



No to the coverup for the Howard Beach lynch mob!

Justice for Michael Griffith!

The essential facts of the case are beyond dispute. It began outside of a pizza place in Howard Beach, a white neighborhood in Queens, New York. Three black men were attacked by a mob of over a dozen white youth shouting racist

epithets and armed with baseball bats and clubs. The black men were badly beaten. The incident ended with Michael Griffith, a 23-year old construction worker, lying dead on the highway after being chased there by the racist attackers and then hit by a speeding car.

This is a monstrous crime. Justice demands that the perpetrators of this cowardly and heinous murder must be punished to the full. But this is not to be — at least if the government gets its way.

Because the December 20 attack in Howard Beach is being followed by another atrocity, the charges have been dropped against the murderers. And all of the New York officialdom is busy covering for the lynch mob.

Judge Throws Out the Charges

From the outset, the forces of "law and order" showed they had no interest in punishing those who took part in this racist savagery. Queens District Attorney John Santucci let most of them off the hook entirely, bringing charges against only three of the attackers.

Then, on December 29, with San-



Anti-racist demonstrators march in Howard Beach, December 27.

tucci's blessing, Queens Criminal Court Judge Ernest Bianchi threw out the second-degree murder, manslaughter and assault charges on these three. They are now free on bail under the relatively minor charge of "reckless endangerment."

The D.A. and the judge have delivered a clear message. In Queens it's not murder, it's not even considered assault, to beat blacks with baseball bats and chase them to their death.

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Down with the war on Nicaragua!

The contragate criminals are guilty

As we enter the third month of contragate disclosures, the scandal remains very much alive. Every day, there are new disclosures about how the Reagan White House conducts its foreign policy. Every day, there is a fresh lesson in how the capitalist government works, behind all the fine talk of democratic principles and morality.

For one thing, the contragate exposures have shown that Reagan and the White House are a bunch of liars. For public opinion they have all sorts of pious declarations, while real policy is carried out through sordid deeds behind the scenes.

We've also seen that U.S. foreign policy is made up of bloody and unjust acts against the peoples of other lands. The U.S. government, it turns out, assists in the carnage of the reactionary Iran-Iraq war — not just by shipping weapons to Khomeini but by providing support to Iraq as well.

What's more, contragate has provided a window into the realm of the secret, worldwide, terror network which the U.S. government uses today to wage its dirty war against tiny Nicaragua. We cover details of this terror network inside.

Thus the White House scandal is providing a series of eye-opening exposures of how Reagan and the presidency operate.

But what is on the minds of the movers and shakers of America? "Credibility." That's the buzz word from Wall Street to Washington.

All the King's Horses and All the King's Men...

Can you believe that? So many dirty deeds have been exposed in the furor touched off by contragate. But amaz-

ingly the chief concern of the rich and powerful in America is: "The restoration of Reagan's credibility."

In nearly every newspaper editorial around the country, you see the same message. The lords of the capitalist

press wring their hands at the continuing exposures and at the bickering and fumbling in the White House, and then they demand in one voice — the restoration of the credibility of the presidency.

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New police-state measures cannot save apartheid!

Another wave of fascist repression has fallen over South Africa. New laws announced on December 11 and thereafter make almost all forms of mass protest against the regime illegal. The roundup and torture of anti-apartheid activists is being stepped up. And virtually all news coverage of the people's struggle and of government atrocities has been banned.

These new measures are a sign of the desperation of the Botha regime. For the past two and a half years the racists have been trying to smash the nationwide upsurge. They have murdered over 2,000 people and detained over 22,000. Numerous police powers and

press restrictions were instituted under one "state of emergency" decree after another. But despite it all, the mass revolt continued. The new restrictions aim at plugging up the few "loopholes" in the previous "emergency" decree.

The ban on news coverage will make it harder to learn about what is happening in South Africa, at least until a vigorous underground press develops in South Africa and is smuggled abroad. But the struggle will go on. The regime can close its eyes, but reality won't go away. □

See pages 8-9 for more on South Africa.

New Year's editorial

The new year is upon us. And if we are to learn from the past year to prepare ourselves for the future, then the single most important task is to learn how to step up the fight against Reaganite reaction.

Reagan's House of Cards

This time last year the overwhelming opinion of the big time journalists and

politicians was that Reagan was invincible. This is the Reagan Era we were told. The era of the strong president, of America standing tall, of recovery and economic prosperity.

But in just the last two short months, the wave of euphoria has crested and the "teflon president" has been left wading up to his ears in damage control.

The contragate scandal has not

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"English only" tramples on the rights of the Latino and other working people

In its racist crusade against the immigrants the capitalist ruling class is covering all the bases.

Behind the lie that the "illegal aliens" are to blame for unemployment, it has set up the new Simpson-Rodino immigration law to further persecute, arrest and deport undocumented workers.

Behind the lie that immigrants are to

blame for crime and drugs, it is escalating the buildup of the Border Patrol police and its brutality against Mexicans along the border.

And behind the lie that the use of different languages is "divisive" and "threatens America," it has launched a racist crusade to trample on bilingual education and the language rights of immigrants and non-English speaking

workers.

This "English Only" crusade gained ground with the passage this November of Proposition 63 in California, which makes English the "official language" of the state. To sneak it by the voters, Proposition 63 was advertised as something harmless to foster "tolerance" and "understanding" through the use of a common language. With this soft

sell they dished out a heavy dose of racist poison aimed at dividing the workers and trampling on the Latino and other working masses.

What Does English as "Official Language" Mean?

The passage of Proposition 63 is being declared as a mandate for a wholesale offensive against the use of other languages. State legislators are lining up with their bills to wipe out Spanish and other languages from election ballots, driving tests, street signs, and applications for educational and social services. State lawyers are looking into whether the law will mean doing away with bilingual 911 emergency information, health services, and court translators.

Backers of "English Only" are also pushing for enforcement in the private sector. They are seeking to pull the licenses on Spanish and other foreign language radio stations, and they are devising bans on non-English advertising.

The wording of Proposition 63 requires the state to "preserve and enhance the role of English" and opens the way for lawsuits against any measures that "diminish or ignore" English. In other words, every immigrant-baiter with enough money to hire a lawyer can file a lawsuit to vent his spleen against the immigrants and languages he hates most. Win or lose, such lawsuits will feed a steady stream of anti-Mexican, anti-Asian and anti-"foreigner" propaganda.

Part of a Nationwide "English Only" Campaign

Proposition 63 was pushed by a group called California English, which is part of a slick and well-funded lobbying outfit called U.S. English. They are boasting their victory in California as a giant step towards gaining their national agenda. Six other states have already passed similar laws and they are pending in over 20 other states. But they are touting California, with its large Latino and Asian communities, as the "trendsetter" in language bigotry.

The U.S. English organization is pushing for a constitutional amendment to make English the "official" national language. And, along with like-thinking officials in the Reagan administration, they have made federal laws mandating bilingual education a special target. They are also after bilingual ballots presently required where there are large numbers of Spanish or other language voters.

There are also plans for banning Spanish and other languages in the private sector. In Dade County, Florida, with its big Latino community, they pushed through an "English Only" ordinance which demanded the use of English on storefront and other public advertising. (Apparently this ordinance remains a dead letter because it is both highly unpopular and hard to enforce.) U.S. English lobbyists also targeted McDonald's and Burger King for posting Spanish-language menus. And in California they attacked Pacific Telephone for the "unpatriotic" act of producing Spanish advertising in the Yellow Pages.

The guiding spirit and honorary chairman of U.S. English is former Senator S.I. Hayakawa. As the president of San Francisco State College in the late 1960's, he made quite a name for himself as a racist diehard. His boss, then governor Ronald Reagan, was cracking the whip against the student movement. In 1968-9, Hayakawa did his part by dispatching the police against student

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See "ENGLISH ONLY"

CIA Off Campus!

Over the past month and a half, students at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and the University of Colorado have waged spirited struggles against CIA recruitment on their campuses. The students are well aware of the CIA's notorious history of terror and murder. They know the CIA's role in the installing of the Shah of Iran, the toppling of Allende in Chile, the invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, etc. Moreover, the students know that today

the CIA is directing the brutal contra war against Nicaragua and committing a thousand other crimes against the world's toilers. This is why the students are rising up to demand "CIA Off Campus!"

At the University of Massachusetts-Amherst

The protests at the University of Massachusetts began in early November

and carried into December. The first wave of protests reached a head on November 14. On that day a CIA recruitment effort at the campus career center was canceled when 60 demonstrators showed up. But the administration had in the meantime set up the CIA interviews at a secret location.

In response, some 40 students took over an office in the administration building. The students called for a ban on CIA recruitment on campus along with other demands. The university called in the police and 11 students were arrested. As the arrested students were put on a bus, a group of 75 students gathered to support those arrested.

The next big confrontation was on November 24. Following a mass rally, 500 people marched to the administration building. One hundred and fifty protesters occupied the nearby public information building. The CIA-loving administration went into a frenzy, calling in a force of about 90 state and campus police to attack the building occupiers. The police thugs beat many demonstrators, severely injuring one. Sixty people were arrested.

But the administration's iron fist policy did not stop the students. On December 4th, 1,200 people rallied and marched on the administration building. This rally not only denounced CIA recruitment but also hit at racism at the university. Students contrasted the harsh stand of the administration toward anti-CIA protesters to the soft stand taken toward 15 white students involved in beating a black student unconscious in early October. While the protesters had faced police raids and jail, the administration had tried to hush up the news of the racist attack.

At the University of Colorado

The University of Colorado at Boulder has also been the scene of anti-CIA actions. On November 17 some 300 demonstrators attempted to prevent CIA recruitment interviews at the school's conference and basketball facilities. The university had gathered 125 cops in full riot gear to suppress the demonstrators.

While the interviews were going on, students tried to tear down a chain link fence surrounding the interview facility. Thereupon the police viciously assaulted the students, spraying them with mace and hitting them with nightsticks. As well, 15 students were arrested.

This anti-CIA action followed a series of anti-CIA events in Boulder. This included a protest against Mario Calero, an official of the CIA-organized contra waging war on Nicaragua. When Calero spoke at the university, about 35 people (three-quarters of the audience!) attempted to make a citizen's arrest on him.

Although the police halted the November 17 actions, the anti-CIA protests are bound to continue. Since April 1985, several such protests have been held at the university. Six hundred and eighty-eight arrests so far have not deterred the students' will to continue.



Anti-CIA protest march at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), November 24.



University of Colorado demonstrators face off with police thugs.

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Employer sanctions against the undocumented

A reactionary challenge to all working people

The new Immigration Reform Act (Simpson-Rodino Bill) is a brutal, racist measure. Its implications are far reaching and dangerous. Below we continue our examination of what this bill is all about. The bill has two main parts: "legalization" or "amnesty" for a small number of the undocumented immigrants; and employer sanctions against hiring the undocumented. In our last issue we looked at the "amnesty trap." Here we look at the meaning of employer sanctions for the immigrants and the workers' movement.

Turning Employers into an Arm of the INS

The stated purpose of employer sanctions is to deprive the undocumented workers of employment and a livelihood. This is to be done by requiring employers to check the documents of all job applicants to verify that they are working in this country legally.

In June, penalties will go into effect for employers who fail to do so. For twelve months after that violators will be given a warning for the first offense. Later, first offenders will face fines (\$250 to \$2,000), while repeat offenders can face criminal penalties and up to six months in jail.

In effect, employer sanctions turn the employers into arms of the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service). They will become one of the principal enforcers of the government's sadistic campaign aimed at imposing hunger and despair on millions of immigrant workers.

Pitting Worker Against Worker

Employer sanctions are also a sly scheme for pitting worker against worker. Every work place is supposed to be drawn into the witch hunt for "illegals." The non-immigrant workers are being told that it is in their best interest to help in the enforcement of these sanctions against their foreign-born class brothers and sisters.

A section of the trade union bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO loudly repeat this lie. These labor hacks are some of the biggest mouthpieces for the racist campaign against immigrants for allegedly "stealing jobs from American workers." With this lie they are playing right into the "divide and conquer" schemes aimed at breaking up the joint struggle of all the workers against the attacks of the employers, including the fight for jobs.

Driving the "Illegals" Deeper Underground

What then will happen to the "undocumented" workers? Millions have families and children and other ties and commitments in this country. And millions have nowhere to go. (Joining the ranks of the tens of thousands of victims of the Salvadoran or Guatemalan death squads, or joining the ranks of the hungry in Mexico, are hardly options.)

So most of the "undocumented" are not about to gack their bags. They will stay, only to be driven further into their underground existence of super-exploitation.

Many employers will close their doors to the undocumented. Others, however, will continue to hire them, not out of charity, but to work them to the bone, often at subminimum wages. Only now they will also do their damndest to take the cost of the risk of penalties out of the hides of the workers.

Employers will demand that the undocumented accept even lower wages and more inhuman working conditions in exchange for the risk of being hired. Companies will also resort to the use of bloodbuckling, subcontractors and other schemes to protect themselves from

penalties.

The net result is that the undocumented will be trapped even more firmly in attic sweatshops, basement kitchens, and miserable day labor. Frozen out of many of the more bearable jobs they will be left at the mercy of the

most cut-throat and brutal exploiters.

Discrimination Against All "Foreign-Looking" Workers

Employer sanctions are a powerful

signal for across the board discrimination against all immigrants and even those who may only "look foreign" or speak English with an accent.

When Ronald Reagan signed the new

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See SANCTIONS

Chicago: In the streets against the new immigration law

On Saturday, December 13, over 150 people marched in a lively demonstration through the largely Hispanic Pilsen district of Chicago. The marchers denounced the new Simpson-Rodino immigration law and called for defending the rights of immigrants. The demonstration was enthusiastically greeted by the masses in the streets.

The events were organized by the Committee in Defense of the Immigrants. The Chicago Branch of the MLP participated in the work of the Committee to organize the demonstration and widely distributed *Chicago Workers' Voice* which denounced the anti-immigrant attacks and called for mass actions.

The demonstrators shouted in Spanish: "INS no, jobs yes! No to discrimination! No raids, no deportations! Immigrant workers, to the struggle! Full rights to the immigrant workers! Simpson-Rodino, no! Republican politicians, no! Democratic politicians, no! Immigrant workers, to the struggle!"

At a rally following the march, speakers denounced the reactionary Simpson-Rodino law. Activists at the march and rally had lively discussions

on how to further organize and develop the fight.

The passage of the Simpson-Rodino bill is a challenge to all working and progressive people. As soon as the bill became law, reports began flowing in of the escalation of the persecution of workers from Mexico and other lands. There have been reports from several cities of discriminatory firings of "foreign-looking" workers. In Chicago, the city's Human Relations Commission has been receiving some 15 complaints a day from minority residents who have been fired or threatened with firing as a result of the law. And Asian and Pacific Island immigrant workers on the West Coast are reporting firings and employment discrimination due to the new law.

The struggle to defend the immigrants, to build the struggle for full and equal rights for all workers, is an important part of the working class' fight against the Reaganite offensive of the bourgeoisie. Internationalist solidarity among the different races and nationalities is vital for building the revolutionary workers' movement. It will also help tear down the walls that the ruling class is trying to erect between the

workers in the U.S. and the toilers of Mexico, Central America and the rest of the world. It is part of linking the American workers with the common worldwide struggle for liberation from imperialism and capitalist exploitation.



