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Atlanta Outrages Mount

Two More
Claimed in
Racist Slayings

Reagan Shooting Shows Imperialism Ain't Healthy

In the wake of the attempted assassination of President Reagan, while U.S. imperialism's "allies" and dependencies in its war bloc look on aghast, and the U.S. ruling class struggles frantically to paper over their mounting internal turmoil with a barrage of "assurances": "we're together"; "everyone's united here"; "Crisis? What crisis?"—events tell a drastically different story. Their hollow protestations, coupled with a new avalanche of pious sermonettes deploring "senseless violence" in America, are transparent attempts to cover up what can only be deadly gangland feuding within their own ranks. And this intense internal struggle is a direct reflection of the intensifying contradictions these imperialists face in maintaining their empire. The stakes are high—higher than they have ever been for them. Indeed, the whole ball of wax is going on the line for them.

On the morning following the shooting, the *New York Times* typified the somewhat desperate attempt to picture "the nation" as "tragically united" by an event which (merely to state the obvious) millions did not seem to regard as especially tragic, and which actually was seen by many as dramatic evidence of disunity and confused uncertainty within the ruling class itself. The title of the *Times* editorial, "Together," read more like a command than a description. The whole purpose of the editorial was for the bourgeoisie to convey to each other and the rest of the world the

line that they themselves must appear and act firm and united, and cover up the obvious internal cracks:

"Then comes a low, rumbling fear. Not for what will happen now, in Washington; Americans' constitutional faith and tradition are so secure that we automatically expect patriotic obedience from those to whom authority has fallen.

"The fear is of what will happen later, around the country. Some, angered by and impatient with uncertainty, will turn preconception into fact. No matter what they say, the accused assassin must be an instrument of the radical right—or left. And the violence of the bullet will be magnified by the violence of glib generalization."

The *Times* is attempting here to indirectly deny what they do not dare even mention directly: First of all, that there is a struggle for control and power, there is confusion and uncertainty within the government that expresses contradictions and instability within the ruling class as a whole—and has nothing to do with "constitutional" verities. They deny that there has been serious and open infighting within the government recently, as everybody knows, right up to and after the shooting of Reagan. Not only millions in this country, but the U.S. imperialists' allies—and an undoubtedly "intrigued" Soviet imperialism—saw the chaotic storm that erupted when Secretary of State Haig, attempting to "remove all doubt" that the govern-

ment was functioning, asserted "constitutional" authority and control while Reagan was in the operating room. Nor has anybody been taken in by the subsequent attempt to deny that there was a sign of weakness, a struggle for control, of anything but cool resolve and "constitutional" harmony in the "situation room."

On Monday night, George Will, a "conservative" columnist widely known to be closely connected to Reagan, went on Ted Koppel's "Nightline" three-ring circus to attack what he called Haig's "disgraceful performance" as "constitutionally illiterate" and "to be kind, displaying extreme political insensitivity." Reports of battles between a "furious" Ed Meese, the White House Chief of Staff, Secretary of Defense Weinberger, and Haig were leaked far and wide to the press, along with a supposedly "top-secret" Presidential Directive which had designated Weinberger as next in line after George Bush to take control of the nation's military forces during a crisis. Dan Rather, aspiring heir and successor to Walter Cronkite as the fount of "that's the way it is" reporting for the U.S. bourgeoisie, criticized Haig's assertion that he was in command; at ABC, Frank Reynolds, who was teetering on the edge of panic all day, at one point was shouting on camera: "Where's Bush? Where's Bush?" What was hanging out all over the screen was a confused scramble at

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On Monday, March 30, the body of a Black teenage male was pulled from the Chattahoochee River near Atlanta. He is the 22nd murdered Black youth to be found in 21 months—two others are listed as "missing." The youth had been dead at least 2 weeks—cause of death asphyxiation, the same type of death suffered by all the recent murdered youth. On Tuesday morning the body was identified as Timothy Hill, 13, a child the cops had maintained was a runaway. The bitter truth of words spoken by the mother of another murdered youth was confirmed, "They'll find that child dead before his name is put on the list!" The youth had been missing 19 days. Only now have the authorities added his name to the growing list of missing and murdered youth.

People are enraged at the police, growing ever more suspicious as these hideous murders continue. The police had once again spent the crucial period immediately following the abductions spreading tales that Hill had a history of running away, going so far as to fabricate some two-week trip to Chattanooga. The family had flatly denied the story as did the child's school record of very little delinquency.

When the body was identified, Public Safety Commissioner Lee Brown said, "We've taken a lot of heat for this." The *Atlanta Constitution* featured a frantic column the same morning ending, "No one is more frustrated at the unsolved state of these tragic crimes than the police... no one is working harder at it or worrying about it more." Every one knows how hard the cops work in Atlanta; the question is—at what?

Now as the Task Force has begun to "work" on this case, the slanders have grown even more sinister. "Sources close to the investigation" began spreading the rumor, again widely circulated in the press, that there is a

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El Salvador

U.S. Tries to Hook Opposition with "Moderate Junta" Bait

While the U.S. counter-insurgency war in El Salvador continued this past week, so did its political efforts to pave the way for a "solution"—however temporary—to its deteriorated Salvadoran position. On the one hand, the fascist junta's air force kept up its aerial bombardment of Morazan province for the 20th consecutive day, while search and destroy missions, backed up by heavy artillery and war planes, continued in Cabañas and Cuzcatlan, especially in the area around Suchitoto and the foothills of the Guazata volcano, creating thousands more peasant refugees who are being herded into concentration camps. And spokesmen for the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerrilla command claimed to have identified 300 U.S. and 400 Israeli troops participating in these combat operations, saying that they can be recognized by distinctive patches on their uniforms, more sophisticated weapons, and the fact that "they are taller, more robust, and they carry out maneuvers in a more synchronized way" than their neo-colonial pupils. On the other hand, and at the same time, the U.S. and its junta offered further "evidence" of their "reasonableness" toward some elements of the opposition, and further inducements to them to come to an accommodation with the junta.

The latest example of the newly invented "moderation" of the fascist junta occurred on March 27, when eight members of the National University's Superior Council were released from prison in Santa Tecla, after having spent over a month and a half behind bars. The university administrators had been arrested, along with twelve of their colleagues who were subsequently released, when they held a meeting to discuss a possible reopening of the school; the school was shut down by the junta in mid-1980 because it had been a stronghold of radical student opposition. Many of the Superior Council members are very close to "moderate" elements of the opposition coalition Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), and one of them is Eduardo Calles, the FDR's vice president. While Calles was not at the meeting, the other 20 were originally held on suspicion of permitting a meeting of the FDR,

although the junta's main concern at the time was making sure that the university remained closed. Thus, the eight administrators were held under the provisions of Decree 507, which legally allows the junta to arrest and jail anyone for up to 120 days without charges if they are suspected of "treason, spying, rebellion, sedition and other crimes against the independence of the state and people's rights." While there has been no word on any possible reopening of the university, the fact that these administrators have now been released (not

mysteriously "kidnapped," winding up dead by the side of the road, the usual procedure) represents another U.S. offering to the FDR's "moderates."

These offerings are a crucial part of the U.S. attempts to bring the formerly pro-U.S. bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces in the FDR back into the Salvadoran neo-colonial apparatus, even while the U.S. escalates its military onslaught against the guerrillas and the masses who fervently support the junta's overthrow and aspire to freedom from imperialist domination. The U.S. also hopes to drive a wedge

between the "moderates" and pro-Soviet/pro-Cuban revisionist leaders of the FMLN, and through these measures gain some temporary "stability" in El Salvador. It hopes this will help calm things down in the rest of Central America as well, while the worldwide face-off with its equally imperialist rivals in the Soviet Union heats up. Releasing certain opposition forces from prison, continuing the "investigation" into the murder of four American Catholic missionaries, and publishing advertisements for the "growing

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New York Times on Duarte:

"He is not particularly handsome, but his sad eyes, boyish smile, and bearish ways have somehow joined to give him a remarkably large following among women. Some say he exudes innocence. He had a reputation as Mayor (of San Salvador—RW) of being incorruptible, and he is still a member of the Boy Scouts today."



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Revolutionary Worker

Call to RW Readers to Testify in Connection with Bob Avakian's Demand for Political Refugee Status in France

Astounding though it may be, some people are unable—or unwilling—to recognize that the much advertised democracy in the United States is in reality no more than a big joke. This problem will have an important bearing on the procedure involving Bob Avakian's demand for political refugee status in France. Already in the initial stages of this process it has been said that political persecution has not been proved—that it has not been established that the difficulties encountered with the authorities of his country of origin (the U.S.) were of political origin, in the sense of the Geneva Convention. As this case now moves into the next and more decisive phase, the *RW* is calling on its readers to provide from their own experience, and to help organize on a grand scale, information and evidence which will clearly demonstrate two basic facts:

1. That the U.S. ruling class (which has been responsible for the war in Vietnam, Pinochet in Chile, the Shah of Iran, South Africa, El Salvador and on and on) in fact exercises a vicious repressive dictatorship *within* the U.S. as well.
2. That, in particular, through its various government agencies (and in cooperation with various "private" reactionary forces) it is carrying out systematic and increasing repression aimed against revolutionaries in the U.S. and specifically against the RCP and its Chairman Bob Avakian.

This is a chance to testify about the so-called "democracy" in the United States and its true meaning for oppressed and class-conscious people

Statements that illustrate the above two points should be written down and, if *at all* possible, notarized (this can be done in many cities at banks, currency exchanges, and many other small business offices). These statements should then be handed over to the local Committee to Free the Mao Tsetung Defendants in your area, or if that is not possible, be mailed directly to the National Office of the Committee (P.O. Box 6422 "T" Street Station, Washington, D.C. 20009). If necessary, statements can also be handed over to a regular *RW* distributor. The kind of statements needed are those pertaining to such things as firings and harassment, frameups, brutality, threats, murder, etc. at the hands of police or government agents and especially as these incidents relate to Revolutionary Communist Party members and sympathizers (including people who sell the *RW*) and above all as they relate to Bob Avakian. There is a certain amount of urgency about collecting these statements, and the bulk of them should be in the hands of the National Office of the Committee before May First. Please note if your statement could also be used (with or without signature) for publication in the *Revolutionary Worker*.

COINTELPRO Siege of the Black Panther Party

On March 29, Bob Avakian's application for political refugee status in France was initially rejected on the grounds that it had not been proven that he was in fact the target of political persecution. The next, decisive appeal stage is underway. This article, a partial history of the savage campaign of U.S. government repression against the leadership, members and supporters of the Black Panther Party in the late 1960s and early 1970s, is aimed at helping paint a vivid and accurate picture of the nature of this country's "democracy." This nature has not changed.

By the end of 1969 the Black Panther Party (BPP) was under an undeniably full-scale assault. Most of the Panther leadership had been jailed, killed, hounded into exile or were awaiting trial on trumped up charges. Panther Chairman Bobby Seale had spent the better part of the previous year in court or in jail. In Los Angeles County alone, bail bond premiums (money kept by the bail bondsmen) had totalled more than \$200,000 in 2 years. Nationwide the Panthers had been the target of a systematic campaign of terror and harassment. Arrests and frameups were frequent—in the two years from 1967 to '69 charges had been dropped against at least 87 Panthers, but only after they had spent days, weeks and even months in jail. The New York Panther 21, arrested on April 2nd, 1969 under a barrage of outrageously phony charges, were held in jail in lieu of a collective ransom totalling \$2.1 million and most would remain in jail until mid-1970. Panther headquarters were the target of frequent armed raids in cities throughout the country. From March 1969 to December 1969 at least 16 raids were carried out against Panther offices and apartments in over 10 cities. Some Panthers attacked and imprisoned during that period, like Dhoruba Moore and Geronimo Pratt, are still held hostage today.

The siege of the Black Panther Party was not the product of a sudden shift to fascism by the ruling class nor the result of police agencies gone berserk. It was not an aberration of bourgeois democracy but the unveiled essence of it. It was a vicious illustration of the point made by Lenin that, "The ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of the minority only to another bourgeois party, while the proletariat, on all serious, profound and fundamental issues gets martial law or pogroms... the more highly developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie." In attacking the Panthers the state unleashed all the forces at its disposal—from local police and courts to the FBI and the CIA, from the Internal Revenue Service to the telephone company and the media, from uniformed pigs to "rival groups" and other murky forces. Each and every individual attack was part of a larger picture, a comprehensive offensive by the ruling class to destroy one of the most advanced revolutionary forces of the times. A strategic weapon wielded by the ruling class in this offensive was the infamous COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program), a ruthless program of repression and intimidation controlled at the highest levels of the government and implemented by the FBI in conjunction with all of the other resources of the state.

COINTELPRO

The COINTELPRO program was actually launched in 1956 and for the next 11 years amounted to a small-scale program of "dirty tricks" and infiltration directed against the revisionist Communist Party USA and the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party, with an even more limited "program" (undoubtedly with very different goals and objectives) involving the Klan and Nazi organiza-

tions. It wasn't until 1967 that the government really began its full-scale offensive with the initiation of the "Black Nationalist—hate group COINTELPRO." On August 25, 1967 a letter describing the program was sent out to 23 FBI field offices around the country. In this letter the purpose of the program was described as: "...to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize the activities of Black Nationalists, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder... Efforts of the various groups to consolidate their forces or to recruit new or youthful adherents must be frustrated." Groups were targeted, according to the Supervisor at the FBI, due to their "propensity for violence" or their "radical or revolutionary rhetoric and actions." FBI headquarters directed their agents to "enthusiastically and energetically" develop tactics that would effectively carry out the aim of the program and would prevent "rabblouser" leaders of the groups targeted from spreading their philosophy publicly.

By March, 1968 the program was expanded to include 41 FBI field offices. In addition to the expansion, the FBI agents were informed of the long-range goals of the program and ordered to devise tactics accordingly. These goals were listed as: 1) to prevent the "coalition of militant Black nationalist groups which might be a first step toward the real Mau-Mau in America"; 2) to prevent the rise of a "messiah" who could "unify and electrify" the movement; 3) to pinpoint "potential troublemakers" and "neutralize them before they exercised their potential violence"; 4) to split the groups from potential allies by discrediting them among "responsible Negroes," other Black radicals, and among the "white liberals" and the "respectable white community," and 5) to prevent the

long-range growth of the target groups, particularly among youth and to develop specific tactics to prevent the recruitment of youth. The targets of the program at this time included the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Deacons for Defense and Justice, the Nation of Islam, the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

While the COINTELPRO certainly represented an offensive by the ruling class, it was by no means launched from a position of strength. It was an offensive launched from a defensive and desperate position. Urban rebellions among the oppressed nationalities, particularly among the masses of Black people rocked the country. Watts exploded in 1965, in 1966 the government officially listed 43 "civil disorders and riots," and in the summer of 1967 ghetto rebellions exploded in rapid succession, one beginning a matter of days after another had ended—Tampa, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Newark, Plainfield (New Jersey), the rest of northern New Jersey, New Brunswick and Detroit. Millions among the oppressed nationalities and other sections of the people were inspired as the struggle mushroomed. Revolutionary-minded organizations and individuals were developed and were tempered in the fires of the rebellions. The bourgeoisie was petrified—their tanks rolling through downtown streets, their machine gun-carrying military and national guard units "patrolling" the streets, their cops, vigilantes, and politicians couldn't seem to have any effect at all. The Kerner Commission was appointed by President Johnson to "study the disorders" and propose new, more effective strategies for the ruling class.

At the same time rebellion had begun to sweep across college campuses

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Report from New Delhi, India

A Red Salute to Chiang Ching, Chang Chun-chiao



March 17—Revolutionary Students Union in New Delhi, India march on Chinese Embassy.

Report on the Protest March to Chinese Embassy in New Delhi

The Revolutionary Students Union, Delhi took out a protest march to the Chinese embassy on 17th March 1981 at 11:30 a.m. The marchers started from Chanakya theatre and marched through a three km. route covering the main streets in the diplomatic enclave in New Delhi (the capital of India—*RW*) before reaching the Chinese embassy by noon.

The main slogans raised during the march and in front of the Chinese embassy were: "Long Live the Revolutionary Legacy of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," "Long Live Mao Tsetung Thought," "Down with Deng Revisionism," "Long Live the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," "Red Salute to Chiang Ching," "Red Salute to Chang Chun Chiao," "Red Salute to Chinese Proletarian Revolutionaries," "Down with the Counterrevolutionary Three Worlds Theory," "Down with Imperialism and Social Imperialism," "Making Revolution is no Crime," "It is Right to

Rebel," and "Down with all Shades of Revisionism."

The demonstrators militantly upheld Mao's great contributions to world revolution and denounced the present Chinese leadership as revisionists and lackeys of imperialism. They condemned the mock trials of Comrades Chiang Ching and Chang Chun Chiao as desperate efforts to restore capitalism in China and expressed their staunch determination to fight this new revisionism tooth and nail.

The protest march converted itself into a revolutionary assembly in front of the Chinese embassy and student militants addressed the meeting. A spokesman of Revolutionary Students Union in his speech traced the evolution of revisionism in the international communist movement and emphasized the urgent need to expose and smash all shades of revisionism. He condemned the attempts of some so-called Marxist-Leninist groups in India to drag the Indian revolutionary movement into revisionist trash by tailing behind the theory of "three worlds" and the revisionist leadership in China. Other opportunist and reactionary trends using the present pretext to attack the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism were also denounced and exposed. Solidarity with the genuine Marxist-Leninists all over the world who are spiritedly denouncing the revisionist clique in China and their phony theory was expressed.

The protest march dispersed after singing the "Internationale" at about 1 p.m. □

"moderate Junta"

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popular support" and "moderate reformism" of the fascist junta in the guise of "news" articles in the bourgeois press are, in part, all aspects of this campaign.

One of the more interesting public exchanges in this campaign last week started in the Latin American press and continued into the front pages of the *New York Times*. José Napoleón Duarte, the junta's president, stirringly told the Chilean magazine, *Cosas* (legally published under the fascist Pinochet regime which overthrew Allende with the direct aid and investment of the U.S.), that his government would never allow U.S. "intervention" in El Salvador. "We accept their coming in to resolve the problems of social convulsion which affect our country, but we will not permit an action which will accelerate those conflicts and create an imperialist domination." This was truly a laughable statement (all the more so made in such a newspaper) since in the first place, U.S. imperialist intervention and domination in El Salvador has been a fact since the beginning of the century, and in the second place, neither Duarte nor anyone else in the puppet junta can "permit" or "not permit" the U.S. to do anything—the tail does not wag the dog. Still, the publication of this interview was directed at encouraging some FDR forces to look with favor on direct "negotiations" with their former ally, Duarte.

However, the FDR forces are not ready to swallow the bait just yet. The day after Duarte's statement was published, Héctor Dada Hirezi, a former leading member of Duarte's Christian Democratic Party and the junta, told the Mexico City daily, *Excelsior*, once again that the FDR desired a "political solution" to the Salvadoran crisis. "Nevertheless, we find ourselves with the problem that the popular forces have no one to talk to. Duarte, the 'president', has no power. You can't dialogue with the most repressive sectors of the army. You have to dialogue with the one in charge, the United States. Nevertheless, they refuse."

And the U.S. will continue to refuse, at least as long as the pro-Soviet influence in the FDR remains intact, for this would represent U.S. recognition and acceptance of Soviet influence in a

new government. On the other hand, direct negotiations between Duarte and the FDR would symbolize that the junta retained the dominant position in a new arrangement and that Soviet influence would be either completely eliminated or so slight as to be easily controlled. So, two days after *Excelsior* published Dada Hirezi's comments, the *New York Times* ran a front-page article on none other than the little puppet Napoleon himself. And what was the theme of this "news" story? The opening sentence reveals all: "One year after joining the governing junta and three months after becoming its president, José Napoleón Duarte, a Christian Democrat, has gained considerable power here and is pushing for more."

See, gentlemen of the FDR, Duarte really does have the "power" to play "let's make a deal" directly with you, and the *New York Times* cites a number of "facts" to sell this U.S. product: the generals have been so taken with Duarte's "gutsiness" that they have become "moderates" just like him, the "extreme rightists" are losing influence in the fascist armed forces, and most importantly, the U.S. has given him unqualified support, so anything he says or does will be backed up to the hilt by the U.S. Why, it's better to "negotiate" with Duarte than with the U.S.—he's becoming the real power in El Salvador, says the *New York Times*. And for the less sophisticated readers, we have the following truly incredible *Times* testimonial to Duarte's character: "He is not particularly handsome, but his sad eyes, boyish smile, and bearish ways have somehow joined to give him a remarkably large following among women. Some say he exudes innocence. He had a reputation as Mayor (of San Salvador—*RW*) of being incorruptible, and he is still a member of the Boy Scouts today." Now, I ask you, wouldn't you buy a used car from this man, especially you "women"? How about a used and thoroughly isolated fascist junta?

It is extremely doubtful that such an absurd fantasy will do much to convince the bourgeois forces in the FDR that their interests are best served by playing ball with Duarte at the present time. Indeed, a congressional liberal "oppositionist," Michael D. Barnes, announced that he was going to offer further inducements by trying to tie the Reagan administration's aid requests for El Salvador to certain "conditions" that sound suspiciously like those requested by the FDR—the removal of U.S. military advisors, "restrictions" on military aid, and continued economic assistance only as long as "civilians remain in control of the



Young Salvadoran guerilla fighters.

government," according to UPI. Barnes was also quoted as saying, "The symbolism of this military presence is simply too damaging."

Whether or not the "symbolism" remains, the U.S. military "presence"—as described in the beginning of this article—most certainly will, since the U.S. has a great deal at stake in El Salvador. But the U.S. desperately hopes to be able to carry forward this clampdown on

more favorable terrain. As for the FDR forces who can help to satisfy this U.S. need, it is unclear just how much "assurance" they will require to carry out the U.S. bidding. But it is certain that both more dirty war crimes and more soft soap to try and make them look clean enough to decrease the junta's isolation are on the U.S. drawing board. □

Letters from Youth on May 1st

We're Planning to Take History in Our Hands

Below are a few letters received by Revolutionary Communist Youth, newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB), about May First 1981. We print them here because they

give a taste of the vanguard role youth are playing in kicking off plans for the revolutionary proletariat to be taking action on May 1. The Revolutionary Worker wants to hear now from all our

readers about their plans and thoughts on May 1st (remembering, of course, that you may not want to send every detail through the well-watched mails).

"A Day of Passion and Challenge" —Iranian Student

RCY,

People depend on each other, however the competition recently is so high that people just don't care about each other any more. A lot of these contradictions are simply due to competition within governments and the nations. People all over the world are being manipulated and brainwashed by their governments; some governments manipulate people to an extent that people actually believe that the life they lead is the only life, and no other way of living is possible. Our goal is to let these people know that the world does not end in the four walls which they are surrounded by.

The world is begging full of opportunities. The governments can be changed if you're not pleased. May Day is such as that which gives you such opportunities, May Day is a day of passion and challenge, a day for you to bring across your point of view. May Day has a lot of importance to all the people who don't have the opportunity to express their point of view. May Day is for people like you and me. I, as a 17-year-old Iranian, still attending high school, think of May Day as a day that might bring about freedom for my country, and countries that have gone through the same situation.

The hatred of those people who live in those countries is to such extent that it can overflow in any second. These people alone cannot change what is going on, they need your help and they need my help. I will express my help as much as I possibly can because I know, I have lived in such situations, I had to grow up in such a government as the Shah's dictatorship. My family and I had to go through so much because they were among the few who tried to express themselves. I personally have so much hatred trapped in my heart that will enable me to do anything to change the world.

The world needs governments made of people, so people can have their rights and opportunities. On May First, 1981, you and I can tell the world what we want. We want change, we want change so we can live proudly and comfortably. The only way that we can reach our not so far away goal is by our unity, we have to have one voice to want to overthrow all the other voices. We have to join all the hands of children, students, farmers and parents to make a fist so big that will crush the fist of the ones who are trying to crush us. Our change will change lives, it will change my life as well as any farmer and worker. It will give us the opportunity to be ourselves, and live the way we want, and not be ruled by some superpower who will try to control every move you make, and every word we say.

Our only path to success is again our unity, unity of you and me to change the world, to bring about a revolution that is superior to all other revolutions. A revolution that will change our lives and will help us get a step closer to our perfection, if not our complete perfection. May Day is *the* day, it has to be celebrated and respected all over by everyone. Speak out on May Day and tell those who rule us that you and I and the rest of the world united can rule them, as well as show them that wealth and power will no longer dominate us, and was never permanent.

Iranian high school student,
San Francisco Bay Area

A May Day Ahead of Its Time

On April 3, the red flag will fly at Keene State College (in New Hampshire) as students and professors there celebrate May Day a little bit early. Confronted with the problem that school at KSC gets out April 30, many people came together and decided that it was better to have May Day early than never. (Although a number of people also plan to take part in May Day activities in other cities on May 1st itself.)

There will be revolutionary activities throughout the day April 3. Different progressive groups are planning such things as: bayonet practice led by a Vietnam vet, non-violence training by an anti-nuke activist, revolutionary dancing in the streets, and in other ways celebrate "a holiday that gets ignored here," as one person described it.

