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May First- Dare to Join Those Forging the Future!

Statement by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the
Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

In just a few short weeks, on May First, an event of historic significance will take place—the greatest political event in this country since years and decades. On that day, bursting forth from the sites of daily degradation, shattering through the grip of the life-stealing factories, breaking free of the demeaning unemployment and welfare offices, erupting out of the prison-like schools of indoctrination and regimentation, even in defiance of the absolute tyranny of the military authorities, and from many other quarters, thousands



and thousands of all races and nationalities, men and women, will rally their forces in major cities all over the U.S. and thunder through the streets, bringing forward many more through their bold action and making a great leap toward turning this whole country rightside up.

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**Is Revolution Really Possible This Decade
And What Does May 1st Have to Do With It?**

Talk with Bob Avakian
See Section 2

U.S. Threatens Iran

Imperialist Spider Thrashes in its Web

On Monday April 7, the latest round of U.S. political maneuvers—aimed at transferring control of the embassy personnel to the Iranian government and thereby greasing the rails for ending the “hostage crisis” on U.S. terms—ran aground on the rocks of the politically aroused and determined Iranian people.

Faced with this new setback in Iran, along with a rapidfire succession of political crises around the world, the chief spokesman for the U.S. bourgeoisie lashed out. At noon Monday, President Carter went on TV, dramatically interrupting game shows and soap operas to announce a new and serious escalation of U.S. economic and military actions against Iran, directed not only at bringing the Iranian people to their knees before the “mighty” U.S., but at whipping up a new storm of patriotism and support for U.S. war preparations.

In a typical display of imperialist gangster logic, Carter labelled the Iranian people “terrorists” for refusing to forget about 25 years of U.S. full-scale support for the Shah’s bloody dictatorship and for daring to take decisive action against the U.S.’s continuing efforts to sabotage and reverse the still-continuing Iranian revolution, operations that used to be coordinated and directed from the 27-acre U.S. embassy compound in Tehran. Carter attacked the Iranian people for their “intransigence” in not giving in to U.S. demands—seeing it as quite fitting not to even discuss Iranian demands, acting as if the Iranian people are constantly changing their minds, when they know full well what their one unchanging demand continues to be—the return of the ex-Shah from Egypt, Panama or whatever U.S.-controlled country he is moved to!

Suddenly “forgetting” about the last two months of confidential messages and political deals being cooked up with Iran’s government, Carter now blamed the Iranian government for the impasse, trying to distort the obvious fact that it is the Iranian people in their millions who have frustrated every scheme to compromise their struggle, dragging President Bani-Sadr and the Revolutionary Council along. Playing pious and patient, Carter repeated his “simple concern” for the safety of the CIA and State Department hostages being held in Tehran, and then went on to spell out a plan that has absolutely nothing to do with their “safe return.” Instead Carter’s new measures have everything to do with proving that the “U.S. is still No. 1”—a superpower fully capable of throwing its weight around and of lining up its allies and its own people for the rapidly approaching showdown with their equally imperialist rivals in the Soviet Union.

“There is a limit,” the president stated toughly, “and this is it.” “Failure to release the hostages will involve increasingly heavy costs to Iran.” Carter then went on to announce his program of breaking off diplomatic relations with Iran and expelling all Iranian diplomats within 36 hours; suspending all trade with Iran except food and medicine (a thoroughly meaningless “humanitarian” gesture, since U.S. exports of food and medicine to Iran had already virtually stopped); stepping up the harassment of Iranians living in the U.S. by refusing to renew their visas as well as refusing to issue any new ones; and using the \$8 billion in Iranian Funds deposited in the U.S., frozen by the U.S. government in November, to accept claims from the U.S. banks and corporations whose Iranian holdings have been nationalized as well as the families of the embassy personnel for all their “mental suffering.” Not only is the U.S. government to hand over Iranian assets to GM, DuPont, General Telephone, Bell Helicopter and the dozens of other capitalist vultures who have sucked fantastic profits from Iran for decades, but it made a point of excluding from these “Iranian funds” the billions in wealth ripped off from Iran and invested in the



Carter at Monday’s press conference on Iran. Right: Iranian students in the Philippines demonstrating with effigies of Carter and Sadat labeled with prison numbers.

U.S. by the Shah and “other private Iranian citizens.”

Even more central to Carter’s new “get tough” plan was his call for U.S. allies in Western Europe and Japan to fall into line and begin tightening up the economic screws on Iran on the one hand, and his blatant threats to take direct military action against Iran on the other.

Military Force Displayed

To drive the point home, over the past few days administration officials noted that Defense Secretary Harold Brown had been instructed to draw up a list of “contingency plans,” including a naval blockade of Iran or mining of harbors of certain Iranian oil ports. And a group of American senators, including “wave a finger at an Iranian” Howard Baker, just happened to be visiting the U.S. naval task force in the Indian Ocean this week. Afterwards, the senators bubbled that the pilots from the aircraft carrier *Coral Sea* “seemed anxious to go into action and hit selective targets in Iran.”

In fact, indirect U.S. military action against Iran has already been begun by Iraq, which picked this moment to deliver a 24-hour ultimatum to Iran to hand over three small but strategic islands that control the entrance to the Persian Gulf. While Iraq’s so-called “Arab socialist” regime has had strong ties to the USSR in the past, it has more recently moved toward the U.S. orbit, allowing Iranian reactionaries and CIA-funded remnants of the Shah’s army to conduct operations against Iran inside its territory over the past year.

The importance that the Carter administration and the whole bourgeoisie place on whipping up anti-Iranian public opinion and war hysteria was graphically illustrated by the hundreds of FBI and Secret Service Agents, organized into “posses,” that descended on the Iranian embassy and consulates around the country on Monday. The government undertook its largest display of military force in Washington, D.C. Even before Carter’s an-

nouncement of the expulsion of Iranian diplomats, District of Columbia police began taking up positions around the Iranian embassy. Immediately after their commander-in-chief’s press conference, police and FBI agents blocked off entirely a half-mile stretch of Massachusetts Avenue and all side streets leading into the area of the embassy, declaring it a “federal secure zone.”

Red flares were burned as D.C. cops in riot gear and flack jackets stood behind the saw horses across Massachusetts Avenue, a major D.C. thoroughfare. SWAT teams with sniper rifles were positioned in the trees behind the embassy, and FBI agents with books of I.D. photos examined all who tried to leave the “secure zone.” These imperialist vigilantes locked the Iranian diplomats out of their offices, and literally took them “hostage” until they left for Iran on Tuesday night, each Iranian guarded by eight FBI agents.

Officially this massive show of force was supposed to prevent any “unpredictable action” by the fifteen staff members of the Iranian embassy. In reality, it was a desperate attempt to foment a war-like crisis atmosphere by a ruling class trapped in its own weakness. In spite of sensational news accounts all day, the hoped-for crowds of anti-Iranian demonstrators never appeared in front of the embassy.

Caught in a Bind

Ever since the Shah was so unceremoniously toppled by the Iranian masses in early 1979, the U.S. imperialists have been in a bind. The Shah’s regime was key to their whole strategy for dominating the oil-rich Middle East. In addition to being a profit gold mine for hundreds of U.S. corporations, Iran under the Shah was an important front-line military outpost for the U.S. against the USSR. At the very time when the U.S. ruling class needed a “stable” Iran to use in their sharpening rivalry with the Soviet Union, a mighty storm of revolutionary

struggle burst forth in Iran, sending the Shah and his 40,000 U.S. “advisors” fleeing for their lives. Since that day, the U.S. imperialists have been trying to maneuver back into control of Iran.

But to do this, they’ve been forced to walk a political tightrope. While they tried to establish a “businesslike” relationship with the new Iranian government in the months after the revolution in order to support efforts to clamp down on the continuing revolutionary struggle raging in Kurdistan and elsewhere in the country, the U.S. never gave up its hopes at regaining its former position by overthrowing the Iranian government altogether. So, as revealed in the secret documents uncovered in the U.S. embassy in Tehran by the militant students who seized it in November, the U.S. gambled that by bringing the Shah to the U.S. for “medical treatment,” this would set off enough turmoil inside Iran for pro-U.S. and right-wing forces inside the country to regroup under a “law and order” banner and pull off a military coup. But the millions of Iranians who hate the Shah and his U.S. masters accepted the challenge and threw it right back in the imperialists’ faces, firmly supporting the seizure of the U.S. embassy compound, beating down the “anti-Khomeini” uprisings organized and manipulated by pro-U.S. forces in the army, Azerbaijan and elsewhere, and rebuffing the bourgeois forces in the government who have repeatedly tried to compromise the struggle.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December underscored the dilemma the U.S. imperialists were caught in. They needed a stable, pro-U.S. regime in Iran more than ever. Changing tactics, they initiated a flurry of behind-the-scenes political maneuvering (U.N. delegations, third-party messages, intense negotiations between Washington and Tehran) with the bourgeois forces in the Iranian government who just as badly wanted to get the “hostage crisis” behind them.

But by Monday this past week it became clear that the latest attempt to entice the Iranian people to release the U.S. embassy personnel with the Shah still far from Iran had fallen flat on its face. The Revolutionary Council had been meeting over the weekend to try to salvage some kind of deal to gain con-

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ON THE BATTLE FOR MAY 1st 1980

Can we win the battle for May First without vigorous ideological struggle? No, we cannot. Ideological struggle throughout the channels of the Party is indispensable for it in order to concentrate the greatest collective wisdom and unite its ranks in the most powerful way around the correct line; it is crucial in enabling the Party members to grasp and apply the correct line and arm the masses to take it up and wield it. And it is very important to involve the masses in ideological struggle over the decisive questions in the society and the world, including especially right now the life and death questions involved in building for May First. What we must do, in the context of and as a very important though secondary part of carrying through the battle for and to make a leap on May First, is to conduct ideological struggle against rightist lines and tendencies, although labelling people as The Right (or The Left) is not helpful at this time and we should not do it now. The more correctly the ideological struggle is carried out within the Party, and also among the broader revolutionary ranks, the better they will be able to lead the masses in this battle and on to the future.

What are our key targets now in building for May First? They are to win the battle of distributing 75,000 copies of the special issue of the *Revolutionary Worker* and to advance to victory in the struggle of Red Flag-Internationale Day (April 24). This will lay the strongest basis and create the greatest momentum to carry through and win the historic campaign for May First, making a great leap in turning this country upside down (or rightside up) and strengthening the preparation for revolution. Neither the bourgeoisie and its agents and enforcers nor backward forces among the masses and even within the revolutionary ranks will be allowed to prevent this from happening. It is over these questions and with these targets in focus that we must carry out sharp ideological struggle; backward ideas and forces will not be allowed to suffocate the advanced, but instead the advanced will be unleashed, the intermediate will be brought forward and the backward will be won over, neutralized, or run over as required in order to meet our unprecedented goal.

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

Red Flags Fly in Watts

"While this country has never seen a revolutionary struggle for power led by the proletariat, it has certainly witnessed revolutionary mass movements shaking the foundations of this country if not yet capable of overturning it. And today there is not only the profound and deepening economic and political crisis and the imminent danger of world war, but there are, increasingly, minor political shocks that jolt society and awaken growing numbers to political life. These are but tremors before a gigantic earthquake.

"In all these events the embryo of a revolutionary crisis can be discerned. When, for example, in the thunderous rebellions of Black people and other oppressed peoples that have erupted, the police and then the national guard are unable to enforce "law and order," when even the power of the army units called in has been challenged, if only for a few days, a bright glimpse of the future can be seen where the authority and power of the ruling class is no longer capable of intimidating and bludgeoning the masses into submission and all the suppressed outrage not only explodes but is channeled and directed toward its source and toward the solution—the capitalist system and its overthrow." The 1965 Watts Rebellion was one of these "glimpses of the future" as

the (draft) *Programme* of the Revolutionary Communist Party so powerfully puts it.

"It changed people's point of view on how to deal with the police and showed that people's faith had been completely destroyed in the system... completely destroyed," a Black man told the *Revolutionary Worker*. Today something new is stirring in the ghetto. With the recent arrival of the May Day Brigade and networks of the *RW* sprouting in Watts, class-conscious workers and revolutionary-minded people of all ages are taking up the challenge of May 1st, 1980—red flags have begun to fly in Watts!

"It's much worse now," a young Black man told us as we talked on 103rd Street. "Everyone gets a chance to go to jail. Nobody reaches 18 without a record and most of it's bullshit. There are people here who never know nothing but Will Rogers Park—their grandmothers raised their mothers in these projects, and now they are raising their kids here. And hardly anyone grows up saying, 'When I grow up I'm goin' to work like my daddy'—no way." 15 years since the Rebellion, the situation for the masses of Black people in Watts is a brutal testament to a system in decline. The crumbs that were thrown into Watts to silence and buy

off the people have dried up and blown away. The only thing there is more of in Watts is *shit*. Unemployment, then officially 35%, is now doubled, particularly among youth. With the closings of the Southgate General Motors Plant and Firestone Rubber, both

within walking distance of Watts, as well as Goodyear, the situation even among the workers with 15 to 25 years on the job is bleak. Many of these workers, especially those who were teenagers at the time of the rebellion,

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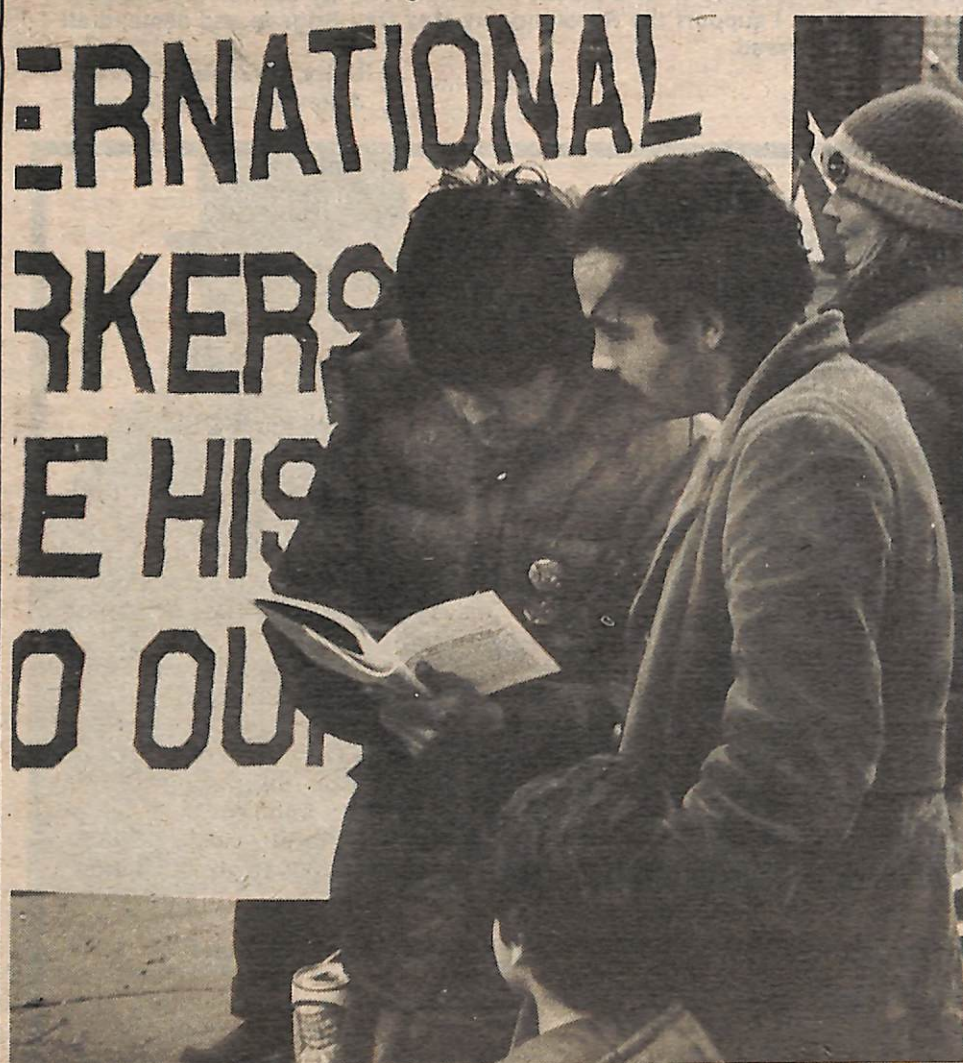
Face Off on May Day "Long March"

Chicago, April 4. Armed with the *Revolutionary Worker* newspaper, May Day buttons and leaflets, the new *Draft Programme* of the Revolutionary Communist Party and the red flag of revolution, members of the Revolutionary May Day Brigade and its supporters began an eight mile "long march" through Chicago's West Side. The march went through the Black ghettos, through Humboldt Park, scene of the 1977 uprising of Puerto Ricans against national oppression, and through busy shopping areas picking up several fresh recruits on the way. Well over 600 *Revolutionary Workers* and many May Day buttons were sold that day.