Part of the December 13 protest.

Protest in L.A. at INS detention center

The Mardi Gras Motel, a mile east of Los Angeles International Airport, has been exposed for what it really is — a detention center run by the Immigration and Naturalization Center (INS).

On Monday, November 24, during rush hour, a group of 20 women activists demonstrated outside the "motel" and leafleted passersby. They showed that the INS has run the Mardi Gras for nearly a year as a detention center for refugees who are going to be deported back to the death-squad regimes of Central America. The activists denounced U.S. imperialism's support of such reactionary regimes as those of El Salvador and Guatemala which force many toilers to flee for their lives. Having arrived in the U.S. to seek refuge and a livelihood, many of these immigrants find the males rounded up

by the INS to be shipped back to the terrible conditions in their homelands.

The women's action also exposed the barbaric conditions in this detention center, where bars cover the windows, fire exits are lacking, and there is much overcrowding. No one is allowed outside for exercise or fresh air, as is done even in prisons.

Besides holding adults, the INS uses the Mardi Gras as one of a number of detention centers for the children of undocumented immigrant workers. The children, many of whom are American-born and citizens, are held in jail-like conditions and denied schooling and play with other kids, in order to lure their undocumented parents into the clutches and handcuffs of the INS. Fear of deportation hinders many parents from being able to claim their children.

The November 24 action greatly angered Harold Ezell, Western Regional Director of the INS, who denounced the demonstration as "political, not humanitarian. [Where's the contradiction?] They're just using this as an attempt to discredit the Reagan administration's Central American policy." He even went so far as to say the activists' concern for those being deported was unjustified because "things have changed now" in Central America. What a lie!

The action and leaflets were warmly received by people passing by the motel and by residents of the neighborhood behind the motel, many of whom were surprised to find out the real use of the Mardi Gras.

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Reagan's 'millions of new jobs' pay minimum wage

A new study has debunked the myth of prosperous job growth in the Reagan era. Released the second week in December by the congressional Joint Economic Committee (JEC), the study reveals that what is growing in America is low-wage jobs. Although the Reaganite "recovery" from the depression of the early 1980's translated into unprecedented profits for big business, the "prosperity" has never "trickled down" to the workers as Reagan had promised.

More Unemployment Now Than When Reagan Took Office

Whenever Reagan is asked about the high unemployment, he is fond of replying with a glowing recitation of the number of new jobs that have been created since he took office. But Reagan's self-praise turns out to be no more than another hoax from the "great communicator."

In the first place, Reagan's talk of "new jobs" covers up the fact that there are more unemployed now than when he took over the White House in January 1981, after a year of rampaging layoffs and plant closings. Even according to the vastly understated figures from the U.S. Department of Labor, there were nearly a half million more unemployed workers at the end of 1986 than there were at the end of 1980.

But you also have to consider the "discouraged" workers — those that the Department of Labor doesn't count as unemployed for the ridiculous reason that there are so few jobs available these workers haven't bothered to report looking for them. As well, there is the growing number of workers forced into part-time work because they can't find full-time jobs. According to official figures there were 15 million unemployed, discouraged, and forced part-time workers at the end of 1986. This is a rise of some 1.7 million unemployed and underemployed workers from the 13.3 million when Reagan took office.

Most New Jobs Are at Minimum Wages

In the second place, the new jobs that Reagan loves to brag about are mostly

at minimum wages or short hours.

The study by the JEC shows that there was a net increase of 8 million jobs from 1979 to 1984. But 4.7 million of them (60%) were at pay of under \$7,000 a year. That is, the workers in most of these new jobs either worked short hours in part-time positions or were paid at the minimum wage of \$3.35 an hour. In either case, the workers fell far below the official poverty level of about \$11,000 year for a family of four.

The other 3.3 million net increase in jobs were also in low-paying positions of under \$14,000 a year. Meanwhile, the net number of jobs paying \$28,000 or more actually declined by nearly a million.

In short, the workers who lost their jobs during the depression, and the young workers who are trying to find jobs for the first time, have either been forced onto the unemployment line or into low-paying, and predominantly minimum wage positions. Such is "recovery" and "prosperity" Reagan-style.

2 million homeless—victims of Reaganomics

With winter here, the capitalist news media is carrying a lot of stories on the sad plight of the homeless. Indeed the plight of the homeless is terrible. There are over two million people in this supposedly richest of all countries who do not have a place to live.

Fifteen years ago the urban homeless were often alcoholics and street people. But today families with children comprise the fastest growing part of the homeless population. In the Southwest thousands of unemployed and low wage workers and their families are living in tent cities on the outskirts of the big cities. Employed workers who simply don't make enough to rent an apartment are forming a considerable segment of the homeless population here in Massachusetts as well.

Homelessness is not simply a matter of some people being down on their luck, as the media would have us believe. It is a part of the rapid decline of the liv-

Reaganism Is Barefaced Capitalism

But if Reagan is gleeful at what he has wrought, he is only taking credit for the operation of economic laws of capitalism.

Long ago Karl Marx revealed that under capitalism growing unemployment goes hand in hand with the overwork and the driving down of the standard of living of the employed section of the workers. Together they are fundamental to the development of the capitalist system itself.

"...The overwork of the employed part of the working class swells the ranks of the reserve, whilst conversely the greater pressure that the latter by its competition exerts on the former, forces these to submit to over-work and to subjugation under the dictates of capital. The condemnation of one part of the working class to enforced idleness by the over-work of the other part, and the converse, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists, and accelerates at the same time the production of the industrial reserve army on a scale corresponding with the advance of

social accumulation." (Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Ch. XXV, Sec. 3)

Marx also showed that the workers don't have to accept these inevitable ravages of capitalism. The workers can join together the employed and unemployed to resist capitalist impoverishment and, at least partially, limit their exploitation. What is more, the working class can break out of the vicious cycle altogether. They can overthrow the capitalist system itself and move forward to a new system, to socialism.

So long as what the workers produce is the private property of a handful of capitalist parasites, then the workers are only given jobs as long as through them the capitalists can amass more profits. Once this system is broken, once the fruits of the workers' labor become the collective property of the laborers themselves, then the old limit on jobs is smashed, unemployment can be abolished, and the workers can build society in their own image. This is the promise of socialism. This is the goal of the workers' movement. □

ing standard of the American working class.

Reagan talks about prosperity. But it is a prosperity only for the rich exploiters. While the Wall Street brokers make billions off mergers and stock manipulation the workers are paying with concessions, lower wages and cuts in benefits for the unemployed. Things have gotten to the point that many of the poorest sections of the workers and unemployed are being forced out into the streets.

Not only is the income of large sections of the working class falling sharply, but the government and the capitalist speculators are pushing housing costs out of sight.

For example, of the 3,400 rental housing units built in Boston last year, only 25% were priced anywhere within reach of even moderate income families. At the same time 4,000 apartments were converted into condos for executives

and professionals.

Reagan, with the almost unanimous support of the Democratic-controlled Congress, is cutting off all funding for public housing and has cut housing subsidies for the poor by 60%. The federal government is even taking up a program of selling off all public housing projects to private developers who are jacking up the rents and driving the poor out.

With \$600 rents in the poorest sections of Dorchester, is it any wonder that people are homeless?

The plight of the homeless workers should not simply bring forth a wave of sympathy. It should serve signal to workers in every industry and community that it is high time to get organized for militant struggle against Reagan and the rich.

(From the Dec. 15 "Boston Worker," paper of the MLP-Boston.) □

'ENGLISH ONLY' Continued from page 2

strikers who were demanding a black studies program at S.F. State. This self-styled "educator" had over 1200 students arrested for demanding education in black history.

Bilingual Education Under Attack

Education for Latino and other youth will be a special victim of the "English Only" campaign. Blows to education will be some of the strongest aftershocks of Proposition 63. Most importantly, the bilingual program for some 600,000 California schoolchildren is being threatened. Presently these students are taught reading, math and science in their own language, while at the same time studying English, until they become proficient enough in English to take all their classes in it. Last August, governor Deukmejian vetoed a bill to extend the bilingual program beyond this year. Plans are now afoot in the state legislature to drastically cut it back and "teach 'em English."

This "teach 'em English" treatment is just what they had before the powerful protests against the racist educational system during the 60's and early 70's. Those were the "good ole days" when the Mexican and other youth were given the nod if they were overheard speaking the language of their birth. That was when having to learn English as a second language meant being treated

by the school authorities as hopelessly unteachable, and frequently driven out of the schools altogether. That was the "sink or swim" method, which sunk the education of millions of Latino and other youth.

It is an ABC of learning that for students to learn they should be taught in a language that they understand. That is another good reason why students should have the freedom to study in their mother tongue. The present bilingual programs, however, do not fully meet the needs of linguistic freedom, as they are, in the main, only limited programs designed to transfer students as quickly as possible to fully English classes. Even so, and despite being inadequate and underfunded, bilingual programs have shown to be important for students to do well in any subject, including learning English.

Unity of the Working People Demands Freedom of Language

The truth is, — by the power of economic and other factors far more compelling than any law — the people of the immigrant communities work hard to learn English. In California alone there are some 800,000 adults enrolled in English classes and there are an estimated 800,000 more who are seeking such classes but are being turned away for lack of instructors and class space.

Even the "English Only" fanatics recognize this neglect by the educational system. Six top honchos of the California English lobby recently

donated a thousand dollars each to adult English classes — a \$6,000 drop in the ocean of lack of funding for voluntary English classes. Meanwhile, the California English group spent nearly \$1 million on Proposition 63 to compel people to speak English and deprive them of the right to use the language of their choice.

That's the whole rub. All working people must have the right to an education, including the right to learn English if they so choose. But any attempt to impose an "official language" tramples on the rights of those who do not speak that language. "English Only" can only strengthen the hand of the capitalists in their drive to whip up hatred of "foreigners" and step up the oppression of the Latino and other communities.

On the other hand, the fight for the freedom of language can only strengthen the workers' struggle. Any worker organizing in a work place where the workers speak different languages has direct experience with this. In a

strike, for example, strike information in languages all the workers can readily understand is needed to bring out the widest participation in the struggle, to defeat the employers' "divide and conquer" schemes, and to defend the non-English speaking workers from special harassment or persecution. The same principle applies in society as a whole.

The demand for freedom to use one's mother language is part of the struggle against the government's oppression of the Latino nationalities and others. It is part of the struggle to gain their equal rights in all spheres of social and political life. And it is a demand which cuts against the capitalists' drive to create divisions among the workers based on language or place of birth.

This is the nightmare of the "English Only" bigots and all the capitalist reactionaries — the fighting solidarity of the working masses of different lands and different languages marching in a single column of revolutionary struggle. □

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the Film Forum), Manhattan

March in Howard Beach against mob killing

Angry demonstrators demand justice for Michael Griffith

December 27th, 2,000 anti-racist demonstrators marched in the Howard Beach neighborhood of Queens to demand justice for Michael Griffith, who was murdered there a week before in a racist gang attack.

The demonstrators were determined and angry. They showed the depth of passion this savage killing has aroused among the black and working masses, and their resolve to get justice for the victims of the lynch mob.

Confrontation With the Racists

The marchers rallied at the pizzeria where the gang attack took place and at the high school attended by participants in the lynch mob. All along the way there were confrontations provoked by about 100 racist counterdemonstrators shielded by about the same number of police.

At one point, the police allowed the racists to line up alongside, and even inside, their barricades on Cross Bay Blvd., forcing the demonstration to run a gauntlet of foul-mouthed racists who spat at the marchers and shouted racist and Hitlerite epithets. At the same time, the police were on the lookout to arrest any demonstrator who might respond to the filthy provocations of the racists.

The racists and police completely failed in their attempts to intimidate the anti-racists. They only succeeded in stiffening their anger. The marchers defiantly shouted in the face of the racists, "Segregation here, apartheid there, smash racism everywhere!" and "Howard Beach, have you heard, this is not Johannesburg!"

At the 106th "Stun Gun" Precinct

The anti-racists also marched on the 106th Precinct. Here the demonstrators



Protesters at the 106th "stun gun" precinct.

really showed their wrath. They kept up a string of slogans condemning the police for the cover-up of the racist lynch mob: "106, tell us why Michael Griffith had to die!" "The cops and the Klan go hand in hand!" "PBA-KKK, different name, same game!" (PBA is Patrolmen's Benevolent Association), and "106, the stun gun precinct!"

Contrary to the lying media, racism in Howard Beach is not just some wild kids or some spontaneous prejudice among your ordinary Joe. It is highly organized by the real estate capitalists and other sharks who control the civic association, as well as by big-time Mafia figures, who have a strong hand in local affairs and are big on white racism.

The 106th Precinct does its part by enforcing segregation in Howard Beach and adjoining Ozone Park. Its brutality

against minorities is notorious. It is known as the "stun gun precinct" because of the use by police of electric prods against black and other prisoners. Now it has gained further infamy for the cover-up of the lynch mob murder of Michael Griffith.

Reformists Pour Cold Water on the Struggle

It must be said that no credit for the militancy and power of the anti-racist demonstration should go to the reformist black leaders who were its official sponsors.

A section of black politicians in Queens came out against any demonstration on the grounds that it would supposedly only make matters worse. But other black bourgeois saw the need

to do something in order to keep a lid on the situation. So the reformist chiefs of the NAACP, who haven't been involved in a mass protest in New York for years, sponsored the march. And NAACP executive director Benjamin Hooks was a main speaker.

At every step of the way the reformist leaders tried to turn the march into a silent and cowardly vigil. They were particularly frightened by the possibility of any type of confrontation with the racists. This sparked a lot of bitterness among the marchers. The masses came to express their outrage and did not fear a confrontation with the racist provocateurs.

The attempt of the leaders to calm the masses with a moment of silence was broken up with militant slogan shouting. When the reformists leaders pleaded with the demonstrators to simply link arms if attacked by the racists, they were met by a spontaneous chorus of the masses shouting for several minutes "Beat them back! Beat them back!"

The discontent with Benjamin Hooks and Co. ran strong and deep. So, despite the grip of the reformist chiefs, the marchers had considerable success in turning the December 27 action into a militant demonstration that the black and working people will not sit by in the face of killings by racist lynch mobs.

Much more has to be done to build the mass actions against racist attacks. More protests are already in the works to demand justice for Michael Griffith. The December 27 action not only revealed the cowardly belly-crawling of the reformist misleaders. It also showed the necessity to work for building a powerful anti-racist movement on the militant shoulders of the black and other working people. □

No to the coverup for the Howard Beach lynch mob!

Continued from front page

A Flimsy Pretext

In throwing out the charges, Judge Bianchi argued that there was no case because one of the black victims, Cedric Sandiford, refused to testify at the preliminary hearing. (The other victim, Timothy Grimes, succeeded in fleeing the attackers earlier, and is not considered a key witness.)

Sandiford's lawyer claims that it is not even standard procedure to call a non-police witness at a preliminary hearing, and that this is simply an attempt to rush Sandiford into testifying in order to discredit him. It is also unusual that the court refused to accept the certified letter from Jamaica General Hospital and Sandiford's request for a delay of the hearings because of the injuries he suffered to his head and eyes.