The effect of last year's May First is powerfully felt at Keene State. Many students and professors there were inspired when Damian Garcia and two others scaled the Alamo last March, and were outraged when Comrade Garcia was murdered by a police agent shortly before May First.

Since then, much political activity on the campus has centered on the attempts by the school administration to fire a progressive professor, and the axing of courses on Marxist political economy. A group of people have formed the "Public Affairs Forum," and opened the Center for Revolutionary Education, complete with a red-ribbon cutting ceremony. A copy of the *RW* is posted on the door of the center, and red flags are becoming very popular all over the campus. Bob Avakian's demand for political refugee status in France is also becoming known, and a focus of discussion. As one person put it, "See what this fucking government is like? This guy has to leave the country because they're trying to kill him."

The administration is trying to stop people from getting a permit for the April 3 "May First," but the students and professors are determined to carry activities out, permit or none.

Berkeley

Berkeley High School, April, 1981—in preparation for Revolutionary May First. RCYBers at the high school invite an agitator and RCYB political organizers to their campus to help, from the outside, to challenge the students to Break Out, Break Free, Take History Into Our Hands on May First. In anticipation of the revolutionaries showing up on the outside, *RW* Co-conspirator posters and May Day stickers had been plastered on hallway walls and in bathrooms, and the red flag began appearing in various places.

Among groups of rebel youth, struggle had been going on over them playing an active, even leading role, in preparing the rest of society for revolution. And for that, Revolutionary May Day is right on time.

No sooner had the agitator arrived than school guards, administrators, and finally city police rushed to the scene to stop students from taking up bundles of *RCY*'s and the red flag—all for "their own protection," of course. Like the 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew that's been imposed on Berkeley High, it's for the protection of the "kids." They'll just arrest anybody if they set foot on the grounds during these hours. Speculation has been going around that the curfew is to stop revolutionary youth from writing graffiti and putting up

posters, especially May Day posters.

The red flag and the agitation this day brought back memories of last year's May Day, when there was a walkout, which particularly targeted the draft. This year the battle is on for the May First Mutinies to reach a much higher and wilder level. In the whole month of April before the big day there will surely be many, many warm-up actions at Berkeley High.

"Pledge to the Red Flag"

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____:

Since the beginning of this semester _____ has not participated in the pledge to the American Flag.

I shall appreciate receiving a note from you in this regard. Thank you.

_____ 's teacher

Around the beginning of this semester
Continued on page 19



Dem. Hits "Right-to-Lifers" 300 Go After Hyde's Hide



Demonstrators disrupt reactionary "Human Life Convention" in the Northwest.

"Down with the old! Up with the new! Caveman Hyde, we spit on you!" The fury of 300 voices ripped through the sedate night air of suburban Bellevue, Washington on March 26.

Inside the Bellevue Holiday Inn, two women dressed in their Sunday best waited for the annual Washington State "Human Life Convention" to begin. Thumbing through the *National Right to Life News*, one asked, "Did you see the demonstrators outside? Were you nervous?" "Yes," the other confided in a slightly panicky tone, "a little." This convention was to serve as a rallying point for those dedicated to the holy crusade of strengthening and reinforcing the bonds of women's oppression. Congressman Henry Hyde—the name which became notorious with the Hyde Amendment banning federal Medicaid payments for abortions—was to be the star attraction.

Outside, in the hotel parking lot, small groups on their way to hear Hyde stopped dead in their tracks, aghast at the sight of picket signs and defiantly raised fists. A pile of dozens of coat-hangers was held by demonstrators, as a symbol of determination to fight those who would force women into resorting to such barbaric methods to terminate a pregnancy. Demonstrators came from a broad range of people: the action was called by the Seattle Reproductive Rights Alliance and endorsed

by many organizations. Demonstrators included revolutionary-minded feminists, many who had been active in the defense of Sasha Cady (Sasha recently beat back an attempt to convict her for assault; she was charged after defending herself when a man attacked her). The event also drew people from the anti-nuke movement and those active in opposing U.S. crimes in El Salvador. Some had simply seen leaflets for the demonstration and decided they had to take a stand.

Shortly after the picket line began, Bellevue police arrived on the scene. A group of cops gathered around the hotel manager, who was frantically gesticulating and demanding that the demonstrators be evicted from his property. But the demonstrators were in no mood to yield; the cops, sensing this, simply diverted traffic around the picket line.

As the night progressed, the militancy of the demonstrators grew. Different forces began to organize to go into the hall and disrupt Hyde's speech itself. Many felt the necessity of posing the most forceful challenge to Hyde's brand of poison. Soon small groups of demonstrators began drifting into the hall, attempting to blend in with the "pro-lifers." The convention organizers, apparently expecting an outpouring of people to hear Hyde, opened the doors to the general public ten minutes

before the convention was scheduled to begin. Dozens of demonstrators, some still carrying signs and holding coat-hangers, streamed in. In all, over 100 demonstrators infiltrated the hall, while the picket line continued outside. Nervous heads turned toward the back of the room, where groups of demonstrators gathered, waiting.

The jittery cops in the front of the room glanced around. Perhaps they should go to the back of the room, one suggested. No, the other responded, better to stay here, "between him (Hyde) and them." Soon the convention organizers were in front, huddling with the cops. At one point, one right-to-life leader commented that there really weren't that many demonstrators in the hall, hoping that saying so would make it true. "There's about 30 of them right there," replied a cop, pointing to the corner of the room where Sasha and many others stood.

The bewildered organizers attempted to start the convention. When the MC stepped to the podium and opened his mouth to begin, all hell broke loose. "Women died because of Hyde!" chanted the demonstrators as the evening's proceedings came to a screeching halt before they ever began. The cops and the right-to-lifers huddled again, this time with the hotel manager too. In the midst of their consultations, an agitator wearing a T-shirt emblazoned

with the graphic of a fist holding a *Revolutionary Worker* stepped to the microphone and began denouncing Hyde, who was squirming a few feet away in the front row. Quickly, the cops descended on the agitator. All they could do was force her from the stage and back into the audience.

After this, the right-to-lifers again attempted to begin. Many heckled the pledge of allegiance, and the few hundred convention-goers could barely be heard reading the invocation prayer as the chanting was back in full swing. By now, many of the right-to-lifers were in a complete frenzy, one woman turning various shades of purple and loudly demanding to know why the police didn't clear the rabble out. Another, apparently abandoning hope in such worldly solutions, turned towards the demonstrators and began reciting incantations designed to drive out demons.

Over a dozen Bellevue police filed into the convention hall. The cops twisted arms and shoved chanting demonstrators into tables. Drinking glasses shattered. Water pitchers were overturned. But clearing the room of all opposition was no easy task. In some cases it took three cops to subdue one woman and get her out the door. One woman's arm was severely sprained when the cops literally threw her out the door and onto the concrete sidewalk. A 15-year-old member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade was singled out by three cops, who chased him to the far side of the hotel and worked him over as he lay on the ground with his hands cuffed. They didn't stop until an *RW* reporter and a number of demonstrators came running up to the scene. In the only arrest of the night, this youth was charged with two counts of second-degree assault, a sign of the charges the authorities would have liked to bring down on many demonstrators; but the fact that the picket line was still going on outside and that there were hundreds of eyewitnesses prevented further busts.

The violent attack by the police only served to underscore the victory that had been won. Even as Hyde finally started to speak—beginning, of course, by thanking the cops for their wonderful performance—the terms of the battle had been significantly altered. Public attention was to have been focused on Hyde & Co. Interviews with Hyde and other reactionaries were arranged with TV, radio and the daily papers, where Hyde smugly boasted that all abortions would be illegal within two years. But the night of the demonstration, as in the days of broad interest and controversy that followed, the spotlight was focused instead on the growing and diverse currents of opposition to these attacks on women. □

Space Shuttle "Columbia"

Opening Up Space—For War



In a matter of days, the space shuttle orbiter Columbia is scheduled, after years of delays, to lift off from Cape Canaveral. With the approach of the final countdown, much more is being openly revealed about just exactly what the real nature and purpose of the shuttle program is. Surprise, surprise—the program was not designed mainly to carry out scientific experiments or set up factories in space—it is a straight-up military venture, the U.S. ace in the hole for the outer space front of World War 3.

The specific military missions the space shuttle is designed to perform include launching a variety of military satellites (some 60% of both U.S. and

Soviet satellites are for military purposes), including spy satellites using regular and infrared photography, radar, and special electronic sensing devices, as well as military communications, weather and navigation satellites. Air Force crews will be trained to use the space shuttle to directly spy on "enemy" activity and to radio back reports, to service and repair satellites while in orbit, to photograph, destroy and capture Soviet satellites, and perhaps to release nuclear warheads from outer space. There are even ideas about setting up permanent manned battle stations in space.

Since the shuttle's inception a decade ago, every step of its development has

been marked by the bourgeoisie's attempts to disguise the shuttle as a purely scientific project, to fire the imagination of the American public with fairy tales about solar power-generating satellites, giant telescopes freed from the distortion of the earth's atmosphere, the mystery of conquering the "final frontier," and so on. It has been compared to the Conestoga wagon and to the first train to travel west of St. Louis. Perhaps such allusions to the past, when the U.S. was still a rising and developing capitalist power—not the moribund, decaying imperialist relic it is today—are supposed to infuse a "new sense of patriotism" among those taken in by such nonsense. Certainly

the bourgeoisie has attempted to milk the dream of space travel and the apparent success—even if three years tardy—of overcoming the technical problems of developing a craft capable of making 100 flights into space carrying payloads of 65,000 pounds. But from the day the bourgeoisie first clutched onto this project, it has been their conscious design to wield the space shuttle as a weapon to gain hegemony over the Soviet imperialists in the field of space warfare.

And now a new twist in the space shuttle propaganda game is emerging. After years of disguising the motivation for building the shuttle as some noble concern for the "advancement of

Continued on page 21

Shaky Compromise in Poland

Last week, yet another shaky compromise was reached between the Polish government and the leaders of Solidarity. A general strike was called off. The last-minute agreement followed a massive four-hour warning strike on March 27 that virtually shut down the entire country in response to the recent police attack against activists in Bydgoszcz as an estimated 10 million Poles walked off their jobs. However, it is clear that this latest development has by no means resolved the complex contradictions at work in Poland. The situation remains in an escalating spiral of confrontation and tense calm that has characterized events there since the upheavals last summer.

Significantly, the deal engineered by Solidarity leader Lech Walesa and the government broke the pattern of the past year in which the government has been forced to gradually retreat in the face of the workers' demands despite Walesa's claims that the union got 70% of what it asked for. While the government agreed to hold officials in Bydgoszcz accountable for the police beatings, the "concessions" offered on the questions of immediate recognition of a farmers' union and an end to legal actions against dissidents were of a highly dubious nature—i.e., the setting up of various commissions to "study the problems," all of which the revisionists have done before to cool things out. At the same time, negotiators for Solidarity ended up making some concessions of their own, agreeing to accept that there was some justification for the police action in Bydgoszcz, and to discourage "tension-producing activities" such as the occupation of public buildings, etc.

This latest "accommodation" brought to the fore, among other things, the deepening rift between Walesa and other Solidarity leaders, many of whom are being propelled along by the anger of the workers who see that they have gained little or nothing in this latest round of struggle. At a tumultuous meeting of the union's national commission in Gdansk to decide whether or not to ratify the agreement, Walesa came under fire as never before as delegates shouted that he had taken the steam out of the strikes. A letter read from two of the victims of the police attack in Bydgoszcz who accused Walesa of selling out the workers declared, "We did not gain anything. Walesa has made bungled decisions. We can compromise on the supply of onions, but not when blood has been spilled." Farmer representatives reportedly were also furious that a strong opportunity to win recognition of Rural Solidarity had been thrown away. Though a majority of delegates voted to call off the general strike for now, they refused to ratify the agreement itself, denouncing it as too vague and conciliatory.

Certainly Walesa's compromising maneuvers have confirmed once again that he is a bourgeois element who has routinely played the role of keeping the workers from "going too far." But he is no run-of-the-mill bourgeois reformist. In all this, Walesa makes no secret of the fact that he is pro-West and is maneuvering in line with the overall interests of the U.S. imperialists. (In a recent interview he remarked: "I like Reagan. Yeah, I like him a lot. The way he moves, the way he talks: just like me... I'll see when I go to America and I will meet him, I hope.")

The point here is that while Solidarity cannot be characterized as a pro-U.S. movement and is a broad social phenomenon reflecting widespread and spontaneous resistance of the Polish masses to revisionism and imperialism generally, the course being consciously pursued by Walesa and other top Solidarity leaders figures significantly in the U.S.'s strategic maneuvering and international contention with the Soviets. Ironically, there is much in common between the current U.S. approach in Poland and the Soviet strategy of "historic

compromise" utilized in a number of U.S.-bloc countries. According to this, while it may not be immediately feasible to overthrow the government dominated by one's imperialist rival, it is feasible to weasel into a position of sharing power and then lie in wait for a more opportune moment—in this case, perhaps, the outbreak of world war. While the U.S. is quite prepared to live with Soviet intervention in Poland and to utilize the political advantages that will come its way in this event, it would much prefer that Solidarity remain a knife in the side of its imperialist rivals.

It is no coincidence, therefore, that throughout the latest crisis Walesa has repeatedly stressed that "We don't want to overthrow the party. We only want to get rid of the people putting the brakes on renewal." He even warned the workers, "If the situation gets warmed up, do not confront them in the open, do not attack buildings or police stations on the streets. Pull back to your places of work and stay there. Even when people get killed, don't go for speedy revenge on territory that is to your disadvantage." It is no surprise, either, that this latest agreement (as with practically all the previous ones) was arranged with the help of U.S. point man, Catholic Church leader Cardinal Wyszynski. As usual, he hovered over the negotiations, delivering assurances to the union that two of the deputy governors would be relieved of their posts if a suitable compromise was reached, while counselling moderation and advising Solidarity negotiators to "put demands on the installment plan."

For its part, the revisionist Polish United Workers Party was confronted with its own set of problems as the threatened general strike precipitated a crisis meeting of the Central Committee to decide how to deal with the union's demands. This took place in the context of an increasingly ominous stream of diatribe emanating from Moscow and other Eastern bloc revisionist governments. Indeed, the stridency of these warnings was backed up by continuing Warsaw Pact maneuvers in and around Poland and reports in the East German press that "new units" from Warsaw Pact countries were being brought in to "relieve" (and perhaps augment) motorized columns and artillery forces on the Polish border. U.S. Secretary of State Haig also railed that sophisticated command and control communications equipment was being put into place by

the Soviets to direct Warsaw Pact troops in event of an invasion.

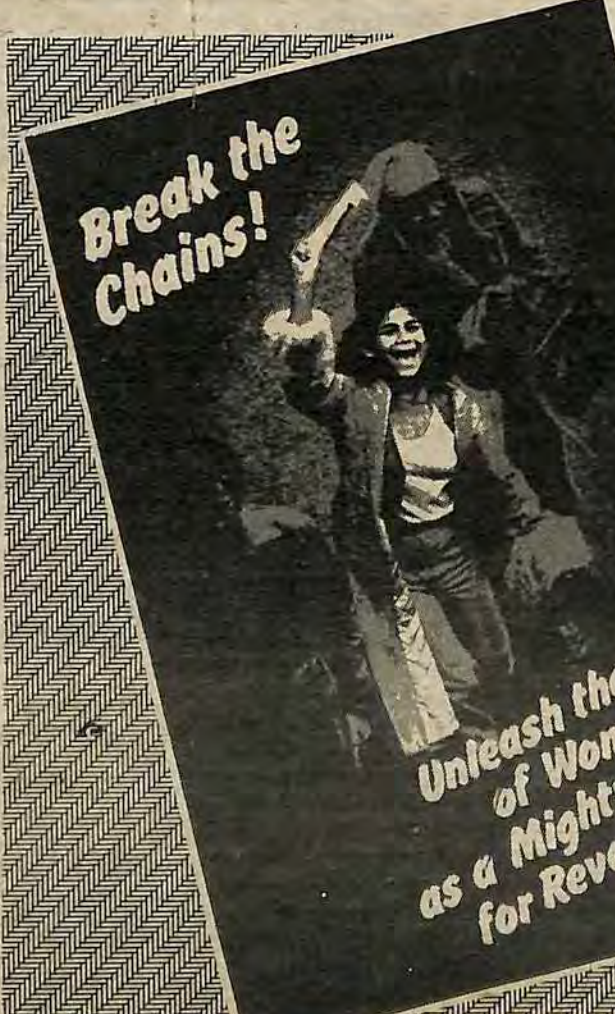
After a stormy session, the Polish party Central Committee voted confidence in the beleaguered leadership headed by Stanislaw Kania (characterized as "moderates" in the U.S. press), as speaker after speaker criticized the party's lack of credibility and raised the need for concessions to Solidarity's demands for a "democratic renewal." But at the same time, the offered resignations of three "hard-liners" on the Politburo were also refused. If all this seems paradoxical, it is because the Polish rulers are faced with severe contradictions in dealing with the workers' upheavals. It is not that they don't want to take a harder stand in dealing with Solidarity—not only out of a desire to please the Soviets, but mainly out of their own necessity as a bourgeois ruling class to maintain control over the Polish workers—and in fact their recent actions in the latest agreement reveal that they are precisely doing just that. At the same time, however, they are increasingly faced with a situation in which, as Deputy Prime Minister Rakowski blurted out last week, "it is impossible to struggle against a movement that has millions of followers."

While the precise terms of the debate within the Polish party are not entirely clear, an indication of the turmoil over what approach to take towards Solidarity was given by reports that on the day of the nationwide warning strike as many as one million members of the party joined in the walk-outs. Indeed, many party members are simultaneously members of Solidarity, but some who joined the walkouts are not. One delegate to the Central Committee meeting even told of how her local party organization in Wroclaw joined the strike "even though we were aware we were violating party discipline." One topic of heated argument was how to deal with the fact that the encrusted high-level bureaucrats along with their flagrant flaunting of privileges, private villas, yachts and hoards of ham have been so thoroughly exposed in the eyes of the masses.

As the crisis reached a critical point, the U.S. moved to up the ante for the Soviets on the question of intervention. The U.S. announced that it would not lift the grain embargo on the Soviets (and there was a statement by Reagan that any summit talks would have to include a discussion of "the imperialism of the Soviet Union" should an in-

vasion take place!). It was also announced that Reagan, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, and French President d'Estaing had agreed by phone that they would cut off all economic assistance to Poland if there were any intervention, internal or external. This was accompanied by a not-so-veiled threat by Senator Percy, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that if the Soviets invaded Poland, the U.S. would probably reverse its present position and begin the sale of sophisticated military weapons to China. At the same time, a White House statement on Poland, while emphasizing that suppression of the Poles would have a "grave effect on the whole course of East-West relations," also held out the carrot of "aid" for Poland's crippled economy—which the U.S. rulers know the Soviets would like to see forthcoming from the West—by emphasizing the U.S.'s "continuing readiness to assist Poland in its present economic and financial troubles, for as long as the Polish people and authorities continue to seek through a peaceful process of negotiation the resolution of their current problems."

The Soviets are obviously prepared to move militarily at any time should they decide the situation requires this. According to one Pentagon analyst, as political tension in Poland has "ebbed and flowed, (Soviet) military preparations have increased steadily." With the Solidarity leaders' acceptance of this latest agreement—in which the Polish government has not had to give up anything in principle—and the canceling of the general strike, Poland's rulers and the Soviets may still have hopes that the movement can be deflected and integrated into the "orderly functioning" of the revisionists' state. But if anything, the latest developments have revealed the depth of the political crisis in Poland and that it is functioning in anything but an orderly manner. Contradictions in the economy are rapidly sharpening (bread rationing has already been instituted in some cities), and as U.S. Secretary of State Haig noted, Soviet intervention could as easily be precipitated by the outbreak of food riots as by continuing demands of Solidarity. Certainly, with the anger of the Polish workers and other strata still burning over the outcome of last week's battle, Poland remains a stick of international dynamite. □



Break the Chains!

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Pamphlet by the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

From speeches delivered at International Women's Day, 1979. And a solidarity message from the League of Fighting Women of Iran.

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Reagan Shooting Shows Imperialism Ain't Healthy

Continued from page 1

the "pinnacle"; "Who's in Charge?" was the question nobody could answer—and a question that had existed well before President Reagan collapsed in the hospital lobby from loss of blood (while the media falsely reported that he "didn't even know he'd been hit.")

The *Times*, only hours after the shooting, rails against the idea that "the accused assassin must be an instrument..." An instrument of whom? The *Times* is very peeved that "some" won't believe the obvious explanation for the shooting, so clear that only a crackpot could dispute it: Hinckley was just a lone nut.

The *Times* pretends that the only conceivable alternative that might enter people's minds is that Hinckley was committing a "terrorist" act on behalf of "the far right... or left." In fact, this is what the networks *themselves* were tending to push in the first hours after the shooting; ABC aired a "history of assassinations," complete with pictures of draft card burnings in the '60s and a description of Sarah Jane Moore (convicted of shooting at Ford) as a "radical activist"—leaving out the admitted fact that she was an FBI informant. Then suddenly, the "terrorist" angle was buried. Over the next twenty-four hours, the case was solved, with the patently absurd "theory" that the whole affair was a spin-off of the movie *Taxi Driver*, that Hinckley had a crush on Jodie Foster, so he shot Ronald Reagan. (Come on bourgeoisie, can't you do better than that?) But what the bourgeoisie has not even dared to mention, even to refute as ridiculous, is what is really hanging out there: "some" people believe that John Kennedy, for example, another one of their own, was bumped off as the result of dogfights *within the ruling class*; that the bourgeoisie attempted a massive cover-up, and that it painted Oswald both as a kook and as a "left-winger" or Soviet agent to deflect any further investigation—and "unfortunately" got Oswald blown away a few days after the assassination. It is no secret that this is what is on the minds of people in this country and "interested observers" abroad. While what actually led up to the Reagan shooting is not clear, it is quite clear that the government and the imperialist press are tiptoeing around the subject as if it were a minefield.

As facts continue to leak out, it's becoming clear that this assassination attempt is the most nakedly obvious intra-ruling class hit job yet—a reflection of the deepening crisis the imperialist system is in.

So, within hours after the shooting, they got it together enough to try to bring down the curtain over the whole "unseemly" affair. By Wednesday night, Ed Meese and James Baker, Ronald Reagan's two top White House staffers, are on "Nightline," coming on like Allstate Insurance agents with their tight little smiles, praising Haig, assuring a relieved nation that there's "no problem," never was any problem, and doesn't the President, who by the way is in full control and even signed a bill repealing dairy price supports, have a great sense of humor?

But an April 1st *New York Times* "News Analysis" on the response of the European NATO imperialists to the shooting indirectly hints at the severity of the crisis: "Behind the messages of sympathy from heads of state and government... a quieter, troubled strain can be sensed in the international reaction to the attempted assassination of President Reagan.

"It could be summed up like this: There is a vulnerability in what is still generally reckoned the most powerful nation in the world..."

And indirectly, the belief that the political instability of the U.S. imperialists could "even" extend into blood-letting within their own ranks is timidly touched on:

"It is perhaps a sign of how things

have changed for Europe, its increased sense of military and economic frailty, that the expectable conclusions about the Reagan shooting are, in fact, being drawn more cautiously and less eagerly than they would have been a decade ago."

It is precisely to erase the image of fragility and internal chaos which has been flashed across the world, that the bourgeoisie has gone to great lengths to enthuse over the robust condition of the President's health, to portray him as a "John Wayne" who took a slug without even blinking, chuckled and cracked jokes as he strode into the hospital, came through the operation like a champ and will soon be out chopping wood at his ranch.

All this hype is not only sharply at variance with the facts of Reagan's medical condition, as has been dribbled out bit by bit; it is aimed at "assuring the world" that the "President is in command," that everything is downright normal and "all systems are go" at the nerve center of U.S. imperialism. Even the sunny assessment of Reagan's "magnificent physical condition," the glowing reward of the life of a true son of the Moral Majority ("he don't smoke and he don't chew, and he don't go with girls that do") is supposed to convey the idea that the U.S. ruling class, like its President, is in "tip-top shape."

Meanwhile, whatever the truth about the circumstances behind the attempted assassination, it is glaringly evident that the bourgeoisie is determined to bury it—although some questions remain. Such as, how Hinckley, the "lone assailant, acting alone, etc.," got himself a box of "exploding bullets?"

All that needs to be said about David W. Hinckley, Jr. is that the circumstantial evidence surrounding him gives off a strong porkish odor. He is the son of an oil and gas prospecting company executive (who is also a sideline preacher) with close ties to Vice-President George Bush. (Hinckley's brother was to have dinner with Bush's son the same day as the shooting.) This embarrassing "coincidence" is something the media has been unsuccessful at totally burying, but not for lack of trying. What is most relevant is that Hinckley is from the *ruling class*; as the press coyly puts it, "he comes from a very good family."