The last stop on the march was the Cabrini-Green housing project/prison. As the marchers split up to enter the buildings and sell the *RW*, members of the Disciples, a street gang, stood in one of the doorways blocking the entrance. "We hate red. That's the color of the P Stone Nation (a rival gang). Get that red shit out of here," they sneered, pointing to the flags and the red berets of the Brigade. "Burn that flag!" they commanded the young kids around them who were holding red banners, and the flags went up in flames.

Suddenly a young Black woman, wearing a bunch of May Day buttons she had just bought, stepped right into the middle of the confrontation. Stabbing her finger right in the gang members' faces she said, "All you motherfuckers talk about is gangbang and blowing each other away... that shit is dead. These people are going up against the people who want to keep us in these cages. You burn that red flag—I wanna tell you somethin'—you all might just be burnin' your future." "These kids are burnin' their future!" she said, pointing to the youngsters. The gang members backed off in the face of this powerful statement. The woman turned to the *RW* seller saying, "I'll take ten of these newspapers to sell to my friends." It is such bold and decisive action by the advanced who hate all this shit and are determined to "Break with the Backward and Join with the Future" that is more and more playing a key role in the sharpening class battle of May Day 1980. □

Young man at his first demonstration, Chicago's "Long March," shows Programme to worker who joined march.



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Watts

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had brought the experience of Watts 1965 into the working class. The 77th Precinct is bigger now and the police brutality is worse. "They are quick to draw and fire," one worker told us. "They are so scared they're shooting first."

"I can feel the tension," a Black youth said, and as he spoke, another youth came running up and pointed to the back of the projects. On the grass, face down, lay a dozen young Black men with the L.A. pigs standing over them making arrests. "Hey, that's it everyday," the youth said.

For those who are searching for a way out of this madness and have begun to see the necessity to act now, May 1st 1980 is an opportunity to prepare for a future when everyday won't just be another day to die—at the hands of some murdering pig, or slowly strangling on degradation, discrimination and despair. "In the 1980s either we break America or it will break our ass," said a 23-year-old who is beginning to become active in the battle for May 1st. And as we continued to talk with the people of Watts about how they looked ahead to what's coming down in the '80s, we were struck by lessons that had been commonly summed up by many revolutionary-minded people, especially the view that Blacks cannot go it alone. This time it would be different: "If Watts happened today it would be totally different—it ain't just Blacks being pushed down, it's everybody. The whole country would go this time because it will be for sur-

vival," another said, and he emphasized slowly, "If it's got the feeling of Black against white it just won't do." There were also a few who had already been looking to working-class revolution. "I'm angered as much about the oppression of coal miners in West Virginia as by the oppression of Blacks in Mississippi. See, there's too much a separate view of the Black struggle," a man who had studied revolutionary politics in the heat of the rebellion told us. "If a Black man gets killed in L.A. this should concern the whole working class. Same for the Blacks—we should be concerned about this nuclear bull-shit," he concluded.

The question of how this unity is going to be realized, and the urgent necessity to weld all those who hate this shit into a class-conscious force to step onto the political stage on May 1st, was sharply posed on the weekend of April 5th. On that day, traveling to different parts of Los Angeles in two flatbed trucks, the May Day Brigade left in its wake *Revolutionary Worker* networks and red flags in the hands of hundreds. For the entire week before, two squads of Brigaders had been all over the Watts area—rekindling the memory of the Brigade's first stop in L.A. in February. In one project, the Brigaders were stopped by wary residents who demanded to know who they were, and upon hearing it was about May Day, welcomed them into the neighborhood. In that same project, residents are often heard struggling over political questions with a "Bob Avakian says," or asking people selling the *RW*, "What's doin' with Bob?" or, "How's Chairman Bob?" On Button Day here, people wanted to talk about the connection between the trial of Bob Avakian and May 1st.

Spray paint and posters are all over the area. May 1st is on people's minds.

As the flatbeds drove past Will Rogers Park on 103rd Street, a crowd of at least 500 were gathered around a radio van—KGFJ, a Black station, was holding a Job-a-Thon—with only census takers' jobs. The trucks pulled in, banners and red flags rippling in the wind. Sheriffs who had been keeping tabs on the Brigade the whole day, busting two downtown, also moved in. The first Brigaders off the trucks were asked, "Who are you?" "The May Day Brigade," came the reply. The people turned and shouted to the crowd, "Hey, it's the May Day Brigade." "Bringing it on in," the crowd demanded. A group of 10 teenage women came running up, led by one with her fist in the air. "All Power to the People! Long Live May Day! All Power to the People!" she cried, as she joined the Brigaders going into the park.

As they reached the main crowd, the struggle got very heated. KGFJ security people started picking people out for arrest. Some in the crowd shouted, "Honkies get out. You bring too much heat in here." Others replied, "Oh man, I already got my red flag and my button. I seen you over at the shopping market the other day..." The radio security were unsure now. But the sheriffs weren't. Two people were handcuffed. As a Brigader attempted to save the bullhorns, the clubs were pulled out and all hell broke loose. The pigs—almost all Black, unlike the usual all-white patrols in Watts, zeroed in to divide the issue along the lines of race. Some backward fools bought it. A white woman, a Brigader, got slapped across the face. "Honky bitch." Some people started punching and kicking the revolutionaries. Pigs were clubbing and grabbing any white Brigader they could get hold of. One youth tried to rip off the camera of an *RW* reporter. Another grabbed him and pulled him off. "You fool," he shouted. "You're acting like these murdering pigs out here." Other people in the crowd began freeing people from the pigs; and two pigs got sent to the hospital by outraged residents of Watts. Brigaders were agitating about who the pigs serve and who gets murdered and how national oppression comes out of the imperialist system. People began ringing the Brigaders to prevent the cops from getting them. Cops hit the ground, tripped and punched on the way down. A number of young brothers picked up the strewn *Revolutionary Workers* and began handing them out to the crowd. A



white-haired lady in her 60s marched right into the melee, with a red flag waving in one hand and an *RW* in the other. The pigs sensed a shift in the crowd. "If you get the hell out of here we'll let you all go," they whined. The agitation continued. The pigs moved them towards the truck. 14 got busted, including persons from the crowd. The flatbeds moved out of the park.

But the battle was far from over. The pigs were in hot pursuit. The trucks made it to a major intersection before 12 cars pulled them over. These pigs were quickly joined by 8 more squad cars and 2 helicopters. As the two flatbed drivers were getting searched and questioned, a crowd began to form. Expecting an immediate bust, a bundle of *RW*'s were thrown from the truck, and Brigaders called on people to pick them up. No one moved. The pigs began writing citations for littering. A few papers were picked up by a guy in the crowd. The Brigaders began calling on people to come to the truck to get them, singling people out by color of shirt or type of hat. No one moved. For 20 minutes the Brigaders agitated on the significance of May Day and preparing for revolution that's ripening in this decade, and the need to bring the working class to the head of the movement to make it happen. Not a stir in the crowd.

Finally, with the stakes clearly outlined for the people gathered there, one man breathed deep and stepped to the truck. He took a stack back to the crowd. Another stepped up in the pigs' faces and took papers. Suddenly the floodgates burst as people streamed forward and surrounded the truck—demanding *RW*'s, posters, red flags, buttons, and manifestos. Within a few

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This letter was received by the local May Day Committee in El Paso.

Dear Comrades,

I am writing in response to red flags flying over the Alamo March 21. I am a Vietnam Veteran and I supported the struggle at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, and also the Moody Park rebellion demanding justice for Joe Torres. I have been framed because I dared to wear a Moody Park T-shirt in my community and now I am in state prison. I support the Revolutionary May Day Brigade and demand all those arrested be freed.

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Get the Battle Plan for Revolution Behind the Walls

The RCP's *New Draft Programme* and *New Draft Constitution*—a battle plan for revolution in the U.S.A.—was published last month. The Party is now issuing a direct call for revolutionary-minded prisoners to take up these documents, study them, discuss them and criticize them to strengthen them. Send your opinions to the *Revolutionary Worker*.

From the mail we receive alone, it is clear that behind the prison walls of this imperialist beast, there exists not only a deep and profound hatred for the

worldwide crimes of our slavemasters but also a yearning to grasp and apply the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Already, broad circulation of the *RW* throughout the dungeons of this country has galvanized revolutionary sentiments among prisoners. We have received reports of discussion and study circles organized around the *RW*.

With the publication of the *New Draft Programme* and *New Constitution*, what is required now is a special and concentrated period of discussion

and struggle over these draft documents among prisoners. As the introduction to the documents states: "We are spreading these drafts widely and deeply so that many among the working class and other oppressed by this monster, imperialism, will seriously study them, take them up and help sharpen them up. These documents are drafts, they are weapons in preparation...". Large numbers of prisoners can be drawn into this process, and those of you who understand the necessity of this more sharply should shoulder the responsibility of organizing it. We encourage both individual and group study, discussion and criticism, and this will, of course, vary given the obviously difficult conditions in most prisons. A free copy of the documents—or, where possible, quantities of the documents—will be made available to any prisoners who write us. Prisoners, their families and those who support this effort should send financial donations.

The urgency is great. As the conclusion to the *Draft Programme* puts it:

"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 *Programme* 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.

Seize the Day, Seize the Hour"

As we go to press a May Day organizer has been convicted in a Youngstown court and slapped with the maximum sentence—5 months in jail and \$1,250 fine. This revolutionary was railroaded to trial on one day's notice. He had been arrested in the same unemployment office and on the same misdemeanor charges as the May Day 10 (only several weeks later). The eight others with him were about to be busted too until the cops checked out the response of the hundred unemployed whose eyes were fixed on the scene.

The defendant was rushed to trial when the judge severed his case from that of the May Day 10. (The two cases had initially been joined for the purpose of plea bargaining.) This attack was in direct response to the May Day 10's refusal of a so-called deal and an obvious attempt to get a guilty verdict as a precedent for the May Day 10 trial. While originally, the court demanded \$42,500 cash bail, they had been forced to back down and offer the May Day 10 and this defendant a "deal"—a guilty plea in exchange for a \$25 fine each. But the May Day 10 refused this "offer" because at the last minute the court added one "small" stipulation, "just agree that the May Day 10 have plans to go elsewhere, won't settle in Youngstown, and won't be there on May 1st."

In light of the removal of the notorious Judge Morely from the case, the recent patriotic parade of "steelworkers" against May Day, the claims in the newspapers that May Day received a "scanty response from steelworkers," this "minor" stipulation is most revealing. The authorities are scared to death of May Day and time is getting short. It's been eight weeks since the arrest of the May Day 10, six weeks since they left, but even so, just one week ago, on March 27, 115 May Day buttons were worn in Youngstown.

Each time they try to stomp out May Day, the word spreads further and the determination of some to take history into their hands grows stronger. While some were swayed by the "steelworkers against May Day" march, others laughed. "Those are the same union goons who marched against pollution control, we can take on those drunks. They don't speak for us." And no doubt company stools and foremen have reported up to their supervisors who have reported up to executives who have reported up, etc., about the graffiti on the inside of the plant walls. A steelworker told one revolutionary that he and his friends had been working on the walls to spread the word about May Day. One slogan read: "Free the May Day 10. Overthrow the government."

The Day They Heard Bob Avakian in the Atlanta Jail

The following story was told to the *Revolutionary Worker* by Lee Otis Johnson, a revolutionary who has recently been released from prison after spending more than 8 of the last 11 years in jail. In the '60s Lee Otis Johnson was Texas state field secretary of SNCC. A leader of the Black liberation struggle, he was framed up on charges of selling one marijuana cigarette to an undercover agent in 1968, the day after he led a march of 8,000 in Houston Texas, and sentenced to 30 years in prison. In 1972, he was released on a court-order and rearrested in 1975—charged with burglary of \$17 worth of meat. In jail, the cops nearly beat him to death to get a "confession." He has been resolute in his support for the people's struggles and has continued to struggle all these years in prison. The RCP warmly welcomes Brother Johnson back on the streets.

"Someone [in the jail] had heard that Bob Avakian was on tour and that he was going to be on a radio station in Atlanta but he didn't catch what station he was on so we had several guys just scanning the radio constantly. I mean

there wasn't a second when there wasn't somebody scanning and trying to catch him. And then all of a sudden, somebody hollered—seventy something. Then all the radios started tuning. The next thing we knew the whole tank was just—all the steel anyway—it was echoing through the whole place. They turned off the TV, and they stopped playing games, stopped writing letters home to their loved ones. They just stopped everything. You couldn't hear nobody talking except the people on the radio. Everybody was listening. Every now and then you hear somebody saying 'Right on, right on!' And somebody said something about how he was kind of short and somebody else said, 'Yeah but he's got a powerful punch!' That was the only kind of laughing going on. But most of the time everybody was listening. When it was over they had little groups just sitting off in sessions talking. Most of the people around us were saying he wouldn't have no problem in prison, no way, if he ever came there 'cause people would protect him."

Pig Snorts from L.A. Jail

Los Angeles—In a failed attempt to keep "the contagion" from spreading, the pigs had busted the May Day Brigade in Watts. Soon after people had been searched, the pigs started parading around the station with the Brigaders' "Death to the Shah" and May Day buttons on their uniforms, a puffed-up attempt to mock the possibility of revolution. But at one button they stopped. As one cop flipped it over, the face he saw was that of Bob Avakian. He paused, then quickly placed it on the table like it was poison ivy, saying, "I ain't wearing that one." Bob Avakian is hated and feared in the L.A. pig sties. One pig questioned a jailed *RW* photographer incessantly about Bob Avakian's whereabouts. The questions were asked with a knife held up to the person's face. Upon receiving only contemptuous silence, he scribbled Bob Avakian's name on a piece of paper and began slicing it up with a blade.

In the woman's holding cell rang the verses of the *Internationale*. The pigs flipped and cut off the lights in the cell, but the song continued to the end in the darkness. Suddenly the door swung open and a few pigs entered. They held a tear gas cannister up to the women's faces. "If you don't shut up, this room will be filled with this!" At that very moment, from the men's side came once again the verses of the anthem of the international working class. The pigs raced out. The next sound heard by the women was the beatings going on in the other cell.

The pigs dragged the brothers out one by one and began beating them. They also grabbed a Latino, who had been beaten and robbed of \$300 by the LAPD and was now being held for not having identification. One Brigader was blacked between the shoulder blades until he was on his knees. Another brave pig kicked him in the gut

and shouted, "See if you feel like singing now." They were then led to another cell which had been sprayed with mace before their arrival. They sat inside, nauseous and trying to breathe. The pigs later showed up in the women's cell asking for one of the brothers' next of kin. Their reason? He had hung himself. It was just another attempt at the physical and mental torment aimed to demoralize the Brigaders.

Soon, all the Brigaders were moved to the L.A. County Jail for Women, and the Sybil Brand Institute for Women. Sybil Brand was a philanthropist who donated all this money to build a nice prison for women. The bus driver told the women as they boarded, "I'd like to blow a couple of you away."

The women were finally taken to Sybil Brand and placed in separate cells. As they talked to women prisoners, exchanging bits and pieces of Spanish and English, May First became the central topic. On the pages of an old library book, ten copies of the *Internationale* were handwritten and handed through the bars and cracks in the walls—passed from cell to cell. A woman from El Salvador began struggling with the woman in the adjacent cell to sing, as the chorus went echoing through the area. Quickly the guards took all the women prisoners out into the day room to isolate the revolutionaries.