In fact, Sandiford's failure to show at the hearing was merely a pretext. The police have plenty of information about what took place to put the attackers on trial. They have extensive briefings from Sandiford given in the first days after the attack. They even have confessions from the racists themselves. By not even allowing a temporary delay, the judge was only showing his impatience to let the racist killers off the hook.

What About the Police Role in the Lynching?

Sandiford's lawyer Alton Macklox maintains that his client won't testify

until Dominick Blum, the man driving the car that hit Michael Griffith, is arrested. Sandiford claims that the car that struck Griffith is one of the cars that chased them.

So far this is not clear. But for sure Blum is no Mr. Clean. There is good reason to believe he is lying when he says that he drove away from the scene because he thought he had only hit a tire or animal, which would mean that he is at least guilty of hit and run. He also may have been speeding at the time, making him legally responsible in the death.

The police, however, didn't even bother with a routine investigation of these things. They treated Blum with kid gloves. After all, the car he was driving only killed a black man, while he himself is not only white, he is a court officer and the son of a cop.

Meanwhile, the fuss about Blum is overshadowing what looks like an even more critical issue. That is, did the police themselves cover for the gang attack?

The police had been called to the pizzeria to check out "three suspicious black men." These were police from the 106th "stun gun" Precinct, which helps enforce the "whites only" policy in Howard Beach and is infamous for its brutality against minorities.

According to Sandiford, the cops escorted them outside and then disappeared as the mob ran up. In other words, the cops helped set up the attack and then conveniently left the scene. The police try to deny this, claiming they left the pizza shop five-ten minutes before. But either way, the police may

very well have given a wink and a nod to the lynch mob. And then they did their best to cover up the crime after the fact.

Tellingly, it was the same cops who had been at the pizzeria who later picked up Sandiford on the highway. Despite being badly beaten and needing medical attention, Sandiford was frisked and thrown into the patrol car to be interrogated for two hours about a fictional shooting invented on the spot by the police.

This doesn't look like just your common variety police cruelty. Michael Griffith had been found dead on the highway. These police knew that Sandiford had been with him. And their brutality against Sandiford looks like part of a deliberate attempt to terrorize the key witness to the murder and put up a smokescreen to protect the lynch mob.

Smear Campaign Against the Victims

This police mistreatment of Cedric Sandiford was only the beginning. The two survivors of the attack have become the targets of a foul smear campaign.

A lawyer for one of the members of the lynch mob has said that the three black men got what they deserved for coming into a white neighborhood late at night. Although they don't put it so bluntly, government officials and the capitalist press are voicing the same apartheid mentality. They have put the victims under the microscope of scrutiny to blame them for bringing the attack upon themselves.

The newspapers are filled with speculations. What were the black men doing

in Howard Beach in the first place? Where were they coming from before their car broke down near the pizzeria? Who did they call on the phone there? Why was the construction worker Michael Griffith wearing a beeper? Was he into some illicit business? What were his neighbors' opinions of his moral character?

They have looked high and low, trying to spread every type of suspicion. But neither the police nor the press have come up with a speck of evidence against the black men, let alone anything that would change the glaring fact that these men were beaten and one was murdered for the "crime" of being black in a segregated neighborhood.

Now they are focusing on Sandiford's refusal to testify. One may think that it is better for him to testify or not. But it is easy to understand why Sandiford has reservations about being rushed into hearings after all the abuse he has just gone through at the hands of the men of the law. Sandiford's lack of confidence in the police and legal process is one of the reasons the government has declared war on him.

The D.A. Santucci is launching an investigation of Sandiford because he allegedly "must have something to hide." Mayor Koch himself is leading the parade. When the attack first took place, Koch made a noisy (and very hypocritical) denunciation of the murder. Now Koch is flying his usual racist colors, equating the victim Sandiford with the lynch mob, and denouncing him for the "atrocious" of

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Strikes and workplace news

North Carolina textile workers win organizing drive



Bates Nitewear workers celebrate their successful union organizing drive.

More than 800 workers — mostly women — at five Bates Nitewear Co. plants in North Carolina recently won the certification of their first union.

Bates Nitewear is the country's largest manufacturer of baby and young children's night clothes. It was bought out by Gerber Products in 1984. But this did not benefit the Bates workers. The workers had to vote twice in order to win

representation by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). Despite dirty company tricks — anti-union lectures, anti-union posters, hounding and firing of pro-union workers, restriction of bathroom and phone use to discourage discussion, and so forth — the workers persevered. Now they are preparing to fight for their first contract. □

College custodians win strike for a union

Custodial workers at Upsala College in East Orange, New Jersey, won union recognition through a bitter eight-month strike.

The college had refused to recognize the United Auto Workers union as the workers' representative. And when the workers persisted in their demands, the

college subcontracted custodial services to a nonunion contractor.

The workers walked out against this outrage. After eight months, and with considerable support from other workers in the community, the custodians forced the college administrators to recognize their union. □

Strike of visiting nurses gains union rights

Nurses at the Visiting Nurses Association in Chicago have finally won union certification.

In January 1986, the nurses voted for representation by the Service Employees International Union. But, as often happens in such elections, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) delayed counting the ballots to give the capitalists time to counterattack to suppress

the nurses' organization.

After waiting six months, with still no action by the NLRB, the nurses took matters into their own hands and went out on strike. After another three months, the strike forced the NLRB to act. It finally opened the nine-month-old ballots and declared a two-to-one victory for the union. □

Steel workers defy injunctions at Babcock and Wilcox

Steel workers at three Babcock & Wilcox plants in Pennsylvania have been locked out since September 13.

At that time, the company (owned by McDermott International, a multibillion-dollar conglomerate) refused to accept the workers' offer to continue working under the existing contract. The capitalists tried to impose a wage-cutting agreement instead. B&W demanded more than \$9 an hour in wage and benefit concessions: a \$3 an hour cut in wages and \$6 reductions in vacations, health care and pension benefits. (These demands are made by a company who had over \$3 billion in sales last year alone!)

After locking out the workers, B&W started hiring scabs and threatened to fine all 1,500 of the locked-out workers. The courts jumped to the aid of B&W by

ordering a limit to the pickets.

But the workers refused to be cowed down. They defied the injunction and carried out mass picketing to block the scabs. In one instance, 500 of the locked-out workers wore masks to conceal their identities while rallying at the main mill.

Fearing the spread of the workers' militant struggle, the courts quickly ordered a 30-day cooling off period. This order prevents the company from firing any workers or hiring scabs and outlaws the workers from mass picketing. The cooling-off period has been extended two more times, with the current order running until January 13.

The B&W workers are justly angry and are demanding action. But the officials of the United Steelworkers (USWA) are trying to divert the anger

into appealing to local government officials to intervene on their behalf. The B&W workers must realize that the government officials (including the courts) are in the hip pockets of the capitalists.

Only the workers' mass actions have so far stopped the scabs. And only the workers' mass actions can win their struggle against B&W. □

Kaiser strike stopped half way

Mass Actions Spread

On December 13, the strike of some 9,600 workers against the Kaiser health maintenance organization in northern California came to an end. A new contract was passed which granted the workers some of their demands. But top officials of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) caved in on the central issue and agreed to a slightly pared down two-tier wage structure.

Although the strike had lasted seven weeks, it was gaining momentum with increasingly militant mass picket lines organized by the rank and file. Fear of the mass struggle forced Kaiser to give way on some issues. It appears that had the mass actions continued Kaiser would have been forced to agree to all the workers' demands. But top international officials of the SEIU were quickly brought in to forge a new concessions contract with the company and the strike was stopped halfway to victory.

Rank and File Organize Mass Actions

From the beginning the union leaders were out to undermine the strike. They ordered the workers to submit to a court injunction limiting pickets. And when, despite this, rank-and-file sentiment grew to completely shut down Kaiser's hospitals and clinics, the union leaders called for an elaborate "corporate campaign" of "moving the picket lines away from Kaiser's front door and out into the community" to ask people to drop their Kaiser membership. Although the hacks claimed this campaign was to broaden support for the strike, its real aim was to cripple the picket lines and thereby let Kaiser operate with scab labor.

But the rank and file resisted the union hacks' maneuver. The MLP called on the workers to "bring the community onto the picket lines." And at the Oakland facility a rank-and-file action committee was formed to mobilize other working people to join the picket lines and to mobilize their militancy to block truck deliveries and scabs.

On December 1, this group — largely comprised of rank-and-file office workers — organized a solidarity march and rally at the Oakland hospital. Coordinated with nurses, who were supporting the strike, and SEIU members, the workers marched with their picket signs right into the hospital lobby. This, and other actions to stop delivery trucks and shuttle buses that were bringing in scabs, had an invigorating effect on the workers and gave them confidence they could win their struggle.

Under growing pressure from the strike, on December 4, Kaiser proposed a second "final offer." But it was little better than the first. And, to the surprise of Kaiser and the union officials alike, the workers soundly rejected it. (Although it was imposed on a small number of medical technicians and optical technicians represented by the Engineers and Scientists of California and by the Optical Workers Union, they continued to honor the picket lines.)

The rejection of the contract unleashed the workers' sentiment for mass struggle. Following the vote, mass picket line actions were organized at every northern California facility from Martinez to Fremont.

In Oakland, scabs were blocked while entering the parking lots. Berkeley strikers shut the warehouse down for a day. In Martinez, cars of administrators were pelted with eggs while workers in Fremont and Hayward held marches through the hospitals. These actions got broad support from other California workers.

While the police arrested over 30 picketers, in an unsuccessful attempt to suppress the mass actions, the SEIU leaders whimpered that the actions were not authorized by the union. Obviously the strike was going forward. Kaiser, their police protectors, and the union hacks didn't like it.

Opposition to the Concessions Contract

The top international leaders of the SEIU suddenly intervened in the strike. Only a week after the last contract was rejected, a new one was agreed to. And the SEIU hacks went all out to force it onto the workers.

In this contract, the workers broke Kaiser's demand for a wage freeze by gaining a 3% wage increase in the third year. One time bonuses are still used to replace wage increases in the first two years of the contract. Yet, Kaiser was forced to substantially increase the bonuses to \$1,000 in the first year and \$850 in the second. As well, the workers beat off the attacks on their seniority rights and subcontracting out work was barred for three years.

But Kaiser pushed through its demand for a two-tier wage system where new hires outside of the Bay Area would receive 15% less pay than the new hires in the Bay Area. Although the 15%

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Mass picket at Kaiser facility in Bay Area.

KAISER**Continued from previous page**

lower pay is less than the 30% demanded originally, the two-tier wage structure is established. What is more, two new wage steps totaling 5% below the current level were added in both the Bay Area and elsewhere.

Although the contract was eventually passed by a three-to-one vote, there was a lot of opposition to it. The MLP spread leaflets widely saying, "No to the two-

tier! Dump the sellout contract!" At a tumultuous union meeting in San Francisco on December 13, rank-and-file workers lambasted the international union leaders for selling them out.

It appears, that although the strike was stopped before it won all the workers' demands, the experience gained and the organization initiated in the course of the strike will stand the workers in good stead for building up their struggle in the future. □



Militant workers demonstrate December 8 atop a homemade "coffin" to bury concessionary Kaiser contract.

Reviving the horrors of homework jobs

The Reagan administration has decided to throw open the doors to the horrors of the homework industry. Within the next few weeks, the Secretary of Labor is expected to issue new regulations which would lift the ban on certain fields of homework, setting back hard-won workers' rights by 50 years.

Sweatshops in the Home

Homework, which describes piecework done in the home instead of at a factory or office, has been spreading rapidly. With Reagan's cutbacks in social programs and the impoverishment of whole sections of the population, large numbers of workers — especially women workers — have been forced into doing sewing, clerical work, and other jobs at home.

The reality of industrial homework entails conditions reminiscent of the worst features of the cottage industry of the 1800's — 12-hour days, below subsistence wages, no health or safety provisions, no unionization, and child labor. The women work totally isolated from other workers, suffering quota demands from the capitalist contractors, while footing the bill for their own machinery, electricity, etc.

Horror stories abound. Women forced to work 72 hours per week, with no overtime compensation, in order to meet their quotas. Children working to help their mothers do the work faster. Homeworkers paid extremely low piece rates. For example, one woman was paid seven cents for making a tie. On the average, she could sew fifty ties in three hours. Her wages, then, were a whopping \$1.17 an hour. Needless to say, homework is a gold mine for the capitalists.

No Regulations on Most Home work

There are no government regulations barring the horrible working conditions for most fields of homework. For example, clerical work done in the home is not covered by the labor laws. Yet this is one of the fastest growing fields for homework. Here women must meet stringent quotas, often working at home computers which are frequently hooked up electronically to the companies they

work for. Here again, sweatshop conditions run rampant. Like their fellow homeworkers in the garment industries, home clerical workers experience low wages, no benefits, and insatiable capitalist demands.

But even in those fields of homework where there are government regulations, against the horrible conditions, they go unenforced. The government has never had enough inspectors even to monitor the large factories and offices where thousands and thousands of workers labor collectively. It is very difficult for the government to check up on abuses in the homework industry, and it refuses to do so.

The only serious bar to ghastly working conditions has been the workers organizing themselves and waging a unified struggle against the capitalists. But homeworkers are isolated by themselves, cut off from their fellow workers, and are most often afraid to even report violations of the government's minimal regulations for fear of losing their jobs. Many of the industrial homeworkers are immigrants — both documented and undocumented. They can only report violations of labor laws to the government at the risk of being harassed and even deported by the government's immigration agents.

The supposed regulation of homework in the knitted outerwear industry is typical of how badly government regulations work. In 1984, the Reagan administration lifted the ban on homework in the knitted outerwear field. Companies who hired homeworkers to produce knitted outerwear were required to register with the Department of Labor and keep records of wages paid and materials produced. To date, very few companies have complied with these minimal requirements, yet they continue to reap big profits off the outrageous exploitation of their workers. And, of those few companies that did register, a majority have been in violation of the minimal requirements.

Legalizing Slavedriving in the Home

It is because of the near impossibility of regulating the conditions of work in the home that the workers fought for the outright banning of homework. In 1942

homework for certain fields was outlawed by the Fair Labor Standards Act (which also legislated minimum hourly wages, restrictions on the number of hours which could be worked without overtime pay, and prohibitions on child labor). The ban on homework applied to women's apparel, jewelry, gloves and mittens, knitted outerwear, buttons and buckles, handkerchiefs, and embroidery.

Obviously what is needed is to extend the ban on homework to other fields, including the fast growing clerical work. But, instead, the Reagan administration is trying to repeal the outlawing of homework in the limited fields where it exists. Such a repeal does not require new legislation. All that is needed is for the Secretary of Labor to hold public hearings before he changes the law. And he completed those hearings in December.

Mass picketing at USX Steel

USX Corporation, the country's largest steelmaker, has been trying to get steel out and contractors in across picket lines at nearly all its plants across the country. This is arousing strong resistance by the rank and file, who have been organizing mass picketing, blocking trains, and defying court injunctions to defend their jobs. The workers are entering the sixth month of a strike/lockout against huge concessions demands.