According to pieced-together press reports, Hinckley was active in his high school "government club." He went to Texas Tech, majoring in journalism and English. He "suddenly" began to develop an interest in guns. He joined the National Socialist White People's Party (the Nazis) in 1978. According to Nazi spokesmen, he was expelled the next year for "encouraging violence;" they said they had concluded that he was "either a nut or a Federal agent." While no credence can be given to any "official" statement from these goons, it is a common practice for the feds to send agents into fascist groups to spur them on to greater, or more focused, reactionary heights. In addition, joining the Nazis and then getting kicked out for being "too extreme" even for *them* is a great way for an agent to develop a "cover" background as a kook which might come in handy later.

Hinckley, in late 1979, got busted at an airport in Nashville attempting to pass through security with three handguns in his carry-on luggage, which he must have known would be screened through a metal detector. Kooky, huh?—and a foolproof way to get a bust on his record. Within a half an hour, Hinckley was back on the streets. He allegedly wrote some nutty letters to Jodie Foster, who acted in *Taxi Driver*, a movie which contains a subplot about a gun freak who plots the assassination of a presidential candidate. This entire "trail" of evidence "proving" mental instability and a crazy motive is quite reminiscent of the well-known police and intelligence "modus operandi" for providing agent "cover".

In the weeks before Reagan was shot, Hinckley reportedly hung out for a couple of weeks at a motel in Denver, only ten miles from where his parents live but "without their knowledge." This "drifter," who for months had been rapidly traveling all over the country on airplanes and living in motels and hotels, reportedly took a pay telephone call every day at the same time, carrying something which is supposed to have "looked like a briefcase." (This is something else the media has not been able to entirely quash, but which never gets mentioned alongside the "theory" that this "isolated young drifter" "acted alone.") Then Hinckley embarks on a three-day bus ride to Washington, D.C.—this time, he doesn't want to pass through airport security. He takes a hotel room in Washington—across the street from Secret Service Headquarters. Finally, he writes a letter to Jodie Foster "confessing" that he was going to shoot the President "to win your affection"; he leaves it in his motel room. He bops over to the site of Reagan's speech, hangs around outside for an hour "looking suspicious," according to several eyewitnesses. When Reagan emerges from the hotel, security is lax (as even an ABC cameraman insisted in the first hours after the shooting); there is no Secret Service agent watching the crowd behind the camera crews or covering Reagan on that flank. Hinckley fires away.

The list of "strange" circumstances and "odd" contradictions could go on much longer. But it's easy enough to see through the clumsy efforts of the ruling class to cover up and bury the true story—and not too difficult to figure out *why*.

If the assassination attempt was a "hit" commissioned by elements within the bourgeoisie itself, let's just say it wouldn't be the first time the "family" has rubbed out one of its own. According to the account of former Vice-President Spiro Agnew in his book, he certainly knew where things stood once he was "asked" to resign: he claims that he got the "definite impression" from Alexander Haig, then acting as White House Chief of Staff during the Watergate crisis, that his life was on the line unless he left office quietly and quickly. Agnew says he went out and bought a gun—and resigned—quick. Agnew, a contemptible little bourgeois crook himself, is wise to the ways of the mob.

While there is a lot of interesting evidence that the Reagan shooting could have been carried out by one of the imperialists' own "button-men"—and it is quite likely, given the present situation, that more information will be "leaked"—it also should be pointed out that the imperialists have more than one way to skin a cat and "take care" of messy conflicts within their ranks.

There is an abundance of evidence, though, to illustrate the essential point: these international imperialist thugs are in bad shape entering into the greatest crisis their rule has ever faced. They are not "in command," in "full control" of the course of events or their out-

come. They are battered by upheavals and confronted with a challenge from their imperialist rival, the Soviet Union, at the same time as they are rotting from within.

Another big problem for the U.S. ruling class is that the general level of political sophistication among the masses is much greater now as a result of the upheavals of the last twenty years. On Wednesday, April 1, the following item slipped through the AP wire as a "curiosity," an "isolated incident" amidst what the *New York Times* wishfully described as a "unity of sick sorrow, shared pain and hopeful prayers for the President and for the men who fell beside him":

"English was the last class of the day for 16 Seventh Graders at Tulsa Central Academy. Just before dismissal, the principal came on the intercom and told them President Reagan had been shot.

"About 10 of the students cheered. 'I was dumbfounded. I didn't know what to do,' said John Zannini, their teacher..."

"Teacher Lynn Morris... returned to find her eighth graders discussing it.

"Three of our students were laughing about it. They asked me if he (Reagan) was dead. When I said no, that he was doing well, they snapped their fingers and said 'shucks.'

"I was stunned, shocked."

But after this item was printed, the "shocked" principal of Tulsa Central was besieged by calls from school administrators all over the country, reporting similar instances of "callousness" and "disrespect for authority."

Not only were mass expressions of "grief" upon hearing the "tragic news" noticeable by their absence; even many who make a point of ignoring the day-in-day-out machinations of the ruling class become keen and very interested observers, adopting an analytical, "appraising" eye *when they sense a crisis* in the ruling class, when they see evidence of weakness glaringly revealed.

"We" are united; "We" are together. Above everything else, it is their own weakness and the instability of their own position that the imperialists are trying to "cover up" in the aftermath of the assassination attempt. For over 200 years, we have been told, the USA has been a model of "stable, orderly succession" and "democratic" government; no coups d'etat, no unsightly revolutions in THIS country; AMERICA isn't one of these "banana republics," after all. But even before Reagan's election they were bemoaning the fact that they haven't been able to keep a president for more than one term in quite some time. Clearly, things are deteriorating. This has had and will continue to have very serious repercussions for the U.S. imperialists, both for their efforts to enforce their rule over the people here and internationally, when the whole international situation is about to explode into a war in which the very survival of U.S. imperialism hangs in the balance. And that "low, rumbling fear" the *Times* refers to isn't quite as "low" as they would like to think. □



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CORRESPONDENCE ON BRECHT

In RW No. 91, February 6th, we called on revolutionary-minded artists and others to contribute to an evaluation of Bertolt Brecht, not simply because the man's theories and works are a hot item, but more importantly because they raise provocative and significant questions up for solution about revolutionary art and politics. We want to learn from Brecht and move forward off the precious experience, positive and negative, the revolutionary working class and its artists have gained. . . not to find easy answers or adulate and imitate the past, like some people who never want to use their brains. Brecht himself never stopped developing his theories and criticizing mistakes that he recognized, and we certainly can do no less.

In this issue, we're printing a contribution to the struggle from an art student who takes on some of these important questions. Rumors of other activity and debate generated by the initial article have drifted in to us. We urge all of you who are involved in doing Brecht or grappling with his ideas to corres-

pond with the RW about this, to bring your experience and knowledge to bear in this endeavor.

In 1908, Lenin wrote to the revolutionary artist, Maxim Gorky, asking that, in addition to and supplementary to his work to create revolutionary art, he write some literary criticism for the Party newspaper, Proletary, and we think Lenin's attitude is appropriate: "How great would be the gain, both for Party work through the newspaper, which would not be so one-sided as it previously was, and for literary work, which would be more closely linked with Party work, with systematic, continuous influence on the Party! There should not be 'forays', but a solid onslaught all along the line, without stops or gaps; Bolshevik Social Democrats (Communists) should not only attack all kind of duffers piecemeal, but should conquer all and everything as the Japanese conquered Manchuria from the Russians."

Dear Rev. Worker,

A late note re your Brecht article. Brecht is an important figure in modern theatre and contemporary art theory. I am familiar with some of Brecht's theoretical writings, practices and not very familiar with his plays.

First, Brecht has come up with a beautiful and precise definition of Socialist Realism:

"What Socialist Realism is, cannot be read off from extant works or styles of presentation. The criterion is not whether a work or presentation resembles other works or presentations which are counted as Socialist Realism but whether it is Socialist and realistic."

(In other words, no more boring paintings about peasants and cows in the (bourgeois) style of Ingres.)

"Realist art is art of battle: it battles against false views of reality and impulses which subvert man's real interests. It makes correct views possible and reinforces productive impulses."

Second, Brecht's concept of the

"alienation effect" in theatre calls for a theatre of thought and analysis. It stands in direct opposition to the bourgeois tradition of sucking the audience into the plot and manipulating their emotions.

As to why Brecht's plays look different from "Red Detachment of Women" and "Breaking With Old Ideas," it is in part due to cultural differences and in part due to who was working where. Chiang Ching made "Breaking With Old Ideas" in a post-revolutionary period, during the political ferment of the cultural revolution. Brecht on the other hand produced work in a hostile political and artistic environment. The rise of Nazism and the theatre of the absurd, I'm sure were hard things to deal with. One can not compare the Chinese theatre to the Western. They have different traditions and different visual clues for analysis. Eastern Theatre is highly stylized with clearly defined villains and heroes. Western theatre has a tradition of naturalism (except in ballet, but that is another topic). We can not translate directly the Chinese cultural experience to the U.S. because

a) the theatrical conventions of Chinese plays are not fully understood in the West,

b) the political and cultural environments are not equal. The point of art is to make ideas understood, if we emulated the Chinese forms we would have a lot of un-understandable art. Art for the masses must be clear, accessible and class conscious.

Finally, an evaluation of all of the class conscious artists of this century needs to be made, not just Bertolt Brecht. There is a revolutionary tradition in Western art. How about the work of Eisenstein, Rivera, Bread and Puppet Theatre, Hans Haake, Douglas Huebler, Suzanne Lacey, Bonnie Sherk, Eleanor Antin, Yvonne Rainer, Lucy Lippard, Incite, Clash, Gang of Four, X-ray Specs, Fire and let us not forget Isadora Duncan, one of the few revolutionary dancers ever. I suggest we build not only on Mao's "Talks at Yanan Forum" and the Chinese example but on our own revolutionary tradition. We have all the tools at our disposal to consider art and its relation to revolutionary struggle. Can art be used to create public opinion

(seize power) or is it just recreation for cadre?

Art Student

The following comment was excerpted from another letter to the RW around several matters of culture:

"... Also, there was the call to take up discussion around Brecht, which is okay, but I think is wide of the mark. Theater, like poetry, is not that popular in the U.S. Both are mainly culture that the petit bourgeoisie enjoys. If you want to ignite struggle around issues of culture, go for the areas of culture that are most popular among the masses, that the broadest audience is familiar with and which has very broad influence. Pop, rock music is one of the most popular areas, and there is a great deal going on in it. Not only in the punk, new wave scene, but in hard rock as well...."

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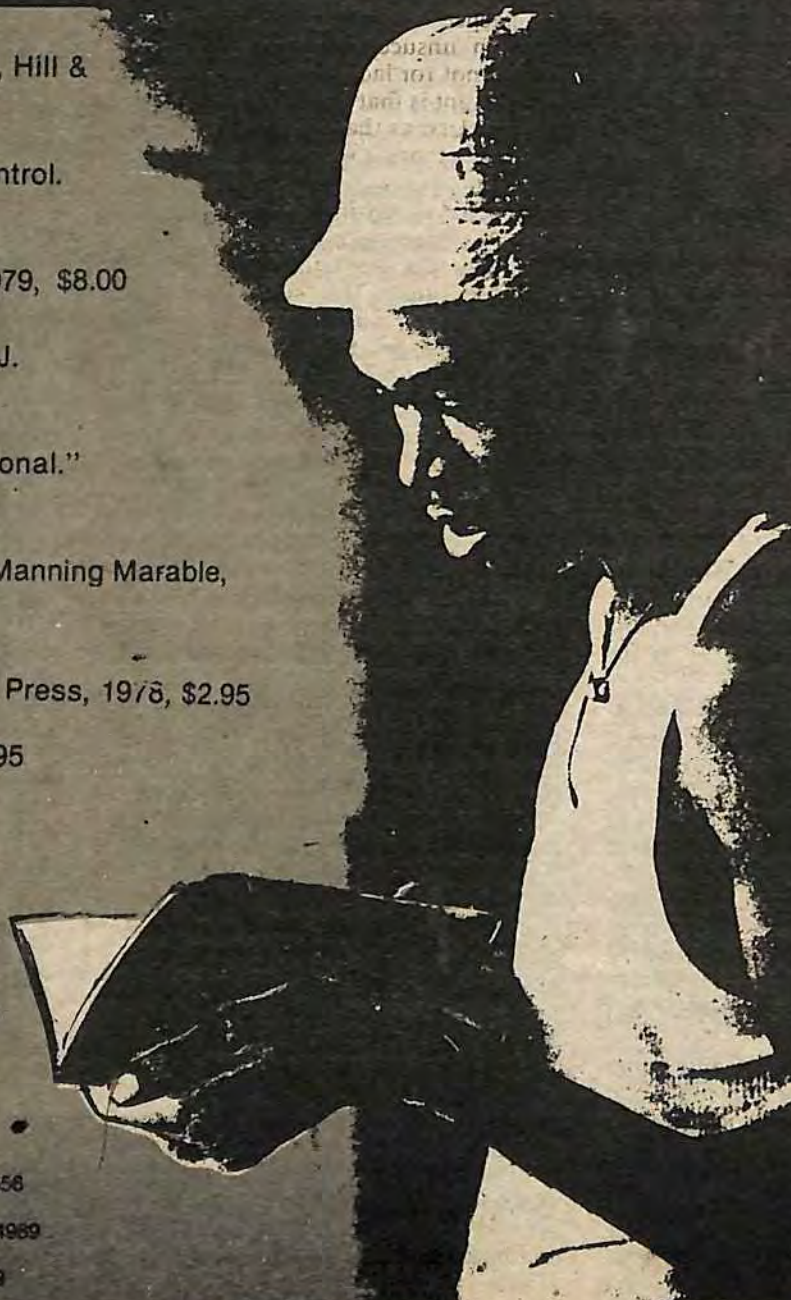
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Atlanta Outrages Mount

Continued from page 1

"possibility of a homosexual link to the slaying of Hill." But just like all the other lies the authorities have put out about these murders, not a single thread of evidence has been offered to back this up.

One night after Timothy Hill was found, the 23rd body, a Black male, was pulled from the Chattahoochee, only one mile from where Hill's body was discovered. The Fulton County Police had hardly taken the body from the scene before they broadcast that this man could not be connected to the murdered youth cases. Task Force detectives did not even bother to go to the site! The 11 p.m. newscast assured everyone that this was a probable drowning, and that the body was much larger than either of the two youth "missing".

The next morning, the man's body was identified as Eddie Duncan, 21, a resident of Techwood Homes—the housing project where only 3 weeks ago some youth found graffiti threatening that the next abduction would be from there. The young man's family had reported him missing two weeks ago, but as his sister said, "The police didn't seem interested at all since he was over 18." No one was investigating his disappearance, not even the Missing Persons Bureau. Duncan had been abducted 8 days after Hill—fitting the exact pattern of the murderers in the past 3 months. For this police have come under even sharper fire.

Suddenly—"there are too many similarities," said the public safety commissioner as he announced that the Task Force has been assigned Duncan's case after all. What the public safety commissioner did not say is how worried the police are about the extremely tense mood in the city. He did, however, announce the installation of a "rumor hotline"—where anyone can call the Task Force at any time to ask any questions about the investigation. Clearly the authorities are very worried.

Police Chief Napper jumped in with his own announcement about the "extraordinary" measures that the police will be taking at the next call of a missing Black child. Roadblocks will be set up in the sections of the city where the kids are being abducted, stopping every single car and van with Black youth for a search. People will have to be able to verify their relationship with themselves and youth with them. Hardly anyone who lives in the affected neighborhoods failed to notice that these measures have been used against them by the police for several months now. Clearly the message is that there will be even greater police harassment as the anger boils hotter.

In particular, the police are worried about Techwood Homes, the largest project in the city. For several weeks now, the police have taken over the area in an attempt to stop armed patrols of residents. The patrols had been started by the tenants association and some Black activists after the threatening graffiti was found. Duncan disappeared from Techwood the very week that the police mounted their offensive to disarm and dismantle the armed "bat patrols."

Since this murder, the authorities have drug out every fool they could find who blames the "bat patrols" for the murder. Newspaper headlines blare, "Duncan's Neighbors Think Bat Patrols Drew Killer." What's clear to many, though, is that it was the police that were "drawn" to the project in droves and that it is the police who are already highly suspect for these

murders and are being carefully watched.

The same day that Duncan's body was found, the Black activists arrested during the Techwood "bat patrols" were in court for their arraignment. The four men had been arrested under a supposedly anti-KKK law, "displaying a deadly weapon at a public gathering" (among other charges). The municipal courtroom at the Atlanta police department headquarters was packed with supporters from the project. The city judge proceeded to railroad the activists to state court for trial—but not without some sharp exposure before the angry audience. Several witnesses to the arrests, who had been present at meetings with Deputy Police Chief Eldrin Bell prior to the arrest, testified that Bell had specifically told the patrol organizers that people carrying weapons which were not concealed would not be arrested. The minute the men stepped from this meeting room to begin the patrol, they were arrested by a swarm of police. The whole thing had been a setup. This is called entrapment, in bourgeois law, and defense attorneys pressed for dismissal of the charges on these grounds. Of course, Bell testified that he "did not recall making any specific instructions around wearing guns." The judge simply declared the whole line of defense questioning irrelevant anyway, because even if Bell had said what the patrol leaders allege, "the law still stands." The picture of Black men walking through a project carrying rifles, handguns and bats continues to haunt the authorities as they go after these men with a vengeance. The message is meant to be broadly applied to all the others involved. But it is a message that is not being heeded.

In other developments, there have been incidents of reactionary elements in the Atlanta area who have felt unleashed by the continuing murders. One DJ on Z93, a popular rock station, opened his morning show last week by dedicating the song "Another One Bites The Dust" to the missing and murdered children. The station management was forced to fire the whole shift after a wave of outrage met this putrid incident.

Thunderbolt—the monthly newspaper of J.B. Stoner's National States' Rights Party, and one of the most widely circulated pieces of reactionary racist trash in the country—has been running a series on "missing, murdered, raped whites." One such article completely outdid itself raising the question at the end, "How many niggers' lives are worth the lives of one white? Ten? 100? 1,000? 1 million?" It is an outright call to the social base of this paper to leap to the fore and carry out more vicious attacks on Black people. In the wake of this article (and possibly related), lynchings have been reported in Alabama and Mississippi.

Nationwide, another version of this same shit was run out at the Academy Awards when Lillian Gish, the star of the 1916 film *Birth of a Nation* (a bourgeois masterpiece of racist culture, glorifying the slave system), gave a gushing tribute to this film before she announced this year's "Best Picture" award.

This reaction in the sphere of public opinion—from the "respectable" Academy Awards to the less respectable Stoner newspaper—goes hand in hand with the unleashing of more terror and attacks on Black people in Atlanta. 23 are now dead, possibly 25. The victims continue to be branded as criminals, as reactionaries in and out of uniform lay plans to strike again. □

RW banned on Atlanta U. campus

Atlanta University officials have launched a calculated attack aimed at banning the *Revolutionary Worker* from the university. According to one professor, this is an unprecedented move at the school, one of the largest Black campuses in the country. A.U. has a long history of political activity and has never banned any other organization or newspaper. In the present period, the campus has become a hotbed of political struggle in the wake of the murders of Black youth. Several hundred students have attended a series of meetings about these murders with revolutionary speakers being cheered; the upcoming April 4 demonstration called by the National Black United Front is being broadly built by the AB-SA (Association for Black Student Awareness), and the *RW* has generated broad interest and hot controversy in the midst of the struggle. A comment by a more narrow-minded student illustrates this: "There's too much controversy around your paper, every time you come, debates rage..."

While campus security guards have taken to running *RW* sellers off campus in recent weeks, last week the Clark College (one of five colleges in the A.U. complex) president put in the call, "the communists are selling newspapers, causing a debate." Security guards and Atlanta police moved in to arrest 4 *RW* sellers and RCYB supporters from the middle of a mass debate of 100 students. The four were charged with a number of charges, from disorderly conduct and disrupting a public school, to criminal trespass. At their arraignment, the four were bound over to state court for the criminal trespass charge. The words of the chief security officer were meant for more than just this group, "don't come back on this campus ever, or you'll be arrested for

trespass." When the defense attorney questioned one of the arresting officers, the man blurted out his answers. "Why did you arrest these four people out of the 100 people who were there?" "Well, they were the ones with newspapers." "Which newspapers?" "The revolutionary newspapers."

Of course, this cop failed to mention the students they had threatened to arrest. One student had immediately held an *RW* up in the cops' faces and started yelling at them against these arrests. Three of the handcuffed co-conspirators, sprawled across the top of the police stationwagon, began calling on people to pick up the paper. A woman jumped up on the back of the stationwagon trying to get a stack of *RW*s the cops had put inside the luggage rack. She wasn't quite tall enough to reach them before the police chased her away. The pigs screamed at her, "You better not try to get that newspaper. If you try to do that again we'll arrest you." But another student got away with a stack of 60 before they could catch him.

Another of the cops testified to the impact of the debate, "There were students hanging out the windows of the library trying to hear what was happening." The impact was only heightened by the arrests and the fact that the case was bound over for trial. An A.U. professor wrote and is circulating a petition demanding charges be dropped. The Clark College radio station is broadcasting a public service announcement describing the scene of the arrests, pointing to the history of harassment of *RW* sellers and calling for money for bail. The ACLU sent a representative to the arraignment and is considering paying for the legal defense. □

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BEAT BACK THE DOGMATO-REVISIONIST ATTACK
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THE ROCKS THE CPML IS CRASHING ON

Despite the full color photo (the first of its kind, a milestone of revisionist "modernization," according to press reports) which appeared in 1978 on the front page of the *People's Daily* showing Mike Klonsky, now former Chairman of the Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (CPML), shaking hands with Hua Guofeng, apparently now former Chairman of the CCP, the Chinese revisionists for some time have had no use for their weak U.S. cousins in the CPML. And while it appears that Klonsky's fortunes have gone down the tubes along with his mentor Hua, the CPML would certainly have been glad enough to shake hands with Deng Xiaoping instead. But the Chinese had made their own belly crawling peace with U.S. imperialism and penny ante parties were an embarrassment to them at best. So the CPML, along with Hua and the high speed revisionist "modernization" drive, were all "adjusted downward." Thus, Klonsky's magic carpet franchise of tailing after the Chinese revisionists, upon which he staked his own career and the prestige of his organization, was pulled out from under.

Not only was the CPML increasingly snubbed by the revisionists, but even if they were still in good stead, the prestige of tailing the dog's tail impresses relatively few in the world today. Genuine revolutionary communists worldwide have correctly upheld the truly immortal contributions of Mao Tsetung and have taken steps to forge unity based on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought. And only two months ago, while the flopping fish of the CPML were going through the throes of their latest trauma, Chiang Ching and Chang Chun-chiao, Mao's revolutionary comrades set a truly earthshaking revolutionary example, upholding the red flag of proletarian revolution, sounding a call for revolutionaries to carry forward the struggle for communism, and inspiring millions and millions of people all over the world. If Hua Guofeng has been correctly described as a man of immense mediocrity who played the role of a scoundrel, then what words could sufficiently portray the puniness of his pale shadow from CPML?

Of course, the CPML has been busily trying to sell their own selves to the U.S. imperialists, trying to outdo the bourgeoisie in pointing the finger at the "other superpower"—the Soviet Union—and "counselling" the U.S. imperialists and anyone else who would listen on the dangers of being soft on the Soviets. But aside from a few mediocre journalists who have made their way into the bourgeois press with self-serving and imperialist-serving articles on Afghanistan, and the exploits of Cynthia Dwyer in Iran, the CPML has not had much of a calling card with the U.S. bourgeoisie. The painful truth—for them—is that they just don't have a social base that they can offer up in the service of the U.S. imperialists' war plans right now. This problem has been for the past year a subject of sharp dispute in their organization and among others in the social-chauvinist trend which has been trying for years to unite itself, including the League of Revolutionary Struggle (*Unity*) and the Revolutionary Workers Headquarters (RWH), a.k.a. the Mensheviks who split from the RCP several years ago.

It seems that recently the fortunes of Mr. Klonsky and the CPML have taken a turn for the worse, crashing on the rocks of their social-chauvinist dilemma. The March issue of their newspaper *The Call* announced that the Central Committee had been dissolved, three leading members had quit, Mr. Klonsky had resigned his post as chairman, and a new leading body had been temporarily installed at an Emergency Delegates Conference at the end of January—a frantic attempt to save their sinking ship. The essence of the debate which is

devouring the CPML boils down to this: how can these opportunists make some headway in tailing and worming their way into various social movements so as to accumulate a base of influence which they can swing to the U.S. imperialists' defense in the future? But before we examine the terms of this debate it is necessary to put this stinking little trend in the proper perspective.