But word spread, and when the Brigaders were leaving they passed some women on line for an Easter Sunday movie. They all smiled and one clenched a fist and whispered, "May Day." And as they passed the day room, all the women in there gave the clenched-fist salute, except one—she gave the thumbs-up sign. Once again, in jails like in Watts, the May First conspiracy was spreading. □



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FALN Suspects Defy U.S. Imperialist Courts

Evanston, Illinois. Eleven suspected members of the FALN (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional or Armed Forces of National Liberation), dedicated to the independence of Puerto Rico, were captured by local cops in this northern Chicago suburb on April 4. The group, which has claimed responsibility for more than 100 bombings or attempted bombings in the U.S. and Puerto Rico since 1974, has completely eluded the cops for the last six years even though their reputed leader, Carlos Alberto Torres, is No. 1 on the FBI's Most Wanted List. Two were arrested after they supposedly stole a rental truck, and the other nine were picked up when a neighbor reported "suspicious activity" around a van parked in the neighborhood.

"TERROR SUSPECTS SEIZED WITH ARSENAL HERE," screamed the banner headlines. The FBI, outwitted more than once by the FALN, who have been a major embarrassment to the supposedly all-powerful intelligence organization, was jubilant over their capture. In Washington, FBI Director William Webster reported that he was personally "very pleased" over the busts. The *Chicago Sun-Times* lavishly praised the fool who blew the whistle on the suspected FALN members.

The massive media hysteria set the stage for the government's plan to prosecute the eleven to the hilt. With special police snipers posted on the rooftop, the FALN suspects were literally carried and pushed into the Evanston courtroom on April 7 for their first court appearance. It had been turned into an armed camp with at least 40 police ringing the judges bench. The prisoners were charged with theft and armed robbery and an incredible \$22 million bond set on their heads. 70 supporters demonstrated outside chanting "Independence for Puerto Rico Now!" and "Death to Statehood!"

Inside the courtroom the eleven remained defiant, refusing to be subdued by the cops or silenced politically. Carlos Torres denounced the hearing as "hocus-pocus" and a "kangaroo court." "We are prisoners of war!" he cried. "We do not recognize the jurisdiction of the U.S. courts." Earlier Torres' father had read a statement written by his son that said in part, "Puerto Rico has been at war with the United States since 1898 when the U.S. Army, Navy and Marines invaded our shores." Ever since that time Puerto Rico has been an outright colony of the U.S., raped and plundered for profit while the people are crushed into dire poverty.

This defiant stand of the FALN, so

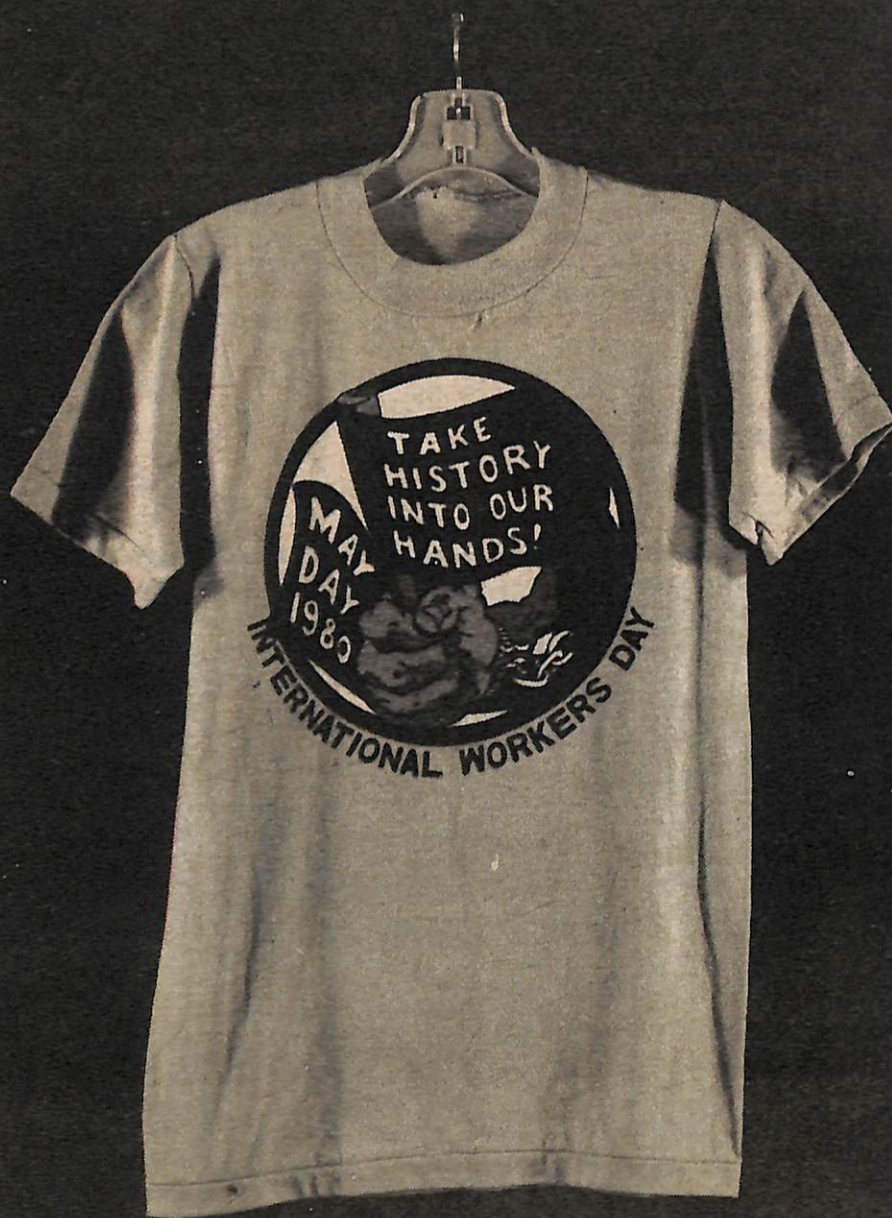
strongly demonstrated in the wake of these recent arrests, has inspired many Puerto Ricans and others who burn with the desire to free Puerto Rico from the U.S. imperialists' clutches. The demand Free Puerto Rico! has been put right out on front street at a time when the bourgeoisie has used the presidential primary elections to push its "statehood debate" in Puerto Rico and in the U.S. too. The purpose of this debate is precisely to suck people into a pick-your-poison argument (do you want to be a state or remain a "commonwealth" like you are now?) and bury the demand for Puerto Rican independence underneath a pile of crap.

While the strategy of the FALN is one of relying on the actions of small guerrilla groups to somehow spark the masses into revolutionary action and as such is not the road to revolution (which can only be made by the masses in their millions politically mobilized and led and conscious of the tasks before them) the fact that the FALN has eluded the FBI and police and thumbed their noses at the imperialists has given play to the revolutionary sentiments and desires of many Puerto Ricans and others. The bourgeoisie is well aware of this fact which is why they are out for blood in these recent arrests.

Not content with the arrests and jailing of the eleven, the federal authorities (puffed up and arrogant after the busts) are planning to launch a special grand jury investigation around the case (the third such jury probe of the FALN in Chicago). A number of times in the past the grand jury has been used by the ruling class to harass and attack those who support Puerto Rican independence. In these authorities' own words, "Such a jury could use the threat of jailing for contempt of court or the promise of immunity from prosecution to persuade the jailed FALN members or their acquaintances to talk."

For all their outward show of strength and their attempts to portray their police and FBI as all powerful, the bourgeoisie has actually demonstrated their underlying fear—the masses of Puerto Rican people and the growing numbers of people of all nationalities in this country who are raising the cry of "Free Puerto Rico!" They are desperate to stamp out this very idea which despite the terror tactics of their police and the current "statehood debate" can never be stamped out. The fight for Puerto Rican independence will continue until the bloody colonial rule of the U.S. over Puerto Rico is ended. □

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N.Y. Transit Strike

Refuse to "Tote That Barge"

Since midnight March 31, over 30,000 transit workers in New York City have been on strike. The entire city's surrounding metropolitan area has been affected by the strike. New York City's mass transit system, the subways and buses, have been brought to a grinding halt. "CHAOS" blared a banner headline on the front page of the *New York Post* on day 2 of the strike. Throngs of people pour across the Brooklyn Bridge each morning trying to get to work. A whole lane of traffic has had to be cordoned off from the city's avenues to make room for the bike riders and roller skaters.

Rush hour is now the equivalent of a working day. It takes eight hours to move all the cars in and out of Manhattan. Hotels are booked solid. A number of people are just staying home. And to add to the disruption, for the first two days of the strike, the Long Island Railroad was also out. As we go to press, workers at Jersey's PATH, which links Newark and Jersey City to New York, are threatening to walk out on April 12. Chaos, indeed—the kind of chaos that can only increase as the deepening crisis propels sections of the working class into action.

But that is not the kind of chaos the bourgeoisie wants to see. In fact what is significant about the strike is that it reveals in more vivid terms the depth of crisis, and the kind of plans the bourgeoisie has for the working class, both in the attacks they made against the transit workers, and in the bourgeoisie's summed-up lessons of the strike that it pumps out daily, hourly to the masses of people in New York.

When New York City was first on the brink of bankruptcy a few years ago, and services were being slashed, labor discipline was instituted to keep the workers in line. Unions co-operated, pensions were turned over to help bail out the city. The work force was reduced by thousands through layoffs, a hiring freeze, and attrition. But none of this has or could have stopped the decline of the system.

That decline has taken some qualitative leaps in the recent period, and the ruling class must not only maintain this strict labor discipline but must greatly expand it.

This is evident in the demands being made of transit workers by the Mass Transit Authority. The highest the MTA ever got on a wage offer was 8% over 34 months in exchange for major contract changes, like 41 give-backs, including the elimination of wash-up and coffee breaks, and giving the MTA the right to hire part-time workers to knock off overtime pay. The capitalists' interest in doing this isn't just the \$450 million it plans to save from such give-backs, but in instituting the kind of discipline, work rules, a "tote that barge, lift that bale" atmosphere the ruling class needs going into this decade. Imagine taking a coffee break being in official violation of a contract.

But the deepening economic crisis the U.S. imperialists face today, as well as the wartime economy they will be entering, leaves them no choice but to clamp down on the working class in ways most workers are not accustomed to. A recent column in the *New York Post* illustrates the point. Entitled "Is Anyone In Charge?", the article uses the transit strike as a starting point to say, "Hey, what's going on here with these people running amok?" and raises serious doubts about the ruling class's ability to govern in this decade.

The transit strike objectively runs hard into the bourgeoisie's plan for a much more firmly controlled work force. What is worrying them is that what has pushed this strike in the first place is the dissension among the rank and file, particularly from Black and Hispanic workers. Although trade unionism is still in firm command, for the first time in a long time, the union machine has been challenged, creating a

split in the union. Founded 46 years ago, the transit workers' union was once a predominantly Irish-American union. But in recent years, the composition has been changed so that almost half the transit workers are Black, with a number of Hispanic workers. James Lawe, head of the Transit Workers Union, has used for his base the largely Irish-American constituency. But the discrimination against minority workers, where Black workers are forced to work largely underground in trains, cleaning cars and porter jobs, with white workers given the higher skilled jobs, particularly above ground, like driving buses, has given rise to a well organized challenge to Lawe's control. He has effectively lost control of the union. Lawe's opposition now claims at least half of the union's backing, including a number of white workers.

The transit strike has caused tremen-

dous disruption in people's lives. The bourgeoisie has lost no time summing up, from their point of view, just how the masses of people should see this strike. Mayor Koch has seized upon every opportunity to turn public opinion against the strike.

In the past year alone Koch has been booed and practically run out of public meetings held in Harlem and the South Bronx. Now all of a sudden, Koch has their interests at heart, telling the transit workers to come back to work because they are only hurting the city's poor, the oppressed minorities in Harlem and the South Bronx. (No doubt this is aimed in particular at cooling out the militancy of the Black and Latin transit workers.)

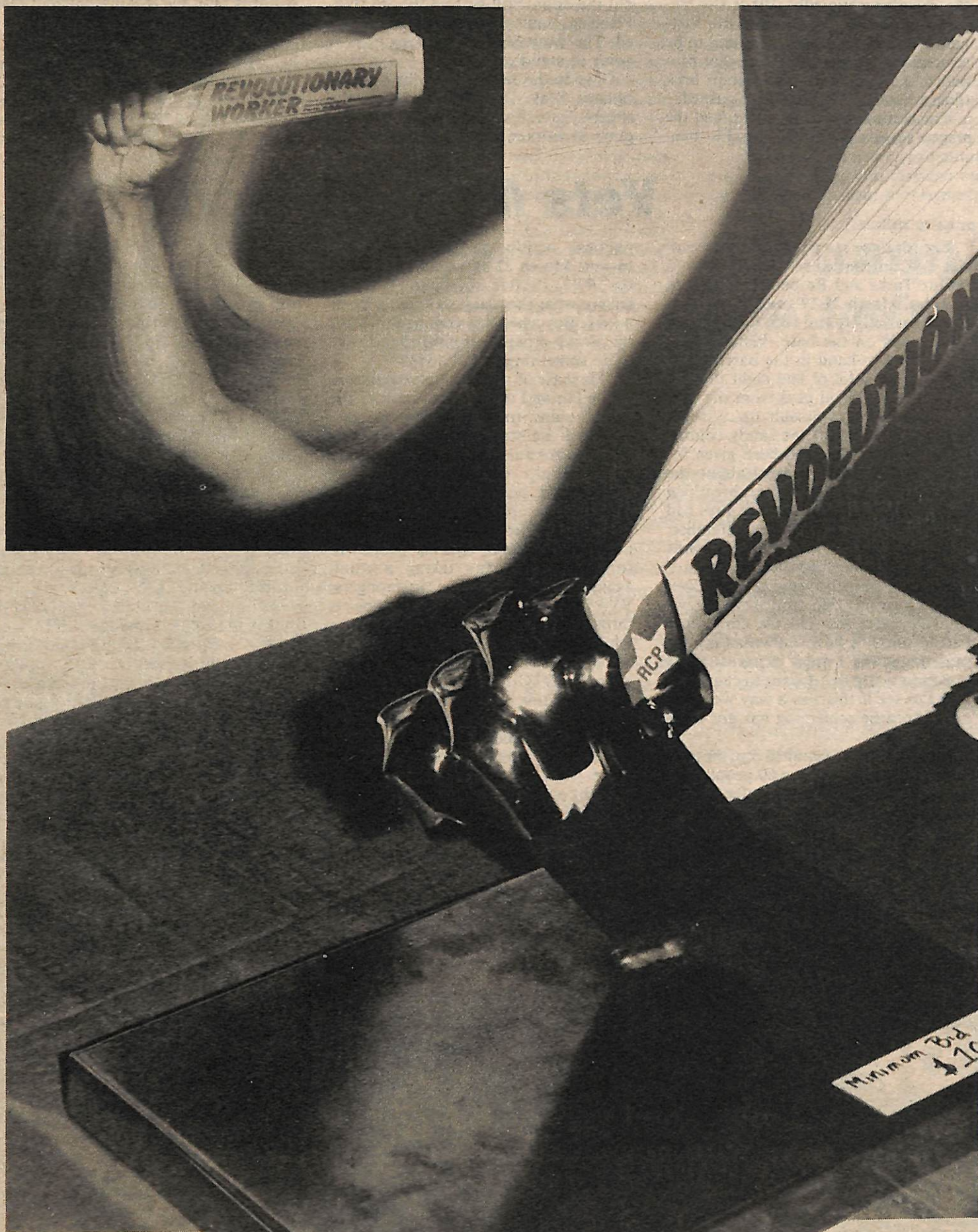
Also while, Koch and his masters tighten up the labor discipline over the workers, they are using the disruptions the strike is causing to run a deadly line to the masses. They are giving people a prep course in how to take it all in stride. What they have in mind is training the masses of people in subjugation, for when heavy disorder is brought about by the further decline of their system, including world war. New Yorkers can take anything—they can walk to work for five miles with a smile on their face—that's how it's put. Koch has even gone so far as to greet the

massive wave of people hiking across the Brooklyn Bridge like refugees each morning.