For three days, December 17, 18 and 19, picket lines were thrown up, 150 workers strong, in defiance of a court injunction at USX's Clairton Works in Pennsylvania. The company was trying to bring contractors in to work on the coke ovens, but the pickets succeeded in turning the contractors away. The police charged the local union president with contempt of court, but at the hearing on the 29th, 150 steel workers packed the courtroom and the judge decided to let the company and the union settle the matter.

In Fairless, Pennsylvania, on December 3 and 4, hundreds of pickets massed at the gates of USX's Fairless Hills Works. The workers sustained 50 arrests but prevented the company from shipping steel out of the mill. The next day a judge ordered USX to stop shipping steel and the union to reduce the number of pickets for a 30-day "cooling off" period. But now the company has gotten an injunction limiting pickets to five, spaced six feet apart and allowing USX to ship steel. If obeyed, this injunction will cripple the workers' resistance.

At the USX National Tube Works in McKeesport, Ohio, 150 workers picketed on December 9, successfully keeping a 30-car train from being brought into the mill to be loaded with steel pipe. The next day though, the local president told the workers that USX had promised not to move the train. He posted no pickets at that gate and USX moved the train in for loading. Now the workers are again picketing to keep engines from going in to pull the loaded cars out. USX has gotten an injunction against mass picketing by the production workers. So dozens of USX clerical workers from National Tube are man-

The Reaganites claim that homework is essential to defend individual liberty and to open up economic opportunity for women with small children whom they consider to be "homebound." Of course, the Reaganites would never consider opening up childcare facilities at the factories and offices to help women. Oh no, for them individual liberty and economic opportunity are only the right to be superexploited by the capitalist parasites.

Homework not only degrades and starves those who are forced to do the work. It also pushes down the conditions of workers in factories and other work places. Why should the capitalists pay decent wages and benefits to their factory workers when they can get the same quota of goods from some poor woman slaving in her home? All workers should rally to the fight against homework. □

ning the picket lines.

At USX's mill in Utah, the workers suffered 86 arrests in the first week of December as they tried to stop trucks from hauling steel away. The steel is going to the USX plant in California which is still working under a contract extension which lasts until January 31.

In Pittsburgh, USX sold its U.S. Steel Supply warehouse one month after the lockout began. But of the 60 workers who worked there, most do not accept this sale as the end of their jobs. Contrary to the advice of the USWA international, which has told them to apply for work in the now nonunion warehouse, most are still picketing there.

At the Gary Works, hundreds of workers picketed the Virginia Street entrance on December 16 to stop contractors from going in to finish work on a continuous slab caster. This mass picket showed how badly the Gary workers want to fight USX. But USX freely uses the Buchanan Street entrance which leads directly off the Indiana Toll Road. In August, 43 workers were arrested picketing this gate. And USX got an injunction barring the stopping of trucks and contractors at the Buchanan gate. The USWA leaders authorize only a token picket line there and refuse to violate the injunction. USX boasts of the steel it has shipped out of Gary since the lockout/strike began.

While the workers are eager and willing to defy injunctions, suffer arrests, man mass pickets, block trains, and fight police, the union leaders are doing their best to hold back this trend. The union brass' betrayal of the workers' cause can be seen at the Buchanan Street gate, at the Pittsburgh warehouse, at the McKeesport railroad entrance, and look at their treachery at the Lorain, Ohio mill.

On November 25th, 200 steel workers picketed despite a court injunction. They were violently attacked by 160 police who came from inside the mill with 50 police dogs. Workers reported there were snipers in the woods and that the FBI was present. The police singled out USWA District Director Valenta and the local president, Al Peoa, for particu-

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A mass picket blocks scabs from entering the USX mill in Clairton, Pennsylvania in December.

APARTHEID
NO!
REVOLUTION
YES!



In defiance of the whips and bullets

The Botha regime has imposed a news blackout to hide the true situation in South Africa. Nevertheless, even from the small bits of information that do leak out, it is clear that the anti-apartheid struggle is alive and well.

In the Black Townships

The black townships continued to erupt throughout December. Even the scant government reports show revolts in numerous townships. The outbursts ranged from the areas near Durban to Johannesburg and East London.

In the township rebellions, the masses have not hesitated to directly take on the racist police forces. The racist troops have carried out a reign of murder and terror in the townships, but the oppressed are taking their revenge. Although the people must face the heavily armed racist troops with nothing but a few pistols and homemade weapons, they have been able to inflict a number of casualties on the security patrols. In mid-December the authorities reported that five police had been killed in recent weeks.

Soon after there were other reports of clashes with the police. In a skirmish with security forces in Alexandra township, a white soldier was seriously wounded. Casualties to white troops are rarer than to black puppet troops, whom the racists often use as the immediate assault force in the townships.

Miners Strike

This past month also saw another action by the militant black mine workers. On December 4th, 5,000 miners waged a one-day strike against the Gencor capitalists, shutting down the Grootvlei mine, 20 miles west of Johannesburg. The strike was called to protest the killing of one miner and the wounding of eight more as police opened fire on workers as they left a miners' union meeting.

Reformists Waffle on Christmas Protest

"Christmas Against the Emergency," a nationwide ten-day protest, was scheduled to begin on December 16 and run through Christmas. The campaign's leadership was a coalition of reformist forces in the anti-apartheid movement including the United Democratic Front, the COSATU trade union leadership, the National Education Crisis Committee, and the South African Council of Churches. The heart of the Christmas protest was to be a boycott of white-owned businesses.

But on December 11, a few days before the campaign was to begin, the racist government announced new decrees which, among other things, ban such boycotts (see accompanying article). Although the boycott appears to be one of the forms of mass protest that could be maintained in the face of illegality, the reformists waffled on it. They decided to fight the police state decrees in the courts, and they tried to keep the Christmas campaign legal by reducing it to various symbolic actions such as the ringing of church bells at designated times, turning off the electricity for two hours a day and using candles, and refraining from sports and music festivals.

This tore the heart out of the protest. Because certain boycotts have succeeded in hurting some white businesses, they have become a thorn in the side of the white ruling class. Boycotts around Christmas (and other times) have become popular among the masses. Indeed, there are some reports that the masses may have maintained some of the boycott despite the waffling of the leaders.

But the reformists have been searching for an alliance with the white liberals (whose political party, the Progressive Federal Party, is a party of the business interests). This requires subordinating the mass struggle to appeals to the white ruling class to be "reasonable." One aspect of this is the stress placed on the hopeless path of

relying on the "reasonableness" of the slaveholders' courts and on symbolic acts designed for show rather than effect (such as refraining from sports, etc.).

The Iron-Tipped Whip Cannot Subdue the Black Workers

The Botha regime may swing the

Exxon keeps its ties with South Africa — while "divesting"

The big oil company Exxon has just announced that it is selling its two South African affiliates, Esso South Africa (Pty.) Ltd. and Exxon Chemical (Pty.) Ltd., to a so-called independent trust. This is being paraded as "divestment." Furthermore, it is supposed to help the South African blacks by making the trust beneficiaries charitable organizations.

But in fact Exxon will continue to market its products through the new trust. This South African business will continue to provide profits for Exxon and big salaries for capitalist executives, with only the leftovers going to support some charity for which the masses are supposed to be grateful.

This is the latest fad. The anti-apartheid masses demanded that the firms divest from South Africa. But instead the corporations are simply changing the signboard in front of their local affiliates, continuing to market their products, and in many cases are stepping up their exploitation of the black workers.

Alan Cowell, a *New York Times* correspondent, has recently written that "Business analysts and others are concluding that the withdrawals are only partial, permitting the companies to continue earning profits in South Africa."

"By selling their businesses to local buyers, U.S. firms are maintaining licensing arrangements and contracts

iron-tipped whip (sjambok) right and left. But the events of December show that the militant black toilers and other oppressed masses will never capitulate to the racist rulers. □

to supply components and thereby are earning money without the political hazards of direct investments."

He gives the example that, although GM has allegedly "divested" from South Africa, "At Port Elizabeth airport, the arrivals hall is dominated by a display featuring the Opel Monza — General Motors Corporation's latest sedan to be produced here — even though GM technically has sold its subsidiary to local managers."

And the capitalist politicians in the U.S. have welcomed this fraud as their salvation. Some of them have promised the anti-apartheid masses that they are passing measures to remove funds with firms doing business in South Africa. But now they can smile and say, see, no problem, GM and Exxon and many others are gone from South Africa. And the others will probably leave if we give them a year or two or 10.

This fraud shows how the capitalist politicians are enemies of the struggle for divestment. It shows how firmly the American capitalists are tied in with racist rule in South Africa. It shows that class solidarity is stronger than empty words about humanitarianism and reasonableness and sweetness and light. Each class supports its own. It is the working class and progressive people in the U.S. who are the real support in the U.S. for the black workers and other oppressed masses in South Africa. □

Brandeis students keep up the fight for divestment

Students at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts are continuing their fight to force the school to divest its funds in companies tied to racist South Africa. Under the pressure of the students in May 1986, the university had pledged to divest. But as of December, the school had only divested about one-third of its \$2.2 million investment in apartheid. Students protests in December were aimed at forcing the university to quit stalling.

The latest anti-apartheid actions were highlighted by the takeover of the administration building by 50 students on December 4. This action was a just response to a decision by the Board of

Trustees that day that refused to meet student demands for full divestment. Twenty students were busted when the reactionary administration called in the police.

The students were not done, however. After the arrests, nightly occupations of the school library began. On December 10, protesters again occupied the administration building. Again the police were called in and five were arrested.

The Brandeis students' actions are another example of the anti-apartheid fervor that continues at campuses all across the country. □

Buthelezi denounced in Boston

As part of a nationwide tour, which included a cozy chat with Reagan at the White House, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi visited Boston University on November 24. Buthelezi is a notorious black sell-out from South Africa. He rules over KwaZulu, one of the bantustan governments that the apartheid rulers have set up to assist them in carrying out their policy of forced relocations and segregation. His political organization, Inkatha, is infamous for its armed bands that attack the militant workers and youth who stand up to the apartheid regime.

Buthelezi is paraded around by the supporters of apartheid as a black spokesman against the revolution, against sanctions, and for coming to terms with the regime. He even passed up a chance to be lionized by the U.S. Congress because their sham anti-apartheid posturing was too much for him. He came to the U.S. at the bidding of Reagan and the U.S. capitalists to do propaganda against the revolutionary movement in South Africa.

Reaganite Oppressor of the Student Movement Welcomes Buthelezi

This is why the millionaire president of Boston University, John Silber, invited Buthelezi to receive an honorary degree. Silber is a Reaganite fanatic. He is such a diehard defender of apartheid that he has tried to expel students simply because they displayed anti-apartheid signs in their dormitory windows. By honoring Buthelezi he hoped to endear himself to his capitalist friends. And he sought to intimidate the anti-apartheid students on campus who have been fighting for several years to force Boston University to divest from corporations that do business in South Africa.

Over 400 Students Rally

But Silber's hopes were smashed when more than 400 students walked

Continued on next page

See BUTHELEZI



Youth in the township of Atteridgeville hold a protest march.

Everything is now illegal in South Africa

Prior to the new regulations, rallies, marches and most forms of mass protest were already severely restricted or banned outright. The authorities had even taken to banning mass funerals for victims of police repression.

The new laws bar the popular forms of mass protest that had developed previously, including rent boycotts, bus boycotts, boycotts of the racist school system, and boycotts of white-owned businesses. It also tightened the regulations against illegal "unrest" including rebellions in the black townships or militant opposition to the "emergency" decrees.

Participation in or advocacy of anti-apartheid actions is not just banned in itself, but also defined as "subversive." This makes them subject to harsher punishment. The same penalties also apply to those involved in various organizations that have sprung up in the struggle such as street committees and "people's courts."

Clamping Down on the Press

The December 11 decrees further extend restrictions on press coverage of the anti-apartheid struggle and the actions of the security forces.

Even before this, reporters were banned from areas of rebellion as well as from photo and TV coverage of the movement. Only government accounts

of police actions were to be published. Publishing "subversive" statements was also banned.

Now, in addition to these restrictions, the new laws state that all reporting on anti-apartheid activity, actions of the police, and all "subversive" statements must be submitted in advance for approval to a government censorship panel. The definition of "subversive" statements has been broadened to include promotion of all anti-racist events or criticism of the government's repression.

The media is prohibited from mentioning the detention, court appearances, or release of detainees, without official permission. These people are now to vanish without a trace.

The press is not even allowed to leave blank spots in its paper indicating what sections of their reports had been censored. On the first day of the censorship, six of ten articles submitted to the censors by the white, bourgeois paper, the *Johannesburg Star*, were banned.

And further restrictions are being carried out against particular publications, particularly black publications. Thus Zwelakhe Sisulu, the editor of the *New Nation*, was arrested once again. The *New Nation* is published by the South African Roman Catholic Bishops Conference and is aimed at blacks. Its editor, Z. Sisulu, is the son of UDF Co-



Mass protest against compulsory military service in the racist armed forces.

President Albertina Sisulu and jailed ANC leader Walter Sisulu.

Despite the regime's anger at the press, most of this press is by no means progressive. For example, the *Johannesburg Star* and other white bourgeois publications, despite the restrictions being placed on them, are ruling class publications. They agree with the regime in opposing revolution but differ

on the methods with which this is to be accomplished.

A New Roundup of Activists

With their clampdown on the press, the racists are trying to hide their bloody repression of the black and other

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See SOUTH AFRICA

BUTHELEZI

Continued from previous page

out of classes and rallied to denounce Buthelezi, apartheid, and apartheid's U.S. supporters. This was the largest demonstration at Boston University in several years. For many students, this was their first demonstration; they were inspired to action by the heroic struggle of the black masses and by their disgust with Silber for honoring the bootlicker Buthelezi. Militant activists came with tire "jewelry" for Buthelezi to remind him of how the revolutionary fighters in South Africa deal out justice to traitors. Supporters of the Marxist-Leninist Party enthusiastically took part in this demonstration and distributed several hundred copies of a special issue of the *Boston Worker* denouncing Buthelezi.

Black Bourgeois Paper Recognizes Buthelezi as One of Its Own

But it was not only Buthelezi and Silber who felt rain on their parade that day. Standing on the podium with these two reactionaries was Melvin Miller, the editor of the *Bay State Banner*, which claims to be a voice for the black community. Miller, this wealthy scribbler, joined with the Reaganites in saluting Uncle Tom Buthelezi. Then the November 27 issue of the *Banner* printed an

editorial praising Buthelezi to the skies and denouncing the revolutionary struggle against the apartheid regime as futile. It says that the *Banner* agrees with Buthelezi that the highest goal of the struggle should be some cosmetic "power-sharing" (in other words, not one person, one vote, but a few blacks to be allowed to share in the work of exercising power over the black majority) and an increase in the number of black businessmen.

These views are a slap in the face to the heroic black masses who are risking their lives confronting the racist troops. They are giving everything for building up the revolutionary movement which will overthrow the whole system of white minority rule, and not simply find some places for a favored few within the present system. But, when you think about it, it makes sense that the bourgeois Miller would praise Buthelezi's policy. After all, the *Bay State Banner*, and the black capitalists for which it speaks, have for years been promoting tokenism and black capitalism as the salvation of the black masses in the U.S.