An International Trend

Speaking of the influence of the Chinese revisionists internationally, the document "Basic Principles for the Unity of the Marxist-Leninists and for the Line of the International Communist Movement" points out: "while they have been widely opposed by many different forces, with varying stands and interests, they do have a coterie of sycophants in various parts of the world, and some groups formerly within the international communist movement have fully embraced the lines and actions of the Chinese leaders, whatever they are, and have gone completely into the sewer, following the Chinese revisionists. This has been particularly true in a number of countries where U.S. imperialism and its bloc are dominant: some so-called 'communists' or former communists there who have in fact given up on revolution have found that tailing after the Chinese revisionists is a convenient way to capitulate to your own ruling class while maintaining a 'socialist' cover and the backing of a 'socialist' country as capital or bargaining chips, however tattered and pitiful they may be. In general these forces are growing more demoralized and losing what influence they have had among the masses. Although it is possible that the ruling class in some of these countries may move to breathe life into them it is becoming more and more difficult to follow and parrot the vagaries, maneuverings and machinations of the Chinese revisionists, and overall these groups will continue to experience further disintegration and slow or fast death by revisionist-capitulationist poison."

The CPML pirate ship which has travelled under a false flag ever since it set sail is now floundering on the shoals of capitulation along with others of its type. A case in point of the "fast death" variety was the "Communist Party of Germany" (KPD) which one year ago dissolved in a meeting where only 8 delegates out of 300 voted to keep the Party together. In 1975, the KPD had pulled out of the mass movement against German rearmament, an important focus of radical struggles in West Germany; instead they announced that they would support West German rearmament in order to win Germany's "national liberation" from Soviet domination in East Germany and the Soviet threat to West German imperialism. Another group in this trend which for the moment has fared a bit better and is the envy of social-chauvinists everywhere is the Norwegian Workers Communist Party, Marxist-Leninist, which last year came out for an increase of Norway's war budget in parliament, called for drafting women and other practical moves for dragging the Norwegian masses into World War 3; and in return for service

the Norwegian government gave the WCPM-L state subsidy for its daily newspaper which up until then was in danger of going out of business. At the time of the dissolution of the German party we wrote in the *RW*, on May 1, 1980: "The problem lies in the fact that this kind of support for imperialism in the name of communism is getting a little hard to perform lately. For one thing, while holding together a ragtag crew under an opportunist political line is hard enough under any circumstance, the dissolution of the KPD was due *not mainly* to the internal dynamics of the organization, but to what's shaping up in the world and the speed at which it's approaching world war.

and the same tendency... The idea of class collaboration is opportunism's main feature. The war has brought this idea to its logical conclusion... The collapse of the Second International, led by Kautsky, head of the German party at that time, was a heinous crime against the international proletariat, betraying millions of workers under the leadership of these parties and internationally. And while the political line of Klonsky and the CPML is no less disgusting, they have a problem in that they are attempting to do a "Kautsky" in reverse. Kautsky and the German party had built a mass base of a million workers and had won the trust of these workers, despite the profound influence of economism in the German party, before they openly betrayed them. Shamelessly tailing the Chinese revisionists' "three worlds line," the CPML has openly taken the social chauvinist position before gaining any such mass influence. This presents them with a problem.

Trying to Rerun the CPUSA

Their opportunist line has been based on expectations of an upsurge of economic struggle among the workers along the lines of the 1930s which they

"The question of world war, of whether to stand for or against your own ruling class in this war, is a question which consciously or not has conditioned the development of all the political forces which arose in the 1970's including both the genuine and phony communists. It is fast becoming a practical question. For the KPD, so practiced in capitulation, the very label 'communist' and the existence of a 'communist' organization became an obstacle to crawling all the way into the imperialists' foxhole.

"...We realize that the unique dramatic touches of the West German Congress make it a tough act to follow. But we suspect that the U.S.'s own social chauvinists, the CPML, have enough pus and venom building up in their own rotten organization to put the KPD's suicide to shame. Encore! Encore! Encore!"

It seems that indeed the CPML is obliging, although their demise is taking on more the character of a limp flounder beating itself to death on the rocks and being consumed by other scavengers than the dramatic explosion that wrecked the KPD. Having no seats in parliament, and little influence among the masses, the CPML could not hope for the U.S. imperialists to foot the bill for their press, which has declined in publication almost as rapidly as it changed its masthead, taking the "red" out, a year or so ago, then removing the slogan "People of the World Unite to Defeat Imperialism" and changing the paper from the "Organ of the Communist Party, Marxist-Leninist" to the "Voice of Socialism in the United States." The third anniversary of their founding only two months after the KPD dissolved found Klonsky and the CPML in a glum state, wracked with dissension and fishing around for some way to avoid the fate of total dissolution.

Describing the social chauvinist parties of his time, Lenin wrote that with the outbreak of World War I, "the boil burst"—the essence of these parties and their disgusting nature broke into plain view. In "The Collapse of the Second International" he wrote, "By social-chauvinism we mean acceptance of the idea of the defense of the fatherland in the present imperialist war, justification of an alliance between socialists and the bourgeoisie and the governments of their 'own' countries in this war, a refusal to propagate and support proletarian-revolutionary action against one's own bourgeoisie, etc. It is perfectly obvious that social-chauvinism's basic ideological and political content fully coincides with the foundations of opportunism. It is one

could then swing into a 1940s CP style "popular front" behind U.S. imperialism in the next world war. They have followed the "classic" revisionist model of attempting to gain influence in the trade unions and the social movements by concentrating on the "day to day" struggles for reforms, with a bit of dogmatic rhetoric thrown in; and while this blatant economist tailing would be wrong under any circumstances, the CPML has been further confronted with the fact that the current situation is not like the 1930s. Thus while they have raised tailing the mass movement to a principle, they have been in a quandry since there has not been a big spontaneous mass movement among the workers for them to tail. Furthermore, their openly social chauvinist position is somewhat of a barrier to them among the more revolutionary minded in the social movements of today. They have been increasingly forced to downplay their line on the international situation, their apologies for the Chinese revisionists and so on, and more and more openly consider how to worm their way into the "mainstream." Thus, in a debate last summer with the Communist Unity Organization over how and when to openly and completely side with the U.S. imperialists against the Soviet imperialists, the CPML cautioned that the CUO (which argued that sooner or later this would be necessary so why not do it now and avoid the rush), was going "much farther than present conditions call for" in proposing support for American military preparations, generally supporting U.S. military expansion and the draft." (See *RW* No. 73, September 26, 1980) In short, what the CPML put forward in this debate was that now was not the time to call for the workers, oppressed nationalities and others to give up their struggle for reforms—in the "higher" interests of U.S. imperialism—that would come later. Right now, that's not a very popular position to put forward, and besides, good social chauvinists have a particular job to do which requires that

Continued on page 20

REPORT FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Below is the second and final installment in the Revolutionary Worker of excerpts from the documents of a recent Central Committee meeting of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA. Last week we ran an excerpt from a paper, "For Decades to Come—On a World Scale," by Bob Avakian, the Chairman of the Central Committee. This week, the excerpt is from a report based on the discussion at the meeting and concentrates on the questions of the alignment of class forces and the path to revolution in the United States, an imperialist superpower. A soon-to-be available issue of Revolution magazine, the propaganda organ of the Party's Central Committee, will carry further sections from the paper "For Decades to Come—On a World Scale" which sum up that a wrong line prevailed in the international communist movement on the fundamental character of World War 2 and give a basic analysis of the main, inter-imperialist, character of that war.

Two points came up together on the agenda. One is the question of what is the proletariat or the "real proletariat" in this country. The second is more on the path to revolution here. These questions interrelate and, taken together, constitute charting more of the "uncharted course" that we referred to in summing up our struggle with the Mensheviks.*

The general question here is one of rising to the tasks that are required of our Party, rising to the unprecedented task of carrying out a revolution in an advanced imperialist country like this one and, at the same time, to contribute the most we can to the international movement. To rise to this task means that we have to destroy still further remnants of economism, remnants of 40 years and more of revisionism in the international communist movement. But even that is not enough, because destroying all this is inseparably linked with making further advances in the science and its application. Could anyone imagine that the world proletariat will successfully meet the tasks posed by the coming world conjuncture without making further contributions to the development of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought? While we have to criticize what's clearly wrong in the past, more will be required of us than simply trashing a few things from some old Comintern documents, important though that is. We have to take a fresh look at old concepts—sorting out correct, incorrect and stale (that is, those that do not apply to particular conditions in this imperialist superpower). And to do so requires still more firmly basing ourselves on the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and combating opportunism—particularly economism and its companion, social-chauvinism.

In approaching these questions, as well as all that is involved in charting

*These Mensheviks (named after their Russian revisionist forbears who opposed Lenin and the Bolsheviks) were an economist clique who split from the RCP in late 1977. The struggle with them came to a head over their support of the revisionist coup in China following Mao Tsetung's death in 1976. The book *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* contains the major documents of this struggle.

our uncharted course, it is important to keep a truly Marxist approach to Marxism in mind. While stressing the continuance of "general and fundamental tasks," Lenin pointed out:

"Our doctrine, said Engels, referring to himself and his famous friend—is not a dogma, but a guide to action. This classical statement stresses with remarkable force and expressiveness that aspect of Marxism which is very often lost sight of. And by losing sight of it, we turn Marxism into something one-sided, disfigured and lifeless; we deprive it of its living soul; we undermine its basic theoretical foundations—dialectics, the doctrine of historical development, all-embracing and full of contradictions; we undermine its connection with the definite practical tasks of the epoch, which may change with every new turn of history." ("Certain Features of the Historical Development of Marxism," 1910)

First on the question of the proletariat. Since the 1976 Central Committee meeting we have taken a harder look and a much more correct line on the (related) questions of bourgeoisification and the labor aristocracy. At the time of the Founding Congress, as part and parcel of the economism there, we strongly tended to hide from the question, to dismiss it, or to relegate it simply to a question of "rolling over the top labor hacks." Since '76, and in particular since the split with the Mensheviks, we have broken with this static and economist view. But have we done enough?

Both "The Collapse of the Second International" and "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism" address this question head on. In the conclusion of the latter work, Lenin wrote, "...it is therefore our duty, if we wish to remain socialists, to go down lower and deeper, to the real masses. That is the whole meaning and the whole content of the struggle against opportunism." Earlier in the same essay Lenin quotes Engels on England, and refers to the prospect of "a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie." These and other points Lenin refers to as "the pivot of the tactics in the working class movement that are dictated by the objective conditions of the imperialist epoch." To those who are infatuated with references to "the masses" in the sense of the mainstream and who wish to cover all manner of crimes under this banner, Lenin again reminds them of Engels' approach: "Engels draws a distinction between the 'bourgeois labor party' of the old trade unions—the privileged minority—and the 'lowest strata', the real majority, and he appeals to the latter who are not infected with 'bourgeois respectability.' This is the essence of Marxist tactics!"

Engels (and Lenin) of course realized that this bourgeoisification is

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something in motion. In our case we have analyzed how it is breaking down. Engels linked all this with superprofits and the parasitism of imperialism and was clear that only a small minority of the working class was permanently benefitted from all this, while the majority experience at best a temporary improvement.

However, Lenin regarded the particular situation Engels was referring to in Britain as somewhat unique—not in the sense that the basic idea of the bribe, parasitism and bourgeoisification did not apply in all the imperialist countries. Lenin was firm in making that point. But he was a bit off about the duration and breadth of these possibilities. He wrote, "In those days it was possible to bribe and corrupt the working class of one country for decades. Now that is improbable, if not impossible."

But in fact just this situation has arisen. The Western bloc of imperialist countries, headed by the U.S., has experienced several decades of relative stability and prosperity since World War 2.

We have to examine this situation and its implications. Of course a dialectical materialist study of this should not lead us to the same conclusions as, for example, the Chinese revisionists. In their original "three worlds" article a few years back they examined this situation and concluded that it is hopeless in the imperialist countries, that the revolutionary possibilities are zilch, so the communists' "task" is to give up—or more to the point to join in the parasites' feast by restoring capitalism in China and capitulating internationally so as to assist the imperialists in as broad a portion of the world as possible. That is not at all our conclusion.

But we do have to take a hard look at the situation in order to fulfill our internationalist obligations and, as part of that, our responsibility to figure out how to make a revolution here. There is also the related fact that never before has a revolution been made in a country where the working class was a majority of the population. Today in the U.S. the working class broadly speaking (not simply the industrial proletariat) is a majority. In China it was a tiny minority. In Russia, a rather small percentage. Historically, having a majority working class has always been viewed as an advantage for the revolution. In a certain sense, it is. But isn't there some strategic significance to this fact? Isn't it more difficult to win this whole class to a revolutionary banner? Doesn't it mean we have to look at the strategic significance of the stratification within the working class itself, even within the industrial proletariat?

Even to begin to look at things in this way is going up against a strong

historical revisionist current in the international communist movement. A kind of flip side opposite of "Three Worlds" revisionism is the Soviet and Albanian type "big," "European" revisionism. It marches around under the banner of THE WORKING CLASS, especially THE WORKING CLASS of the imperialist countries. (Mickey Jarvis,** with his economism and chauvinism taught us something of this by negative example.)

This particular revisionist tendency has a long history, too, within the international communist movement. German social-democracy, in particular, seems to have been much infected by it, and spread the infection internationally due to its great influence. In praising Rosa Luxemburg for breaking with German social-democracy (she declared it a "stinking corpse") Lenin also points out (particularly in relation to the *Junius Pamphlet*) that she did not entirely escape the pervasive stench in the atmosphere. The analogy is relevant for us today, in further breaking with revisionism.

Even Lenin himself seems to have been a bit influenced by this (though not basically nor in its most virulent forms). As the '79 Central Committee Report pointed out, Mao wrote in his "Critique of the Soviet Textbook *Political Economy*": "Lenin said: 'The more backward the country, the more difficult its transition from capitalism to socialism.' Now it seems that this way of speaking is incorrect. As a matter of fact, the more backward the economy, the easier, not the more difficult, the transition from capitalism to socialism. The poorer they are, the more people want revolution. In Western capitalist countries, both the employment rate and the wage standard are relatively high, and bourgeois influence on the working people has been far-reaching. It looks as if it is not that easy to carry out socialist transformation in those countries [i.e. seizure of power]. The level of mechanization in those countries is very high, too. After the revolution has borne fruit, boosting mechanization further should present no serious problem. The important question is the remolding of the people."

By reading Lenin, one can get some idea of the prestige of the "German experience," which seems particularly characterized by massive influence in the (big) working class, even during relatively peaceful times. Even Lenin often felt he had to "tip his hat" to the prestige of the German party. For example *What Is To Be Done?* is full of qualifiers about how the Bolsheviks had to do things different from the Germans because of their particular circumstances. Most of Lenin's principles,

**Mickey Jarvis was a leader of the Menshevik clique referred to earlier, noted for his philistinism.

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we can see now, were correct in Germany as well as Russia. Perhaps Lenin could see it at the time, too, but if he did he decided not to pick that particular battle right then when people were running around saying things like "the ears never grow higher than the forehead" (apparently meaning that the Bolsheviks could never be so presumptuous as to put their experience above the Germans'). This "German" experience, actually is the experience of revisionism—in the form of the banner of "the working class" tinted pink around the edges. This must be a big part of the heritage we renounce as we develop revolutionary theory and carry out revolutionary work among the proletariat (and all classes) in this society.

While the leading role of the proletariat is a correct and important principle, it is important to examine just what is the proletariat, or the "real proletariat," as opposed to the labor aristocracy. In this country, bourgeoisification has deeply and with some permanence penetrated into the industrial proletariat, including into its most socialized sectors. This is especially true in some of the most basic or "key" industries such as steel and auto.

It would be helpful here to quote at some length from some of the preparatory material (in draft form) for the book *America In Decline*:

"Many researchers who have examined the labor force in the U.S. have operated with what has been called a 'dual labor market' model. This model posits one cluster of jobs which are more or less stable and better paying and another which are more peripheral, marginal and insecure. There is, then, a 'primary' and 'secondary' sector of working class jobs. . . . Briefly, the existence of such 'segments'—and in particular the 'secondary sector'—of the labor market means that there are many low-skill jobs in mainly non-union plants employing less than 500 people, a host of service-related jobs, low-level clerical jobs, agricultural and migrant labor, small-scale construction and some jobs in large-scale industry in which pay is considerably lower than for most jobs in large-scale and highly-unionized industry. People in this segment move from job to job more frequently, that is, from one plant to another. Those jobs put a very low premium on skill and education—and what skills, level of education and length of time workers had on a particular job paid off very little.

"These are your 'dead-end' jobs and they have been filled disproportionately by minorities, women, youth and, more recently, by 'illegals' and immigrant workers. What stands out about these jobs is that they are low-paying and offer little security—and they have been among the fastest growing sectors of the economy. These workers are less

likely to work full time and they have, as their main incentive to stay on these jobs—sheer survival. A rather extraordinary finding in one study of such jobs was that many Black workers employed in this sector saw little wage increase from the time they were in their late 20's to their 60's. . . .

"The other sector in this model consists of the more stable production jobs in large-scale and unionized industry, like operatives in transport and better paid workers in retail, wholesale, and utilities (such as telephone workers). Wages here are generally higher, the fringe benefits are more extensive, employment is more regular, and though working conditions may be either unsafe or stultifying, this is somewhat compensated by higher pay and opportunities for promotion. In these categories experience on the job is more likely to be rewarded. . . . When these more secure workers are laid off they not only have more to fall back on—such as SUB pay—but can generally count (at least until recently) on returning to their place of employment. They have acquired a stake of sorts in these jobs. . . .

"There are large—and growing—differences in average annual earnings and compensation between these segments. And the working conditions may also vary greatly between these jobs. [It is] the case that a significant section of the industrial proletariat has enjoyed not only a relatively high income but more than that a measure of stability. . . ."

This material goes on to point out how things are changing, but then specifically analyzes how: "Stability is being severely curtailed and most research indicates a 'hardening' between segments. Those entering into these secondary jobs can count on remaining on them at best; more likely they can expect to be shunted in and out of those jobs."

It goes on to make an important observation about stability. It has been the case that "a laid off auto worker is just that—an 'unemployed auto worker.'" "When these marginal workers are laid off, they are quite simply out of a job; they are not unemployed 'foundry' workers or whatever."

In addition the material concludes that while the majority of the working class in this country earn wages approximately corresponding to the value of their labor power or below, a substantial minority earns above it. And a majority in the highly socialized "basic" industries and plants above 500 workers earn wages above this level. In general, more socialized industries tend to be higher paying. (Of course, even within these industries there are also—and increasingly—dead-end jobs and workers whose job stability, etc., are much lower. This is often closely linked

with discrimination and the youth question.) As a sidepoint it could be said that if a backward steel worker wants to carry on about how welfare recipients are "sponges on working people," then a welfare mother could certainly turn around and call him out as a parasite on the world proletariat. (Of course here we are talking about analysis to serve revolution, not to serve mutual recrimination.)

In the past, while noting some of these facts, we have tended to talk about basing ourselves—at least strategically—in the "basic industrial proletariat." We have tended to operate on the assumption that all this bourgeoisification will just "break down all at once"—propelling this whole section into motion at once—to "roll over onto our plate," so to speak. This is undialectical and unmaterialist. While there is no way to predict precisely what will develop, and while we are not talking about abandoning these workers and the strategic importance of winning them over, it would be silly to believe that all this bourgeoisification (and certainly the ideological effects of long years of it) will break down completely and uniformly. While there is broad erosion of bourgeoisification, the *AID* material points out that a key form of it is the "hardening" of categories—making it, for example, much less likely that young workers will "climb their way up." The conclusion of all this is that the proletariat or "real" proletariat that will form the most reliable social base for a revolutionary line does not completely correspond to the classical "working class in highly socialized, basic industry."

This should not be surprising. The question of socialization today is not the same as 100 years ago. Today, in the imperialist countries, society is highly developed in general, the whole environment is highly socialized. This is because of the development of the productive forces and the fact, as Lenin pointed out in particular in the concluding section of *Imperialism*, that imperialism is "capitalism in transition"—to something higher. He speaks of socialization not just at the enterprise level, but, even on a world level, involving supply of raw material, transport, plans for distribution (he even says that management is socialized) and he concludes "then it becomes evident that we have socialization of production, and not mere 'interlocking'; that private economic and private property relations constitute a shell which no longer fits its contents. . . ." All this is far more important in the class struggle than how socialized a particular enterprise is. The question of what socialization means is different today. Also, between the characteristics of working in large-scale socialized industry, and having "nothing to lose but their chains" the latter characteristic is a more decisive, revolutionary characteristic of the proletariat. Not that there is nothing to socialization on this level, but who is more likely to be more revolutionary—a worker in a plant of 2,000-3,000 earning \$8-10 an

hour or a worker in a plant of 200 or 300 earning \$4-5 an hour?

Marx and Engels did not make the biggest deal out of socialization. See how *The Communist Manifesto* describes the proletariat:

"... a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

"Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labour, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack that is required of him. Hence the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and therefore also of labour [the term "labour power" was used later by Marx and Engels], is equal to its cost of production. In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labour increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work exacted in a given time or by increased speed of the machinery, etc." (I. "Bourgeois and Proletarians") (The description, which continues in this section, is all quite relevant.)

When you read these passages with the proletariat in the U.S. today in mind, what stands out is that there is a real proletariat in this country today (yes, even in parasitic old U.S. imperialism's homeland). But on the other hand, this does not, in the main, correspond to the conditions of the workers in the most highly socialized, unionized "basic industries."

For one thing this means that we should make some changes in how the Draft Programme puts this question. In the main, this document ruptures with economism, including on this question. But, on the other hand, it does not have this full understanding. On page 22 the statement is made that "The backbone of the working class and most decisive force in the proletarian revolution is the industrial proletariat—generally the productive workers (as opposed to supervisory and management personnel) in manufacturing and other basic industry, including utilities, mining, construction and transportation." This statement is wrong and is echoed in other points in this section of the Draft Programme; it is also an echoed "tradition" in the international communist movement, even its revolutionary sections. Based on the above understanding and analysis of U.S. imperialism, the description of the "industrial proletariat" as the backbone should be changed to "proletariat" and the specific industries cited should not be. Throughout this whole section on the United Front there are quite a few references to the importance of a high degree of socialization in industry, to "decisive industries" or to the "basic

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industrial proletariat," which means the same thing. All this should be changed. This is because while the industrial proletariat as compared to the rest of the proletariat is one important distinction, still more important is the question of the labor aristocracy and the distinction between the "real" proletariat we have been talking about and the more bourgeoisified sections of the industrial workers. The true "backbone" will be those proletarians who will most leap at the chance for revolutionary change as soon as the opportunity presents itself. In the main these forces will likely come from this "real proletariat" which is today a most important social base for a proletarian revolutionary line. Still, this "real" proletariat is principally made up and characterized by being industrial proletariat (though it does include other sections as well). Taken as a whole its conditions of life are more like those of a real proletariat than those of large sections of more socialized industrial workers. Of course we should not look at all this statically, and, partly to combat this kind of thinking and metaphysics generally, we should not broadly and generally use the term "real proletariat." The word "proletariat" is quite fine and should be broadly popularized. It is also scientific, since it is precisely the conditions characteristic of the proletariat that we are speaking of here.

This question of the "real proletariat" is not exactly the same as the question of "roads to the proletariat," though they are related. The "roads" question as it was raised in Chairman Avakian's pamphlet, *Coming From Behind to Make Revolution* refers to political characteristics of much of the advanced section of the proletariat. As the Chairman put it, "I think a lot of what the advanced section of the proletariat is now are people who for reasons other than simply being members of the proletariat are somewhat politically advanced." And he goes on to speak in particular of the people who were heavily influenced by the '60s—of vets, oppressed nationalities, women, as well as many immigrants, etc. While many of these people are in these lower sections of the working class, still this is not exactly the same question. In fact, quite a few of these people are also in some of the higher sections of the industrial workers and constitute an important advanced force within these sections as well. The main way in which these two questions link up is political—that is both are important in combatting "mainstream" thinking that has and will smother genuine revolutionary work—and maybe even a genuine revolutionary opportunity—under the weight of economism. The "For Decades..." paper points out sharply that "Lenin, you see, was not very impressed with the idea of attracting—or attempting to attract—a mass following on a non- (nor certainly counter-) revolutionary basis." Along the same lines, it has been said that "the majority of U.S. workers today belong in the Democratic Party." Of course this latter statement should not be taken as a guide to revolutionary work—we should be finding every avenue to raise their level and break them out of it to genuine class consciousness—it is more like Engels put it in regard to the bourgeois state of the English working class: "For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable." Engels wasn't seeking to "justify" this politically, he was simply making a hard-nosed scientific and historically sweeping analysis. Both this analysis of the "real proletariat" and the "roads" analysis are key to avoiding the suffocating economism of the mainstream and to influence the proletariat (and all society) in as broad and revolutionary way as possible—to prepare minds and organize forces for the revolutionary assault.

It should be emphasized that this should not be perverted into another recipe for tailing spontaneity. In *Struggle! (En Lutte!)* has also noted some similar phenomena in analyzing the Canadian proletariat. In a recent article in their theoretical journal they point out that the highly socialized, unionized sections of the industrial proletariat in Canada today are the most influenced by the labor aristocracy and are the least volatile today. However the conclusion they tend to draw from this is not the same as ours. They give emphasis to the relatively high level of strike activity in other, lower sections and discuss the greater potential for communist influence there.