One psychiatrist blurted out quite bluntly just what the bourgeoisie is up to with their "New Yorkers can take anything" crap, when he said, "New Yorkers would do very well in a nuclear attack. If we had some time to prepare, we'd all die with grace and class."

Just where the strike will go at this point is not certain. A news blackout has been imposed over the contract negotiations. The union still maintains its grip on the strike. Koch has stated emphatically that no strikers arrested for damaging scab buses will be granted amnesty. Yet only a few days later, a slew of buses was rendered out of commission by angry strikers.

The transit workers' strike has brought to the fore important social questions that will increasingly be facing the American people. The overall effect of the strike—despite the fact it is well within trade-union, economic confines—is to raise bigger questions. It's running up against the plans to turn the working class into docile sheep on their way to the slaughterhouse. For these reasons, it is important that this strike be supported. □



Sculpture made by Jesus, a worker from Colombia who has lived in the U.S. close to 3 years. Asked by the RW how he views the importance of culture and what it has to do with the struggle for revolution, Jesus said: "I believe the job we have to do is to create a culture that raises people's

consciousness, create truly proletarian revolutionary works of art. The inspiration for my sculpture was the newspaper—the sculpture affirms the statements of Bob Avakian about distribution networks and the strength of the working class . . .

The giant banquet table was laden with shrimp, canapes, and other hors d'oeuvres. Liquor poured fast and free from 10 bars around the room. Over 1000 people, Boeing's special guests, executives, managerial underlings and office workers joked and laughed as they munched their petits fours. The centerpiece of the banquet table told the story. It was a three-foot replica of the Boeing air-launched Cruise missile (ALCM) just chosen by the U.S. Air Force as the best design of mass death and destruction machine over its competitor made by General Dynamics. This was not a scene from the movie Dr. Strangelove. It was for real not simply insanely absurd, but absurdly insane. Pictures flashed on a screen in the background: happy production workers assembling missiles, happy executives behind their desks, happy computer programmers at their consoles, happy cogs in U.S. imperialism's war machine. The masters of war themselves, Chairman and former Chairman of the Board, slapped each other on the back, an imperialist job well done.

The bourgeois press agrees. "Jubilant at Boeing," read the *Seattle Times*. "Two billion dollar winner in an important defense sweepstakes," puffed the *Post Intelligencer*. *Time* magazine led the cheering nationally. "It is the biggest Air Force contract since the Vietnam War, and it is almost certain to be remembered as the arms deal that propelled the U.S. into the weapon bristling decade of the 1980s," it gushed.

The company president mounted the stage, smugly satisfied with his ban-



Cruising It Up at Boeing!

quet's success. He began to congratulate "his team." A revolutionary elbowed past the chairman and leaped center stage. From his jacket he pulled a red flag and thrust it into the air. The president, mouth gaping, stepped back from the podium. The revolutionary spoke: "The people behind the Cruise missile are the greatest criminals the world has ever seen. They are preparing today to incinerate hundreds of millions and they have the gall to throw a party to celebrate and to suck us into celebrating." Boeing executives and security guards, faces twisted with rage, grabbed the revolutionary, shoving him out the door. Still he held the red flag. "Boeing, your gravediggers have arrived. This May First the working class is going to stand up."

Outside the red flags of the Revolutionary May Day Brigade lined the streets. Fists shot up out of the car windows of workers passing by.

Boeing doesn't throw many parties like this, but they work overtime to con workers into playing the fool, docilely following the U.S. imperialists' headlong rush into World War 3. "This is ALCM country," read numerous posters in the departments where the Cruise missile is being designed and built. Workers are treated to special "news bulletin" films on their breaks: the Cruise missile hugging the ground as it speeds toward its target, the Roland missile intercepting "enemy aircraft," the MX missile with its multiple nuclear warhead—all aimed at sucking workers into the "challenge" of being Number One and staying Number One with good old Uncle Sam.

"Your job at Boeing puts you on the American front line of defense regardless of your division," according to the handbook given to every new hire—and it's true. Those Boeing workers and

others who find themselves happy and relieved that Boeing has gotten the Cruise missile contract and who blindly follow the company's wild warmongering hoopla—those who are grateful for being graciously given the privilege of producing the very weapons that the imperialists are planning to use to incinerate tens of millions here and around the world in order to maintain their empire of slavery, should remember that line from the company handbook well: "You are going to be on the front lines." And by the way, slaves just like yourselves are producing nuclear weapons in the Soviet Union that will be aimed at you. In fact, you will be a prime target.

Aware of this, Boeing even has what it calls a Crisis Zero Case Plan, a plan to evacuate Boeing before it is nuked, herding people and machinery to eastern Washington where they would continue to supply U.S. imperialism's arsenal during a world war. This is an example of how serious the ruling class is taking this front lines stuff. The bourgeoisie itself, of course, will be inside of a mountain somewhere, far away from the Boeing plant, in case the plan doesn't work in a real nuclear "exchange"—you can count on that.

The point here is there is something even more absurd than Boeing's Cruise missile banquet and lunchtime war propaganda, and that's any worker with a brain in his head jumping on their war bandwagon, falling for their shit. Isn't it time to start thinking about ridding the world of this madness and the class responsible for it? □

Vets Meet on World War 3

The Marine got on the train at Ocean-side. "Conference on World War 3—Our Tasks and Responsibilities. Los Angeles, March 28-29" were the words on the leaflet. He had seen it as it made the rounds on the base, being passed from hand to hand in the barracks. It had sparked a lot of late night rapping about the thousand guys from the base who were sent to assault units in the Persian Gulf, about the sandy colored desert fatigues they had been given for the upcoming war games, about the world war they could feel breathing down their necks. A bunch of guys had talked about coming to the conference, but some had been scared off by words like "revolution" and "communism." But he felt he had to step over the line. Now, a train ride and several bus transfers later, he told the conference participants, "I have known all my life something was rotten. I have known most of my life that I want to change it. I had to see if this was a way we could do it, because something has got to be done."

This statement summed up the sentiments of the more than 60 people who came to the West Coast conference initiated by Vietnam Veterans Against the War—male and female veterans, joined by some youth from the barrios of East L.A. and Oakland, feminists, and students actively working against the draft. Most had been contacted by VVAW for the first time during the last weeks. A Korean War vet, who had heard about the conference at the first

political action he had ever been to—the March 22 anti-draft rally—told the *RW*, "After my tour, I didn't believe what they said, so I read a lot of books. But what it is coming down to, the world situation, I either had to try to do something or kill myself."

This sense of urgency and recognition of the life and death importance of the rulers' plans for World War 3 characterized the stand of the new people stepping forward. But they were truly only the tip of the iceberg. They underscored the possibility and necessity of calling up thousands more who, being pulled into political life by the imperialists' necessity to whip people up for war, are today taking a stand against the plans of the warmongers. VVAW members had seen this going on throughout the period building up to the conference. One day in particular stood out—the day when one of the largest ROTC's in the country held their recruiting session on the campus at the University of Southern California. Instead of the old method of just sending out an officer with a table and some sign-up cards, the military brought out a Marine combat unit of 90 GIs complete with TOW missiles, jeeps, a howitzer, and special suits to protect against poison gas and radiation. When some of the Marines began talking with VVAW, their sergeant growled at his men, "Shut-up—don't talk to these guys." But when VVAW members raised their banner, "Oppose U.S.-Soviet War Moves," and began agitating

about spitting on the red, white and blue, and "Our Fight is here at home," a cheer went up from a large section of the crowd of 160 students that had gathered around them. Then the campus police came up and threatened the vets with arrest if they didn't leave; but the students chanted at the pigs "Let them stay," and when they finally left later 20 of the students ended up marching off with VVAW members to protect them from possible attack. Three of those students showed up at the conference.

Conference

But the potential that such sentiments and actions represented had to be transformed into a conscious force that would oppose and expose the imperialists and call out to thousands of others to take the same stand. The question of how to do this was the driving force pushing the struggle forward throughout the two-day conference.

Some people were confused about the nature of the impending imperialist war, influenced by the sentiment of much of the anti-draft movement for "no more Vietnams." But by the end of the first discussion, they began to see that the situation was far different today. A vet from Seattle brought this home when he said, "Boeing is building bunkers to house not only its executives, but also big enough to run production lines in there. That's how serious they are about World War 3."

But is the U.S. still imperialist? After all, someone said, a lot of people look at the fact that the U.S. didn't invade Iran, like the Soviets marched into Afghanistan, and figure maybe the U.S. is changing. Through the discussion, the nature of U.S. rule was exposed, with its tentacles stretching all over the world, and the fact that it was the heroic struggle of the Iranian masses, armed in their millions and determined to resist American domination, that had so far actually prevented the U.S. from invading. The leopard can't change its spots—and the U.S. ruling class can't shed its imperialist nature or be stopped from going to war unless it's overthrown.

People spoke to the necessity of uniting the advanced—vets and GIs in particular—to hit at the national chauvinism the ruling class is whipping up, and of standing with the Iranians and all others who fight against imperialist domination. A veteran from Seattle, who quit his job to join the May Day Brigade, spoke to this point

and brought out the crucial importance of thousands marching in the streets on May 1. One youth, who had just recently heard about May Day from vets building for the conference, applied to join the May Day Brigades. And with many participants proudly wearing their buttons, it was clear that people felt that May Day had to be a focus of their activities between now and May 1st.

The conference produced a manifesto—a battle cry to be taken out to every anti-draft and anti-nuke demonstration, to veterans throughout the country, to ghettos and barrios, to factories and schools, and to the military bases where the imperialists train their cannon fodder. "...To all those who feel like a volcano ready to erupt. Now is the time to become active. Now is the time for the volcano we represent, which has lain dormant and pent up for a decade, to explode. To bring forth lava, our outraged anger, all over this country, indeed all over the world. Those who see the looming shadow of World War 3 and the lying lords of profit who stand behind it, who know full well that our rulers' plea to defend America and the free world means nothing else than protecting their world empire built on mangled lives, must influence millions to oppose it, influence millions to fight against it. And should this gangster war be unleashed, influence millions to seize the opportunities from our rulers' every difficulty and every defeat to push forward the rebellion of people here and the world over. To truly liberate and free mankind to develop and build a world in which the young—following the natural course of things—will bury those who have grown old and died, and not the other way around." The manifesto ends with the words of a member of VVAW who threw his medals at the Capitol building in 1971, "...if we ever have to fight again, it will be to take these steps."

Most of the people at the conference had only been "shaken awake" over the last few months. Several pointed out that they had been "against Iran" until they ran into someone selling the *RW* and read the newspaper. But they came here determined to learn what's behind the threat of war and to take that knowledge out to others and galvanize them to political action as well. As he got ready to get on the bus for the long trip back, the Marine said he was really glad he had come. "Now when I go back to the base, I've got a lot more ammunition." □

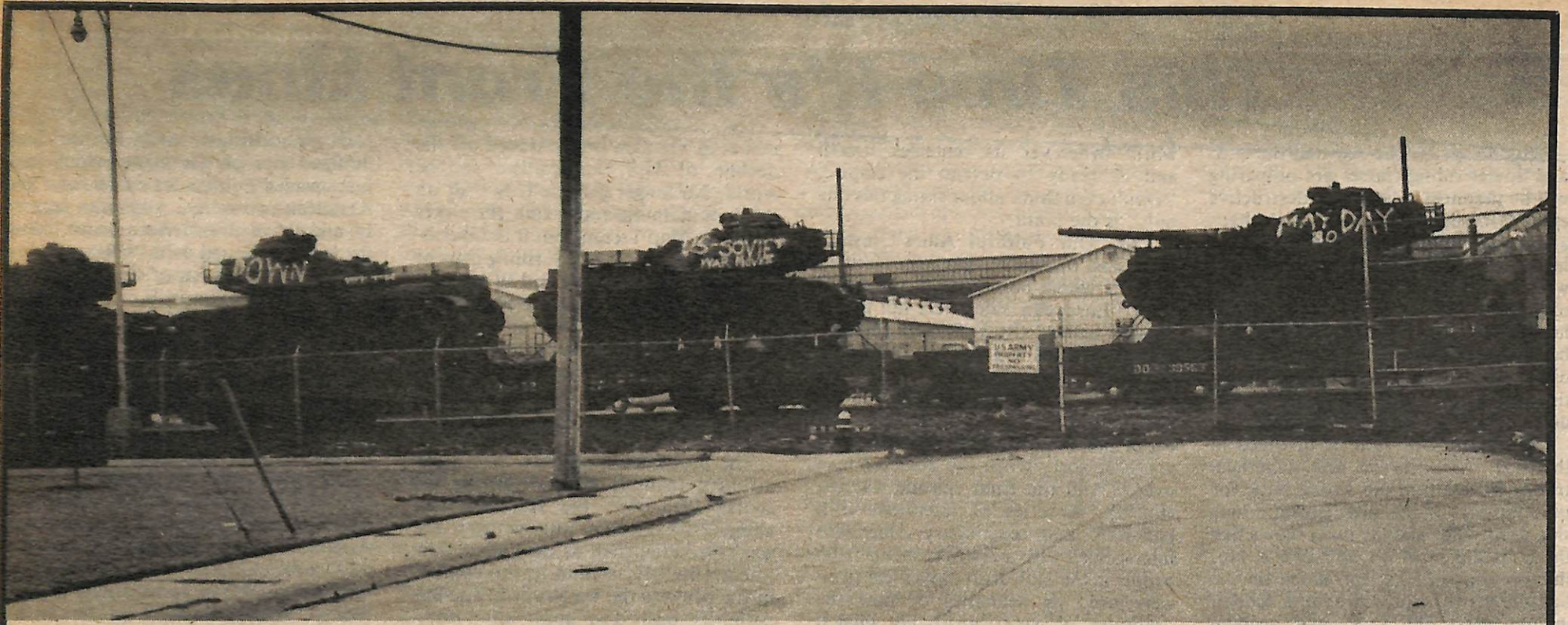
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One day last week, the finished product that rolled out of the Chrysler tank plant had a different paint job. "Down with U.S.-Soviet war moves—May Day 1980."

More Lies on Vietnam

The Fool and His Book: Fields of Fire

This was submitted by a reader of both the RW and Turn the Guns Around, newspaper of Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Dear Turn the Guns Around and Revolutionary Worker:

I recently finished reading a book about the Vietnam war called *Fields of Fire* by James Webb. It's a fairly new book having come out in paperback just last August, and for a couple of reasons I feel a special responsibility to respond to the damn thing. First of all it is a reactionary piece of shit that is in some ways a political pacesetter in the ongoing bourgeois effort to change public thinking about the Vietnam war. And secondly, the author and I graduated in 1968 from the same college (if you can call it that)—Annapolis. I knew him personally back then, and even more I knew his type very well. While the world was being turned upside down for millions (including myself) in the turmoil of the late '60s and early '70s, people like Webb, who liked the little niches they had chiseled out for themselves, were becoming even more firmly entrenched in their backward thinking and love for the status quo.

A place like Annapolis is literally teeming with narrow-minded and conservative blockheads who have about as much ability or desire to cope with new ideas and change as a petrified redwood stump. Jim Webb is no exception. He is typical of those who in 1967 leapt at the chance to beat back the expected "hippie" invasion of the "yard" (that's Anus-polis talk for the campus). That year during a large anti-war demonstration in Washington, D.C. the Navy brass whipped up a rabid fervor among the Hitler youth types with rumors of impending demonstrator attacks, and asked for volunteers to man the fences. Armed with baseball bats and lucid intellects these intrepid warriors shivered all night in the cold, waiting in vain for their chance to join the ranks of infamy in advance of the National Guard at Kent State.

I'll never forget the time a Jim Webb type burst in on some of us who were longingly viewing pictures of a beautiful palm tree beach in the Caribbean. While in our heads danced idealist visions of escaping the madness of our present situation to the tranquility of this peaceful scene, this aspiring marine officer launched into a tirade about how all he could imagine doing with that beach was invading it. He immediately struck a pose of a soldier in full combat gear just off the landing craft during an amphibious invasion. With hands positioned as if armed with an M-1 and teeth clenched on an imagined bowie knife, he whirled and began clomping down the hall in his combat boots (which some swore he even slept in) snarling "kill, kill, kill." This same individual's favorite song was the "Ballad of the Green Berets,"

which he used to play at full volume to the great "benefit" of everyone within a mile radius. While this was not Webb himself it well could have been.