The demonstration at Boston University shows that, despite the maneuvers of the Reaganites and their hangers-on, the solidarity movement with the struggle in South Africa continues to find new support. □

Defend the anti-apartheid activists at U.C. Berkeley!

Defend John Winters and Rhodney Ward!

(Faced with the development of militant mass struggle by the anti-apartheid students, the University of California regents promised to divest their huge funds from firms doing business in South Africa within three years. But so far the administration has not lifted a finger to divest itself of anything but anti-apartheid activists. It has continued mock disciplinary hearings against the activists at the Berkeley campus and set the campus police on them; and more criminal charges have now been laid, this time against John Winters. The following article is excerpted from a Dec. 1 leaflet by the MLP-San Francisco Bay Area.)

demonstration at the Shantytown 10 hearings was viciously attacked by the UCPD (University of California campus police). The action had been called by anti-apartheid activists to denounce the UC administration's kangaroo trial of the 10 student activists and to demand that the hearings be reopened to the public. They were joined by many participants from an earlier anti-rape march. This unity was particularly appropriate. The same administration that was doggedly persecuting the anti-apartheid activists was also responsible for orchestrating the despicable exoneration of four Cal football players accused of rape.

About 100 activists crowded around the doors to Wheeler Auditorium shout-

ing slogans such as "Drop the charges" [against the anti-apartheid activists] and "Stop rape now." Several militant activists held a door to the hearing open so the anger of the students could be heard inside.

This was too much for the UCPD. In a display of loyalty to the administration they set out to punish the demonstrators. They used their batons to jab and hit the activists crowded around the door. They didn't stop their assault once they had forced the crowd back far enough to close the door. One cop broke a glass display case with his baton and used this as a pretext to jump on an activist and supporter of our Party, John Winters, standing nearby. Immediately, the other cops joined in and brutally beat John in front of the crowd. They repeatedly punched him and bashed his head against the wall. Like many other victims of police brutality, he was later charged with resisting arrest and assault on a police officer.

As they were dragging him outside one of the cops, Michael Freeman, ran back 30 feet to viciously club another activist, Rhodney Ward. Rhodney had his back turned to the cop and was knocked off his feet by this cowardly attack. He was left lying on the pavement for 40 minutes until other activists could get a chair to carry him to Cowell hospital.

One of the cops who was dragging John off to the police station kept calling him a "fuck head" and then, reaching for what he undoubtedly thought was the worst curse of all, called him a "nigger lover." Such is the racist and fascist mentality of the thugs the administration hires and grooms to do its dirty work.

Another arms scandal

The Reagan administration pretends that it is implementing sanctions against South Africa. But State Department and Pentagon cooperation with the white racist regime continues.

In December a bourgeois paper in London, England, the *Independent*, exposed the undercover shipping of arms from the U.S. and Europe to South Africa. It cited business sources, telex messages, etc. The weapon shipments appeared to be part of Reagan admini-

stration cooperation with the South African military to slaughter the Angolan people. They were apparently being transshipped to UNITA, a former Angolan liberation organization against the Portuguese colonialists which has degenerated into waging a reactionary, fratricidal war, in alliance with the South African racists and the U.S. imperialists, against the present Angolan government. □

These latest attacks on the anti-apartheid movement must be answered. Those participating in mass actions must be protected from the persecution of the UC administration, the police and courts. Defending them is inseparable from defending the trend toward militant mass actions which plays a vital role in building up a powerful mass movement.

In the case of John Winters, a legal defense is being organized. Anyone witnessing his arrest or actions prior to it, or who would like to help in his defense in any way should leave a message at (415)-653-4840 (Marxist-Leninist Books and Periodicals).

In the case of Rhodney Ward, he is lodging a complaint against the brutal attack on him. All witnesses to it should contact the CAA-SAICA (Campaign Against Apartheid — Students Against Intervention in Central America) office at 613 Eschleman. Information about current legal proceedings against a number of other activists can also be obtained there.

This alone will not be enough. The San Francisco Bay Area Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party calls on all students and activists to join with it in building up mass actions and political agitation to expose what the administration is up to. We must make the university pay politically for its crimes by utilizing every attack it carries out to build up the anti-apartheid movement on campus. All those who would like to help in this work please contact the MLP-SFBA at P.O. Box 8706, Emeryville, CA, 94662. □

Thursday, November 20, a militant

New Year's editorial

Continued from front page

simply shown the "strong president" to be a clumsy, two-bit liar. It has also provided a glimpse of the real world of imperialist foreign policy lurking behind the glitter of White House ceremony and Congressional debate; a shady world where big businessmen and gun runners, U.S. military officers and drug czars, politicians and contra cutthroats organize their next plots for terror and aggression against the people of other lands.

While contragate scandalized Reagan's foreign policy, Boesky's stock market manipulation, General Motors' announcement of plant closings, and the homelessness of two million people have scandalized Reaganomics.

Through concessions and social spending cuts for the workers, and fat military contracts and tax breaks for the monopolies, Reaganomics has produced enormous profits. As well, there has been an unprecedented surge of corporate mergers. Boesky's unscrupulous dealings are but a part of the sordid financial wrangling where one monopoly eats many and the social wealth of the country is concentrated in fewer and fewer hands.

But has this got the economy moving, as Reagan promised? GM's plant shut-downs show the answer is no. After amassing record profits over the last few years, the world's biggest industrial giant is laying off tens upon tens of thousands of workers. And this is not because the masses don't need new cars, but because the monopolies can produce too many to sell at the price they require to maintain their profits. Reaganomics has pushed off the depression only by creating the conditions for a more devastating economic crisis on the horizon.

Such is the Reagan era — capitalist impoverishment at home, imperialist aggression abroad, lies and corruption, scandal and crisis.

Restore the Credibility of the Presidency or Class Struggle Against Reaganism

Every new outrage of the Reaganite

offensive is also producing a deeper anger among the working masses, an anger that here and there breaks out into mass struggle. Bitter strikes are unfolding against the capitalists' concessions drive and to defend the workers' jobs. Waves of student actions have rolled across the campuses against Reaganite support for the racist South African regime. Sporadic protests have leaped out against the contras, the CIA, and U.S. aggression in Central America. And demonstrations have emerged in defense of the immigrants and against racist attacks.

But as the masses grow more angry with Reagan for what his scandals reveal, the Democratic Party liberals grow more angry at the scandals for revealing the ugly truth about Reaganism. Of late they have been worrying out loud that no one should "go too far" and start Reagan-bashing. They are concerned about the harm to the credibility of the presidency, about finding the best way to put contragate to rest so they can get on with the bipartisan congressional agenda. Perhaps these liberal worries are the biggest scandal of all.

Last fall the liberals, the union bureaucrats, the respectable misleaders of the black people, and other reformists promised over and over that electing enough Democrats to gain control of the Senate would block Reagan and bring a change for the better. Now the Democrats control both Houses of Congress and all we see is pleas for "cooperation, not confrontation," for moving ahead in a "bipartisan spirit."

The Democrats are showing themselves to be just another party of the capitalists, a party of closet Reaganites out to blunt the struggle of the masses. For the struggle against the Reaganite offensive to become consistent and really powerful it must be broken free from illusions in the Democratic Party liberals and all the misleaders who are hitched to their bandwagon.

Build the Party of the Working Class

January 1 marks the seventh anniversary of the Marxist-Leninist Party. It was formed from activists and organiza-

tions that arose in the mass struggles of the 1960's and 1970's. They saw that the working class needed its own political party to unite it, to organize it, to rally it around the banner of struggle.

The last year has provided examples of why the workers need just such a party.

Consider the struggle against Reaganomics. The MLP has been the most consistent champion of the workers' resistance to the capitalists' concessions drive. This is because the Party is based on the working class in deed, not just in name, and is organized independently from the union bureaucracy. The Party does not blow hot and fight only when some union hack decides to take a militant pose, and then blow cold when the labor bureaucrats tell the workers to stop and help the companies out. Instead the party fights consistently alongside the rank-and-file workers for their demands. The party does not seek cushy posts among the labor bureaucrats, but to solidify the ties between the party and the real mass of the working class.

Everyone knows that newspapers and publicity are an important part of any struggle, whether against Reagan's war on Nicaragua or against Reaganomics and exploitation. But the capitalist papers and TV and radio, even the liberal papers, don't side with the working class — at most they sigh over the horrible conditions of the poor, but they oppose the path of struggle. It has been the Party that has worked to build up a working class press. This press includes leaflets that come out right in the midst of the fight and provide the timely information and point out the best path of struggle. It includes *The Workers' Advocate* that provides broad analysis of the U.S. and the world situation. And this is a press that is not built up by detached scholars but is produced in intimate connection with the working class. From literature distribution networks at the work places to the Marxist-Leninists who sacrifice themselves to produce and support this press, it is a press that springs from the very midst of the class conscious workers' movement.

There is no question that the last few years have been difficult ones for revolutionary work in the mass movements.

Yes, the discontent with Reagan grows deeper among the working masses, and the capitalists have been in crisis. But these have also been years of relative decline in the mass struggle, years when the dead weight of liberal and reformist treachery have played a particularly disorganizing role. It is the MLP that, by rallying the advanced section of the class conscious workers and activists, has provided consistency and staying power to the struggle. It has not trimmed its sails or put down the red flag of class struggle to wait for better days. It is the party that has maintained its convictions and principles and known how to present them to the masses during the alleged Reagan era.

It is this persistent work that is necessary to organize a powerful movement. The masses learn by experience that concessions don't save jobs, that the liberals betray, etc. But for this experience to really become a conscious basis of the masses' activity, for it to really be summed up among the broadest masses, the class conscious vanguard must constantly agitate among them, draw them into the fight. Otherwise the experience is always gained too late, otherwise the crucial moment is always lost. Class conscious workers and revolutionary activists, help us build the Party and organize the masses for a firmer struggle against Reaganite reaction. The Party belongs to the working class and revolutionary activists, and it must be built up by them. Let us join together in the mass struggles against Reaganism, in defiance of the liberals and labor bureaucrats, in building up the working class press, and in building the party organizations.

And then we shall see that the heroic mass struggles will not be frittered away, but will strike even more fear into the heart of the bourgeoisie. We shall step by step see the so-called era of Reagan replaced by the era of the revolutionary class struggle, the era when the working class puts its stamp on the struggles against the outrages of militarism, war, racism and exploitation, the era of preparation for the socialist revolution. □

HOWARD BEACH

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"obstructing justice."

The Cries for Justice for Michael Griffith Will Not Be Silenced

Yes, there is an outrageous obstruction of justice here. But it starts with those who took part in the racist lynch mob (who, of course, were also eyewitnesses to the murder). The police who abused Sandiford are also involved. The Queens D.A. Santucci and Judge Bianchi are guilty as hell. And Mayor Koch, other top city officials, *The New York Times*, the *Daily News* and the rest of the capitalist media are all co-conspirators in this filthy cover-up.

USX

Continued from page 7

lar abuse. They threw them down, rubbed their faces in the dirt, and broke a nose and an arm. There were 14 arrests altogether. The workers were incensed and ready to fight. But Al Pena ordered them to go home. And the train they had stopped was moved out.

A few days later, Valenta said his Cleveland office, the local union in Lorain, and his home were deluged with calls from other USWA locals and other unions from Ohio and all over the country offering to help. He responded in a news conference, saying, "Please, please don't go to Lorain. We don't need that kind of violence in that town."

But the murder of Michael Griffith cannot be swept under the rug. The black and working people have been stirred by this atrocity. The anti-racist demonstrations in Howard Beach are a sign of the depth of the mass anger.

The official cover-up and the efforts of the courts and government officials to exonerate the lynch mob are a slap in the face of all working and progressive people. They can only stiffen the resolve to get justice for Michael Griffith. And they bring home the need for the masses themselves to build the anti-racist struggle. Only the organized and militant struggle of the masses can bring justice to the thousands of victims of racist gangs, police brutality, and official injustice in capitalist America. □

And he insisted that "What really caused that melee that took place in Lorain was definitely a lack of communication" with the police. So Valenta set up a joint committee between the police and the union. And he called the 30-day "cooling off" period a victory.

These are but a few examples of the union leaders' treachery against the workers in this lockout/strike. For the workers' struggle against concessions to be really powerful, the USX workers have to digest the lessons they are learning about the treachery of the union leadership. The workers can do their struggle justice only by organizing the rank and file independently of the law and order lovers of the USWA leadership. □

SOUTH AFRICA

Continued from previous page

oppressed masses. Indeed the new laws have been accompanied by another wave of police murder and detentions of activists. A series of black activists of various anti-apartheid organizations were also swept up.

Detention of Children

The mass detentions have not spared the youth either. In December the government admitted it has held black children as young as 11 years old. According to the minimized official figures, 256 detainees were under 16 years old. According to other sources, about 8,000 youth have been detained under the "state of emergency." In one case a whole school was detained. Once in custody the black youth have been held in solitary confinement, tortured and denied access to parents and lawyers. Often parents are not even informed of their children's arrest.

Just before New Year's, the government announced a further crackdown on the black youth. Now not just the army and police, but also the Department of Education and Training has been given further powers to bar anyone it pleases from the schools, prevent after-hours use of school facilities, and bar any course or book or lecture that doesn't serve to reinforce apartheid. (At the same time, the regime also bans education outside the official schools.) The racist authorities, in a panic, are even venting their wrath on T-shirts, emblems, etc., which bear slogans or

names of groups.

These decrees destroy the plan of creating an "alternative education" within the regime's schools. A number of reformist-led organizations, such as the National Education Crisis Committee, have been telling the black students to give up the school boycott before obtaining their demands and promising them that there would be "alternative education," readings from ANC leaders, etc., in the official schools. This has now been shown to be a pipedream. The militant students are right: there is no way to avoid hard struggle.

The new regulations also put additional bans on sending letters or the distribution of pamphlets, books, and other written material containing material the white racists find offensive to their bloodstained sensibilities.