CL (now the "Communist Labor Party"), in this country, is a good teacher by negative example about where *not* to go with this analysis. They analyzed some of these same phenomena of imperialism (though they tended to make absolutes out of them) and drew the conclusion that they should "go lower." Their political conclusion was to narrow their work to dogmatism among a handful, combined with straight out rightist, economist (and nationalist) work among these lower strata. In other words, tailism, and a way to get "a foot in the door" in the trade union movement. To say the least, our approach must be quite to the contrary. Our goal is to do all-around revolutionary work broadly in the proletariat, and all strata, and to raise the level of the spontaneous to the conscious, armed struggle for power. To us, the words "labor movement" must be a curse.

Of course giving up on the better off sections of the industrial proletariat would be silly at best. Our main concentration should be elsewhere, but even now there is a fairly broad basis for revolutionary work in this section. It would be difficult to successfully complete an insurrection and civil war without a majority of these workers coming over at some point, and some whole sections of them may even play a kind of vanguard political role. (Undoubtedly many individuals will.) Even sections of the labor aristocracy can probably be neutralized and some won over. But all this, in turn, depends on a reliable base, and this is where the importance of the "real" proletariat comes in. Even here, we must be careful to point out that we are not talking about these workers just being some kind of "first stage of the rocket" whose role is to launch the "real payload" (the workers in basic industry) and then basically fall away in significance. This, too, would be economism. These workers will undoubtedly play a crucial role today, and all the way through the overthrow of bourgeois state power and during the socialist stage. Making analysis in order to break with reformist "mainstream" thinking is one thing, while making an absolute out of categories is quite another. Lenin, right before making the point we quoted earlier about going "lower and deeper to the real masses" made this clear: "We cannot—nor can anybody else—calculate just what portion of the proletariat is following and will follow the social-chauvinists and opportunists. That will be revealed only by the struggle, it will be definitely decided only by the socialist revolution. But we know for certain that the 'defenders of the fatherland' in the imperialist war represent only a minority."

An important ideological question is involved here. The majority in this society, let alone worldwide, have no interest in this decadent, moribund imperialist system. This certainly applies to the overwhelming numbers of workers in this country. "Coming From Behind..." makes the important point that for the masses of workers things may be still tolerable, but they are not fine. What we are talking about is a section that, because of its daily condition, responds more readily to a revolutionary line and will help swing others into motion as well. We have no need for some "lonely voice in the wilderness" mentality, or some ultimately pessimist, Bundist (nationalist) lines. This analysis reveals even more profoundly the fundamental weakness of this system. Look at it through the

bourgeoisie's eyes. They have a lot to be worried about. We got a little taste of this in the '60s. One of the big reasons the bourgeoisie had to get rid of Nixon is that he had showed political weakness in the face of the masses. Nixon's weakness was the bourgeoisie's weakness, and they cannot afford to show it. The "seige mentality" often described as present in the White House during those years was real. The great thing that stands out here is that tremendous and very broad possibilities are unleashed, as further demolition is done on economist thinking in our ranks.

Proletarian revolution will not be a general strike in "decisive industries." Yes, strikes, including economic strikes, will certainly play an important role. One can even speak of "decisive industries," but not from the economist point of view of "crippling industry" or "the most socialized workers"; rather this question comes in from the point of view of supplying and winning a civil war between two regimes, and afterwards, the political and economic battle to build socialism. We are out to seize political power, not some version of the syndicalist strategy of "taking over the factories." Breaking with these economist conceptions truly liberates the real, revolutionary role of the proletariat in the process of revolution.

All this shows the close relation between the question of the proletariat in this country and the other question of the path to revolution here—its relation to the historical experience of the proletariat internationally and to the October Road.

By way of introduction to this point, we should look at what went down here in the '60s in light of what is coming up. At the height of the struggle in that decade, the ruling class was on the defensive politically. The division of opinion on the cardinal questions of the day was not at all favorable to them—even including in the working class. Now look at the possibilities ahead. What if the alignment and situation were to start off similar to the "'60s alignment," with the critical addition of a section of the proletariat in the fray from the beginning (the section we have been referring to above). Why wouldn't that be a favorable situation from which to begin an attempt for the seizure of power? A situation with all the ferment among all the classes of the '60s with a minority section of the workers in at the beginning, and playing a role in "swinging in" a wider section of the workers further down the line—precisely those who today find their situation tolerable, not fine.

The material basis for this situation is great. It was only because of the relatively greater reserves of U.S. imperialism at the time that it was mainly able to placate the workers during the Vietnam war, and that it was able to extract itself from that war before something far worse happened, including internationally. Stalin makes a similar point in the *History of the CPSU(B)* in summing up the reasons for the defeat of 1905. One reason he gives is "The conclusion of peace with Japan in September 1905 was of considerable help to the tsar. Defeat in the war and the menacing growth of the revolution had induced the tsar to hasten the signing of peace. The loss of the war weakened tsardom. The conclusion of peace strengthened the position of the tsar." (p. 94) While the analogy to Vietnam and the '60s is not exact (for one thing there was an actual revolutionary attempt to seize power in 1905) Stalin's (surprisingly!) dialectical analysis here is relevant. Looking ahead, the U.S. imperialists, as the head of an imperialist bloc in a world war, will have it "all on the line" and will not have such graceful flexibility. The more one breaks with economism and sees revolution in this revolutionary light, the more possibilities open up, the better the situation looks.

With this as background, let's take a closer look at the "path of the revolution question" and what it has in common and how it differs from the experience of the "October Road."

The "October Road" is used in two ways. First it applies to the general prin-

ciple of the need for a Leninist-type party to lead an armed seizure of power and to establish a form of the dictatorship of the oppressed class or classes. This principle is applicable universally—that is in all types of countries. The second aspect of the October Road is more specific in that it applies to the imperialist countries. Here it refers to the general strategy of insurrection followed by the setting up of a regime and the pursuance of a civil war with the opposing regime. This war, though it may take years, is principally characterized by the strategic offensive. Revolution proceeds from the cities out to the countryside. This applies specifically in the developed capitalist and imperialist countries, and is generally applicable in this country.

Beyond this there was a number of specific features of the October Road as it developed in Russia which do not in the main apply and it is necessary to break with such iron models. Lenin made a point that in October, the Bolsheviks had a majority in the working class (at least in Moscow and St. Petersburg). And in fact the insurrections at that time (as opposed to the civil war which followed) were relatively bloodless. In "Marxism and Insurrection" (written in September) Lenin argues that it would have been wrong to go for power in July because the objective conditions for victory did not exist.

At one point he lists "We still did not have a majority among the workers and soldiers of the capitals. Now, we have a majority in both Soviets. It was created solely by the history of July and August, by the experience of the 'ruthless treatment' meted out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov revolt." Lenin's second point here, which he elsewhere refers to as the workers' still lacking "savageness," underscores an important political principle about paying attention to shifts in the mood of the masses and to "turning points" in the history of the growing revolution. But to make an absolute out of the first point—the need for a majority of workers—would be a dogmatic reading of history indeed. That was not Lenin's attitude toward 1905, and here also it is important to remember the difference between the relative size of the working class in Russia then and here today. Under our conditions if we were to hinge launching an attempt to seize power, on the precondition of having achieved a majority in advance in the working class, we might well be condemning ourselves to waiting forever.

Lenin wanted to win. This we should learn from him. Especially as he saw the conditions for success maturing, he did not want to waste it in a premature attempt. All these are correct principles. But we should not cling to mechanically copying everything about previous experience. As Lenin himself put it in "Guerrilla Warfare," "We do regard it as our duty relentlessly to combat stereotypes and prejudices which hamper the class-conscious workers in correctly formulating a new and difficult problem and in correctly approaching its solution." (1906)

It should also be pointed out that what Lenin refers to as a "turning point" in the history of the revolutionary movement is often easier to see in hindsight than it is to grasp at the time. Such turning points can be missed. This, too, seems to be a law of every revolution. Lenin was struggling like hell to get the Bolsheviks to take the offensive in October. He had to threaten to resign his post, and barely squeaked by with a majority, on the Central Committee. Lenin once wrote "the independent historical action of the masses who are throwing off the hegemony of the bourgeoisie turns a 'constitutional' crisis into a revolution." ("Reformism in the Russian Social-Democratic Movement," 1911) If this is so, then its reverse can be true as well. That is *lack* of independent historical initiative (and particularly leadership of it by the vanguard) can turn a revolution into a constitutional crisis. These are a dime a dozen, relatively speaking, and are resolved by the bourgeoisie.

A general point should be made parenthetically here. It seems that historically the biggest political retreats have been sounded by communists right

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when the opportunity for advance is the greatest—i.e., the Second International, the 7th Comintern Congress, etc.

We should not worship spontaneity, least of all in insurrection, but it may also be true that we will not exactly be given that choice by an important section of the masses. In response to Plekhanov's "they should not have taken to arms" line on the 1905 revolution Lenin referred to Marx's letters to Kugelmann:

"Marx immediately (April 17, 1871) read Kugelmann a severe lecture.

"World history," he wrote, "would indeed be very easy to make if the struggle were taken up only on condition of infallibly favorable chances."

"In September 1870 Marx called the insurrection a desperate folly. But when the masses rose Marx wanted to march with them, to learn together with them in the process of the struggle, and not to read them bureaucratic admonitions. He realized that to attempt in advance to calculate the chances with complete accuracy would be quackery or hopeless pedantry. What he valued above everything else was that the working class heroically and self-sacrificingly took the initiative in making world history. Marx regarded world history from the standpoint of those who make it without being in a position to calculate the chances infallibly beforehand, and not from the standpoint of an intellectual philistine who moralizes: 'It was easy to foresee...they should not have taken up...'"

"Marx was also able to appreciate that there are moments in history when a desperate struggle of the masses even in a hopeless cause is essential for the further schooling of these masses and their training for the next struggle." ("Preface to Marx's Letters to Kugelmann," 1907) (This essay, and many others cited here are available in the collection, *Marx, Engels, Marxism, FLP*, Peking, 1978.)

We may be confronted with the situation of trying to "turn a 1905 into a 1917." The '60s have played a kind of 1905-type role in this country though as we pointed out they never got fully to the scale of a dress rehearsal struggle for power. But perhaps something that starts off looking like it will not succeed, looking as though the necessary forces are not in the fray, will require us to support it, lead it, seek to broaden it and try to turn it into a successful attempt. Involved here is the question of what kind of stand do you take to sections of the people who take an advanced stand in relation to other sections. The "real proletariat" point discussed above bears on this. So does the point made in the document "From...Toward" where it speaks of the potentially important role that the Black masses can and do play, both in their own right and as a potential lever to move others. What if an insurrection began with a sharp struggle of a section of the masses that was overwhelmingly from the oppressed nationalities starting the battle? Tailing such a section is no answer, but neither is taking the philistine, academic hands-off attitude blasted by Lenin. An insurrection is not a rebellion, or even many rebellions. But it is possible that under turbulent overall conditions, perhaps world war, that maybe the fifth rebellion could be the spark for an insurrectionary attempt. Here our work of "diversion" would be tested severely. It is not possible to say in advance that this couldn't happen, nor even that it could not succeed particularly if the vanguard carried out its work correctly.

The point is not to try to predict this with a crystal ball. The point is to challenge old, economist conceptions of what an insurrection and civil war is. We have to get away from straight-jacketing preconceptions of the sort that the enemy is 100 families and that millions upon millions will surround them (after a round of successful general strikes). In "Guerrilla Warfare" Lenin wrote, "The forms of

struggle in the Russian revolution are distinguished by their colossal variety as compared with the bourgeois revolutions in Europe. Kautsky partly foretold this in 1902 when he said that the future revolution (with the exception perhaps of Russia, he added) would be not so much a struggle of the people against the government as a struggle between two sections of the people. In Russia we are undoubtedly witnessing a wider development of the latter struggle than was the case in the bourgeois revolutions in the West. The enemies of our revolution from among the people are few in number, but as the struggle grows more acute, they become more and more organized and receive the support of the reactionary strata of the bourgeoisie." (emphasis added)

In another place in the same essay he writes "In certain periods of acute economic and political crises the class struggle ripens into a direct civil war, i.e., into an armed struggle between two sections of the people. In such periods a Marxist is obliged to take the stand of civil war."

When one adds to this picture of revolution the point made by Lenin that it is not so simple as two armies lining up, one for socialism and one against, one gets a hint of the complex, variegated nature of insurrection and civil war, and the kind of task it is to lead it. This should also intensify our desire to chase away economist preconceptions about civil war, which would doom it to failure. Lenin wrote "... a Marxist must take cognizance of actual life, of the precise facts of reality, and must not cling to a theory of yesterday, which, like all theories, at best only outlines the main and the general, and only comes near to embracing the complexity of life.

"Theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life." ("Letters on Tactics," April 1917)

To return again from another angle to the point that revolution is "not so much a struggle of the people against the government as a struggle between two sections of the people." It is certainly possible, given past history, and our understanding of the proletariat, that a big section of the masses in the battle right at the start will be Black masses. Because of this, the bourgeoisie is quite likely to slander and to rally forces to attack this proletarian struggle as "race war." (Today, in Turkey, for example, the state is suppressing the masses' revolutionary struggle under the banner of "stopping Left-Right violence.") It would be the duty of the Party to expose this, and to work to further broaden the forces. "Race War" would certainly be a lie. From the beginning there would certainly be other oppressed nationalities, youth, vets, whites in the "real proletariat" and others in the battle. And beyond that the objective class content of such a struggle would be in the interests of the proletariat of all nationalities here and internationally. And from the beginning the Party would be working to lead and to broaden the struggle. But, still, the enemy would almost certainly be attempting to attack the struggle in this way. (Once again we must stress that this is not some absolute prediction, but an attempt to break with preconceptions and give some idea of likely forces and questions that will be involved in such a complex and changing struggle as an insurrection. In any case it is certainly a much more likely scenario than such preconceptions as all the auto plants—urban and suburban—start things off by going up together. The latter could happen, but we should be politically prepared for other, more likely, events, and—above all—be flexible.)

The bourgeoisie would certainly be aided in their attempts to paint all this a race war by the actions of certain of their reactionary agents among the people—such snakes as the KKK, Nazis and others who would certainly come into the battle with overt or covert support.

It is worthwhile to study your enemy. The KKK is working the suburbs and talks about "surrounding the city." A reactionary, racist group calling itself the Christian Patriot Party is doing similar things, and preparing to fight a "race war" with the suburbs and rural

areas as their base. The point here is not to fall into the trap of thinking such forces are more of an enemy than the bourgeois state, but to understand Lenin's point about how "among the people," enemies receive support from the bourgeoisie. Such will be people through which the bourgeoisie tries to rally important sections of their social base under a "race war" (and anti-communist, anti-"foreign enemy") banner. In Germany in 1918, the bourgeois army disintegrated and an insurrectionary attempt was put down by a "free corps" which the bourgeoisie reconstituted with the combined forces of loyal army units and paramilitary rightist groups. These Christian Patriots, in a perverse sort of recognition of the "real proletariat" question, are also on something of a prison reform campaign—warning of the "dangerous element" to society that is bursting at the seams in there, waiting to exact their terrible revenge on civilization.

In doing their lying "race war" propaganda, the bourgeoisie will attempt to pick up on perceptions and distorted partial truths to get over. The proletarian Party, in turn, must combat this at every turn and seek to broaden the struggle further into an all-around and successful seizure of power by the proletariat. While, again, the Marxist principle that "nothing ever turns out quite like it was expected" applies, it is still a complex struggle like this that we must be prepared to work in and turn into a "1917."

There will certainly be those who say that such a situation is hopeless for the proletariat, does not possibly contain the seeds of successful revolution and doesn't correspond to Marxism. Lenin had some appropriate words for them:

"Apart from the fact that they are all extraordinarily faint-hearted, that when it comes to the minutest deviation from the German model even the best of them fortify themselves with reservations—apart from this characteristic, which is common to all petty-bourgeois democrats and has been abundantly manifested by them during the whole course of the revolution, what strikes one is their slavish imitation of the past.

"They all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic... It does not occur to any of them to ask: but what about a people that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war? Might it not, under the influence of the hopelessness of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that would offer it at least some chance of securing conditions, not altogether of the usual kind, for the further development of civilization?" ("On Our Revolution," 1923) Lenin went on, "Napoleon, it may be recalled, wrote: 'On s'engage et puis... on voit.' Rendered freely this means: 'One must first join a serious battle and then see what happens.'"

And in the same essay, Lenin asks if it were not also possible to envision "conditions which enabled us to accomplish precisely that combination of a 'peasant war' with the working-class movement suggested in 1856 by no less a 'Marxist' than Marx himself as a possible prospect for Prussia?"

How does this apply to our situation? The key strategic alliance in the Soviet Union was the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and peasantry. On that basis, the form of the Bolshevik insurrection and civil war became precisely the combination of a peasant war and the working class movement. In our situation, the key strategic alliance is between the struggles of the oppressed nationalities and the working class movement as a whole. Does this not have strategic implications for the path of the revolutionary insurrection and civil war in this country? Why not some form of combination of the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nationalities (which the bourgeoisie will

*Bruce Franklin was a leader of the Revolutionary Union, a forerunner of the RCP, USA. In 1970 he led an opportunist split off from that organization with a line of revolutionary adventurism, challenging the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution and echoing some of the positions of the Weatherman organization.

attempt to slander and attack as "race war") with the working class movement? This combination will exist from the beginning and will have to be broadened and deepened through the intense work of the proletarian vanguard in every sphere, including military. All this has implications, too, for our work today, which, though not leading an insurrection, is work aimed precisely at, as we have said, preparing minds and organizing forces for the seizure of power.

Is this Franklinism? No. Franklin was very empirical. He looked at what was going on in society right then and thought it would go straight ahead to revolution. He also thought that the permanently unemployed would be the basis of the revolution and that protracted urban guerrilla warfare was the military strategy. None of this was correct. Our basic answer to Franklin was correct. We pointed out the applicability of the October Road in the sense that the military strategy in this country had to be insurrection followed by civil war. We emphasized that the proletariat was the leading force of the revolution, though there was a strong (and later much stronger under Menshevik influence) tendency to mean the employed workers stably at work in large-scale industry. Franklin's line, for all its adventurism, was fundamentally quite pessimistic. In particular, he despaired of broader forces being brought into the revolutionary struggle, except on the basis of economism. There is a world of difference between this outlook and what we are talking about now, which points out the basis (and some of the methods) for unleashing the broadest possible conscious activism of the masses. If someone tried to sling the label "Franklinism" to attack this line, they would be quite wrong and another piece from Lenin seems an appropriate response. He wrote that when he saw "a proud smugness and a self-exalted tendency to repeat phrases learned by rote in early youth about anarchism, Blanquism and terrorism, I am hurt by this degradation of the most revolutionary doctrine in the world." ("Guerrilla Warfare")

It is time to break with old, economist preconceptions if we are to face the tests ahead as part of the advanced detachment of the international proletariat. To those who said "People will confuse us with the Anarchist-Communists..." Lenin replied: "It is an argument of routinism, an argument of inertia, an argument of stagnation.

"But we are out to rebuild the world. We are out to put an end to the worldwide imperialist war into which hundreds of millions of people have been drawn and in which the interests of billions and billions of capital are involved, a war which cannot end in a truly democratic peace without the greatest proletarian revolution in the history of mankind.

"Yet we are afraid of our own selves. We are clinging to the 'dear old' soiled shirt..."

"But it is time to cast off the soiled shirt and to put on clean linen." ("Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," April 1917)

With the analysis we are making, both of the proletariat and of the path to revolution, we are making crucial preparation for revolutionary activity. We are not coming up with "get rich quick" schemes or new recipes for tailing spontaneity. Instead we are engaged in ideological and practical preparation for actually making a go for it when the time is right. To even make such an effort, let alone to have a chance at success, it is necessary to break with social democracy and social pacifism and all the pre-conceived notions that a revolutionary situation will necessarily present itself to us all nice and ripe so we can pick it like a plum. In a sense we are clearing the ground of economist litter and all other obstacles so as to be able to see such an opportunity as it is arising and not to miss it. We will have to firmly grasp Lenin's point that a revolution is a civil war between two sections of the people, and also his point that when a revolutionary situation comes, it never turns out to be quite as you expected it. □

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Correspondence on Carl Sagan's Cosmos.

Several weeks ago the Revolutionary Worker (RW No. 93) ran a letter from a reader on Carl Sagan's Cosmos series and called for correspondence on the series and the scientific and philosophical questions it raised. That call read in part:

"Millions of people across the country and around the world watched Carl Sagan's Cosmos series on TV and hundreds of thousands are reading his book by the same title. The great interest in this series itself stands as vivid and irrefutable evidence that among the masses of people there is an inexhaustible thirst for science and philosophy that can advance man's understanding of nature and himself (conscious nature). The very popularity of this

show blows holes in the arguments ceaselessly run out by the bourgeoisie that the masses of people are simply too dumb and ignorant to be concerned about anything but the most narrow and mundane pursuits and, on top of that, just love being kept in the dark about such questions as the nature of the universe. Carl Sagan has himself realized that this is a preposterous lie and dedicated himself to stimulate even more of a thirst for science and to bring a generally materialist understanding of the cosmos to the masses of people in a fresh and lively way.

"While there are definite weaknesses and limits to Sagan's philosophy, it cannot be denied that the results of his efforts have been overwhelmingly

positive and his series has raised many profound and extremely important scientific and philosophical questions among the masses of people including the class-conscious forces in society. Not only are the scientific and philosophical questions that have been raised significant in their own right, they have a direct and profound relationship to the class struggle. In the interest of sharpening up debate over these questions and advancing the struggle in the area of science and philosophy, the RW is opening up its pages for debate on the Cosmos phenomenon and many questions raised in and by this series. While there is much debate and differing opinions about how to evaluate Sagan and his work—is it positive and progress-

ive? Or is it basically just bourgeois and wrong?—and while the RW welcomes a variety of opinions on this important and hot topic, the purpose of wrangling around Cosmos cannot be limited to simply passing a verdict on it, but more importantly must delve into the whole wide range of questions it has raised."

The letter below was written in response to this call and is being printed as part of furthering the struggle and debate called for in the pages of the RW. The RW does not necessarily agree with everything in the letter nor do we intend to limit the scope of the debate to the questions raised in it.

The Limits of Carl Sagan's Materialism

The Cosmos series by Carl Sagan blew into television like a breath of fresh air. Sagan let loose a typhoon of materialism, upheld the thirst of the masses of people for scientific knowledge, discussed frankly the influence of the class structures of ancient societies on the progress of science, sniped constantly at all forms of chauvinism, and even introduced some dialectics. It seems almost in conscious revenge that now we are to be subjected to a new series called "Walter Cronkite's Universe."

The strengths of the Cosmos series can be appreciated even more when we compare it to the other "scientific" books currently being foisted on the public such as *The Tao of Physics* which has already gone through five printings as a Bantam paperback and *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* which has been a book-of-the-month club offering. Both of these books argue for a "quantum leap beyond rationality" to mysticism as the only true way to perceive reality. They speak of the Cosmos also, but argue that the universe is one inseparable reality, both spiritual and material at the same time, and that human perceptions and the objects we perceive are really identical, which is another way of saying nothing really exists beyond our perceptions and sensations (straight up idealism). And rather than seeking to really unfold a sweeping understanding of the physical processes of the material world, each of them narrows in on the physics of

subatomic particles and claims that new discoveries there show a "remarkable unity" with the concepts of various mystical Eastern religions.

Also if anyone thinks that such attacks on materialism and science itself are limited to the open exponents of religious mysticism, they should check out the November 1979 issue of *Scientific American* which contains an article entitled "Quantum Theory and Reality" featuring the following subtitle: "The doctrine that the world is made up of objects whose existence is independent of human consciousness turns out to be in conflict with quantum mechanics and with facts established by experiment."

There are, of course, serious weaknesses in Carl Sagan's understanding and exposition, most of which were pointed out in the introduction and first letter on Cosmos printed in the *Revolutionary Worker* (No. 93, Feb. 20, 1981). Most important is his belief in the inherent orderliness of the universe, a concept called "Cosmos" by the ancient Greeks, which leads him ultimately to an outlook which is agnostic. Related to this, is his denial of the general existence of contradiction within matter itself, his positivist theory of knowledge, his eclectic explanations of contemporary human behavior, and his search for utopian solutions—even the intervention of higher forms of extraterrestrial life—to save the earth from inter-imperialist nuclear war.

Significantly, all of these weaknesses

are related to Sagan's difficulty in fully grasping dialectics, and hence reflect back ultimately on his ability to remain a thoroughgoing materialist. Thus, while making a generally correct assessment of Sagan's important contributions, the first letter on Cosmos fell short of going deeply into precisely those burning questions concerning dialectics raised by Sagan's efforts. These questions are by no means particular to Sagan and are of crucial significance because they must be grappled with and mastered by anyone who seeks not only to consciously understand the world but to transform it.