Anyway, this gives you some idea of the type of asshole that Jim Webb is—exactly what Annapolis and the military are programmed to produce (Webb was a vanguard element, if you'll excuse the expression). He has the kind of better than thou, straight-arrow, all-American, chauvinist and racist mentality that most normal people can't stand. And, of course, all of this is reflected in his book.

It is important to know Webb's background because that helps uncover his method, which is one of the worst ironies and outrages of the book, and it helps expose his overall criminal purpose in writing it. Here we have an ex-marine officer, an Annapolis graduate who is now a high priced lawyer and congressional advisor, a man who not only willingly carried out but also commanded and supervised imperialist rape and butchery in Vietnam, and he is writing as if he was "just one of the boys." In the name of "all those who actually did the fighting" he puts forward the most nauseating drivel imaginable, and attempts to reverse the verdict on the war while discrediting those who courageously opposed it.

Fool Mouths Off

Webb's contrived efforts to distort reality reach their heights in the final scene. Senator, a Harvard graduate who went to Vietnam with some confused anti-war ideas has come back crippled and "educated," and is now giving a "you don't know what the fuck you're talking about" speech to an anti-war demonstration. He is being called upon by the ghosts of all his dead buddies to "Set The Bastards Straight." In bold capital letters (so no one will miss the point I suppose) Senator lets fly: "WHY ARE YOU PLAYING THESE GODDAMN GAMES? LOOK AT YOURSELVES." "I DIDN'T SEE ANY OF YOU IN VIETNAM. I SAW DUDES, MAN. DUDES. AND TRUCK DRIVERS AND COAL MINERS AND FARMERS. I DIDN'T SEE YOU. WHERE WERE YOU? FLUNKING YOUR DRAFT PHYSICALS?" "LOOK. WHAT DO ANY OF YOU KNOW ABOUT IT, FOR CHRIST SAKE? HO CHI FUCKING MINH." Senator's devastating argument is only surpassed by the broadness of his appeal: "WHAT DO YOU CARE IF IT ENDS? YOU WON'T GET HURT." Senator is then justifiably chased off the stage, but we are supposed to be sympathizing with him and hating the demonstrators. (Even Webb's ecstatic reviewers are embarrassed by this scene, but only because it is such blatant ballyhoo not because they disagree.)

This theme is played throughout the

book: The heroic and noble warrior, the common man has risen to the occasion and sacrificed incredibly, only to be as Webb sees it maligned, misused, and misunderstood. We are treated to gory battle scenes with arms and legs blown off, blood spattering like rain, and snipers constantly terrorizing the American ranks. We are supposed to sympathize with the horror of fighting dedicated and disciplined guerrilla units who are never around to get killed, only to kill. We are expected to see why it's okay to kill women and children—anything that moves—because "it's them or us." We learn how hard it is to be a front line imperialist lackey while senior officers "sit somewhere with air conditioners around them and Coca-Cola inside them while we drink this god-damn wormy water." (Webb can't wait for his turn).

"Poor Lifer's Plight"

We hear the torment of the poor lifer: "I'm a staff NCO in the United States Marine Corps, the President's Own, guardians of this country. Now I wear my uniform back home and they look at me like I'm an animal." "Some broad. I'm coming back to Viet—fuck-ing—Nam because I'm a professional dedicated to protecting her prissy, babied way of life and she spits at me."

In other words, according to Webb, if I can paraphrase him for a minute: "It's just not fair, we are the real heroes. Sure it was a dirty war, but what war isn't? It had to be done and we shouldered our responsibility and fought it like men."

The treachery of this is just short of astounding. You can almost hear one of the executioners from the Nazi gas chambers saying "It's just not fair, we are the real heroes." Webb's idea of heroics is dutifully murdering and rendering homeless millions of innocent people, burning down villages, machine gunning women and children, the spraying of poison gas and the dropping of anti-personnel flechetts over hundreds of thousands of acres, herding entire populations into concentration camps, and countless other unspeakable outrages all while singing "God Bless America." (Webb also defends tiger cages with the offhand remark, "What the hell is a tiger cage, except a cage for tigers?" and he upholds rape by claiming "those animals"—Vietnamese women in particular—love it!)

What the hell, I would like to know, is so heroic about all that? What is so heroic about fighting or even dying for one of the biggest gangster countries the world has ever seen? The real heroes were the Indochinese people who valiantly and relentlessly fought back and won against the most monstrous killing machine in the history of mankind. (The fact that the leaders of Vietnam have now sold their people down the river to another imperialist superpower does not change this historical truth.)

Real Heroes

Face it Webb, there is nothing heroic about an American GI's guts dribbling into the mud of Vietnam after being blown apart by the "VC." The Indochinese were fighting a just cause and they were an inspiration to millions all over the world. This will never be forgotten and no amount of fact twisting can change it. (It has always infuriated me that the American POWs were drooled over in the press as such heroic figures. What is so heroic about dropping bombs from ten thousand feet on peasant villages and rice paddies, not to mention schools, hospitals and the like? I was a Navy fighter pilot and I will never forget a senior pilot bragging to me about firing a heat-seeking missile into an old man on a bicycle. How heroic! [It's no wonder that some of us were sickened and enraged by all this and refused to do it.] Compare that with the courage of the Vietnamese fighting for liberation day after day underneath devastating carpet bombing. As far as I'm concerned the Vietnamese would have been justified if they had ripped every POW apart limb from limb.)

So Webb is hiding this system's and his own cowardly crimes under the mantle of the supposed sentiments of GIs and vets and then using this as a club against the very real heroics of those in this country who were willing to stand up against the war. Think about it, those who resisted the war, especially in the years before it became somewhat acceptable, had to go straight up against the full power of this system. They were fighting years of ingrained habit and patriotic tradition constantly reinforced by the media, schools, etc., they had to stand firm in the face of abuse from jingoistic American pig-headedness, and they fought police clubs, mace, jail, even death in some cases. And above all that—they were right. But Webb is undaunted by any little nuisances like the truth.

Which explains why he is so quick to speak for "his men," because if he let them speak for themselves we would hear a very different story. He is the kind of condescending officer who arrogantly claims "I know what my men think better than they do." Well Webb, if you know so much, maybe you can explain why by the time U.S. ground troops were chased out of Vietnam they were in almost total rebellion? Even the U.S. Army has had to admit that desertion rates were astronomical, entire companies were refusing to fight, gung ho officers were being shot by their own men (unfortunately somehow they missed Webb), and general anti-war sentiment among the lower level enlisted men was almost universal.

Further, tens of thousands of veterans were active in the anti-war movement, many of them in Vietnam Veterans Against the War, while several millions

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U.S. Pre-War Propaganda

This Time It's the Front Lines

Why do we say the war that the U.S. and Soviet ruling classes are preparing will be the most vicious and destructive ever—with unprecedented social chaos and tremendous turmoil including right here in the U.S.? Don't just take our word for it. Read the current U.S. war propaganda in the media and see just how different it is from the propaganda before both previous world wars—a difference reflecting its changed position in the world today and what it must do to defend its worldwide plunder.

Clearly the U.S. will be involved in this war from the get and American troops will be too. No sitting back for the first part of this one, letting others slug it out and take the main blows like the U.S. did in WW1 and WW2. No, the top-dog U.S. has too much on the line all over the world so all of a sudden in the press the U.S. has become "broad thinking" bourgeois internationalists, not "mind our own business" isolationists like before the earlier wars. So the press floats out stories to the American people about how the area in the west where the MX missiles will be located is supposed to act like a nuclear "sponge" absorbing Soviet missiles in the event of a nuclear "exchange." Articles are run about how many tens of millions of deaths in the U.S. can be considered "acceptable" and preparations for massive chemical warfare are plastered all over the papers and magazines. The point is clear—this time you are going to be on the front lines from the get and it will be hell so you better prepare now.

This was shown very graphically by a late night "America Held Hostage" type news program with Walter Cronkite entitled "America—Where Do We Go From Here?" which was aired a few months ago. "Where do we go from here?" has a simple answer...to war! This five-part series had episodes entitled: "Our New and Old Foreign Policy," "The Balance of Power," "Adversaries in the Middle East," "Our Faithful Allies," and "The Image at Home." Its purpose was to promote the imperialists "new internationalism" by which they mean the American people have to concern themselves with the U.S. imperialists profit and blood-soaked interests all over the

world—wherever its tentacles stretch and be ready to defend the empire. "Don't even think about sitting this one out," is the point.

The "Our Faithful Allies" installment was, of course, sarcastically titled since its whole point was to show that "our" European allies were not firmly enough behind the U.S. and couldn't really be trusted to go all out against the Soviets. "Don't rely on these countries, they can't be counted on to defend the U.S. empire," was the message. "You better prepare yourself to do battle or you'll be sorry when the Soviets 'take over.'" And the final episode was the clincher. A series of interviews with backward and reactionary Americans interspersed with a few statements from people in the anti-draft movement (who were used as examples of how the "morale" of Americans is not what it needs to be for the coming war effort) was put together to make the point that the showdown is coming and that the American people should gladly step forward and be the first ones to defend this country by any means necessary. One nit-wit frat rat at a rural college is interviewed, for example, and asked what he thought about fighting a nuclear war. This suicidal troglodyte responded by saying something to the effect of, "Hey, nuclear war—whatever it takes, I don't even think about it. Let's start thinking about keeping America number one."

All this advance propaganda designed to prepare Americans to be on the front lines of WW3 from the beginning is necessitated by the fact that the U.S. is one of the two superpowers—the two main powers competing to divide up the world between their respective blocs. They will not be able to let other powers of similar or greater strength fight amongst themselves until both sides are weakened and a clear winning side is determined and then jump in cleaning up on the spoils and grabbing territories from both sides as was the case in WW1 and 2. Emerging from WW2 as the number one top dog imperialist power in the world has turned into its opposite for the U.S. As it became top dog, it became the main target of the struggle of the oppressed nations and peoples of the world culminating with the severe

defeat in Vietnam which kicked off the decline of U.S. imperialism in the world. No longer can the U.S. "sit on the mountaintop and watch the tigers fight" as Mao Tsetung put it in describing the tactics of the U.S. ruling class at the beginnings of WW1 and WW2. Today, it finds itself desperate and battered from all sides, forced to frantically plug up growing cracks in its empire while preparing to duke it out with its chief rival the up-and-coming USSR.

Different Before WW1 and WW2

The propaganda prior to WW1 was different than we are now seeing. Of course there was the standard talk about "seek peace but prepare for war"—routine then as now—but then "neutrality" in relation to the conflict in Europe was the watchword. The imperialists pushed a spirit of "isolationism." The quarrels of Britain, France, and Russia vs. Germany, Austria, and Italy were to be no concern of Americans. As one bourgeois history put it, "The United States, of course, had no part in the European rivalries, fears, and hatreds that precipitated the war. We cared little whether Slav or Teuton controlled the Balkan Peninsula. Probably not one in ten thousand of our citizens could locate Bosnia or Baghdad on the map. Three thousand miles of "cooling ocean" lay between us and inflamed Europe.

In regard to U.S. involvement in the war after it broke out, President Woodrow Wilson announced, "We must be impartial in thought as well as in action." This neutrality talk of course quickly faded when the time was ripe for the U.S. to enter the war "in armed opposition to an irresponsible government (Germany—RW) which has thrown aside all consideration of humanity and of right..." as Wilson put it.

A situation similar to before WW1 existed before WW2. While the U.S. cleaned up on the spoils of WW1 it was still by no means the undisputed top dog among the imperialist powers. As things began to heat up going into WW2, the U.S. adopted the same basic strategy as prior to WW1. Thus when Roosevelt spoke to Congress in 1939,

just after Britain and France had declared war on Germany which had just invaded Poland, he called for, "an American neutrality, American security, and above all American peace." But the U.S. continued as in WW1, to supply massive amounts of arms for both sides of the conflict in Europe and was making all around plans to enter the war at the decisive moment.

Again the neutrality talk faded as direct U.S. military involvement neared. On October 27, 1941, Roosevelt declared, "Hitler has attacked shipping in areas close to the Americas... Many American-owned ships have been sunk on the high seas. One American destroyer was attacked on September 4. Another destroyer was attacked and hit on October 17. Eleven brave and loyal men of our Navy were killed by the Nazis. We have wished to avoid shooting. But shooting has started... America has been attacked."

This was about as shallow and shoddy an excuse as Wilson's had been—all to cover the changed interests of the imperialists. While, both the pre-war "isolationism" of WW1 and WW2 and the "new internationalism" of today are precisely that—pre-war tactics of the imperialists that are part of their overall war preparations, it is important to understand changed conditions in the world that dictate the type of preparations the U.S. imperialists are making in today's situation. They are not preparing us for a war like the last ones, in which the U.S. suffered only a very small percentage of the casualties. They are preparing us for the front lines—and to grit our teeth and bear it through turmoil and upheaval.

But why not turn this around and make other plans, take note of all this in order to take advantage of the heavy situation that is shaping up in order to overthrow the rule of the U.S. bourgeoisie whenever the opportunity presents itself whether it is before or after the outbreak of war. People in this country will be on the front lines in the great upheavals ahead—this is a given. But what the revolutionary working class and people should be preparing for is to be on the front lines of revolution this time around. □

International May Day Message From the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, U.S.A. Organization

The RCP, USA has received the following solidarity message for May 1st from the revolutionary organization Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, USA Organization. The Kurds are an oppressed people inside Iraq (as well as in other countries in that part of the Middle East).

OUR OPINION OF MAY DAY TO THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKER:

Because of your gracious invitation in your newspaper asking those of us from other countries for their opinion of May Day and what it means to them, we are happy to have the honor to share in commemorating this great day by sending you some thoughts from the Iraqi people commonly and the Kurdish people especially, hoping for solidarity in their struggle with the great people of the U.S. We hope the Kurds and the exploited and oppressed in your country can work together, struggle side by side together to achieve the victory in a great revolution against imperialism, Zionism and all reactionaries here, there and everywhere! We are depending on our revolutionary workers to knock down any kind of imperialistic regime under any cover they have cloaked themselves in.

COMRADES:

The 1st of May, International Workers Day all over the world is the symbol of the revolutionary activities in which revolutionary workers are leading the people against capitalism and world-

wide imperialistic regimes -- holding up the Red Flags of class struggle to bring about the socialist system all over the world.

The proletarian class everywhere is rising up and shouting loudly using revolutionary slogans demanding the end of imperialism, Zionism, all reactionaries. They are preparing a worldwide revolution to knock down imperialism and fascist regimes.

In 1886 the proletarian class rose up in a big demonstration against the U.S. capitalist regime in Chicago demanding that the daily work day should consist of 8 hours only. They were demanding a better life and more hope for the working people.

Today, the proletarian class in Iraq is facing and meeting many difficulties under the fascist regime of the Baath party which is in power presently. The necessities of life are almost impossible to obtain for the working person, because of the horrendous inflation in the country. Even when wages are high, it is very hard to make ends meet, especially for the lower class consisting of mostly workers, laborers and peasants. Many necessary items have disappeared from the markets.

The Iraqi regime keeps harassing the proletarian class; putting them in jail or firing them from their jobs. Right now there are thousands of Kurdish workers who have been laid off their jobs in Kirkuk from the Iraq Petroleum Company and in Kanaqin. Adding more cruelty to their treatment, the

Iraqi regime deports people by the hundreds to the southern part of the country separating them from their friends and relatives.

The Iraqi regime courted the imperialistic capitalists to gain the use of their assets. The Iraqis signed different military and economic agree-

ments with several imperialistic countries, like the U.S.A., Britain, West Germany and France. Meanwhile the Iraqi people are in need of food and clothes, but the regime needs weapons to kill -- to kill especially the Kurdish people!

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Yours in Struggle
P.U.K
U.S.A. Organization

Story of the Internationale

Eugene Pottier the 25th Anniversary of his Death
by V.I. Lenin

Eugene Pottier was the revolutionary poet who wrote the song the Internationale in the aftermath of the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, the first attempt of the working class to seize power. Now this song is the anthem of the class conscious workers of every country. 25 years after Pottier's death, the Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin wrote the following article about this song and its author.