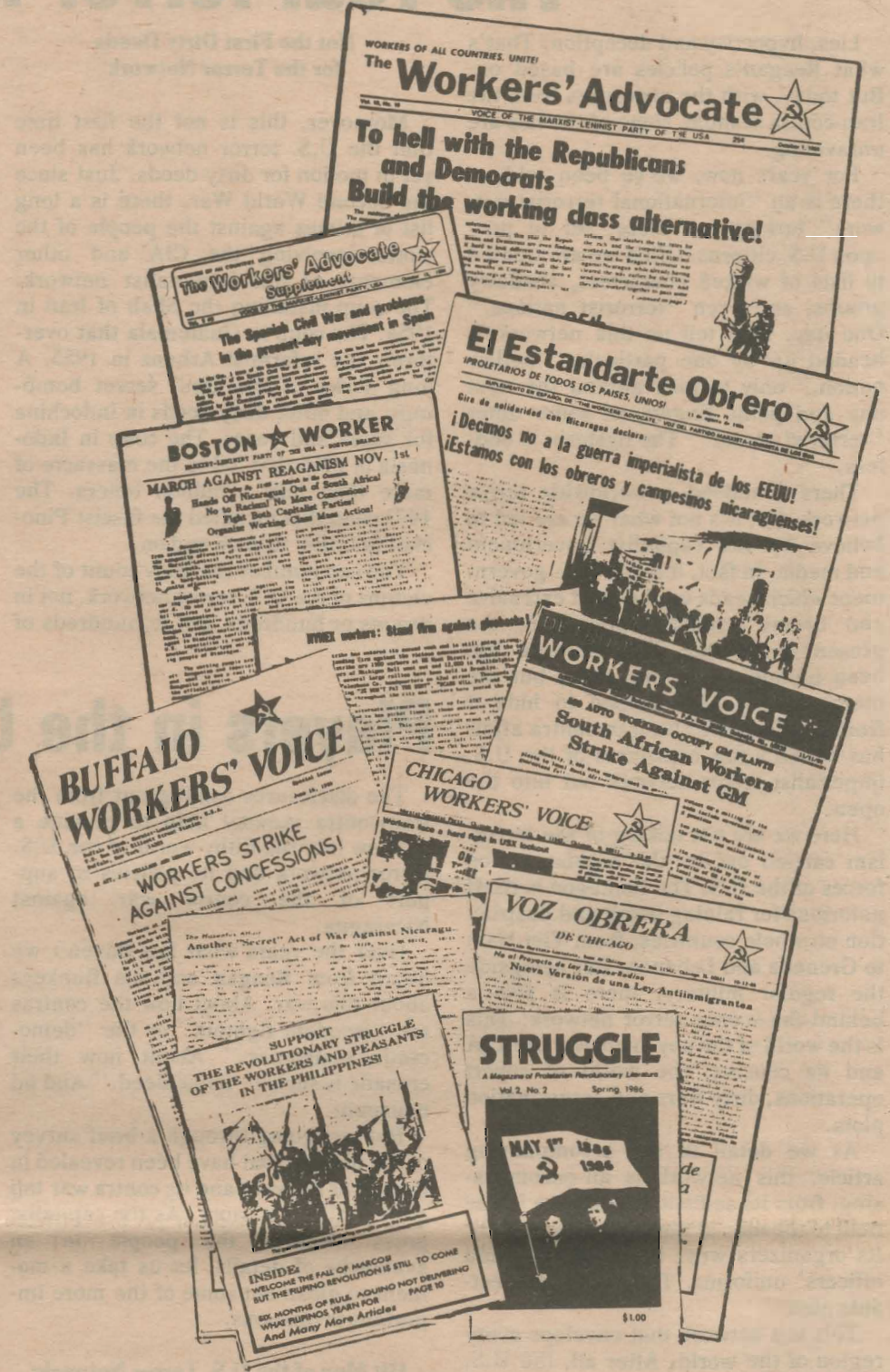
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1986 – A Year of Struggle



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1. Students at the University of California's Berkeley campus defend their shantytown from a police assault, April 1, 1986. The militant divestment struggle of the Berkeley students marked the peak of the anti-apartheid movement that swept the college campuses last year.

2. In July, the MLP,USA organized a delegation of workers and activists to travel to Nicaragua. This was a solidarity tour with the Nicaraguan working people in the face of the criminal U.S.-contra war. In this photo a steel worker from the MLP delegation gives a solidarity message from his co-workers in the U.S. to the Metasa metalworkers.

3. In 1986 the MLP conducted a major campaign for the 100th anniversary of May Day. The Party held demonstrations and meetings across the country and carried out widespread agitation explaining the history of the original May 1st struggle of 1886, summing up the revolutionary lessons of the international working class struggle and providing orientation for the battles ahead.

4. This past year, the government stepped up its attacks on the immigrant workers. This includes the passage of the racist, anti-worker Immigration Reform Law (Simpson-Rodino Bill), which is a challenge to all working people. Here 150 people march against this reactionary bill in Chicago on December 13.

5. In 1986 the courageous strike against concessions by the Hormel workers continued despite treachery by the AFL-CIO hacks and vicious attacks by the capitalists including the use of National Guard troops. On February 15th, 2,500 workers from across the country marched in Austin, Minnesota in solidarity with striking Hormel workers.

Revelations from contragate:

The real terror network surfaces

Lies, hypocrisy and deception. That's what Reagan's policies are based on. But today, with the exposures from the Iran-contra scandal, some of the lies are unraveling.

For years now, we've been told — there is an "international terrorist network" lurking out there, set to prey upon U.S. citizens. Often we are treated to lists of wicked characters, shadowy groups, and even "terrorist nations." One day, they tell us this network is headed up by one particular "outlaw nation," only to turn around the next day and point fingers at some other "terrorist center." The hysteria is endless.

There is indeed a worldwide terror network. But it's not what we are led to believe by the capitalist government and media. In fact, it is the U.S. government which heads up the most extensive and brutal terrorist network in the present-day world. This network has been around for a long time, but the media barons have helped to hide it from public view. The Iran-contra affair has forced a few exposures of the U.S. imperialist terror network out into the open.

Here we are not talking of the terrorism carried out by the regular armed forces of the U.S. The Pentagon is itself notorious for raining death and destruction on whole countries, from Viet Nam to Grenada and Lebanon. But alongside the regular military, there is also a behind-the-scenes terror network. This is the world of the spy agencies, the CIA and its cousins, the world of covert operations, dirty wars and assassination plots.

As we detail in the accompanying article, this network is all-encompassing, from its sadistic triggermen in the field to the men at the top who run it all. Its organizers wear business suits and officers' uniforms. They are "respectable men."

This is a network that envelops every region of the world. After all, the U.S. has declared "security interests" in all corners of the globe. At the moment, the most exposed part of the U.S. terror network is in Central America.

At the center of the contragate scandal is Reagan's war against the Nicaraguan people. The most notorious hit men of the U.S. terror network are the reactionary butchers known as the contras. It is to organize, supply and arm the contras that the network has mobilized its worldwide forces.

Not Rogue Elephants, But Instruments of Imperialism

Today the Reagan administration is busy with its damage control operation. Oliver North is being made the scapegoat for the Iran-contra dealings. They say that this was not official policy; the president knew nothing about it; the CIA knew nothing about it; the Pentagon and State Departments knew nothing about it. The whole operation, they claim, was some sort of rogue elephant.

Who are they kidding?

This type of claim about rogue elephants is an often used ploy when scandalous operations are exposed. It has been used many times before. But it remains, as always, a lie.

After all, it is incredible that a single lieutenant colonel operating on his own can manage to organize such a vast worldwide network into operation. More importantly, the whole thing is based on well-known Reaganite policy. It is Reagan who is obsessed with carrying forward the contra war against Nicaragua. It is the U.S. CIA and Pentagon who have set up, trained and organized the contras. It is the State Department who draws up the endless lies upon which this criminal war is based. And even the Democrats, the alleged critics of Reagan, are accomplices in this war.

Not the First Dirty Deeds for the Terror Network

Moreover, this is not the first time that the U.S. terror network has been set in motion for dirty deeds. Just since the Second World War, there is a long list of crimes against the people of the world involving the CIA and other elements of this imperialist network. The coup installing the Shah of Iran in 1954. The coup in Guatemala that overthrew the reformist Arbenz in 1955. A long series of murders, secret bombings, and other dirty deeds in Indochina for years and years. The coup in Indonesia in 1965 that led to the massacre of more than half a million toilers. The 1973 coup that installed the fascist Pinochet in Chile. And on and on.

You can number the body count of the victims of the U.S. terror network, not in dozens or hundreds, but in hundreds of

thousands, even millions.

As the above examples show, the U.S. terror network exists irrespective of who is in the White House. It has been an instrument of both Republican and Democratic administrations.

It is in fact an inherent part of the American foreign policy apparatus. Its operations — from day-to-day spying, gathering of intelligence, and disinformation campaigns to large-scale destabilization efforts, coups, assassination plots, and dirty wars — are all in service of imperialism. In other words, its activities are meant to defend the faltering U.S. empire. To defend the interests of the wealthy and the U.S. corporations who exploit the labor of poor and hungry toilers around the globe. To make sure that the people of other lands, no matter what they may want, live under the heel of tyrants and in the orbit of the U.S. government.

The terror network cannot be reformed or legislated away. It will remain as long as imperialism extends its bloody claws around the world.

For example, after big exposures of the CIA in the late 60's and early 70's, there were Congressional investigations galore. And even laws were passed that allegedly reformed the intelligence apparatus. But nothing essentially changed. And with Reagan in the White House, many of those laws were quickly scrapped.

These lessons are important to recall as we see a new round of disclosures of dirty deeds, and as new promises are made of reform. They point to an inescapable conclusion. The destruction of the terror network requires nothing less than revolutionary struggle against imperialism. □

Players in the U.S. terror network

The disclosures coming out from the Iran-contra scandal help to provide a window into the filthy world of the U.S. terror network and its policies in support of the contra war against Nicaragua.

Over the years what lies haven't we heard from Reagan and his flunkies about this war. About how the contras are "freedom fighters" or the "democratic resistance." About how their crusade is such a "noble deed." And ad nauseum.

But just going through a brief survey of the players that have been revealed in the terror network and its contra war tell quite a different story. As the capitalist press swamps the people in an avalanche of details, let us take a moment to glean out some of the more important revelations.

Hit Men of the U.S. Terror Network: the Contras

Who are the contras? The men who form its core are the ex-National Guardsmen of the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua. The Somoza tyranny was set up by the U.S. in the 1930's, and for five decades it ruled through terror, murder and torture. The National Guard was the iron heel of this dictatorship, built up through the years with generous U.S. aid and training.

The Nicaraguan people toppled the Somoza tyranny through a people's revolution in 1979. The National Guard was smashed. But its remnants fled abroad. With the help of the CIA, first under Carter and later under Reagan, they were regrouped into a terrorist strike force to wage war on Nicaragua.

Reagan calls them "freedom fighters" and "democrats." But there is no real question about the aims of these minions of Somoza. Their goal is nothing less than the restoration of a Somoza-style dictatorship in Nicaragua. Indeed, the contras have made themselves notorious for rape, torture, and murder. Several thousand Nicaraguan people have died recently at the hands of these terrorist killers. And we cannot forget the National Guard murdered some 50,000 Nicaraguans during the revolution.

The contras have also been involved in other criminal activities. They have murdered labor and opposition activists in Honduras. They have taken part in death squad activities in El Salvador. And they have been involved in drug running.

Mercenaries and Contras From Wars Past

Besides the contras, the hit men of the terror network also include other

hidebound reactionaries. Some are mercenary soldiers of fortune, like Eugene Hasenfus. They are hired with money or with the promise of a chance to pursue private Rambo-like fantasies. Others are the leftover contras of yesterday's operations. Especially prominent in the U.S. terror network are fascist Cuban exiles, many of whom took part in the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs raid against Cuba in 1961.

Let's just take a couple of figures whose names surfaced in the Hasenfus story.

● Felix Rodriguez, alias Max Gomez. One of the key figures who ran the contra air supply operation. A Cuban assassin whose exploits include helping Lyndon Johnson in the 1965 U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic and the murder of guerrilla leader Che Guevara in Bolivia. Gomez is a man Vice-President George Bush calls "a friend."

● Luis Posada Carriles, alias Ramon Medina. Felix Rodriguez' partner. Posada was an explosives man in the Bay of Pigs raid. Posada was involved in blowing up a Cuban airplane in 1976, killing all 73 people on board. He was convicted in Venezuela for that crime but "escaped," only to end up in the contra supply effort in Central America. Posada was in regular contact with Oliver North in the White House as well as with Bush aide Donald Gregg, a 31-year veteran of the CIA.

Assassins like these are the frontline warriors for Ronald Reagan's "democracy" in Nicaragua.

Look at the "Democracies" Who Come to the Aid of the Contras

The U.S. network of terror is reinforced by the alliances that Washington has around the world with reactionary and fascist governments. For the goal of counterrevolution, these governments are all too eager to help the U.S. Their secret police agencies closely interlock with the CIA.

The revelations from contragate have brought out some of the involvement of a number of Washington's allies in the contra support brigade.

Israeli Zionism

The Israeli Zionists have become a major player in the contra supply network.

The Israelis claim they didn't have any role in transferring the Iranian funds to the contras. Don't bet on that. It is no deep secret that Israel has given direct support to the contras on other instances. Indeed, this is no big surprise. The Israeli regime has a long record for supporting tyranny in Central America.

It was a good friend of Somoza. And it is a major supplier of weapons to the Guatemalan fascists.

After all, the Israeli regime is itself a past master at terrorism. As events show nearly every day, Israel rules through violence against the Palestinians and terror against its neighbors.

The Saudi Arabian Monarchy

Like Israel, it too was not only a middleman for shipping arms to Iran but also in funding the contras.

Last July, for example, the Hearst News Service reported on two instances of Saudi money for the contras. In one case, the Saudis paid kickbacks that were later funneled to the contras when it bought AWAC radar planes from the U.S. The news story connected this operation with Oliver North.

The capitalists tell us that Saudi Arabia is a "moderate" Arab state. This boggles the mind. There is little that is moderate about Saudi rule. Here is an iron-fisted tyranny which tolerates no opposition. There is not even a pretense of giving its citizens the right to vote. And people convicted of even small crimes are subject to barbaric laws like the cutting off of limbs.

The Sultan of Brunei

To raise funds for the contras, the U.S. government has sent its men to the furthest reaches of the world. It's come out recently that Secretary of State Shultz visited the Sultan of Brunei to seek money for the contras. And the Sultan opened up his largesse.

And what is this regime? Brunei is a small oil kingdom in Southeast Asia. Like Saudi Arabia, it is also a despotism run by a fabulously wealthy king. The monarchy has ruled by decree since 1962 when a liberal party which won the elections that year was suppressed.

Marcos Too

There are reports that even Marcos in the Philippines got into the Iran-contra affair. The *San Francisco Examiner* reports that Marcos collaborated in the Iran arms deal by signing fake resale certificates indicating that the arms sent from Israel had arrived in Manila, not Iran. And in return a 5% commission from the profits went to Marcos' army boss General Fabian Ver and also to a Filipino arms dealer.

Other old friends of the CIA also were recruited into the Iran-contra dealings. For example, one of the key Iranian figures involved in the Iran arms deal, the weapons dealer Ghorbanifar, has a

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The contragate criminals

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You hear the same message on Capitol Hill. From liberals and conservatives alike. A few weeks ago, the incoming Democratic Senate majority leader Robert Byrd declared, "The nation's credibility and standing in the world is at stake. The institution of the presidency is at stake."

In other words, to hell with questions

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history of connections with the Savak, the notorious secret police of the former Shah's regime. The Savak had very close ties with the CIA. Today despite the overthrow of the Shah, Ghorbanifar remains a trusted man with the Khomeini regime.

The involvement of Israel, Saudi Arabia and the Sultan of Brunei in contra support again shows up the fraud of how the contras allegedly stand for democracy and freedom. How can the likes of these reactionary regimes have anything to do with democracy? Some of these regimes don't even pretend to be democratic!

At the Top: The "Respectable Gentlemen" in Washington

Finally we come to the apex. Responsible for coordinating the extensive U.S. terror network are not some "wild-eyed foreigners" but "respectable" men in Washington. Men who wear business suits or officers' uniforms. Men who, the press informs us, are family men, church goers, and so forth. These are the Oliver Norths, the Poindexters, the Secords, and the Caseys. These are the people who carry out Reagan's orders, the ones he calls "national heroes."