To begin with, how should we understand the point made in the first letter on Cosmos that "Sagan associates much of the supposed orderliness in the universe with the idea of God... Sagan argues for agnosticism rather than atheism"? The reason why this is a question is that Sagan, especially in his book *Cosmos*, quite clearly makes a conscious effort to reject the notion of a supreme being or divine creator standing outside of or above the material world. The first line of Chapter 1 reads, "The Cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be." There is certainly no talk here of god, spirit, or eternal soul. And in his description of the rise of rational knowledge among the Ionian Greeks, he clearly links the appreciation of the existence of laws of material causality with the rejection of gods as they were traditionally conceived: "a universe created from chaos was in

perfect keeping with the Greek belief in an unpredictable Nature run by capricious gods... (then) the great idea arose, the realization that there might be a way to know the world without the god hypothesis; that there might be principles, forces, laws of nature, through which the world could be understood without attributing the fall of every arrow to the direct intervention of Zeus."

The point to be grasped is that what Sagan is rejecting here is not religion but rather dualism. Dualism is the belief that there exists both a material world and also a non-material world of god, spirit or soul. Opposed to dualism is the concept of monism, the existence of a single world. Dialectical materialism is an example of a monist philosophy, upholding as it does a single material world consisting of both conscious and unconscious matter and that this reality exists independent of man's consciousness of it. But monism *per se* is also completely compatible with religion as demonstrated, for example, by the pantheism of a 17th century philosopher named Spinoza, and by Eastern mysticism. Pantheism is the metaphysical belief that identifies god with the totality of nature. In its modern form, pantheism was introduced by the Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza who argued vociferously against the idea that there was a divine creator who preceded what we call the material world. To argue that God pur-

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poses and designs, he said, was to argue that God lacks or lacked something which he needs or desires—a view rationally incompatible with the very idea of God as all-powerful! Therefore, he argued that God is but one name for the single substance whose other name is nature. This view led Spinoza to affirm that the universe is self-caused and without limit in time or space (which it is). Yet his outlook remained religious, and his difference with materialism was far more than a semantical quibble over whether to call the real world Nature or God. The philosophy of Spinoza retained the essential character of religion, the belief in inherent order, design or purpose to the universe which transcends man's ability to fully grasp yet around which man must orient his life. For Spinoza, consciousness and matter were of precisely the same substance, indistinguishably parts of a single God-Nature, rather than consciousness being the reflection within conscious matter of the material world.

Spinoza's pantheism was during his time a step toward materialism, representing a break with established religion. For his rejection of the dualist belief in a supreme being he was vilified by the established religions. While both Marx and Lenin described the metaphysical monism of Spinoza as a creative advance over the dualism of Judaeo-Christian theology and as being a precursor of French materialism, they were very clear about its idealist nature. However, the role of Spinoza was quite different from that of many who put forward very similar views after the development of dialectical materialism and in direct opposition to it. The positivists such as scientist Ernst Mach, for example, put forward an idealist philosophy that left the door open to religion, even dualistic religion, directly in opposition to Marxism during Lenin's time.

Sagan is very much a pantheist, not unlike Spinoza. For Sagan the very majesty, orderliness and vastness of the universe take on a quasi-religious nature of which the small and thinking existence of man stands in awe. And while he explicitly rejects the dualist concept of capricious gods operating on the material world from without, there is nothing in his writings which makes a complete break with religion although he generally stands on the side of materialism. Interestingly Sagan has a real fascination and admiration of Spinoza and others who played a similar role at that time. He is very much into that whole period of the rapid development toward materialism in 17th century Europe. While he is not playing the same role historically as these philosophers did and while putting forward beliefs similar to those of Spinoza in this day and age long after the advent of dialectical materialism is certainly not a progressive development of philosophy, in a certain sense Sagan is playing somewhat the role of a modern-day Spinoza in challenging all the religious and mystical crap that passes as science in this decadent and rotting imperialist society called the USA.

There is no question but that Sagan subjectively desires to be a thoroughgoing materialist. He even speaks passionately of how "for thousands of years humans were oppressed—as some of us still are—by the notion that the universe is a marionette whose strings are pulled by god or gods, unseen and inscrutable." Yet in his raising up of *orderliness* as the organizing principle of the universe, a universe in which chaos and chance are in fact overall principal over orderliness and stability, Sagan perpetuates a view of the material world which remains compatible with religious beliefs and that ultimately forces him to admit that "the enterprise of knowledge is consistent with both science and religion." This is why in discussing the random mutations, false starts, and evolutionary dead-ends of biological evolution, he can steadfastly reject the myth of a divine "Great

Designer" while at the same time admitting that the fossil record is not incompatible with a god "of remote and indirect temperament."

Sagan, then, is basically an agnostic. Agnosticism consists precisely in leaving the door ajar for religion and is not thoroughly materialist. For thoroughgoing materialism there is only the material world existing independently of man's consciousness of it, and man's consciousness consists of reflections of that real world. It is precisely in violating this bedrock requirement of materialism by seeking to make the material world a reflection of man's consciousness, in particular the socially conditioned requirement of the primacy of order, that Sagan departs from consistent materialism.

Sagan attempts to argue for the primacy of order by equating orderliness with knowability. The universe, in fact, is characterized overall not by orderliness but by disorder and change. Infinite in both time and space, it consists solely of matter in motion within which all things can be split into contradictory and opposing aspects whose unity and struggle determines both their nature and development. This motion and change is the only truly "permanent" aspect of the universe, with all things coming into and going out of existence with a motion and development characterized not by smooth, quantitative change but by leaps of qualitative change. Further, under the proper conditions, the opposing aspects of a contradiction may be transformed into one another, and in the end their contradiction is resolved only by a synthesis in which one aspect overcomes and, to use the words of Mao, "eats up" the other. This resolution through such a synthesis, however, leads only to the development of new and higher contradictions as matter continues to move in a ceaseless spiral of new development.

As a scientist, Sagan cannot help but be aware of this, at least in part. Thus in *Cosmos* he says, "The study of the galaxy reveals a universal order and beauty. It also shows us chaotic violence on a scale hitherto undreamed of." For in his discussion of evolution, he emphasizes the randomness of mutations and their sudden appearance. And in discussing the evolution of the human brain he explicitly describes the cerebral cortex as the organ "where matter is transformed into consciousness." Yet in spite of these many flashes of dialectics, for Sagan the bedrock of man's ability to know the universe around him is the existence of order. If there weren't eternal laws operating uniformly throughout time and space, what would there even be to know? How could we rationally understand the motion of the moons of Jupiter if gravity functions differently there than on earth, or if the laws of gravitational attraction changed from day to day?

Marxism answers this contradiction by affirming the existence of laws of necessity in the material world, but by also affirming that all such laws have limited spheres within which they are valid and even within these spheres they may occasionally be superceded by random events and by other laws which have temporarily become primary. This dialectical approach liberates human consciousness from the clutches of the metaphysical search for a handful of eternal and fundamental laws which supposedly explain the whole universe, and instead focuses it in on man's ability through the endless spiral of knowledge and practice to acquire ever more complete knowledge both of the world as it is and as it changes. It is this understanding that makes Marxism a *revolutionary* philosophy in opposition to the metaphysical quest for absolute and eternal laws. This is what makes Marxism the deadly enemy of all dogmatism and once-and-for-all answers. This is why Mao continually stressed the need to study the particularity of contradiction and this is why Lenin insisted that the living soul of Marxism is the concrete analysis of concrete conditions.

Yes, there are laws which govern the material world and which operate independently of man's will. But the fact that they are neither absolute, nor eternal, nor unrestricted in their sphere of operation is a reflection of the reality

that order itself is relative, temporary, and spatially restricted in the material world. A good example of both of these aspects of material laws is given by Stalin in *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. Stalin took up the question of whether the socialist state could abolish the law of value. Stalin correctly answered in the negative, pointing out that the law of value was a law of commodity production, and that while it could be consciously restricted by the socialist state it could not simply be abolished. On the other hand, he pointed out that the law of value would indeed pass out of existence with the end of commodity production itself.

But then reflecting the fact that the science of Marxism itself has not always been fully clear on these points, Stalin added, "One of the distinguishing features of political economy is that its laws, unlike those of natural science, are impermanent, that they or at least the majority of them, operate for a definite historical period after which they give place to new laws." There is more than a touch of metaphysics in this distinction. More accurately we should say that physical laws *like* those of political economy also have their domains of validity. For example, we now know that the "eternal laws" of Newtonian mechanics operate with validity only in the macroscopic range of matter and fail miserably to explain the notion of subatomic particles. Likewise the laws of Newtonian mechanics go out the window in the presence of extremely powerful gravitational fields and with matter moving at speeds approaching the speed of light.

Another example brought up by Sagan is the supposed necessity of oxygen for life. Sagan points out that the first life evolved on earth in the total absence of oxygen and that oxygen was in fact a deadly poisonous gas to such organisms. Only much later did organisms evolve which not only could withstand the presence of the new oxygen given off as a waste product by plants in photosynthesis but could even utilize it to promote their own metabolism. Ironically some hold-outs from the previous era still exist in the form of the "anaerobic" bacteria such as the tetanus bacteria which can only survive surrounded by methane gas in horse manure or deep in puncture wounds away from the air. The great law of the necessity of oxygen for life is clearly relative and temporal.

Thus man's ability to know the world about him is not contingent upon the primacy of order, and in fact, attempts to impose external order on the cosmos reflect man's attempts to impose his own subjective ideas which are historically conditioned by his social life onto the material world. And despite his own weakness on just this point, it is an important contribution of Sagan to point out explicitly the relationship of the doctrines of ancient thinkers to the class societies in which they lived. Sagan relates the rise of rational knowledge and materialism in Ionia to participation in productive labor and to the material needs of the dominant classes of seafaring merchants. He also connects the metaphysical doctrines of Plato and Aristotle which divorced thought from material practice and the heavens from the earth to the outlook and needs of a patrician class of slaveowners which had developed.

It should be noted here that the new wave of physics and mysticism books mentioned earlier also attack the question of man's ability to know the world, but from an outright reactionary standpoint in contrast to Sagan's flawed but materialist contribution. For example, in *The Tao of Physics*, author Fritjof Capra points out that rational knowledge entails extracting general concepts from experience and then declares that rational knowledge is thus "a system of abstract concepts and symbols, characterized by the linear, sequential structure which is typical of our thinking and speech... The natural world, on the other hand, is one of infinite varieties and complexities, a multi-dimensional world which contains no straight lines or completely regular shapes, where things do not happen in sequences, but altogether... It is clear that our abstract system of conceptual thinking can never describe or understand this reality com-

pletely."

Capra raised the bogeyman that "conceptual thinking can never describe or understand this reality completely" for the purpose of ushering in a different type of "knowledge," a supposedly direct experience of reality which transcends sensory perception, "an experience arising in a non-ordinary state of consciousness which may be called a 'meditative' or mystical state."

The proposition that because speech is linear (arranged in sequence, one word after the other) rational knowledge is incapable of adequately describing multi-dimensional objects or simultaneous events, is patently false as our everyday experience demonstrates. But what the author is trying to resurrect here is the old positivist assertion that because our knowledge is always only relatively complete, it is therefore absolutely incomplete—that the essence of reality is unknowable. True, at any given time, man's knowledge is relative and encompasses only a part of that which is potentially knowable. But the point is that man does possess a significant measure of absolute truth which is compounded from relative truth, and knowledge of the material world is constantly being enlarged, there being nothing which cannot eventually become known through the repeated spiral of practice and knowledge.

To sum up then, the knowability of the real world is based neither upon an intrinsic orderliness (although relative order certainly does exist) nor upon the experience of "altered states," but rather the knowability of the real world which flows from man's continuing social practice in the arenas of class struggle, economic production and scientific investigation.

Yet another issue of philosophy arising from the *Cosmos* series which bears deeper investigation is the significance of the existence of contradiction in matter itself and why its denial inevitably leads back to idealism. The materialism of the bourgeois revolution remained metaphysical and stuck in mechanical determinism, which denied the possibility of contradiction in matter. This system (of which Newtonian mechanics was the crowning achievement) sought to explain all motion and development in the material world by the application of external force. There was no room in this system for the self-movement of matter through the development of its internal contradictions. Also since every action could be ascribed to immediate and predictable external force, there was no place for chance, accidental or non-deterministic action. Further, all motion was seen as smooth, continuous and incremental, there was no possibility of sudden leaps or discontinuous transformation. And finally, man's consciousness was detached entirely from the material world and placed in a contemplative relationship to it.

Eventually all of this blew up at the end of the 19th century with the discovery of radioactivity and the investigation of the laws of motion of subatomic particles. Atoms and particles were found to spontaneously and unpredictably break apart *without* the application of external force. Electrons appeared to make discontinuous leaps to new positions. And it was found that matter and energy, two metaphysically separate categories in the Newtonian physics, were found to be convertible one into the other under the proper conditions.

Yet the fact that mechanical materialism is still equated with materialism and how that leads back to open idealism was aptly demonstrated in an article in the January, 1981 issue of *Scientific American* entitled "The Mind-Body Problem." The article correctly heaps abuse on the idea that the mind is composed of spirit independent of matter, likening this to a belief in ghosts. But then the author explains that "materialism" is also an inadequate theory because it allegedly cannot explain the established causal relationships between mental states, as for example when we think and draw conclusions by induction. How could we freely think if every action of our brain is determined by the laws of physics and chemistry? For the

THIS DISTINCTION IS NOT COMPLETELY CLEAR

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Cosmos

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metaphysical materialist, this presents a hopeless quandary. For the dialectician Engels it was however the source of some amusement. In *Dialectics of Nature* he ridicules mechanical materialism, saying that, "Last night I was bitten by a flea at 4:00 in the morning and not at 3:00 or 5:00, and on the right shoulder and not on the left calf—these are all facts which have been produced by an irrevocable concatenation of cause and effect, by an unshatterable necessity of such a nature indeed that the gaseous sphere from which the solar system was derived, was already so constituted that these events had to happen thus and not otherwise."

By contrast, the existence of contradiction within matter itself strips away the mystery of self-movement of matter and its sudden qualitative leaps in both space and form. Motion is the mode of existence of matter and the development of highly structured forms of matter with the ability of self-consciousness is certainly not unfathomable. Both Engels and Sagan, in fact, delight in describing the rise of matter through evolution to consciousness with the power of memory, abstraction and deduction.

Still, however, Sagan's failure to fully embrace the existence of contradiction in matter again limits his ability to apply a thoroughly materialist approach. This comes out for example in

his description of science itself as "self-correcting, ongoing, applicable to everything. It has two rules. First: there are no sacred truths; all assumptions must be critically examined; arguments from authority are worthless. Second: whatever is inconsistent with the facts must be discarded or revised."

Certainly there is a great deal to be united with in this statement, particularly in its skeptical approach to traditional truths and constituted authority. It reflects the rebelliousness of Sagan's materialism which is clearly a step over the line of what can be tolerated by a parasitic imperialism faced with crisis, rebellion and world war. And it is sure to draw forth a legion of hired rebuttals from reactionary scientists.

On the other hand, we should point out that there is one fundamental (if not sacred) truth, which is that all matter exists as a unity of opposites. This in turn affects Sagan's second criterion which he correctly intends as a demand that theory and rational knowledge should faithfully reflect the material world. However, expressing this in terms of consistency reflects once again Sagan's desire for the primacy of order. The plain fact is that the facts themselves are not going to be consistent and will instead always reflect the contradiction that is inherent in matter. Electrons will sometimes act like particles with all the properties of matter such as mass, angular momentum, and electrical charge which appear in our ordinary experience, yet in other situations electrons will appear with all the properties of waves, infinitely extensive in space and fully capable of diffraction and interference. Rational knowledge which

accurately reflects the material world must thus be expressed in contradictory conceptions. The demand that theory and rational knowledge be self-consistent is metaphysical and must ultimately lead to an idealist rather than a materialist view of the real world.

In the end Sagan's own quest for the certainty of order leads him to lay preconceived notions on the world not unlike the ancient Greek philosophers, and thus prevents him from fully achieving his goal of consistent materialism. This is why both Lenin and Mao laid repeated emphasis on the centrality of dialectics and the unity of opposites, making it primary in its dialectical relationship to materialism itself. Lenin developed this essential point in his outline essay "On the Question of Dialectics" (*CW*, Vol. 38). Here Lenin wrote: "In his *Capital*, Marx first analyses the simplest, most ordinary and fundamental, most common and everyday relation—of bourgeois (commodity) society, a relation encountered billions of times, viz. the exchange of commodities. In this very simple phenomenon (in this 'cell' of bourgeois society) analysis reveals all the contradictions (or the germs of all the contradictions) of modern society. . . . Such must also be the method of exposition (or study) of dialectics in general (for with Marx the dialectics of bourgeois society is only a particular case of dialectics)." Here the crucial lesson Lenin is drawing for us is that the leap to rational knowledge begins with perceptual knowledge, but it proceeds not through the simple quantitative increase of perception, but rather through the analysis of the contradictory aspects of

the basic objects of perception. It is in the analysis of the contradictions of matter itself, that its laws of motion and development are to be found.

Lenin concludes his essay by pointing out how the rejection of dialectics inevitably leads "into the quagmire, into clerical obscurantism (where it is anchored by the class interests of the ruling class)." It is in such a quagmire that Sagan ends up discussing contradictions of imperialist society in terms of the struggle between "the rational part of man's brain" and "the reptilian" part supposedly responsible for man's "aggression, ritual, territoriality and social hierarchy."

Off of this debate our attitude toward Carl Sagan, despite his weaknesses, must be one of thanking him for raising these profound and timely questions. Sagan's determination to present a thorough materialistic description of the universe can only be welcomed with open arms, and indeed we have to stand a little in awe of the fact that his television series which has been syndicated internationally has already been viewed by 3% of the population of the earth. Finally, we should learn from Sagan's attitude toward the masses when he described his *Cosmos* project as "dedicated to the proposition that the public is far more intelligent than it has generally been given credit for; that the deepest scientific questions on the nature and origin of the world excite the interests and passions of enormous numbers of people." □

A.R.

Take History in Our Hands

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ter, my teacher said that we had to say the Pledge of Allegiance before we went to class. I asked her why, and she said it was a new rule from the Illinois Board of Education. When she said to stand I said I wasn't going to. She said why, and I said, "They're just trying to get us all gung-ho for their World War 3." She interrupted and said, "Well, I'll talk to the principal about that." I talked to some of the other kids about it and they said not to cause such a stir 'cause it just makes us wait longer. Some asked if I was a commie.

The next day she said that the principal said that if I didn't stand I'd have to bring a note from my Mom saying I didn't have to. This made some of the other kids start thinking, 'cause the next day a few of the other kids didn't stand either! And some of them were the ones that had told me not to cause such a stir! Then she said, "You won't stand now, but when the Russians invade, you'll stand in a flash," which totally exposed the whole scam in the first place. I don't want to pledge to that flag, but I will pledge to the RED flag, especially now with the coming of May First, 1981. I'm talking to the kids and taking out the RCY more and getting more of the youth involved in the RCYB.

Junior high school youth,
Chicago

Vive le Premier Mai!

RCY.

The First of May is coming. For all oppressed people all over the world and in France it has always been a symbolic day, on which people go into the streets and demonstrate their eagerness to get rid of oppression and exploitation. It is a day to realize our strength and affirm it.

More than ever this period is characterized by uprisings especially of many underdeveloped countries against colonialism and imperialism. U.S. imperialism and its agents are trying more than ever to stop any revolutionary movement, and reinforcing their pressures and killings on the masses. But they can't really stop the determination of the oppressed peoples.

In France, as in America, there are many problems. These last years, with the excuse "the crisis of petrol," the government has been trying to get us to accept economic restrictions—block-

ing salaries on one hand and raising the cost of living (food and rent) on the other. It is becoming harder and harder for poor people in France to manage their everyday lives. When we look at education, it is no better. A lot of programs have been cut down and diplomas lead to unemployment. Teachers—no work from year to year.

With the economic restrictions, racism towards Arab peoples (mainly Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian) has been fostered—and repression is getting stronger.

The policy is now to eliminate any Arab foreigner from France. The workers are told to go back to their countries and students have to go over a lot of difficulties if they want to come and study in France. (For instance, an exam in French is now compulsory for entering the country.)

In the face of this let us show the imperialists our unity, let us show them we don't accept the economic restrictions, the racism, the killings in Atlanta,

the situation in El Salvador or any of the tricks the capitalists try to make us accept poverty and repression. Let us go by the thousands and millions into the streets.

It is a big event for me to be in the States for this day. It will be a great opportunity to reaffirm my solidarity with the oppressed people, no matter what country.

A student from France,
St. Louis

Blessed are the Fools—Born Again

A leaflet has started appearing recently in Cincinnati, Ohio. Many things about the leaflet are clearly aimed at countering May First, 1981, such as the timing and rally site of a march called for in the leaflet. We'd like to reprint some choice sections for our readers. It's headlined: "FOR GOD & COUNTRY

MARCH 11." The text explains:

"The march will start promptly at 10:00 A.M. If you intend to come, you must notify me as soon as possible so I may give the police the number of persons attending. . . .

"The two fold purpose of this march is:

"1. Point out to Communist Youth Brigades, that while they are looking for what they call a better government, that none will come till the Lord Jesus comes to reign on earth, when the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6 shall be fulfilled, that the government shall be upon His shoulder.

"2. To say to all Born-Again Believers—if the Communists Youth, who have no message can stand on street corners, even in the cold weather, selling their paper full of filthy words, we can and must be witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ—according to Acts 1:8 where He promises the Holy Spirit, to believers, to give them power to be witnesses for Him."

NOW AVAILABLE!

"Bob Avakian Speaks on the Mao Tsetung Defendants Railroad and the Historic Battles Ahead" is the text of a speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA delivered on November 18, 1979 in Washington D.C. at a rally of over 800 people at an important juncture in the battle to free Comrade Avakian and the 16 other Mao Tsetung Defendants, arrested on charges totaling 241 years each. The government had been forced to retreat and maneuver, temporarily dropping all charges in the case in the face of broad and very active support for the defendants all across the country. Since that time the decision to drop the charges has been overturned in federal appeals court and the government's railroad is back on track.

Comrade Avakian's speech, delivered at a crucial turning point in the battle sums up what the government was up to at that particular point in the case and goes deeply into why they are going after the RCP and why they came down so viciously on the January 29, 1979 demonstration against Deng Xiaoping's visit to Washington D.C., which the charges against the Mao Tsetung Defendants stem from. Even more significant is Comrade Avakian's profound and sweeping presentation on the objective situation today facing revolutionaries and the masses of people, the real necessity and possibility for making revolution in the period ahead and urgently preparing to do so today. Finally, he speaks powerfully for an uncompromisingly internationalist and revolutionary stand in support of the struggle of the people of Iran, who had just delivered a body blow to U.S. imperialism with the taking of the U.S. Embassy and hostages in Tehran.

Contains the text of "Iran II's Not Our Embassy," previously published as a separate pamphlet.

BOB AVAKIAN SPEAKS
ON THE MAO TSETUNG DEFENDANTS' RAILROAD AND THE HISTORIC BATTLES AHEAD

\$1.50 (plus \$.50 postage)
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or at the bookstore in your area.

CPML

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they maintain a "socialist" cover or at least some kind of mask "in favor of the working people" in order to better deceive the masses, or as Lenin put it to "throw dust in the eyes" of these workers, win them away from embarking on the path of revolutionary struggle to seize power from the imperialists, and fatten them up on reformism and economism into becoming the loyal opposition.

In his essay *Marxism and Revisionism* Lenin long ago described the likes of the CPML: "To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the chops and changes of petty politics, to forget the basic interests of the proletariat, and the main features of the entire capitalist system, of capitalist evolution as a whole; to sacrifice these basic interests for the real or supposed advantages of the moment—such is the policy of revisionists. And it patently follows from the very nature of this policy that it may assume an infinite variety of forms, and that every more or less 'new' question, every more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even though it changes the basic line of development only to an insignificant degree and only for the shortest period of time, will always give rise to one or another variety of revisionism." The economist line, which was articulated by the revisionists of Lenin's time and reiterated by the CPUSA in its earliest days, that line which holds that communists work to win influence among the masses by tailing the spontaneous movements for reform, is the line which inevitably has led to full blown capitulation to imperialism, to standing with one's own bourgeoisie in event of a war. The opportunists of the CPML who long ago renounced the possibility of revolution as anything more than a vague hope and have increasingly ceased to even utter the word "revolution," have come to this full-blown social chauvinist position, but their dilemma is that they lack capital. Good social-chauvinists must have a social base, otherwise why should the imperialists have anything to do with them?

Debate

In this light, last spring's third anniversary celebration found Mr. Klonsky opening up the pages of *The Call* to debate what was wrong with the CPML and their trend and how were they going to get out of this mess. And this editorial, which revealed that Klonsky himself was under fire, put forward that the problem of the rightist and social-chauvinist CPML was actually "ultra-leftism." Together with a major article summing up "ultra-left" errors in the CPML's trade union work, Klonsky's editorial threw the line and practice of the CPML open to criticism, posing the problem of how to better tail spontaneity without dissolving the organization. "On the one hand, the rectification of the Party's style of work must be made the central theme internally or our party will degenerate into a small, isolated sect, irrelevant to the inevitable upsurge that lies ahead.