In November of last year—1912—it was twenty-five years since the death of the French worker-poet, Eugene Pottier, author of the famous proletarian song, the Internationale ("Arise ye starvelings from your slumbers," etc.).

This song has been translated into all European and other languages. In whatever country a class-conscious worker finds himself, wherever fate may cast him, however much he may feel himself a stranger, without language, without friends, far from his native country—he can find himself comrades and friends by the familiar refrain of the Internationale.

The workers of all countries have adopted the song of their foremost fighter, the proletarian poet, and have made it the worldwide song of the proletariat.

And so the workers of all countries now honour the memory of Eugene Pottier. His wife and daughter are still alive and living in poverty, as the author of the Internationale lived all his life. He was born in Paris on October 4, 1816. He was 14 when he composed his first song, and it was called: *Long Live Liberty!* In 1848 he was a fighter on the barricades in the workers' great battle against the bourgeoisie.

Pottier was born into a poor family, and all his life remained a poor man, a proletarian, earning his bread as a packer and later by tracing patterns on fabrics.

From 1840 onwards, he responded to all great events in the life of France with militant songs, awakening the consciousness of the backward, calling on the workers to unite, castigating the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois govern-

ments of France.

In the days of the great Paris Commune (1871), Pottier was elected a member. Of the 3,600 votes cast, he received 3,352. He took part in all the activities of the Commune, that first proletarian government.

The fall of the Commune forced Pottier to flee to England, and then to America. His famous song, the Internationale, was written in June 1871—you might say, the day after the bloody defeat in May.

The Commune was crushed—but Pottier's Internationale spread its ideas throughout the world, and it is now more alive than ever before.

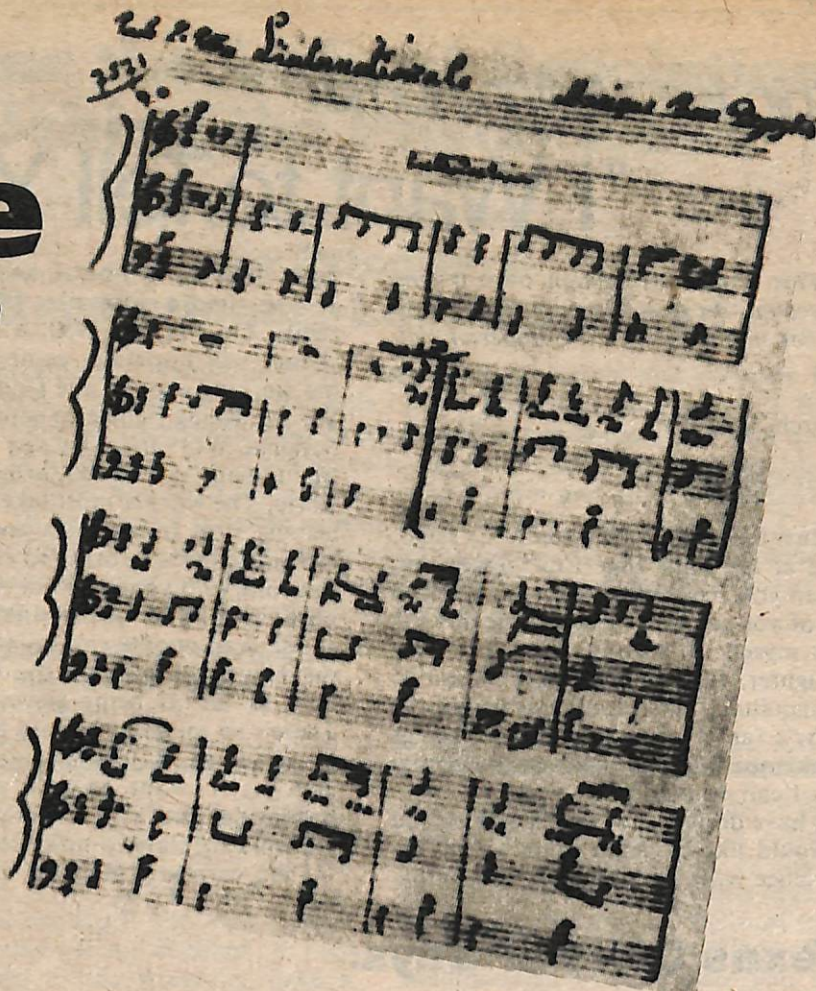
In 1876, in exile, Pottier wrote a poem, *The Workingmen of America to the Workingmen of France*. In it he described the life of workers under the yoke of capitalism, their poverty, their back-breaking toil, their exploitation, and their firm confidence in the coming victory of their cause.

It was only nine years after the Commune that Pottier returned to France, where he at once joined the Workers Party. The first volume of his verse was published in 1884, the second volume, entitled *Revolutionary Songs*, came out in 1887.

A number of other songs by the worker-poet were published after his death.

On November 8, 1887, the workers of Paris carried the remains of Eugene Pottier to the Pere Lachaise cemetery, where the executed Communards are buried. The police savagely attacked the crowd in an effort to snatch the red banner. A vast crowd took part in the civic funeral. On all sides there were shouts of "Long live Pottier!"

Pottier died in poverty. But he left a memorial which is truly more enduring than the handiwork of man. He was one of the greatest propagandists by song. When he was composing his first song, the number of worker socialists ran to tens, at most. Eugene Pottier's historic song is now known to tens of millions of proletarians. □



Celui qui possède.

Celui qui n'a rien.



Ça va mal!!

Ça va bien!!

Above: Two views of the Paris Commune depicted in a drawing from that time: (Left) "The sun is setting—it's terrible!" (Right) "The sun is rising—it's fine!"

Some History

The following background history of the Internationale appeared in the then-revolutionary Chinese weekly Peking Review in 1972—Ed.

On March 18, 1871, the proletariat and the people of Paris in France staged a courageous armed uprising and founded the Paris Commune. This was the first proletarian regime in the history of mankind, the first great attempt of the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Paris Commune failed because of the military onslaught and bloody suppression by butcher Thiers in collaboration with Bismarck. But just as Marx pointed out: The glorious movement of March 18 was "the dawn of the great social revolution which will liberate mankind from the regime of classes for ever."

The Paris Commune members put up an extremely heroic resistance against the class enemy at home and abroad. In that week of bloodshed, corpses were littered on the streets and bloodstains found everywhere in Paris. Searches and slaughter continued up to early June. A Versailles newspaper published on May 30 announced that the poet Eugene Pottier had been arrested and put to death. Actually the poet had gone underground. Amid the roar of guns and fire, under the threat of death and while the corpses of the victims were being transported by carts outside the window, our great proletarian poet stayed on the outskirts of Paris in early June. Neither wavering nor becoming down-hearted, he summed up experience from the failure and translated his boil-

ing feelings into language to write the extraordinary inspiring poem—the Internationale. The poem was filled with the firm determination that slaves created history and confidence in the certain victory of the communist cause. It predicted: "Let each stand in his place; the Internationale shall be the human race." By writing his poem Pottier erected an immortal monument for the Paris Commune members, while through the Internationale the heroes of the Commune issued the call to the late-comers of carrying the revolution through to the end.

It was in June 1888 or seven months after Pottier's death that Pierre Degeyter first read the words of the Internationale. This French worker-composer was exhilarated by its spirit. Reviewing the historical experience of the workers' movement, he thought of many things—his and the masses' loyalty to Marxism and longing for communism, the life of Pottier, the battle scenes of the Paris Commune... He seemed to have returned to that great year, 1871, so he began on his simple organ to set the music for the Internationale at night. Degeyter worked the whole night and when he finished his task the sun had risen from the east.

In July 1888, the composer led a chorus to give the first performance of the song at a gathering of newspaper sellers in Lille. From that time on, the Internationale has spread all over France and the world and become the battle clarion of the proletariat and workers of all countries. □

Preparing the Battle Song

Deep in an all-Black, working class district a meeting was going on. Organizers from the RCYB were meeting with youth from the immediate area about Revolutionary May Day. Hands and eyes were pouring over the Party's *Draft Programme* and newspapers and the discussion turned to how the people in this room would spend their next three weeks before May Day.

A woman came into the room, the mother of the local RCYB member who called the meeting. She sat down and began looking at the RCY newspaper as she listened to the discussion and talked about experiences she'd had wearing May Day buttons at work.

Suddenly her eyes caught the headline "Internationale." She shouted out, "Let's sing it, right now. I know the words, but I gotta get the tune down." For those in the room who knew the Internationale, a look of excitement came across their faces. The younger daughter of the woman looked around and asked the RCYB organizers, "You mean you already know it? You already know it too? Wow!"

None of the youth who had come to the meeting to get into May Day had ever heard of the Internationale. Some-

one laid out how it was the proletariat's response to all the patriotic bullshit national anthems. A comrade from the RCYB ran through the verses going into the history and meaning of each line, like what are those tradition's chains which we've got to break.

Someone started it off and others from the family came out of the kitchen and joined in the singing. Those who knew it only a little were straining to learn the tune from those who knew it well. Those who had never heard it before were just trying to keep up and get the basic hit off the song. And when the final words rang out, "Shall be the human race" everyone in the room was looking around at the others in the room, just bursting with pride at how well it had been sung, and at the knowledge that proletarians in the U.S. were learning this anthem of the international proletariat.

People were preparing for Red Flag—Internationale Day. But once through the song, the woman said that this was great, but the song had to be sung again. People had to be singing this loud, strong, tight and all the way through on April 24. So everyone started over, picking up the tempo a bit. □

Chicana Writes Home:

"I Want to Tell You About Imperialism"

This letter was written by a young Chicana—a city worker in California—to her home town in the Imperial Valley.

March 25, 1980

Dear Compadres:

Just these few words are to say hello, and at the same time I'm hoping that when you receive this letter, it will find all of you in the very best of health. As for myself, I am fine and so is my daughter. First of all, I don't want to sound rude, but I don't talk about the baby's father, mostly because it brings back too many bad memories, memories I can do without.

I have done lots of exciting work and I would like to share some of my experience with you. I know you compa-

ñeros are kind of liberal, and you were at one time a supporter of Chicano rights. On May 1, 1980, a significant change will hopefully come about for the working class in the United States. We are asking people to support International Worker's Day the way it is traditionally celebrated throughout the world. The worker must take a stand in helping stop Imperialism and Capitalism around the world. A capitalist is someone who you work for who makes profit off of you for his benefit, and we as Mexican people can say that we are the biggest supporters the Capitalists have as far as being slaves to them. There's so much to be said but no one to say it to. I feel so inspired right now... I want to tell you about revolution, and why it is important for the working class to make revolution.

I am currently involved in trying to

make revolution happen, but it can't happen overnight, or by just a handful of revolutionaries. It has to be supported by everyone. And if you and I and everyone who is sick of being run down by the capitalists show our might as people and as a working class, we can indeed make revolution in the Eighties.

I never thought it possible to make revolution; I really didn't. But study the economy of our country, study the events happening in the world right now, and you can see that it is possible. But it takes soldiers to make an army, and Compadre, I know that as a conscientious human being you can take a stand in uniting with people and spreading the flames of revolution, as we say.

Can you imagine if every one of us who is tired of living the way we are took a stand on May 1, how different the world could be for everyone? Look at Iran—that is one country that stands as an inspiration to the world. When the newspapers report bullshit to bring out people's hostilities, have you ever stopped to ask yourself who makes us think Iran sucks? And why? Why would Iran suck? Because the people got sick and tired of a dictating bastard who was as sick as Hitler? Because people were being tortured under his rule; because he was sucking every bit of human dignity out of these people? Is this why America has admitted him into the U.S.? Kissinger said we were being good samaritans. Do you call a person who is a good samaritan someone who shoots his people down with no compassion? This, I think, is a dog, and we are led to believe that because this man has a terminal illness we must protect him. Did we protect Hitler when he persecuted the Jews? Hell no. Then why do we protect a man who is a cutthroat? Because this man is needed. It's part of the U.S. tactics to see if they can get someone in Iran again. People are saying, let's go blow up those fucking Iranians. How do people plan to blow up 35 million Iranians who are taking up arms to protect their land from invaders?

So when people say it isn't possible to make revolution, I say that it is. I saw the people of Iran do it, and the people of Nicaragua do it. Look at the turmoil in San Salvador today. Everywhere around the world the working people are standing up and making revolution. There is so much to inspire us.

Some of us think, well, I have too much to lose if I take a stand for revolution. I have kids, I have a payment in this and that, and to take a stand is too scary. What it boils down to is that there are only two choices we have. One, we can continue to live under the capitalist rule and continue to live our lives for someone else, or we can say fuck it and take a stand for the better. You see, we have nothing to lose. I thought a while back, well, I have a daughter, I can't get involved in a plan to overthrow the government because I have to get a good job and help support both of us. I had to say, no way, because it isn't possible in our country

to make revolution. But think about it, isn't this the way they make us believe? Now they are giving us propaganda for war, for World War 3. It is senseless to think of the many lives that will be wasted.

Why are we going to war? Ask yourself that question a minute, compadre, why do you think we are going to war? Because the Russians invaded Afghanistan and now they want to invade the U.S., so we as a conscientious country must say no to the Russians and fight them, because if we don't the Russians are going to get us? Why such a big stink about Afghanistan in the first place? Why wasn't a big stink made when the U.S. invaded Viet Nam? No, it's different now. We must even be denied the Olympic Games. Is this the policy of Carter, to tell young people who have for years looked forward to this event to be put off because the president says "boycott the Olympics"? Now who was it who said you cannot mix politics with the Olympics? Look at them trying to do it now.

There are more reasons why revolution is needed. Too many. I could continue to write pages of why we as an oppressed nationality must join the ranks for a dramatic change in our government.

May 1, 1980 is a big challenge, and the working class, in order to bring change, must take a step forward instead of backwards for revolution.

There will be a May Day march. In case you don't know the symbolic meaning for May Day, it is a day on which many nations step forward in a march to celebrate the working class struggle.

The purpose being, we are a working class united for change.

I am hoping that if possible you can come up to participate in this event. Many people say, I can't because I have to work. I can't afford to take time off. But things like this have to be done. People must realize that in order to bring about change we must all take part in bringing about change. We cannot wait and let change be brought about by itself. It doesn't work that way.

Sacrifices should be made. What kind of a society must we build for our children?

When you think about it, you'll use every excuse as to why you cannot attend, from children to money. But when do we draw a line and make ourselves see that we will always have to make sacrifices, and this is something very crucial to the Party? We must organize everyone and educate them so that we can mobilize our working class and stop the oppression of people all over the world.

Compadre, there's so much I want to tell you, and if you'd like I'd like to send you some political literature.

We will have to meet soon for I'm sure you must have a lot of questions. Think positive about May Day.

Onwards towards Revolution. □

Texas Official Says: Get a Job or Get Sterilized

Austin, Texas. Early this month, chairman of the Texas Department of Human Resources, Hilmar Moore, made some blatantly racist statements supporting forced sterilization of women on welfare. "A woman should be allowed to have one child, then she should be sterilized," he said. "When you cannot support yourself or your family, you give up certain rights. One of those is to bring in more children. It's a right you give up. If you don't want to give it up, get a job and get off welfare." This was quickly followed by the disclaimer that "I am not proposing this as head of the Dept. of Human Resources—this is just my personal opinion."

Moore's "personal opinion" was immediately picked up by major news networks, broadcast by the media nationwide, and Moore himself jetted off to such faraway places as Chicago for radio interviews simply to express his "opinion"—get a job or get sterilized. And of course Moore left no doubt that the so-called "lazy loafers" he is talking about are the Black, Latin, Native American and minority workers. This was the signal for all racist reactionaries to crawl from under their rocks, cluck their tongues over "those people" and call for the blood of their unborn kids.

Hilmar Moore's opinion was blown up nationwide not simply because it's an interesting news tidbit, but because it exactly expresses the outlook of the bourgeoisie toward the masses of people—especially the oppressed nationalities forced to the bottom of the barrel of this society—at a time when the capitalist system is falling apart and cannot possibly provide enough jobs. If you're not grinding out profits for the capitalists, to hell with you, Moore says practically outright. Go back to Mexico, go back to Africa, or die—but for god's sake don't bring any more hungry mouths into the world. And of course, the U.S. already "experiments" with sterilization techniques in these countries on a large scale.