Contragate has brought public attention on a few of these figures. We take a look at two:

Reagan's Rambo: Oliver North

Oliver North. The man who, if you believe the damage control people in Reagan's administration, masterminded it all and carried it out by himself. Which would make him something akin to a character out of Marvel comics. But anything is possible, since this is after all the age of Rambo.

North is a diehard fascist criminal. It has just been reported that in Viet Nam North worked on Operation Phoenix, a CIA campaign which murdered over 100,000 Vietnamese civilians suspected of sympathy for the liberation forces. In 1971 he wrote to right-wing columnist William Buckley protesting the press attention then focused on the U.S. troops' massacre of villagers in My Lai, Viet Nam.

In the Reagan White House, North was made pointman to coordinate support for the contras.

After the 1984 exposure of the CIA-written murder manual for the contras, it was North who made sure that the individuals "fired" by the CIA were properly taken care of. Vincent Canistraro, the CIA operative ultimately responsible for the murder manual, got a job on the National Security Council staff.

In the past, North's role was exposed a number of times for the contra support operation, particularly in the summer of 1985. But the talkshop politicians in Congress refused to push any investigation.

North is not only a Marine officer but he is also closely connected to various right-wing political groups. For example, he is reported to be a member of the Council for National Policy, an exclusive organization of millionaires, right-wing preachers, top right-wing politicians, and members of Reagan's kitchen cabinet. Its members include Nelson Bunker Hunt, Joseph Coors, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson.

of substance, forget matters of policy. Forget about such things as the inhuman war Reagan is conducting against Nicaragua. The issue for the capitalist rulers today is to shore up Reagan's image, to make the masses trust Reagan again.

Does this mean that the U.S. government will stop lying? Does it mean that the terror network will be dismantled?

It has also been reported recently that North may have been involved in providing funds for conservative campaign activities against certain Democratic candidates in last November's elections.

Secord, the Air Supply Man

General Richard V. Secord. He is ostensibly a retired Air Force general, but shows up as a major player in the Iran-contra arms deal. He took part not only in the recent trips to Iran, but in fact he is chief organizer of the contra air supply operation in which Hasenfus got

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Reagan's new man at the NSC — an assassin for all seasons

After news of the Iranian arms deal came out, the first response at the White House was to stonewall. When that didn't work, Reagan and his cronies turned to damage control.

In timeworn tradition, the old fairy tale of a "rogue operation" was trotted out. Reagan's role was shielded. And the first sacrificial lambs were turned out. Poindexter and North, two honchos at the National Security Council, were removed.

To take charge of the NSC, the White House brought forth Frank Carlucci. And a cheer went up in the corridors of power. The politicians on Capitol Hill, both Republican and Democrat, the billionaires on Wall Street, and the barons of the media applauded in relief.

The press has been full of praise for Carlucci. Every few days we are told about how ruthlessly he is cleaning house at the NSC. Now everything will be in order there. There will be no more delinquent operations à la Oliver North. The NSC will now get out of the business of covert operations, shady dealings, running secret wars, etc.

Don't hold your breath for any such thing. Carlucci's whole career for the U.S. government tells quite a different story. In fact, here is a man who has a model record in just the same sort of skulduggery that he's allegedly cleaning up.

Look at some of the highlights in the "distinguished career" of Frank Carlucci, who has served the U.S. imperialist terror network under every administration from the 1950's.

A Career in Assassination Plots and Counterrevolution

Carlucci entered the U.S. foreign service in 1956. Since that time, he has served in a series of "trouble spots" around the world. Everywhere he has gone, he earned the reputation as the CIA's man.

He was in the Congo-Kinshasa (now called Zaire) in the early 1960's. This central African country was then in the throes of a militant struggle for independence from Belgium. Patrice Lumumba, a radical nationalist, was the leader of the independence movement, enjoying wide support among the Congolese people. Lumumba was assassinated in a plot in which the CIA was involved. Carlucci was implicated in this plot by a 1975 Congressional investigation. After Lumumba's death and much

Not on your life.

No, the issue for the capitalist ruling class is something else.

For one thing, it is to get over the scandal and march forward with capitalist business as usual. This means to find ways to reassure the people that all is well in Washington. Surely, with all the investigations, committees, and commissions, the people can rest easy and allow Washington to proceed with business.

Another thing is to tinker around with the government. Get rid of North and Poindexter; put in a Carlucci. (And for the truth about who Carlucci is, see inside.) Make a few minor changes here and there.

Even more importantly, find Reagan ways to give the impression of "being decisive," show the flag, demonstrate that presidential authority is well and alive. In short, proceed with the business of the Reaganite offensive. With military adventures. With budget cuts in social services. With police measures against the people.

For the Workers, the Issue is to Fight the Reaganite Criminals

But the workers approach contragate

not to strengthen Reagan, not to shore up his authority, but to push forward the fight against his reactionary policies.

The issue for the workers isn't to make sure that the war against Nicaragua is done more professionally, but to ask, what the hell are they doing in Nicaragua? The real issue is to develop the struggle against U.S. imperialism's killing and maiming of the toilers of Nicaragua.

Nicaragua is of course an urgent concern. But our concern is with all the crimes of Reaganism. The workers don't give a damn about the image of the White House, we demand real change. But in order to get change, we cannot expect Reagan to reform himself, nor can we expect the Democrats to save us. No, the workers have to act for themselves. We have to build a movement of the working class against the capitalist offensive, a movement that stands up against both the capitalist parties.

The Democrats worry about a weakened presidency. For our part, let's use the "weakened presidency" to push forward the struggle against Reaganism. Let's use all the inflammable material that contragate is exposing to mobilize the working masses against the capitalist offensive. Now is the time to organize for struggle. □

turmoil, the Congo finally fell under the rule of General Mobutu. Mobutu is a cutthroat despot who has ruled the country with extreme terror ever since. Mobutu, a high-living dictator in the style of Marcos and Duvalier, has been a loyal friend of U.S. imperialism all these years, while the Congolese people have experienced great suffering and poverty.

From the Congo, Carlucci moved on to the island of Zanzibar in eastern Africa (now part of Tanzania). Zanzibar too was a scene of mass ferment and left activity. Carlucci's tenure there got him expelled by the Zanzibar government for "subversive activities."

Carlucci found himself next in Brazil. This was right around the time that the military dictatorship came to power in 1964, after overthrowing a liberal government. The Brazilian generals went on a ferocious offensive against the workers, peasants, and the left. The U.S. government gave massive support to these brutal generals.

Through these years, Carlucci was serving the Democratic administrations of Kennedy and Johnson. In 1969, Nixon took the reins at the White House. During Nixon's second term, Carlucci was taken under the wing of Caspar Weinberger, then Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. Weinberger took charge of slashing social programs, earning the nickname "Cap the Knife." Carlucci became a loyal protégé of Cap's.

In 1975, Carlucci was appointed ambassador to Portugal by President Gerald Ford. Portugal then was in upheaval after the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship in April the previous year. Carlucci became the point man for U.S. intervention in Portuguese politics, working to safeguard the interests of capital and Western imperialism from the threat of revolution. Carlucci worked closely with the West German government, then run by the Social-Democrats, to bolster the Portuguese Socialist Party. This social-democratic party took on the key role to stop the revolutionary upheaval. Carlucci also worked closely with conservative and fascist elements while in Portugal.

In 1977, the Democrat Carter took over in Washington. Carlucci had done his job in Portugal so well that Carter made him deputy director of the CIA. He was placed in charge of covert operations. Among other things, he spearheaded a 1979 covert operation against

the pro-Soviet South Yemen government in the Persian Gulf. The plot was closely linked to Saudi intelligence and involved sponsoring paramilitary operations from monarchist North Yemen. But many of the plotters were caught and executed.

When Reagan came in, Carlucci was appointed deputy to his old boss, Weinberger, now at the Pentagon. Among his main duties has been the task of defending the gargantuan Pentagon budget increases before Congress.

One interesting event in Carlucci's career at the Pentagon involves his connection with General Secord, the man who has headed up Oliver North's "private" contra airlift operations. In 1982, Secord was under investigation because of various shady financial dealings with a Middle East transportation company. He was to be placed on leave at the military, but Frank Carlucci came to his aid and ordered him reinstated.

Why Carlucci at the NSC?

This is the man who is now at the head of the NSC. With a career chock full of dirty deeds for the U.S. terror network, it is incredulous to believe that Carlucci has been placed at the NSC to "clean up."

No, the issue isn't that Carlucci will conduct a different policy than the Norths and Poindexters. That's not the meaning of the change at the NSC.

What then is the meaning of his appointment?

It is that a man of the calibre of Carlucci enjoys the trust and confidence of the capitalist ruling class as a whole. The North-Poindexter operations for Reagan apparently stretched the limits of how monopoly capital prefers its foreign policy to be conducted. The North-Poindexter operations were conducted in too erratic, unprofessional and slipshod a manner. As well, they created discord between key ruling class figures within Reagan's cabinet and in Congress. Having served both Republican and Democratic administrations loyally for three decades, having friends in both parties, Carlucci will carry out U.S. operations in a less cowboy-like fashion that the likes of North and Poindexter. Carlucci wasn't appointed to get rid of these operations but to clean up the sloppy way they've been undertaken. □

Although Congress talks about contragate, Reagan escalates his war on Nicaragua



Demonstration against the CIA/contra war in Central America marches through Chicago, December 20.

Every day Reagan's contragate scandal is deepening. As Reagan's top advisors fall over each other in panic, and Reagan pretends to know nothing, it becomes clearer and clearer that Reagan's war on Nicaragua is a dirty war based on lies. The contras are a gang of thugs and rapists bought and paid for by the White House, financed through skimming shady arms deals with dictators like Khomeini, and running cocaine into the U.S.

Even while the scandal about illegal arms dealing and Swiss Bank accounts unfolds, Reagan continues to escalate his war on Nicaragua. 3,000 U.S. troops have just arrived in Honduras for four-month war maneuvers, and 4,500 National Guardsmen and Army reservists will be keeping them company. And this comes only weeks after U.S. troops were used to ferry Honduran troops to the Nicaraguan border to help the contras in their battle against the soldiers of Nicaragua. This open and direct use of U.S. troops was a dangerous escalation of Reagan's war. And it followed by only three weeks a military exercise at Fort Bragg where 15,000 U.S. troops practiced a mock invasion of Central America.

But while Reagan escalates his new Vietnam war, the same congressmen and news media that are all abuzz with the details of contragate say next to nothing about this war that is brewing. In fact the Congress and the media repeat the word of the White House lies as if it were gospel truth. When Reagan says U.S. troops were sent to help Honduras protect its borders, all of Washington bows down and says "It must be true, would the president lie?"

Never mind that for six years Re-

gan's contras have been using bases on the Honduran border to stage raids into Nicaragua to murder and rape the workers and peasants who support the revolution. Never mind that 10,000 Nicaraguan civilians have been murdered by these gangsters. But when Nicaraguan troops chase these terrorists over the border, Nicaragua is suddenly the aggressor. Why, the Pentagon just must send its Huey helicopters to fly Honduran troops to back up the contra terrorists. The White House has spoken.

Why is it that even when the contragate scandal is unfolding, the media and the Democrats in the Congress don't challenge Reagan's escalation of his war in Central America? Why is it that even the most liberal Democrats express fear of seeming to be "beating up on" Reagan? Why are they concerned that Reagan won't be able to vigorously pursue his foreign policy in the next two years? Why?

Because, despite all the noise and political infighting, the entire capitalist ruling class wants to strangle Nicaragua. Part of these wealthy dogs, and the liberal politicians, are upset with Reagan and his staff for their bungling, for their infighting, for their crudeness, for their getting caught — but they all agree that the domination of U.S. imperialism must be protected. They disagree a bit on the methods. But they all agree, "Nicaragua must be crushed."

After all, the Nicaraguan working people stood up and overthrew a U.S.-backed dictator. That example could spread. Think of the danger to the profits of the multinational corporations, to the bases of the U.S. military,

allow him to organize the allegedly "private" air supply operations for the contras.

Secord also has had close ties with Edwin Wilson, the former CIA agent who is in prison for ostensibly unauthorized arms deals with Libya. At Wilson's trial in 1982, Secord testified as a defense witness. Secord's connections with Wilson, and other shady dealings in the Middle East of his own, were apparently factors in arranging an early retirement for the general.

Other names have also surfaced. And still more follow almost daily. But the effort continues to hide the fact that Reagan was involved. That is just so much twaddle. Make no mistake — this was Reagan's baby. From the first days of his administration, Reagan has busied himself with the war against the Nicaraguan revolution. The U.S. terror network is merely an instrument of the White House. □

to the prestige of a superpower.

And so the rich and their bought-and-paid-off politicians have set limits on what they want covered in the contragate scandal. Some legal technicalities can be discussed. Some officials can be dumped. The Democrats huff and puff about how the will of Congress has been subverted. The methods of administering the CIA and the Pentagon can be discussed, and the methods of advising and consenting with Congress. But the basic policy on Nicaragua, the goal of counterrevolution in Nicaragua, and the goal of a stronger CIA and Pentagon, are not to be seriously challenged.

But the working class has a different view of contragate. It is the bloody aggression against Nicaragua that is the scandal. It is the CIA and the National Security Council themselves, with their

system of covert operations, buying and selling governments, and murdering opponents, that is the scandal. It is seeing the U.S. governed by a class of exploiters that would rather drown the world in blood than give up their filthy privileged life of million dollar bonuses and ruthless parasitism.

It is among the masses that the real verdict on contragate will be given. The contragate scandal should be used to help rouse the widest masses for a real fight against Reagan's whole war on Nicaragua and Central America. It should be used to arouse hatred of the whole system of exploitation at home and the military jackboot abroad. The Washington politicians may squabble but only the militant struggle of the working class and its allies can beat back the Reaganite warmongers and the offensive of the rich. □

Chicago: Slide show of MLP's solidarity tour of Nicaragua



Meeting in the schoolhouse, cooperativists tell the MLP delegation about their struggle against the hated landlord, Nicolas Gonzales.

A slide show of the recent MLP solidarity tour of Nicaragua has been shown on two occasions in the Chicago area.

On October 25 the Chicago Branch of the MLP presented the slide show at a meeting held to discuss the tour and solidarity with the toilers of Nicaragua and their revolutionary vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua. This meeting followed an afternoon march and rally against Reaganism. At this march much agitation was done regarding the present situation facing Nicaragua. Many activists expressed interest in learning more about the situation in Nicaragua and particularly about the work of the MLP of Nicaragua.

On December 7 another showing was held at Iran House with a speaker from the MLP (Chicago). This meeting was sponsored by the Organization of Iranian Democrats Abroad (OIDA) and was followed by a lively discussion.

The solidarity tour itself was marked by many opportunities the comrades had to talk with the workers and peasants of Nicaragua about the struggles they are waging against the imperialist and contra war and against the bourgeoisie. The comrades also had a good opportunity to view first hand the dangers being created for the Nicaraguan revolution by the vacillating policy of the Sandinista regime.

The slide show gave a good insight into this. Many scenes were featured such as:

- A trip to talk to the workers at the Metasa steel mill where workers are demanding higher wages from the Minis-

try of Labor. Since it is the workers that shoulder the burden of both military defense and increasing production to counter the war and blockade, the workers must be paid better so that they can eat.