"On the other hand, the difficult part is to carry out this shift while maintaining the independent line and political work of the Party." (And his position as the chair, one might add.) The terms of the dog fight which has erupted in the CPML and their trend and resulted in the most recent debacle do illustrate rather well, Lenin's point about endless varieties of revisionism. Actually in this case, it appears to be a debate between revisionists and aspiring social-democrats about how best to demolish the CPML.

A "Message to the Movement" written by one Jim Hamilton of the CPML in the February issue of *The Call* attacked Klonsky from the right! Not only did this "message" call into question the line and practice of the CPML, crying that "ten years of difficult dedicated mass work has yielded little result".

"neither our press nor our political approach has really 'caught on' among any significant section of the population, and they show no signs of doing so unless fundamental changes are made in our work," and the "CPML did practically no theoretical work of an original nature," but the "Message" went on to call into question their line on the Soviet Union, "Isn't there also something wrong when we insist on describing the Soviet Union as 'capitalism restored' even though no one in our movement can offer a coherent proof of that contention?" Hamilton further calls into question the dictatorship of the proletariat, "four vague words," the need for a vanguard party and mass armed struggle for revolution, three cardinal principles upheld by genuine communists internationally, and in fact, questions Marxism, itself, as a guide to... well, anything—the man obviously hasn't got the slightest pretention to revolution. The message was in effect a blatant appeal to CPML and all in their tendency to drop almost every remaining shred of their "Marxist" cover, dissolve any sort of party formation and head for the mainstream of the social movements, and an open appeal to anyone who would listen to join hands in a grand coalition and march together with them into the swamp. This was underlined in a brief exchange with John Trinkl in the *Guardian*, who criticized the "Message" for not going far enough and particularly targeted the CPML for tailing after the "three world's theory" of the Chinese revisionists. Of course the *Guardian* criticism was coming from their own standpoint of being reformists themselves and "principled" apologists for Soviet imperialism; and from this standpoint they seemed to relish sticking it to Hamilton that the "implications of carrying out this line (three world's theory) for the U.S. left is collaboration with U.S. imperialism." Hamilton's response to the *Guardian* revealed the most disgusting ability to grovel before apologists for Soviet revisionism and longstanding rightist elements in the so-called U.S. "left" and pointed the finger at Klonsky: "On the membership's part, the thinking was not that Beijing was necessarily the seat of all political wisdom. Our mistake was in relying on information, opinions and analysis other than our own." He then accuses Trinkl of "sectarianism" for making such a big deal out of the "three worlds" theory anyway. (After all kissing ass to one superpower isn't much different than kissing ass to another.) But that's not Hamilton's point—his point is that all this international stuff is really irrelevant here, and in a last desperate cry he writes: "Look, several hundred members of the CP(M-L) are ready and willing to talk, to admit our deep-rooted errors and to talk serious business about building unity. *Guardian* readers shouldn't waste the opportunity here. If you don't believe me, go out and talk to just about anyone in the CP(M-L)." What an advertisement! "Half-dead fish out of water seek others to share low tide. Will not quibble over principle. Slightly used, but still able to wiggle among the masses. Terms negotiable."

Veiled or Naked Revisionism

Meanwhile back on the rocks, the "debate" rages, and the unmistakable shadow forms of these economist scavengers, the RWH, can be clearly discerned among those flopping on the pile. Here we must admit that our previous assessment that the CPML would eat up the RWH Mensheviks seems to have been in error—for it seems that the Mensheviks have been gnawing away at the CPML and have succeeded greatly in devouring them. Frankly, however, by the time the meal began it didn't matter too much who was eating whom for there was little real substance to consume. We will not attempt to delve into the details of the internal carnage going on, since we are not privy to them at this time, although our Party is well acquainted with the habits of the puny predators of the RWH, but all signs point to their political line having gained the upper hand in the CPML. A not-too-subtle

hint for the discerning reader was the article praising the work of the student wing of the RWH in participating at a conference of student activists at Kent State. (Earlier it was reported by the *Guardian* that an alliance of "communists" defected an anti-capitalist resolution which some masses there had proposed); this article appeared right opposite the page 2 editorial in the March issue of *The Call* announcing the resignation of Klonsky as chairman, etc.

But fundamentally what accounts for the Menshevik ascendancy is that they have been in the vanguard of the economist trend, dropping all but the shabbiest pretense to Marxism since they split from the RCP. At that time, they did not want the terms of the political line struggle to focus on the revisionist coup in China, they wanted to argue economism pure and simple. Of course, they defended the Chinese revisionists right down the line, and continued to do so, but they were way ahead of the CPML in dropping it altogether as a central question. They were not anchored to the "China franchise" the way that Klonsky was; and in particular he was unhappily anchored to Hua Guofeng, which while it seemed like a free ride for a while, was merely a brief act in the revisionists' production of "Down the Road to Capitalism," and as it turned out a doomed intermediate phase which quickly turned into its opposite for Klonsky and the CPML.

In his talk "Coming From Behind to Make Revolution," Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP, speaking about the approach which has been all too often followed in the communist movement of tailing the spontaneous movements, said: "Let's look at this question in terms of what the struggle with the Mensheviks really was about, most fundamentally. It was about a lot of things, and you know it was focused around China, what stand to take toward the revisionist coup and reversal of the revolution after Mao's death in 1976. But if you look at it objectively, even beyond what even we fully understood at the time, what were the two roads that were parting company there, what was the basic dividing line? It was the question of whether or not you were going to capitulate to the bourgeoisie in World War 3, because anybody that takes the line of tailing after the masses at this point can do nothing else—I don't care what their intentions are—once you decide that's going to be your program there is no question where you will end up, you will capitulate, you will throw away the red flag and pick up the red, white and blue rag of plunder and oppression. That was the biggest crossroads we were objectively facing."

The bottom line within the social-chauvinist trend is economism and social chauvinism: on this all sides agree. In a response to Hamilton's letter in the March issue of *The Call*, Susan K. (Klonsky?) writes: "People become socialist and communist because the communists fight side by side with them for the things they need, and we fight, or should fight, in ways that bring victories. We have not yet, in my view, mastered these winning ways." In other words, the business of communists is to make the dying system of capitalism work for the masses. This viewpoint which appears in a letter in opposition to Hamilton's message, echoes very well the formulations of the old CPUSA and their ilk internationally—it has been the watchword of revisionism. And, as we have pointed out, that line which is wrong under any circumstances, as Lenin so fiercely argued in *What Is To Be Done?* and elsewhere, and as our Party has argued in upholding Lenin's line, has some particular problems getting over today.

And it is precisely from the difficulties in attempting to apply this line in the world situation today that the differences have emerged within the CPML, etc. camp. Although all sides in the debate still operate within the framework of the same rotten world view, their differences are over how to deal with the failures of this line. One side, the side represented by Hamilton—as point man—and the Mensheviks, leans toward dropping the

Marxist cover altogether. In a perverse and thoroughly opportunist sense they are more willing to "face up to" the failures of the "classic" revisionist political line. They are more in favor of scrapping the whole concept of the vanguard party (if your goal is not revolution, what do you need a party for?) and operating as some kind of social-democratic formation. The Klonsky group clings stubbornly to the old revisionist line, grappling to keep the Marxist cover, the thin veneer of dogma over reformist practice which would distinguish them from other social-democrats in the field.

Thus Hamilton argues: "In the past we have spoken of the 'cardinal' or universal principles of Marxism-Leninism. I also believe that there are universal features of Marxist thinking—including the recognition of the class nature of existing society and the need for working class political power ultimately backed by an armed people."

"But beyond these generalizations, it is noteworthy that probably no two communists anywhere in the world can recite the same complete list of these 'cardinal principles' of Marxism. And probably, no two communist groups who subscribe to Mao Zedong Thought anywhere in the world hold the same definition of it."

"What does it all mean? Mainly it means that Marxism is a much more inexact science than, say physics."

"In physics an object falls at 32 feet per second regardless of where the object is on this planet. This fact is eminently provable and agreed on by all."

"But the simple truth is that Marxists can agree on few specific conceptions even among themselves. That fact should at least tell us that the universal laws of Marxist social science mean something a little different than do the universal laws of the physical sciences. A little experimentation with such an inexact science is not out of place therefore, especially when we remember that no people have made a successful revolution without abandoning some previously-held theories and developing new applications of Marxism to suit their own circumstances..."

And in a blistering critique, Susan K. responds:

"Yes, Marxism is a science, an inexact human science. But even here, Hamilton forgets something important. True, a falling object will fall at the same rate of speed anywhere in the world—provided no external forces act upon it. You can't understand science if you overlook this interaction—whether in physical science or the science of class struggle. To forget this is to become another kind of dogmatist."

"Marxism, like every science has its laws and principles and boundaries. And its universalities. These we've got to work to crystallize, retain and adapt to our conditions. We need to become better Marxists, not less Marxists or former Marxists. Don't equate the fight against ultra-leftism with the fight against Marxist theory."

Now here are some really hot polemics. Hamilton attempts to throw Marxism out the window by comparing it to one of Newton's laws of physics, which, while it has some particular applications in scientific work, has long since been surpassed by Einstein's theory of relativity, in the realm of physics. This law of physics he argues is "eminently provable and agreed on by all," therefore is "useful" to all; it is "exact" and true, whereas, Marxism is untrue because no two opportunists in their trend can agree and every other variety of opportunism in the world has their own "revision" of it. It might appear that this guy is like the Machists of Lenin's time who argued that reality wasn't knowable and held that truth was merely "an organizing form of human experience," except for one thing. The Machists, who were certainly dead wrong at the time, were thrown for a loop partly by some recent scientific discoveries, among which was the discovery that mass is not unchanging, but it is related to energy, the atom is not an indivisible whole but can be divided into different particles and the existence of electrons also became known. These discoveries brought about a "crisis in

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physics" which exposed the limitations of certain theories which were held to be basic premises. In fact these discoveries provided further proof of the dialectics of nature, but among many scientists who did not consistently adhere to *dialectical* materialism, they were considered "proof" of the incorrectness of materialism. Further discoveries today both in sub-atomic particles and in outer space have (with somewhat less justification) fed a "crisis" of sorts in physics and a new trend of agnosticism, but that it is not even recognized by Hamilton. So deep rooted is his pragmatism that such philosophical debate does not even enter the picture. He opposed Marxism with mechanical materialism—"laws" which were challenged in the early 1900s when the "crisis in physics" mentioned above took place. In his "Talk to Sakata" Mao Tsetung pointed out:

"The world is infinite. In both time and space, the world is boundless and inexhaustible. Beyond our solar system are numerous stars which together form the Milky Way. Beyond this galaxy are numerous other galaxies. Regarded broadly the universe is infinite: regarded narrowly, the universe is also infinite. Not only is the atom divisible, but so too is the atomic nucleus and it can be split ad infinitum. Chuang Tzu said: 'One can take away half of a hammer measuring one foot long daily, but there will still be no end to it even after ten thousand generations.' This is true. Thus, our cognition of the world is also infinite and inexhaustible. Otherwise, the science of physics would not develop any further. If our cognition were finite, we would already have recognized everything, and what would there be left for us to do?"

"...Everything in the world is changing; physics is changing, Newton's laws of physics are changing. The world has evolved from one in which there was no Newtonian theory to one in which there was, and thereafter, from Newton's theory to the theory of relativity. This is dialectics itself."

But for J. Hamilton the world stopped with Newton and the revisionist Bernstein (a revisionist who openly challenged Marx); dialectics be damned. He might just as well have said, "Marxism is getting in the way of tailing the mass movement, and it is going to get more in the way when there is more of a movement, so let's avoid the rush and dump it now." Susan K. fares no better on the philosophical front although she argues to keep the so-called "Marxist" cover. Marxism she agrees is "an inexact human science": it is flawed because man is a flawed creature—we can't really know anything, there are no laws of development of *objective reality* including the class struggle, which can be grasped and applied to actually changing the world through man's conscious dynamic role. But nonetheless "Marxism" has some usefulness. And further, she takes on the argument in terms of the mechanical materialist example Hamilton has set up, to remind him that external forces—such as wind velocity—will vary the speed of a falling object. She also warns against his "straight-line" view and speaks of "economic collapse" and "world war." Susan K. is not making a vain attempt at dialectics here; what she really means is this: "Sure our trend is falling on its face all over the world, but maybe the wind will change and future developments will provide us with a mass movement to tail after, with our Marxist cover intact, if we just tuck in our sails and wait like good little revisionists. And maybe there will be a

world war, and the masses will spontaneously rally to the American flag and we can go to town like real social-chauvinists." For Susan K., the world stopped with Kautsky (a later revisionist who gutted Marx's revolutionary soul while parroting some of his words).

The "League," As Always Tails Nationalism

The League of Revolutionary Struggle (*Unity*) seems to be joining on the side of Klonsky & company in this debate. (Though whether they want to unite with the man himself is another matter.) In the March 20-April 2, 1981 issue of *Unity*, they respond to Hamilton's message, objecting to the article on the grounds that it "only fosters more cynicism and confusion." Though there has been a great deal of infighting between the League, the CPML and the RWH, and they have been unable to come to any agreement to unite in their so-called "trilateral talks," the League is opposed to the liquidationists in the CPML. Like the other two groups, they share the most profound social-chauvinism. Only one example of this, but a rather stark one, was the League's favorable characterizing of the "anti-hegemonist" stand of the Teddy Gleason's nakedly reactionary and national chauvinist ILA, which boycotted Soviet ships at the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. (This may actually be one of the few times where the League put aside their tailing after nationalism among the oppressed nationalities in favor of their "anti-hegemonist" international line, but this is not the place to examine the League's line in any detail.) The reasons they oppose the liquidationist trend are two-fold. One reason is that since their specialty is tailing the nationalist movements, which tend today to be more spontaneously revolutionary, they need to keep their Marxist cover intact and

appear more "leftist" in order to appeal to their prospective social base among the oppressed nationalities. Secondly, the liquidation of the CPML would leave them without a "Marxist" trend to be part of, and they would be just another little sect trying to adapt Marxism to nationalism and tailing the revolutionary movements of the oppressed nationalities. Their claim to fame would be diminished. Thus, in their newspaper they hit hard at the Mensheviks—obviously angry that it is the RWH and not themselves that are now eating up most of the CPML—and come out in favor of revisionist rather than social-democratic politics.

It is quite possible that this ugly and pathetic spectacle of the thrashings of this dying trend may continue for some time, with new squabbles and realignments in the future. One of the things that the CPML Emergency Delegates Conference was able to unite on was to "maintain and transform organization, rather than dissolve into a loose network of activists," and they have announced plans for a Congress. "The conference," they say, "was a step toward rebuilding organization, an organization that serves its membership and reflects their experience," (emphasis ours) which sounds like a self-serving little social club. (Serving the world proletariat and the oppressed peoples doesn't enter their revisionist little minds). And, as yet, they have not stopped using the words "Marxist-Leninist." But as Lenin pointed out about the liquidators of his time, the "hypocritical assurances that they are 'also communists' are nothing but 'window dressing.'"

Once again we say: "Encore! Encore! Encore!" for with each crisis of revisionism, more teaching material by negative example is provided for the genuine revolutionaries. □

Opening Up For War

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human knowledge," the bourgeoisie has in the past several months begun to openly use the space shuttle as a rallying cry for war. The March 29 issue of that premier bourgeoisie mouthpiece, the *New York Times*, contains a front-page article entitled, "Military Planners View the Shuttle As Way to Open Space for Warfare." The article features a lieutenant general Daniel Graham of the Alliance for Peace Through War—oops, we meant "Peace Through Strength"—and a former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, saying, "The shuttle gives us a strategic edge over the Soviet Union and their masses of missiles and submarines. While the Russians would say, 'Ain't it awful,' I say, 'Hurray,' and let's take advantage of our superiority." Leaving aside the standard bull about how the Soviet rulers have the U.S. hopelessly outgunned with their "masses of submarines and missiles," this statement is revealing exactly because the U.S. has every intention of taking advantage of its relative superiority in space—during the next world war.

The *Times* article quotes one scientist as saying, "The military use of the shuttle is going to be dominant, while the civilian uses will be minor. NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration) is going to be trampled by the Defense Dept. on shuttle use, so why not be honest about it and call it a military program?" Significant sections among scientific circles oppose the shuttle and view it as an example of the Defense Dept. butting into the turf of NASA, which is supposedly a purely "scientific" institution. (The *Times* article, interestingly, quotes from one scientist who says that many scientists' superiors have warned that those opposed to the military dominance of the shuttle "are on thin ice.") But the problem here is not one of some bureaucra-

tic invasion of NASA by the Defense Dept. On the contrary, NASA management from the beginning worked closely with the Air Force in developing the shuttle, as it always has, and has been quite useful in covering up the actual uses and nature of the shuttle project.

The real problem with the shuttle is hardly that somehow the military establishment gained the upper hand in deciding the uses of the space shuttle. The fact is that the U.S. ruling class has never been mainly concerned with some abstract advancement of science (though much general research is carried out and is necessary and desirable for them); what they have always been chiefly concerned with is using science and technology to achieve their economic, political and military aims. It is true that for various reasons they have funded and supported some basic scientific research in space such as the Pioneer, Viking and Voyager missions to Venus, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter, and a number of research satellites. While all of these are not totally unrelated to military needs, they are certainly not mainly disguised military adventures. Such projects are in fact a very small part of the budget of the space program, however, and the trend is to make them an even smaller part of it. For example, planned programs such as a probe of Halley's Comet and of Saturn have been completely cut from NASA's budget.

The use of the U.S. space program for military aims is certainly nothing new. As far back as 1965, Gemini astronauts experimented with using infrared equipment in space to track missile flights and warhead trajectories from space. The Pentagon also prepared a program to use the Manned Orbiting Laboratory project (which was later scrapped) to keep a crew constantly in space, spying on the Soviet Union.

The space shuttle has become the centerpiece of their current plans for space warfare. In the face of rapidly developing world events there is a frenzied push to get it into operation as quickly as possible. The ruling class is attempting to make up for nearly three years of delays and snafus by a massive push to

get the thing into the air as soon as possible. This has had the result of making the shuttle the least tested, most dangerous space vehicle ever launched, and in some quarters there is substantial questioning as to whether the shuttle will survive its first few flights without a major accident.

No less frantic is the bourgeoisie's push to ready a wide range of military facilities needed to back up the shuttle program and other military space projects, a second shuttle-launching facility at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California and a second shuttle control facility in Colorado. One reason for both the second shuttle-launching facility and the control center is so they could act as insurance in case the NASA facilities are destroyed by Soviet attack during a war. This entire spurt of activity is merely one indication of the speed with which the U.S. is preparing for war with the Soviet Union.

All this highlights the importance of space as yet another arena of the increasingly sharp contention of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and, contrary to the *New York Times*' front-page headline, the way to space warfare has long been open to both the U.S. and the USSR. Spy satellites have long been a key source of information on enemy missile launchings and movements by troops, surface ships, submarines and aircraft. A well publicized photo taken last year by a U.S. satellite of Soviet troops in Afghanistan showed a single soldier standing atop a Soviet tank! Military communications satellites not only provide radio contact between military forces but also put computerized information on enemy forces at a commander's finger tips. The U.S. Navy is linked to a system of navigation satellites that allows ships to know their positions with pinpoint accuracy within a matter of seconds. Even seemingly innocent weather satellites are part of a system designed to give troops, ships and aircraft instant information on weather conditions at any battlefield on the globe.

With this kind of intense military activity going on in space, it is no wonder each side is trying to devise the ways to

blow up the other's satellites. The U.S. is developing an anti-satellite missile that would be fired from F-15 fighter planes, and another program is preparing spare satellites to be launched to immediately replace any destroyed by the Soviets. The Soviet Union has just concluded another in a series of tests of "hunter-killer" satellites: satellites which hunt down other satellites and then explode, destroying the target satellites. Research is being done by the U.S. and Soviet Union to develop high-energy and particle-beam weapons which, when fired from space, could destroy satellites or explode enemy nuclear missiles in flight, before they reach their target. Finally, despite a treaty supposedly banning the use of "weapons of mass destruction" in space, both superpowers are known to be developing a variety of programs to launch nuclear warheads from or through space.

Having a manned spacecraft in orbit, or ready to go into orbit, would be a tremendous advantage in the kind of space battle which would very likely accompany an all-out confrontation between the U.S. and Soviet blocs. A space shuttle, because it is reusable and therefore flexible, is a big asset in this situation. This is why the Soviet Union, too, is developing a space shuttle system. In addition, the Soviet imperialists also have the Salyut space station program, and it is estimated that half of the Salyut stations launched so far have military missions. Manned space vehicles could most likely outmaneuver unmanned satellites, replace satellites destroyed by the enemy or repair them, and seize or destroy enemy satellites. Also, a manned space vehicle or station would provide constant reconnaissance over any section of the world during battle.

All of this is what the U.S. rulers will have in mind as the Columbia soars above the Florida skies, as patriotic music plays in the background and as the bourgeoisie sits with fingers crossed—hoping and praying it doesn't come right back down. That would indeed look real bad for such a superpower as the USA. □

COINTELPRO

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nationwide. The ruling class's Vietnam War was under heavy assault, open support for the struggle of the Vietnamese people was not an uncommon sentiment. ROTC programs, CIA recruiters and Dow Chemical recruiters were run off campuses. The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the anti-war movement had intensified 100-fold both in size and influence, with thousands of college students moving towards and taking up an anti-imperialist stance. Draft resistance and resistance in the military itself was on the rise. Many colleges became widely known as radicalizing centers as the bourgeoisie's socialization process rapidly headed toward a breakdown. The youth rebellion was raging as a good chunk of a generation debunked and rejected the sham of the "American Dream." At the same time, the rebellions among the masses of Black people had inspired and brought forward other oppressed nationalities, and all of this had a much broader ripple effect throughout all of society.

In 1968, the all-sided assault on the imperialist system continued to intensify. The U.S. was taking a beating at every turn. North Korea had seized and exposed the U.S. spy ship "Pueblo," Martin Luther King had been assassinated and rebellions broke out overnight in the ghettos in most major cities in the country (including Washington, D.C. where the flames raged only 10 blocks from the White House) and the Vietnamese people had launched the Tet Offensive. In France a general strike of workers and students erupted, while in China the Cultural Revolution was raging—both of which had a very significant influence on the struggle inside the U.S. Tens of thousands demonstrated for a week against the war at the Chicago Democratic National Convention and the ensuing police riot was broadcast worldwide. The Soviet imperialists invaded Czechoslovakia and strikes erupted at San Francisco State and Columbia University. And more and more, the revolutionary organizations from among the oppressed nationalities and the students and youth were influencing one another and beginning to work together. Revolutionary consciousness had begun to develop on a broad scale, and revolutionary organizations were formed out of the struggle throughout the country, one of which was the Black Panther Party. As the BPP emerged nationwide, with its active work in support of the international struggle against U.S. imperialism, including supporting Mao and popularizing the revolution in China, and their insistence on unity with other nationalities in the struggle raging inside the U.S., the Panthers were soon recognized as the leading force in the revolutionary movement. This was the climate that the bourgeoisie faced at the time—a climate where revolutionary forces were on the offensive and the ruling class was most definitely on the political defensive. This was the "profound political divergence" that necessitated the birth of the all-out COINTELPRO assault.

By 1968 the ruling class had considerably sharpened up its COINTELPRO program against Black nationalist and revolutionary organizations (at the same time they added a new program aimed against the "New Left"). Where the Panthers had not been considered a main target of the COINTELPRO program as late as March 1968 when the program was expanded, by September 1968 they had become the primary focus of the program. By 1971, out of 295 officially admitted COINTELPRO actions, 235 of them were aimed solely against the Panthers. In the September 8, 1968 *New York Times* FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover described the Panthers as "The greatest threat to the internal security of the country. Schooled in the Marxist-Leninist ideology and the teachings of Chinese Communist leader Mao Tsetung, its members have perpetrated numerous assaults on police officers

and have engaged in violent confrontations with the police throughout the country. Leaders and representatives of the Black Panther Party travel extensively all over the United States preaching their goals of hate and violence not only to ghetto residents, but to students in colleges, universities and high schools as well." Following Hoover's statement, a letter was sent out to all FBI offices in areas of Black Panther activity ordering them to design "hard-hitting counter-intelligence tactics aimed at crippling the Black Panther Party."

Keeping in mind their long-range goals, the government pushed ahead in "enthusiastically developing the tactics to attain them." Years later, a House Intelligence Committee "investigating abuses" stated that at the worst these tactics resulted in "careers (being) ruined, friendships...severed, reputations sullied, businesses bankrupted and, in some cases, lives endangered." However, a much more accurate picture of the vicious and ruthless tactics employed by the government in order to cripple the Panthers was painted by a man who had been an FBI informer from 1968 to 1975 (code name Othello) in an article in *Penthouse* magazine. "They (referring to House and Senate investigators) didn't know the half of it. Hell, forget about half, they didn't find out a tenth of what the Bureau was doing—and was still doing long after they had said they had stopped. Like accessory to murder, like arson, like planting of false evidence, like supplying weapons and explosives for radical groups. Like violence. Like Black bag jobs (burglaries). Like frameups. Just about anything you could think of and more." And in every one of the attacks FBI informants and agents provocateur in the Panthers or close to them played a key role. By 1969 the FBI claimed to have at least 67 agent provocateurs and informants inside the Panthers nationwide.