Forced sterilization is not just idle talk. It is practiced today in the U.S. by the government on a wide scale against all women, but especially minority women, in supposedly "voluntary" programs. The difference with Moore is that he is pushing outright for mandatory sterilization, which has been going on in reality for a long time anyway.

Take a look at Puerto Rico. 35% of all women of childbearing age have been sterilized as a result of a sterilization program begun in the 1930s and carried out since 1974 under the Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare. This is U.S. imperialism's quick and easy answer to the skyrocketing unemployment in Puerto Rico and the resulting political instability—kill off a third of the population by making sure they

never even get born. Only, of course, unemployment keeps soaring because no matter how many they sterilized, unemployment is still built into capitalism.

Take a look at the treatment of poor women in this country. Between 1970-75 there was a 300% increase in female sterilizations, and the majority of these were performed on minority women. These women's bodies are being butchered as a training ground for young surgeons. According to the director of a New York City hospital, hysterectomies are commonly used for this purpose. "At least 10% of all gynecological surgery is done on this basis," he said, "and 99% of this is done on Black and Puerto Rican women. No one knows how many women are sterilized each year without their knowledge, or pressured into it by doctors or welfare caseworkers."

There was another group who had similar "personal opinions" on the reserve army of the unemployed and the oppressed nationalities among them, calling them "useless eaters." They were the Nazis. □

COMMUNISTS ARE REBELS

By Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

A Letter from RCP Chairman Bob Avakian to His Parents On Philosophy, Religion, Morals, and Continuous Revolution

Order from:
Revolutionary Communist Youth
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Pamphlet from the Revolutionary Worker

IRAN: IT'S NOT OUR EMBASSY!

By Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

NOW IN SECOND PRINTING price: 25¢

Excerpts from a speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, November 18, Washington D.C.

Demonstrate May 1st!

L.A.—10:00 a.m. MacArthur Park (bandshell area), Parkview and 6th

New York—9:30 a.m. Union Square

Chicago—11:00 a.m. Daley Center Plaza

Washington, D.C.—11:00 a.m. Malcolm X Park, 16th and Euclid NW

Detroit—10:30 a.m. Palmer Park, Woodward and 6-mile

Atlanta—Central City Park (downtown), time to be announced

San Francisco—time and place to be announced

May 1st demonstrations will be held in many other cities. For information contact the *Revolutionary Worker* in your area.

SOME TURKEYS WHO WON'T BE MARCHING ON MAY DAY



"Turkeys" reprinted from *Revolutionary Communist Youth*



- 1) Go to work
- 2) Go to school
- 3) Register for Draft
- 4) Confessions at Church
- 5) Memorize Pledge of Allegiance
- 6) Buy latest BeeGees album
- 7) Stay home and watch soaps


THE YOUNGSTOWN DAILY VINDICATOR 50 Stage March Against Brigade

By JACK GATES
Vindicator Police Reporter
America's silent majority took to the streets Thursday when some 50 steel workers marched through downtown carrying flags and chanting "U.S.A., U.S.A." and "Down with traitors."



USA ALL THE WAY — Patriotism spilled into the downtown streets Thursday when some 50 steel workers marched through downtown to protest the actions of people who would change the American economic structure. Aimed specifically at the May Day Brigade, the march remained peaceful.

Police Chief Stanley E. Peterson said he assigned uniform and plainclothesmen to the downtown district and had a number of uniformed police on stand-by when he received reports there might be a confrontation between the Revolutionary May Day Brigade and steel workers. But none of the communist inspired May Day members appeared downtown, and the marchers continued in an orderly fashion. The May Day Brigade has marched in the downtown district off and on during the past month to gain support.

NEIGHBOR
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VOL. 8, NO. 7, FEB. 14-20, 1980
Let's rally against Communist march
Editor:

Once again the ugly cancer of communism is raising its head in Tampa.

A massive Communist march called "May Day 1980" looms before us. Leaflets and posters are being distributed by the Revolutionary Communist May Day Committee to build support for their cause.

On that day I will march against them. May 1 will be "Rally Day" for me and any other American who supports our Constitution.

I need marchers to make "Rally Day" a success. I ask all concerned Americans to contact me at 877-6228 after 6 p.m. weekdays.

REV. FRANKLIN J. GARNER

MAY 1st — WELD THOSE INTO A CLASS CONSCIENCE



Forging the Future

Continued from page 1

In their hands will be held aloft the bright red flag of the international working class, as they move in step with millions and hundreds of millions across the world; in their minds will be the sharpening vision of the future, of a society and a world free of exploitation and the thousand evils that are daily life under this system; in their hearts will be the fierce determination to forge a way to this future through determined struggle, to take history into their hands and never lose that grip, and the joy of slaves straightening their backs, refusing to bend to the daily routine of debasement. At their core will be the powerful force of thousands of workers so radical that they openly proclaim their intention to join with their class throughout the world to fight for the final abolition of all class distinctions—revolutionary workers, right in the USA, striding at the head of the forward march of the oppressed in this country! What a shockwave that will send throughout this country—and the world—what a blow to the arrogant imperialist overlords headquartered here and their kind everywhere, what a challenge to those who have tried, in vain, to make their peace with this madness, what an inspiration and assistance to masses here and on every continent who are yearning, struggling for a way out of and beyond it!

If you have ever hoped or dreamed, or even prayed, for an end to the continual torment; if you have ever thought, or even wished, that humanity is capable of something higher than this dog-eat-dog butchery they call "the best of all systems" and we call capitalist enslavement; if you have begun to see the even worse destruction and horror they are coldly calculating to put us through to preserve this system and their top-dog position; if you have ever wanted, or even wondered what it would feel like, to step forward, stand up against all this, spit in the face of those responsible for it and look around to see you are not alone; then there is only one place you must be on May First 1980. Not as a faceless figure counted with the dead and dying, but rising, alive, in the midst of those who are awakening to political life and the potential to turn the strength of thousands into the awesome force



of millions and tens of millions, actually capable of sweeping away every obstacle to the emancipation of the working class and all humanity from the suffocating backwardness and death-bed decadence of capitalism and all remnants of exploitation and class division.

Do we really dare to do this? We dare not fail to do it. Today, right now, our rulers are not only taking pound after pound of our flesh, they are readying us, with computerized frenzy to raise their red, white and blue rag of plunder and march off to mutual slaughter against those suffering under the same humiliation on the "other side." Deeper crisis and the ever larger shadow of world war looming before us—this is the future we are to sacrifice, kill and die for in countless numbers, whether we are on the battlefield or slaving "at home." It is not a question of whether there will be great suffering, sacrifice and struggle—it is a question of for whom and for what? Will it be in the interests of that small minority for whom we and the people throughout the world are less than pieces of

machinery, mere beasts on whose backs their riches and powers are built and on whose agony their system feeds; to prolong such a system and tighten its yoke of oppression? Or in the interests of our class, the international proletariat of all nationalities and languages, on both sides of the battle line over which the rival gangs of push-button murderers are facing off; to abolish such a system and erect on its ruins a far higher form of society serving the interests of the great majority of the people and opening the way to unparalleled advance of humanity?

Only those who have a stake in imperialist plunder and enslavement computed by the hour, or those ignorant of the real issues and conflicting interests—or, finally, those miserable slaves who are determined to remain on their knees—could make the former choice. But this is a choice we do not have to make. Because the future, with all the misery and destruction they have in store for us, will also bring great opportunity for the wretched who are tired of being wretched—it will find our rulers

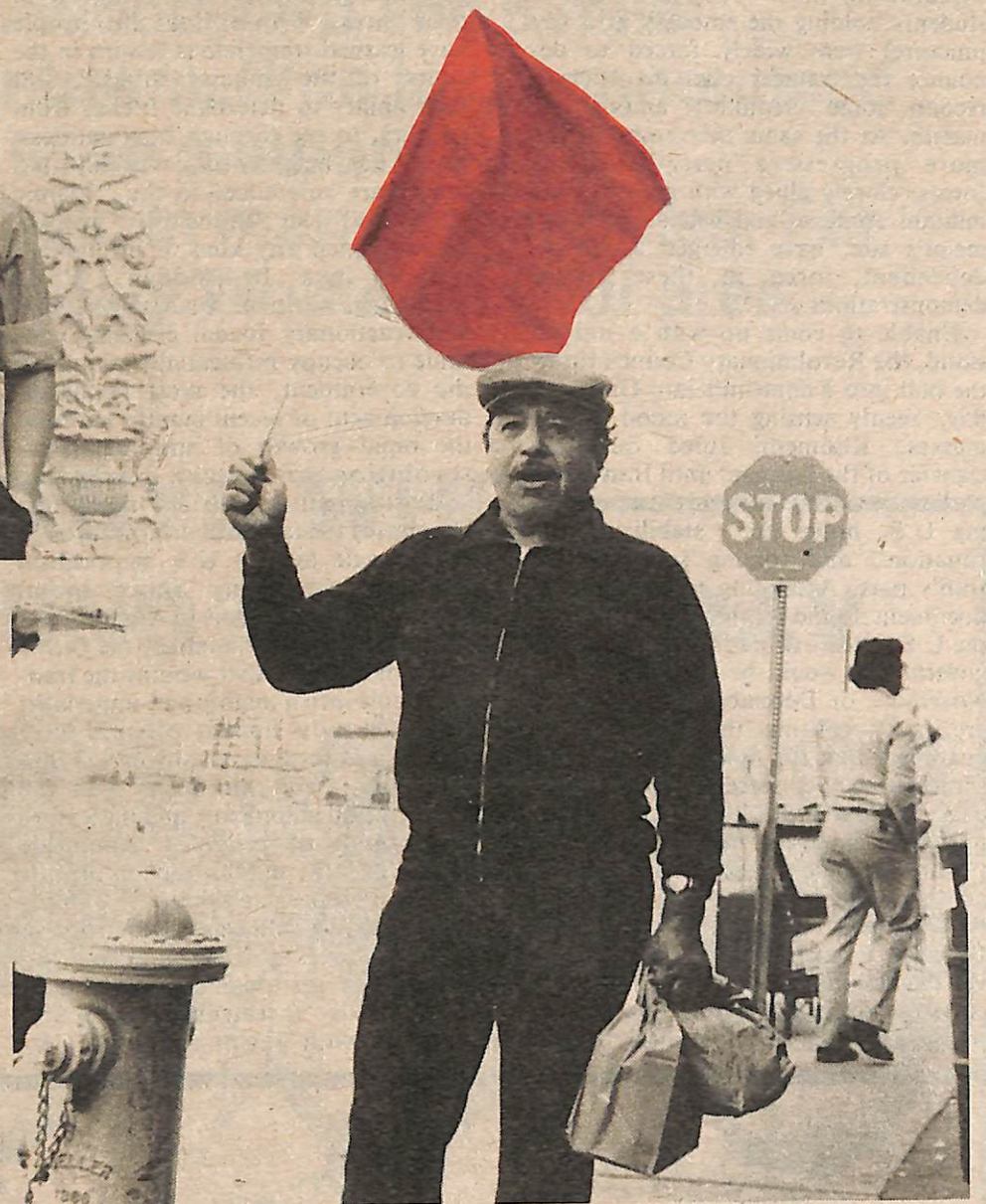
and torturers, with all their intimidating power, stretched to the limit, weakened... and vulnerable to the uprising of the masses in a way that they only too rarely are. What we do from now forward, focused immediately on May First and looking beyond it, will be of tremendous importance in deciding whether we are able to seize this opportunity when it arises in the future.

But will it do any good, can we really win, what guarantee do we have that it will be worth the struggle and sacrifice? One thing that can be said with certainty is that it will do no good at all to act like docile drones, passively giving up our lives, fast or slow, waiting and trembling with servility for worse horror and destruction. And it is guaranteed that if we do not act now, if we do not begin to take history into our

THE WHO HATE THIS SHIT POUS FORCE!

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 8:55 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.



hands when it may well be there for the taking, we can only lose—for living under this system is losing every day and fighting and dying to preserve it is the twisted logic of losers desperate to drag others down with them.

In joyful, liberating opposition to all that, the thousands who explode forth on May First 1980 will declare their determination to win—not just for themselves but for the oppressed people everywhere and ultimately for all mankind. Their actions will have a force far beyond their numbers, it will influence millions, even hundreds of millions, here and around the world, for it will represent their

real interests and the only way forward for the overwhelming majority. Theirs will be the righteousness and confidence expressed in the international anthem of our class, the worldwide proletariat: *Arise ye prisoners of starvation, arise ye wretched of the earth; for justice thunders condemnation, a better world's in birth.*

On that day a great encounter in the battle for the future will be joined. Dare to enlist in the forces of advance, break free on May First, unite your voice and strength with those who have recognized the road of emancipation and are forging their way onto it, red flags aloft! □

photos by Revolutionary Worker

Imperialist Spider

Continued from page 2

trol of the "hostages," but again the voice of the Iranian people reverberated throughout the Council walls. Not only had President Bani-Sadr been booed down when he addressed a rally earlier in the week in Tehran, several days later there was a demonstration of between 300,000 and 400,000 people that condemned the transfer plan as "a plot of the liberal and compromising elements of the government."

This thunder from the Iranian masses forced still new splits within the ruling Revolutionary Council. The bourgeois forces grouped around Bani-Sadr and Ghotbzadeh continue to fight for the transfer plan. Some of the feudal forces grouped around the Islamic Republic Party and Ayatollah Beheshti (who had been exposed when the U.N. Commission was in Iran several weeks ago for withdrawing their "support" for the students holding the embassy at a key juncture) were widely forced to denounce the transfer plan in order to recoup some credibility among the masses. At the same time some of the more progressive petty-bourgeois forces, closely allied with many of the militant students and headed by Khomeini's son, have emerged as an independent force in these recent demonstrations.

Unable to come up with a unified stand, the Revolutionary Council threw the ball into Khomeini's lap. On Monday, keenly sensing the mood of the masses, Khomeini ruled out any transfer of the hostages until Iran's new parliament meets later this year—dashing U.S. hopes for "stabilizing the situation" and forcing surrender on Iran's part. According to one official document found in the U.S. embassy, the U.S. had first predicted the Iranian government would be consolidated by November or December '79. But they are now realizing that there is no guarantee that the new parliament will soon get seated, since the date of the next round of elections keeps getting pushed back by the continued revolutionary struggle of the Iranian people, as well as the intense infighting among the bourgeois forces in the government. Perhaps Egypt's Anwar Sadat, nervously looking over his shoulder, was closest to the truth when he commented that Iran could be in turmoil for the

next ten years.

As if this wasn't bad enough, the U.S.'s unsuccessful attempts to bludgeon the Iranian people into submission have weakened its efforts to spearhead a unified Western response to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Their efforts to mount a limited boycott of the Moscow Olympics have floundered, and over recent months none of their major allies have decreased trade with Iran to any substantial degree—in fact, Britain and France have increased it of late. As one commentator put it, "There is a growing impression and world public opinion that the U.S. was incapable of taking any action on Iran. U.S. credibility is on the line." And to top it all off, the public opinion that the U.S. had whipped up in the initial days of the Iranian crisis here at home has been fading away.

Thus, in spite of all the claims of how "patient" and "restrained" they've been, the U.S. imperialists' moves are growing increasingly desperate—every option they choose is blowing up in their faces. Within Iran, the people have learned tremendous lessons in the course of the embassy struggle, and their ability to determine friends from enemies, to see through capitulationist plans, has heightened immensely. No longer are references to the "Islamic revolution" an all-inclusive blanket behind which any kind of reactionary policies can be hidden. While vacillating national bourgeois forces and reactionary feudal elements continue to occupy influential positions in the government, the most important development of recent months has been the rapid growth of anti-imperialist, revolutionary forces, including Marxist-Leninists who are mobilizing the masses to step up and carry through the struggle against U.S. imperialism while also exposing Soviet social-imperialism and its role in Afghanistan.