Leadership Targeted

In carrying out their attack on the Panthers, a key element in determining how successful the ruling class could be in crippling the Black Panther Party was the degree they succeeded in attacking the Panther leadership. In terms of the government's attack on the Black Panther Party, a highly focused attack on the leaders went hand-in-hand with the broader, more general attacks from the very beginning. In a sense the ruling class had set up a dialectic between the broader attacks and the attacks on the leadership, each one feeding the other

but with the principal focus on the leadership. The broader attacks on the Panthers laid the groundwork for and helped to create the public opinion for the specific and savage attacks on the Panther leaders. And in turn the attacks on the Panther leadership helped to lay the basis for more sweeping attacks on the ranks of the Panthers and on the masses of people. This was accomplished in a variety of ways, including through frameups, mass busts and raids, to shootouts and falsely labelling people as police agents.

One of the most infamous frameups involved the Panther 21 in April of 1969 in New York City. Roused from their beds and then held at gunpoint while their apartments were ransacked, 21 members of the Panthers were charged with attempting to blow up just about every city and government office building in New York City. Their arrests were accompanied by a press conference suddenly called by the District Attorney to spread the outrageous lie that they had been caught "with bombs" in their hands, a lie that was broadcast throughout the city on every TV station in preparation for ramming through their railroad. In addition to the outrageous bail, the 21 were held in isolation from other prisoners, tortured and beaten, refused permission to see or consult with their attorneys, continually cited for contempt and were told by one judge that since the Panthers were "un-American" the supposed laws and rights did not apply to them. Most of the 21 ended up spending a year and a half in jail during the height of the struggle.

In addition to the direct attacks on the Panthers, the government was also fond of employing tactics designed to capitalize on political differences between the Panthers and other groups, including street gangs, in order to promote violence between the groups, and "hopefully" result in the deaths of Panther members and leaders. In intensifying the tension between a Chicago gang, the Black Stone Rangers, and the Panthers, the FBI used a series of phony threats, slanders and anonymous tips in hopes that, according to the Special Agent in charge of the program in Chicago, their efforts might result in Jeff Fort, the gang leader "... having active steps taken to exact some form of retribution toward the leadership of the Black Panther Party." The government continued its work until Fred Hampton, the Chairman of the Illinois Branch of the Panthers, stated at a public forum that Jeff Fort had threatened to blow his head off. At this point the FBI, hoping to speed things

along, sent an anonymous letter to Jeff Fort stating that the Panthers had a contract out on his life.

Another more infamous incident involved the FBI playing on the differences between the cultural nationalist United Slaves Organization (US) and the Panthers in Southern California. In addition to directly instigating the killings of various Panthers by US members, this time the FBI took it a little further. Othello, the former informant, has stated that as an informant he was playing a key role in implementing these tactics and has stated that he was a witness to the Los Angeles police department supplying arms to the US organization. And more, Othello stated that he was present at the UCLA meeting that ended up with the assassination of two Panthers, John Huggins and Bunchy Carter, by members of the US organization. Othello stated that he witnessed the assassins getting into a car outside of the meeting and being driven away by a man known to him to be an FBI agent, in fact it was his own FBI contact man.

Supporters

One area of "disruption" deemed extremely important by the government in their efforts to cripple the Black Panthers was the effort to isolate them from their allies and supporters. Among many other tactics this effort involved discrediting white supporters in the eyes of the Panthers and sending out phony letters tipping white supporters as to supposed physical danger involved in supporting the Panthers, not from the government of course, but from the Panthers themselves. In this area of effort, the government was also big on instituting COINTELPRO actions against big name entertainers who were Panther sympathizers, hoping that this "would be an effective means of combatting Black Panther Party fundraising activities among liberals and naive individuals." A particularly interesting aspect of this work was the attempts by the government to discredit the Panther "Breakfast for Children Program." According to J. Edgar Hoover this program was particularly dangerous insofar as there was a very real danger of the children believing the propaganda of the Panthers. To this end the government pressured church officials and landlords to throw the programs out of their buildings, and in order to create broader public opinion against the program even went so far as to forge a coloring book put out by the Panthers and disseminated broadly among the Panther supporters. The FBI's forgery consisted of adding some pages to the original book, pages depicting children holding bloody knives standing over dead cops. The fears of the ruling class, along with their dirty tricks, stand naked.

The government also paid particular attention to trying to prevent any kind of political coalition between the Panthers and other radical and communist groups. In one instance, when the government got word of contacts between various Panthers and members of the Revolutionary Union (RU, the forerunner of the RCP), the FBI immediately set its rumor mill to work, "spreading the word among the Panthers the RU was infiltrated at very high levels by police agents."

Well aware of the importance of creating public opinion, the government launched a campaign to spread unfavorable stories and outright lies about the Panthers through their friendly media sources, that is their media mouthpieces. This ranged from planting false stories to helping to write the editorials and offering to help TV newsmen put together a series "that would tell the truth about the Black Panther Party." Often times, as in the murder of Fred Hampton, the "friendly media" was put to work to lay the groundwork for and later to justify the government's crimes. (For more on this, see *RW* No. 72, Sept. 19, 1980 "How the FBI Used the Media Against the Panthers.")

In addition to recognizing the importance of creating their own unfavorable public opinion of the Panthers, the government was especially anxious to

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SUMMING UP THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY

by Bob Avakian

"...in the final analysis, the reason for the destruction of the Black Panther Party as a revolutionary organization did not lie outside of it but inside of it. It lay not in the policies and vicious acts of repression that the government carried out—murder, harassment, jailing, hounding people out of the country—not in all that, though that played a crucial role, a vicious, crippling role—but fundamentally in the ideology and philosophy of the Black Panther Party, which ultimately determined how they responded to not only that repression, but how they responded to events in society as a whole." (from the pamphlet)

(Excerpts from a speech given in Cleveland, 1979, as part of a nationwide speaking tour.)

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COINTELPRO

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stop the spreading of the Panthers' ideas and revolutionary thinking throughout society. To accomplish this the FBI embarked on an effort to both destroy the Black Panther newspaper and to prevent various Panthers from speaking out publicly. In May of 1970 "the media action" was "deemed necessary because the Black Panther Party newspaper is one of the most effective propaganda operations of the BPP. Distribution of this newspaper is increasing at a regular rate thereby influencing a greater number of individuals in the United States along the Black extremist line. . . . The Black Panther newspaper has a circulation in excess of 100,000 and has reached a height of 139,000. It is the voice of the Black Panther Party and if it could be effectively hindered it would result in helping to cripple the BPP." At different points the government considered using the Internal Revenue Service to harass the paper to death with little known and little used tax laws, disrupting production of the paper, writing letters from ultra-patriotic groups like the Minutemen and threatening "drastic action" if the paper continued to publish, and turning the Nation of Islam newspaper against the Panther newspaper hoping to destroy both newspapers in the process. In addition to these "considerations," the government got United Airlines to up the rate they were charging for shipment of the newspaper to the maximum amount allowable (a 40% increase) and forced the Panthers to pay this amount retroactively, thereby destroying the paper financially, and in New York City the newspapers that regularly arrived at the airport intact would frequently be mysteriously hosed down with fire hoses between the time they arrived and the time they were picked up. The New York FBI office stated that they were making plans "directed against, 1) the production of the BPP newspaper; 2) the distribution of that newspaper and 3) the use of information contained in particular issues for topical counter-intelligence proposals. The New York office realizes the financial benefits coming to the BPP through the sale of their newspaper. Continued efforts should be made to derive logical and practical plans to thwart this crucial BPP operation." Some months later an example of these plans surfaced in a directive from FBI headquarters for all field offices to broadly circulate in the press, among the unions and otherwise, a column by well-known hack Victor Riesel calling for a nationwide union boycott against handling the BPP newspaper.

In conjunction with the campaign against the newspaper the government also actively worked to prevent speaking engagements by various Panther leaders. In February of 1969, Fred Hampton was arrested by Chicago police at a television studio immediately before he was to begin taping an interview. In May of 1969, Bobby Seale cancelled a speaking engagement in Oregon and Washington due to a "tip" phoned in anonymously by the FBI that in the wake of recent bombings in the area it would be far too dangerous for Seale to appear. Memos from the FBI headquarters to various field offices throughout the country all stressed the importance of continuing this kind of harassment.

The ruling class has long recognized the importance of revolutionary leaders to a revolutionary movement, especially recognizing that in order to effectively cripple a revolutionary movement its leaders must be "neutralized" or done away with. The attacks on the Panther leadership acted in conjunction with the other tactics devised by the ruling class to disrupt the internal life of the Black Panther Party, including using police agent provocateurs to spread rumors about the leadership and falsely accuse other Panthers of being informants, and contributed to the internal crisis broiling in the Panthers. In addition to this,

the ruling class played on and even created weaknesses in the internal life of the Black Panther Party and in the leadership, a factor which significantly added to their internal crisis, whose causes were ultimately political, not pig induced. The eventual overall political effect was to focus the attention of the Panther leaders on a million and one questions other than the main political questions of the time in the world and U.S. society, and thus seriously hampered their ability to lead the revolutionary movement and doing what had to be done. But more importantly, these attacks were designed to remove from the struggle as much as possible the most advanced forces in the Panthers and thus render them incapable of leading the masses of people in the further development of the revolutionary movement.

"Prevention of a Messiah"

At the time that the ruling class unleashed its attack on the Panther leadership, the social and political climate had generated revolutionary sentiment among large numbers of people. At the same time this struggle had brought forward revolutionary leaders. In a very real sense, at the time the Panthers represented the concentration of the revolutionary aspirations of the masses of people and on that basis their leaders were respected and cherished by millions. By attempting to crush these leaders the ruling class was actually attempting to snuff out the revolutionary aspirations of the masses of people and their ability to translate those aspirations into action. It was with this in mind that the ruling class designated the "prevention of the rise of a messiah" as the key goal of the COINTELPRO program.

The first target was Huey Newton, the Minister of Defense and recognized leader of the Panthers. Even though the Panthers were basically just beginning as an organization when Newton was framed for the murder of an Oakland cop, the ruling class had him pinpointed as a "potential troublemaker" and was determined to "neutralize" him by any means possible. They tried murder and failed, so they turned to their legal system. In 1967, Newton was framed for murder, held in jail with no bail, convicted on a manslaughter charge and thrown back in jail until 1970. While the jailing of Newton was a serious blow to the Panthers, it actually became more serious for the ruling class as the battlecry "Free Huey" spread nationwide and in fact spurred the rapid spread of the Panthers across the country.

As the revolutionary forces continued to develop (significantly 1968 was the year that SNCC and the Panthers announced a merger) and mount the offensive and as the ruling class continued to take a beating and suffered an increasing amount of exposure, the government turned its gunsights on Bobby Seale, the Chairman of the Black Panther Party. For over 2 years, Bobby Seale was seriously hampered in the struggle as he spent the better part of that time defending himself from outrageous frameups and traveling from jail to courtroom to jail all the way from California to Connecticut. In late 1968, Seale was indicted in Chicago for conspiracy charges stemming from the police riot of the '68 Democratic National Convention. Seale's crime was that he'd spoken during one of the rallies that week in Chicago. In 1969 Seale was extradited from California to New Haven, Connecticut, and charged with murder and jailed. Later that same year he was taken from New Haven to Chicago to stand trial. During that trial, as millions watched, Bobby Seale was bound, gagged and beaten in the courtroom and was then sentenced to four years in jail for contempt of court. He was then returned to New Haven to stand trial on the murder charge and eventually acquitted.

That same year, 1968, Eldridge Cleaver, who despite his current "profession" was then a major spokesman for the Panthers, was hounded into exile in Algeria after being charged in the shootout that resulted in the police murder of another Panther, Bobby Hutton. Cleaver was forced into exile

since, even though he had not been convicted of any "crime" but only charged, his parole was about to be revoked and he too would have been jailed.

But by far the sharpest example of both illegal and extralegal hounding of a Panther leader by the ruling class can be seen in the murder of Fred Hampton. From the beginning of his involvement in the struggle against national oppression and the U.S. government, Fred Hampton had been zeroed in on by the government as a potential "troublemaker." Even before he joined the Panthers, Hampton had earned a slot on the FBI's Agitator's Index. He had also been framed for the robbery of \$71 of ice cream. In the two years from '67 to '69 the FBI collected more than 4,000 pages, 12 volumes, of information on him. By mid-1969 Hampton was beginning to attain national prominence in the Panthers and was widely recognized as one of the most advanced of the Panther leaders; by this time he was Chairman of the Illinois Branch of the Party. And coinciding with this the government also stepped up their harassment of him, including using the Internal Revenue Service to monitor his bank account. In May of 1969 Hampton was thrown in jail after his conviction in the "ice cream frameup" and refused appeal bond. In August of '69 he was given appeal bond and released from jail. When the trial of the Chicago 8 started, Hampton organized demonstrations in front of the courthouse to expose what was going on inside. And in the immediate period before his murder, Hampton had been promoted to the Central Committee of the Black Panther Party and was being considered as the possible national spokesman for the Panthers. Immediately prior to the murder, Hampton was in the process of reorganizing the Illinois Branch of the Panthers. And on November 26th, 1969, his appeal had been denied and he stood in jeopardy of being ordered back to jail very shortly.

All of this was well-known by the government, the FBI and the other police agencies since an agent provocateur for the FBI had worked his way into the position of being Hampton's bodyguard. Still the police planned and executed a raid on Hampton's apartment on December 4th. Ostensibly the raid was to seize "illegal" guns, but the facts indicate clearly the real goal of the government—the planned execution of Fred Hampton: Twice the raid had been cancelled and rescheduled to a time (5 a.m.) when they were sure that Hampton and other Panthers would be in the apartment and asleep. At some point in the night before his murder, Hampton had been drugged and a detailed map of Hampton's apartment had been provided to the FBI by Hampton's bodyguard, FBI informant William O'Neal. After seizing the apartment and making sure that it was firmly under police control and after having killed another Illinois Panther leader, Mark Clark, wounding others and arresting all but Hampton, the police entered the room where Hampton was laying in a drugged sleep, stood over him and executed him. While executing Hampton was a key element in the government's move to wipe out the Panther leadership, the brute force and naked terror displayed in the execution was a clear attempt to step up their broader intimidation campaign.

During the same period, approximately within a month, the ruling class carried out a desperate assault on Panther leaders nationwide. Within that one month period Bobby Seale had been locked up, David Hilliard had been framed for supposedly threatening the life of a president, Hampton and Clark had been murdered and a week after their murder, the L.A. Panther office was the target of an armed police assault which resulted in the arrest of 24 Panthers, including another leading member, Geronimo Pratt. For Pratt this arrest was the first step in a calculated frameup which resulted in him spending the last 10 years in jail, with at least 8 of those years being spent in solitary confinement.

By 1971 the COINTELPRO program had been exposed. It likely never would have come to light had it not been for

the fact that some people broke into an FBI office, discovered and publicly released some files. In a publicized effort to clean up their slate and "correct abuses," the government announced that in fact COINTELPRO had ended six weeks after it was uncovered. In actuality the picture was very different. While the ruling class' need for a comprehensive COINTELPRO program had diminished with the ebb in the struggle of the masses in the mid-'70s their need to attack and destroy revolutionary opposition to their rule never ended. In fact their much ballyhooed ending of COINTELPRO was nothing more than a retuning of their "intelligence work" to meet the requirements of the times. Attacks on revolutionary leaders and organizations were still carried out, only now the routing of the reports and proposals was changed and it was done under the banner of "intensive investigation" of individual cases. COINTELPRO was the product of the necessity and desperation of the ruling class in the period of the late '60s and early '70s. In the mid-'70s it was fine-tuned but never ended. As FBI Director Kelly stated in 1975, "We must recognize that situations have occurred in the past and will arise in the future where the government may well be expected to depart from its traditional role, in the FBI's case, as an investigative and intelligence gathering agency, and take affirmative steps which are needed to meet an imminent threat to human life or property."

Given the period we are entering into—a time of worldwide political and economic crisis for the U.S. ruling class, world war, mass opposition to their rule and the existence of, leadership of and influence of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat in the U.S., the Revolutionary Communist Party led by Bob Avakian—it is inevitable that the state will once again, and in fact has already begun to do so, intensified the use of all of their machinery of repression. The experience of the government's campaign of repression against the Black Panther Party generated a feeling among many that the state was too powerful, that the ruling class could not be defeated. What this view missed was the point that despite all of the ruling class' efforts, despite the savage repression, they were not able to prevent the overall advance out of that period in the revolutionary movement. They were not able to snuff out the consciousness that had developed in that period. And they were not able to prevent the very real advances over the relatively primitive stage of development of the revolutionary movement during the '60s. And it is these very advances, particularly the organizational, political and ideological advances concentrated in the existence and leadership of the RCP, that will make a crucial difference in the period ahead, both in an overall sense and in terms of not being doomed to just repeat the experience of the Panthers in the '60s, but in fact to sum it up politically and move forward off of it.

It must be pointed out in conclusion that even with all the fierce government attacks, the main cause of the destruction of the Black Panther Party was the weaknesses in its own political and ideological line. (This even contributed to the success of some of the police tactics.) Much of this is gone into in depth by Bob Avakian in the pamphlet "Summing Up The Black Panther Party." Learning from the advances and correcting the weaknesses of the Panthers means principally adhering to and further developing the correct Marxist-Leninist revolutionary line. But an important part of this line, and one in which the history of the government and the Panthers is an excellent teacher, is being quite clear about the absolutely ruthless and dictatorial nature of this state, this "democracy," we are facing. □



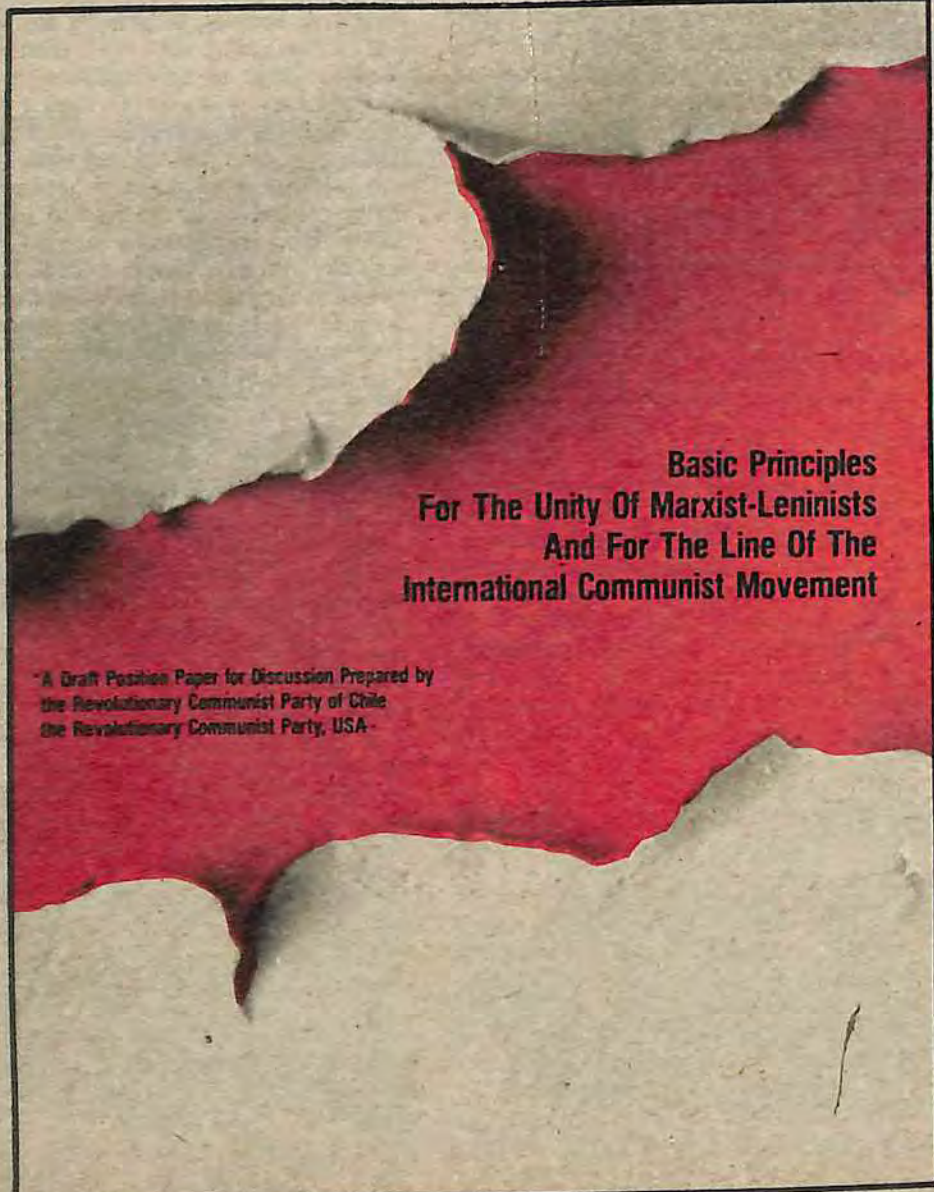
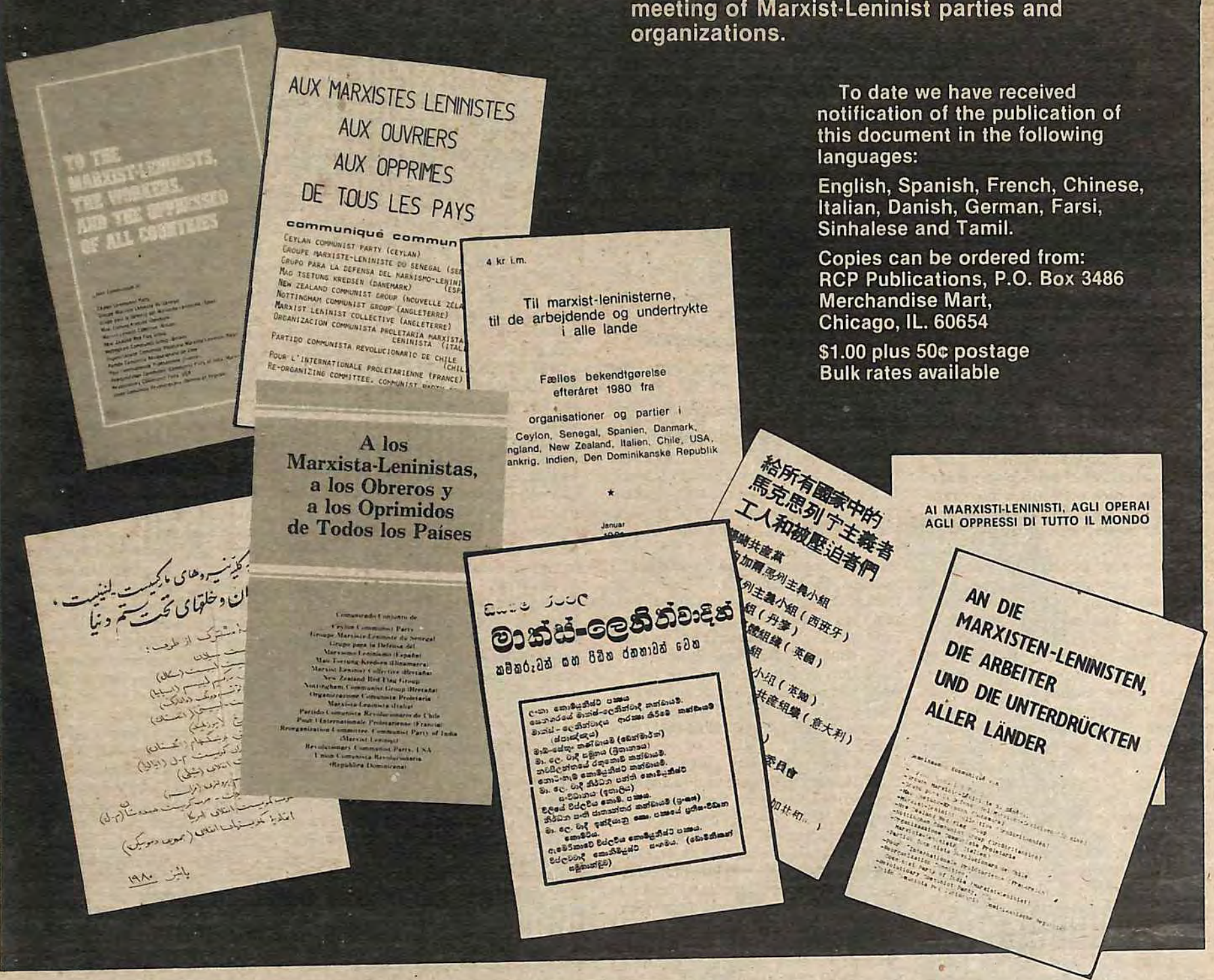
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