In this explosive situation, the U.S.'s new moves are further welding the Iranian people into a mighty anti-imperialist force. Already Iranian officials have been forced to threaten any nation that embargos trade with them with the cut-off of oil shipments, and there have been new rounds of calls for nationwide vigilance. U.S. military action against Iran could unleash a tidal wave of mass struggle that would wash the remaining pro-U.S. forces in Iran out to sea.

These new get-tough tactics with U.S. allies are also threatening to backfire, especially with Japan and West Ger-

many, who have much more to lose in cutting off their trade with Iran than the U.S. Already the response from Western Europe and Japan has been "cautious," with some public words of support for the U.S. but very little concrete action. In fact, Japan (which imports 10% of its oil from Iran) has expressed its "shock," and many European officials were taking unofficial pot shots at the new measures.

While they are fully aware of the effect that a full-scale Iranian oil cut-off would have on their allies' economies, the U.S. imperialists are nevertheless pressing ahead to whip them into line. U.S. officials have already started threatening the Western European and Japanese imperialists that if they don't toe the U.S. line, if they don't start cutting back on their trade with Iran for fear of losing Iranian oil, the U.S. Navy may just put an end to the "discussion" by steaming into the Persian Gulf and cutting off Iran's oil exports directly. The message is: If you don't stand with your imperialist big brother in the U.S. in facing down these "uppity" Iranians, what is our military alliance going to do when push comes to shove with the Soviets?

Naturally the Soviet Union is showing no sign of turning the other cheek. Not only are nearly 100,000 Soviet troops still firmly entrenched in Afghanistan, but the Soviet news agency Tass has reacted to the U.S. moves by blasting them as motivated by "undisguised imperialist interests and not by concern for U.S. embassy personnel." This is a departure from previous confrontations between Iran and the U.S., during which the Soviet Union generally maintained a lower profile. The Soviets and their Eastern European allies have recently upped their exports to Iran, and they will probably be only too glad to step up exports of food and other needed commodities should the trade embargo begin to have a real effect.

There are also a growing number of forces within Iran that have pro-Soviet leanings, who, during any crisis, could turn to Russia for aid—perhaps even inviting the "Red" army into Iran, Afghanistan-style. These forces include not only the Tudeh Party and the Kurdish Democratic Party, which have long been vassals of Soviet policy in Iran, but also the People's Fedayeen Organization, one of the largest leftist groups. The Fedayeen's leaders are now openly calling the Soviet Union a

socialist country (though with "revisionist leadership"), and have said they would conceivably accept Soviet "aid." After initially refusing to condemn the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan, they have recently come out in support of it and the Soviet-installed regime. While the Soviet social-imperialists are still mainly maneuvering and attempting to build up their influence within Iran, they are beginning to more openly oppose U.S. imperialism there. Given a sudden U.S. escalation, they could also jump into the fray.

World events are accelerating. Like a deadly spider, U.S. imperialism is caught in a tangled web of political and economic crisis that is closing in daily, limiting its room to maneuver and frustrating its best laid plans. However, this does *not* push it, to back off and cease being an imperialist bully. In fact, it's just the opposite. It forces the U.S. to escalate its preparations for world war. The imperialists are driven to break through the only way they can, by attempting to forcibly smash the political obstacles to their reign and redivide the world. The trade boycott and diplomatic rupture with Iran represents an escalation within that process, and no matter how "unfeasible" it might seem to some for the U.S. to take military action, that possibility cannot be underestimated in the period ahead.

All this makes support for the Iranian people's struggle and opposition to the imperialists' sabre-rattling and patriotic calls for "national unity" all the more crucial. Today millions have grown tired and cynical of the government's maneuvers; many have seen past the initial gut reaction that led them to side with our rulers in the first days of the crisis and now understand that the U.S.'s imperialist designs on Iran have only intensified since the fall of the Shah. And millions also see the spectre of world war between the rival gangsters in the U.S. and Soviet Union looming more openly, both superpowers are rocked by revolutionary upsurges in their own "territory" and are caught up in economic and political crises they have no way out of.

Now more than ever, the class-conscious workers here in the imperialist heartland of the U.S.A., the oppressor of hundreds of millions of people here and around the world, need to make a decisive break with our rulers and their whole red, white and blue system, and stand shoulder to shoulder with the Iranian people. □

CHILE:

An Attempt At Historic Compromise— The Real Story of the Allende Years

by Jorge Palacios

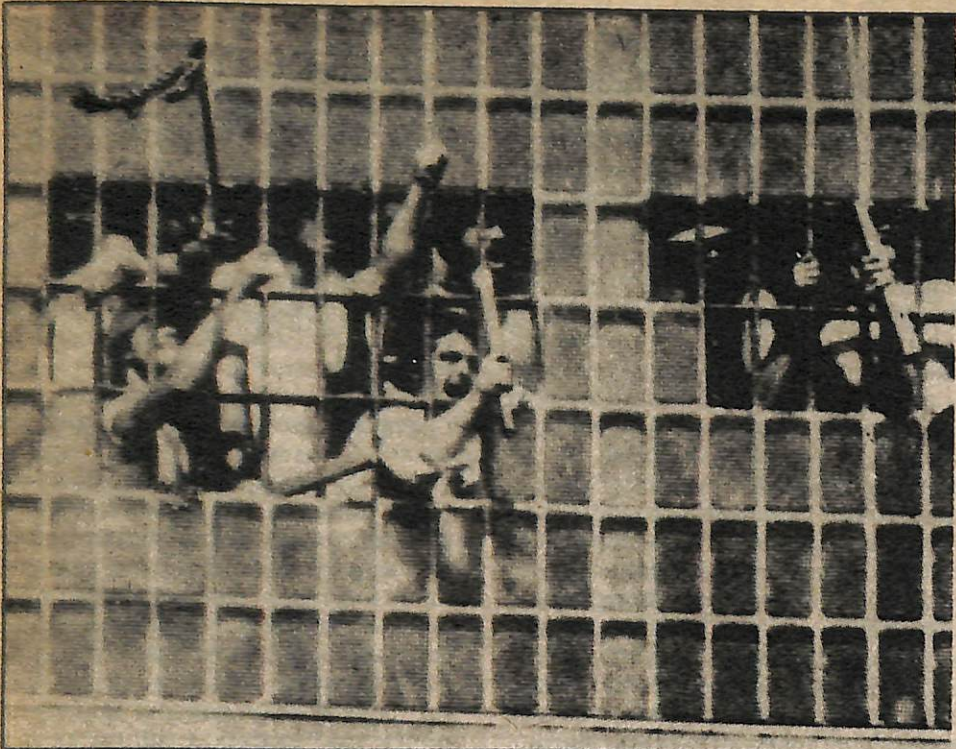
"It was the failure of an attempt to exercise power without having won it and without even the intention of using what had been acquired through the electoral victory of 1970 in a revolutionary way in order to develop a fighting mass movement capable of really seizing such power by smashing the armed reactionary apparatus."

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Shine the Light of Revolution Behind the Prison Walls

Contribute to the Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund

The Revolutionary Communist Party receives many letters and requests for literature from prisoners in the hell-hole torture chambers from Attica to San Quentin. There are thousands more brothers and sisters behind bars who have refused to be beaten down and corrupted in the dungeons of the capitalist class and who thirst for and need the *Revolutionary Worker* and other revolutionary literature. To help make possible getting the Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party as well as other Party literature and books on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought behind the prison walls, the *Revolutionary Worker* is establishing a special fund. Contributions should be sent to:

Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund
Box 3486, Merchandise Mart
Chicago, IL 60654

Watts

Continued from page 4

minutes the trucks were empty of political weapons. But more people were coming up. They were coming from across the street, pulling up alongside in their cars, hands outstretched from the windows. Suddenly, the people in the crowd began ripping the red flags up—and handing smaller pieces out to those without one. One man held up a paper. "You know who this is. That's Bob Avakian," he yelled to the crowd. Another, who was given an RCP *Draft Programme*, flipped to the

picture of the Chairman and told a Brigader in the truck, "I know who that is. That's Bob Avakian." He started reading the *Programme* on the spot.

The debate was now at fever pitch over the upping of *RW* sales to 75,000 by next week, and the 50,000 red flags and the singing of the *Internationale* on April 24. People were handing out papers to cars going by, to people coming across the street and taking them across the street themselves. A white youth, about 16, walked through the crowd distributing papers grinning from ear to ear. The pigs freaked. They got behind him and knocked the papers out of his hand and moved in for the bust. A Black man, about 65 years old,

stepped between them and picked up the papers and began handing them out. The cops retreated. Fists, with red flags and *RW*'s, were raised everywhere. As one truck left, they noticed that the other was still detained. As they pulled into a side street to make a U-turn 6 people came out of their houses waving red flags. Some kids on the block were looking over a friend's shoulder admiring a May Day poster.

Meanwhile, the entire crowd of over 200 people had swarmed around the other truck. The people had scored a victory. Relying on the revolutionary-minded masses to grasp the meaning of May 1st, 1980, the May Day Brigade had gone right into the heart of Watts.

And they had lured the enemy in deep. The pigs were swamped in a sea of politically aroused people, as the gut hatred of the masses of Watts began to be transformed through political struggle on the spot. The red flags of the multinational working class had been raised in the fists of hundreds of Watts residents. Suddenly, a Black teenager, a garage worker, rode his bike through the crowd. As he rode up he pulled from his back pocket a greasy red work rag and held it aloft. "See this red rag?" he shouted. "Hold it high. They'll try to take it from you. They'll try to tear it down. Don't ever let this red rag fall." Another glimpse of the future. □

Message

Continued from page 10

The proletarian class in Iraq has a bright background in their struggle against imperialism and the bourgeois who are building their castles and buying their expensive luxury cars on the laborers' shoulders.

The massacre of Gaworbaghi in 1946 was the best proof of revolutionary workers' struggle against the *above mentioned group*. The revolutionary workers prepared a demonstration in Kirkuk which is the richest city in Iraqi Kurdistan with its oil. They were demanding an increase of wages and better living conditions. The regime answered with guns and shot 80 work-

ers to death; about 42 were wounded.

The Iraqi fascist regime kills, chases, arrests the best and most innocent and patriotic group of Iraqi people—both Arabs and Kurds and all national minorities. This regime has executed more than 300 Kurdish revolutionaries in *one day's time*! Most of these people were workers, peasants and students. At the same time they arrested some workers of the League of Toilers of Iraqi Kurdistan. Their president, Comrade Abdullah Hassan was included. He had been working in a Sulaimanyia cigarette factory. After torturing the patriots severely for three months they were executed without a trial. This wasn't the first execution! There were some other comrades including one of the L.T.I.K.'s leader by the name of Shehab Sheikh Noori

who was one of the established members of the League of Toilers of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Twelve years ago, after all this, the Baath party took over the unions in the country including the Worker's Union. In spite of this, in May 1980 the Kurdistan revolutionary workers, along with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan will join together in their support of the revolutionary workers in the U.S., the Revolutionary Communist Party and all the other foreign workers in the United States. These workers pledge to all that they will make May Day in 1980 a great advance for the class conscious proletariat in America, holding up the red banner in the streets singing revolutionary slogans, declaring the coming of the end of capitalism and imperialism.

Today, the revolutionary workers are reminding themselves of the incident in Chicago and Gaworbaghi's massacre, telling themselves that it was a very important matter and it is NOT to be forgotten ever! It is the proletariat's right to make revolution with the support of other progressive parties, to knock down the fascist and imperialistic regimes everywhere, until they achieve victory!

LONG LIVE THE 1ST OF MAY:
THE WORKERS' DAY.
LET THE WORKING CLASS GET
UNITED AGAINST THE
IMPERIALISTIC REGIMES AND THEIR
ALLIES.
DOWN WITH THE WIDE WORD
"IMPERIALISM" UNDER ANY COVER!!
P.U.K., U.S.A. Organization

Fields of Fire

Continued from page 9

were openly sympathetic. (It comes as no surprise, by the way, to find out that Webb has been speaking at major American Legion functions claiming that it is that organization and not VVAW that really represents the interests and sympathies of the Vietnam vet!)

No, Webb's little version of reality is in fact only a reflection of the sentiments of backward fools, military officers, and others who love this system exactly the way it is. He is acting just like an ex-slave overseer might who can't stand having lost that feeling and position of authority and power. You can picture him sitting down to write a book in the name of "all us on the plantation" to justify and regain his job. "Yez suh, we loves da steady work an' da free food an' bed, shur nuf," you can just see him putting words into the mouths of his former slaves with all the chauvinism of his kind and with his hand just itching to pick up the whip again. Then with his book in hand he will sneeringly assail the abolitionists with "what do you all know, you weren't there, we were."

Chauvinism Supreme

It is impossible to review this book without commenting on the white chauvinism which literally drips from its pages. (Webb's rampant male chauvinism is also richly deserving of analysis, but it would take another complete article to do it adequately so I

will just remind the reader of his justification of rape to which I have already referred.)

Webb subscribes to the Jensen/Shockley school of biological racism. One of his main heroes is a Lt. Robert E. Lee Hodges (and the name is no accident), who is the closest thing to Webb in the book. Hodges, who is white of course, is a "natural born" leader and warrior. He has inherited these traits from his ancestors like his grandfather who fought with the South to maintain the slave system. For Hodges, if there wasn't the Vietnam war he would have invented one because it is the fight that matters not the cause (as long as it's reactionary that is).

Then there is Cat Man, the Chicano, who through Webb's perverted eyes gets imbued with those "natural" Mexican traits of stalking and killing with the swiftness and grace of a cat. And who can forget Cannonball the Black from the ghetto whose role is to be an Uncle Tom in opposition to the drug crazed ravings of the radical Blacks at the front. Webb portrays Blacks either as pill popping opportunists who numbly recite revolutionary phrases like memorized nursery rhymes, or as dedicated flunkies who would like to kill the "uppity niggers" for making "everybody hate all o' us."

The Vietnamese are all gooks and animals good for nothing but screwing and shooting. Even those fighting with the U.S. are portrayed as ingrates who are naturally inferior to Americans and who are willing to do anything for anybody for just a bowl of rice and a pat on

the head. ("Goddamn gooks." "Ever been to DaNang? Christ. The fuckers act like they own the place.")

This garbage speaks for itself, and more importantly it speaks for the system which Webb and his book so dutifully defend.

Fields of Fire is being promoted as one of the great war novels of our generation and has gotten rave reviews from *Time*, *Newsweek*, and many major newspapers. It is clear that some of the people upstairs in this country are hoping this book can help glorify the Vietnam war in the same way that books like *The Naked and the Dead* helped to do for World War 2 (it is also apparent that Webb was hoping the same thing as evidenced by the remarkable amount of plagiarism from Mailer's work). As a matter of fact I won't quibble with the comparison to *The Naked and the Dead* because that book is politically disgusting as well (while it is true that World War 2 had a progressive aspect to it, due to the fact that the U.S., despite itself, was objectively aiding the first socialist country, this was not what Mailer was extolling and sanctifying).

However, the brainwashers of the public have got a sticky problem with the Vietnam war, because what the U.S. actually did there is known to one degree or another by millions here and hundreds of millions around the world. For that reason defenders and apologists for the war have been somewhat timid about upholding it in all its bloody glory. The most commonly used cover in recent years has been that the war was "a dreadful mistake"

rather than the conscious act of a desperate superpower.

But that explanation is not sufficient for the times. As most readers of *Turn the Guns Around* and the *RW* already know, a new imperialist war is rapidly approaching and there is still that nasty problem of the Vietnam experience getting in the way. This explains why there has been so much encouragement from well healed sources in the last few years to "re-examine" Vietnam. Like a true wind-up soldier, Jim Webb has thrown himself into the fray (with the full weight of the U.S. ruling class right behind him, of course).

Another way to look at all this is that we should be thankful to Webb for displaying in print the outlook of the "ugly American" in all its glory. It's actually quite revealing that this book is being touted as the war novel of the generation. How desperate the U.S. bourgeoisie must be to promote such a bald display of hack writing, plagiarism, arrogance, and reaction. Clearly, they are in very serious trouble. And all I can say to you Webb is, keep that baseball bat firmly in hand because this time you are going to need it. □

On to May 1st

Correction:

An article in last week's *RW*—"A Year Under the Shadow of Three Mile Island"—contained a typographical error. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearing reported on occurred in March 1980, not March 1979 as the article says.