- A trip to the Marris Duarte Pig farm where workers recently elected the Workers' Front (led by the MLP of Nicaragua) to be their union instead of the Sandinista-led CST union because the CST had ignored their demands while the Workers' Front was organizing to solve their problems. Presently they are fighting for greater trade union rights.

- A trip to a peasant cooperative in Jinotega where these peasants who live in a front area of the war against the contras were in the midst of planning a land seizure.

The comrades also participated in several demonstrations including: a parade to greet soldiers returning from the front of the war against the contras, a march in Leon on the anniversary of the murder of student activists by Somoza, and a demonstration at the U.S. embassy to denounce U.S. imperialism and to protest the murder of peasants and international volunteers that weak by the contras. All this was also depicted in the slide show.

Anyone interested in sponsoring or viewing this slide show should contact the MLP-Chicago Branch at P.O. Box 11542, Chicago, IL, 60611 or stop by Marxist-Leninist Books and Periodicals at 1631 W. 18th St.

(From the Dec. 17 "Chicago Workers' Voice," paper of the MLP-Chicago.) □

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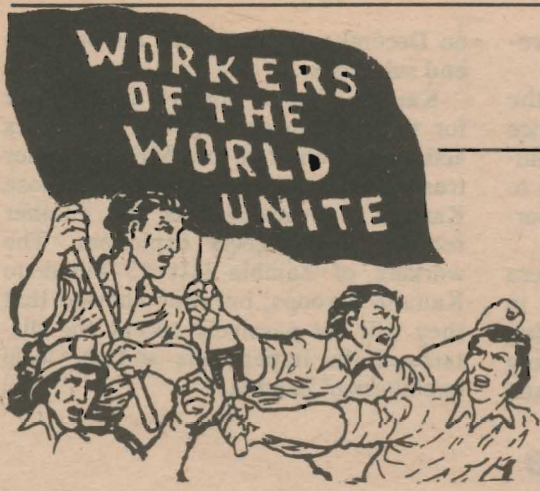
caught.

Here too we have a long-standing member of the U.S. terror network. In the late '60's, Secord helped run the secret air war in Laos with the CIA.

He also has a long history of involvement in U.S. military operations in Iran in the 1960's and again in the mid-70's. The U.S. military was a major prop for the brutal Shah's regime. Secord's business partner today, Albert Hakim, is an Iranian capitalist who used to work as middleman for foreign corporations seeking contracts with the Shah's regime.

Early in the Reagan administration, Secord was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East. He went on "early retirement," but was retained as advisor on a Pentagon covert operations group. His retirement, as the record shows, is obviously a formality to

The World in Struggle



Why are the students protesting in China?

Throughout December demonstrations of students took place in cities all over China. While at first the Chinese revisionist rulers took a lenient approach to the protests, now the authorities are trying hard to clamp down. As we go to press, flurries of protest are still being reported.

The U.S. media is making it out as if the student upsurge is against socialism. But in fact China is not a socialist country. Rather, it is a country which shows the class conflicts typical of capitalism. The students are protesting over a variety of just grievances — from tuition and other problems of campus life to bureaucratic oppression. However the students are just awakening to struggle, their consciousness is still undeveloped, and there are different political trends active in the movement.

The revisionist Communist Party in China is not a Marxist workers' party but a bourgeois party. It is championing a program of capitalist development, opening up China to imperialist exploitation and gutting a number of the improvements made by toilers in the wake of the 1949 revolution. As a handful of bureaucrats and capitalists grow fat, the masses of workers are being squeezed to the wall. The revisionist program is sowing the seeds of discontent among the working people. The current student upsurge is a reflection of the contradictions of revisionist capitalism in China.

The Growth of Student Protest

The demonstrations began on December 5 in the provincial capital of Hefei, where a march of some 5,000 students through the center of town halted traffic for hours. The next week another demonstration was held in the same city. This time they marched on the offices of the provincial government and the local newspaper.

After this student organizers spread the movement to other cities including Wuhan, Kunming, and Chongqing. On December 20 the movement emerged in a big way in Shanghai when 30,000 students jammed the streets. On December 21, up to 50,000 students marched in People's Square in Shanghai, and students prepared for even larger actions the next day.

But on December 22 the Chinese government press came out with an article opposing further demonstrations. Up until then government spokesmen had appeared to be somewhat tolerant of the demonstrations, languidly remarking that "students have the right to demonstrate." But now the government press announced that the students' demonstrations "threatened unity and stability" and that future demonstrations would have to have a permit approved by local authorities. Students who applied for permits were however denied them.

After this the Shanghai demonstrations dwindled, but now the movement shifted to the capital Beijing. On December 23, several thousand students from Qinghua University poured into the streets. Beijing government authorities tried to restrict the movement, but the students showed initiative

in developing the movement. For example, a group of demonstrators got out at 1 a.m. in the morning and began marching from one university campus to another, calling to students in dormitories to wake up, come out and demonstrate. By getting an early start the students were able to mass several thousand demonstrators in the streets before the police were able to disperse the march.

The latest reported demonstration occurred on New Year's Day, when thousands of students marched back and forth across Tien An Men Square in Beijing. The mayor of Beijing had previously vowed that students would never demonstrate in the square, but by using flexible tactics the students were able to demonstrate most of the day. The police arrested two dozen demonstrators but later let them go after the students took up the demand for their release.

The Meaning of the Protests

What is this wave of protest all about? The general slogans raised in the movement have been things like "freedom" and "democracy." But behind these vague slogans, there are many different grievances among the students and many interpretations of what the overall slogans mean.

The U.S. capitalist media has concluded from such slogans that the Chinese student movement is a liberal, pro-capitalist movement which would help to push China into an even more pro-imperialist direction. They see the movement as a pressure group that could help Chinese revisionist boss Deng Xiao Ping consolidate capitalism ever more rapidly in China.

And indeed, there is some evidence that at least a section of the students do stand behind Deng Xiao Ping's platform of capitalist "modernization." And like many previous movements in China, it is easy to see that rightist factions in the ruling revisionist party hope to use the student demonstrations in their favor. That at least in part explains why the authorities initially took a more tolerant attitude.

However, there is much more to the movement than that. Here you are talking about tens of thousands of students across the country. And while a great deal of prominence in the U.S. media has been given to slogans like "freedom" and "democracy," the multifaceted grievances of the students have been obscured.

For one thing, there is ferment among students over basic economic issues concerning them. School fees are rising for Chinese students, just as they are for students in other capitalist countries around the world. Chinese students are also faced with primitive living conditions on university campuses — bad food, poor lighting, a stodgy and unhelpful bureaucracy. These conditions were one factor in the student demonstrations of a year ago, where students also denounced Japanese imperialist penetration of China and Japanese militarism.

There are also political issues raised by the students. For example, the first protests emerged in Hefei because stu-



Chinese students march in Shanghai.

dents were angry at how candidates were selected for an election to the district-level people's congress. Ruling party officials had selected candidates for the university's four seats on the local legislative body without even letting the students know who the candidates were.

Another issue that came to the fore as the movement began was the question of freedom of the press. The Chinese revisionist-controlled press refused to print any news of the student demonstrations, even though it printed editorials denouncing them.

Fear of Workers Getting Into Motion

When the demonstrations were few and scattered, the Chinese revisionists appeared not to worry too much. But the movement kept escalating, spreading to cities across the country. What also worried the authorities were signs that workers were beginning to join the protests.

There was one report that as the protests grew in Shanghai, at least one group of industrial workers came out to join in. They are said to have demanded better wages and improved working conditions. There have also been demands raised against rising prices for food and other commodities. Also, at the end of December there was a report that thousands of workers and students were gathering in the industrial city of Nanjing.

The growth of such things could present a real nightmare for the Chinese revisionists. There is always the danger that as the student protest percolates, it

could spark off a wider mass movement, bringing the toiling masses into motion. And the entry of workers and their class demands into the movement could help give impetus for the re-emergence of a proletarian revolutionary alternative in China.

The Chinese revisionist rulers have certainly given the workers and poor laborers in the countryside enough things to rise up over. Deng Xiao Ping's celebrated "modernization" program seeks to boost capitalist development in China through stepping up the exploitation of the workers. Many gains in wage and job security that workers had made after the 1949 revolution have been scrapped, and more are changed each month. Just a few months ago, there were major new changes introduced which will make life even more difficult for the workers.

Indeed, there have been other reports of worker discontent. One report claims that an increasing number of strikes have taken place over the last year.

It is not clear where the current wave of protests will go. Still, it is a sign that the Chinese revisionists, in their headlong rush for capitalist development, are themselves giving birth to the discontent that spells potential disaster for their rule. "It is glorious to be rich," a slogan fostered by the Chinese revisionist party, may be well and fine for the top bureaucrats and a few capitalists, but it is an axiom of capitalism that only a few can be wealthy, while the masses of toilers and working people will be subject to ever more intense exploitation. □

Student protests around the world

The student upsurge in France set an inspiring example for students in a number of other countries.

During the French events, students elsewhere organized solidarity actions with the French movement. As well, the French students' struggle against Chirac's university "reform" became something of a beacon for students elsewhere who are also fighting against similar capitalist austerity measures. Student movements have emerged in several countries against government measures to cut back on educational opportunities for the masses and to restrict access to universities to the sons and daughters of the wealthy.

Solidarity With the French Students

At the large December 10 demonstration in Paris there were hundreds of students from Italy and numerous dele-

gations, totaling about 300 students, from Britain.

In Belgium, students demonstrated against the police murder of Malik Ousseine in Paris.

In West Germany, 2,000 students marched in West Berlin to denounce the visit of a French cabinet minister. And West German high school students sent over 4,000 representatives to a march in Strasbourg, France.

In Switzerland there were demonstrations in solidarity with the French students. Similar actions also took place on Italian campuses.

And in the French colonies, especially Martinique, thousands demonstrated in solidarity with the French students.

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See STUDENT PROTESTS

STUDENT PROTESTS Continued from previous page

Spanish High School Students Protest

High school students in Spain organized two large demonstrations in December to protest the government's plans to "rationalize" admissions to universities. On December 5th, 100,000 students marched in Madrid while thousands marched in other cities (Barcelona, Zaragoza, Seville, Malaga, etc.).

Then on December 17 the students held an even bigger nationwide demonstration which hundreds of thousands joined in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Seville and other cities. The protests were also joined by some workers. As in France, the police used the provocateur activity of some far right-wing youths as an excuse to attack the demonstration.

The students in Spain are protesting the government's plans to raise university fees and stiffen entrance requirements. Already last summer the government canceled second-chance entrance exams for many students, depriving them of the possibility of entering college. The students are demanding open admissions and the abolition of university fees. As in France, the high unemployment rate for youth (about 50% in Spain) is propelling the movement forward.

The Spanish government which is spearheading these measures against the youth is the Socialist Party administration headed by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez. The fact that Gonzalez' regime in Spain is taking up the same reactionary policies against the youth as the conservative administration in France exposes the social-democrats once again as just another party of capitalism.

Large Demonstrations in Mexico City

A hundred thousand students and workers marched in Mexico City on November 24 to protest a government plan to "reform" the National Autonomous University of Mexico. The Nation-



Part of the demonstration of 70,000 Japanese students against tuition increases, November 26.

Zambian workers rise up against price hikes

During the second week of December, the toilers of Zambia beat back a weighty increase in the price of food-stuffs through several days of mass rebellion.

On December 5 the government of President Kenneth Kaunda announced an end to subsidies for cornmeal, the staple food of the masses in Zambia. Kaunda's decision to end subsidies was

al Autonomous is the largest university in Latin America, with 340,000 students. The government's plan is to raise fees and toughen academic standards, thereby "improving" education — but in fact restricting it more to the upper crust.

Students protesting the proposed "reform" have been organizing marches, sit-ins and boycotts throughout the fall. The students closely followed, and received inspiration from, the events in France.

Struggles in Italy, Japan and Belgium

On December 5, hundreds of thousands of students marched in 150 towns across Italy to protest government education policies. The students denounced new schemes of the government for religious indoctrination in the public schools and demanded the resignation of the Education Minister.

Seventy thousand college students in Japan walked out of their schools on November 26 with the slogan "No more tuition raises!" The students demanded an increase in government funding for higher education.

And there have also been demonstrations in Belgium against the adoption of more restrictive college entrance requirements in that country.

Elsewhere in this paper, we report on the student protest in China which has received a great deal of coverage.

Underlying the student protests that are coming up internationally today is the deep capitalist economic crisis. In the face of this crisis, the capitalist governments are taking up a variety of austerity measures. All these are aimed at making the masses of working and poor people bear the brunt of the economic adversities.

The only proper response of the working people to the capitalist offensive is mass struggle. The student upsurges are a welcome development. Linking up with the workers and other toilers, the student movement can play an important role in challenging the unjust dictates of the rich exploiters. □

and burned cars, especially government vehicles.

Kaunda did not hesitate to send in the army against the toilers. Local police were quickly reinforced with paramilitary troops. Kaunda declared a dusk to dawn curfew and sealed the land borders of Zambia.

Undaunted, the toilers of northern Zambia took on Kaunda's troops in pitched battles in the copper mining towns. After four days of steadily rising rebellion, Kaunda admitted defeat and

on December 11 cancelled his order to end subsidies.

Kaunda likes to posture as a fighter for the African people. But Kaunda's actions on behalf of the IMF, and other treacheries and betrayals, expose Kaunda's government as just another regime of bourgeois exploiters. The workers of Zambia lost 15 killed to Kaunda's troops, but they showed that they will not passively accept the dictates of the imperialists and the local exploiters of Zambia. □

Palestinian upsurge in the occupied territories



Palestinian guerrillas in the "battle of the camps" in Lebanon.

December saw a popular upheaval in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza territories, as the Palestinian population rose up in militant demonstrations against the Israeli zionists.

The demonstrations began December 1 when Palestinian youths in Ramallah demonstrated against the ongoing attacks on Palestinians by Israeli settlers. Israeli soldiers broke up the demonstrations with gunfire.

Then on December 4 the occupation authorities decided to shut down Bir Zeit University, a Palestinian university that has been the center of many meetings and marches. Israeli soldiers set up roadblocks around the university campus to prevent anyone entering. When students and instructors protested this, the troops opened fire, killing two and wounding eleven.

After this, a storm of protest blew over the West Bank. The same day there were demonstrations by students in Bethlehem and a strike by shopkeepers in Ramallah. On December 5 a crowd of youths threw stones at an army patrol near Nablus; the zionist troops opened fire, killing one boy. By December 6 a general strike had spread to all the major towns of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In the following days there were constant attacks on Israeli patrols, as the Palestinian youths built barricades, burned tires in the roads, and ambushed the army patrols with stones. The zionists responded with their typical brutality, killing another two youths and wounding a number of others. The protests died down the second week of December but then flared up again a week later.

Children Stand Up to Israeli Brutality

These demonstrations are remarkable for the bravery of the Palestinian youth, as very young boys and girls face the guns of the zionist military machine.

Israeli troops open fire at the slightest provocation — for example, soldiers shot a 12-year-old girl in the leg outside her school in the Gaza Strip because, they said, she was urging her fellow students to participate in a march. Israeli troops normally do not employ tear gas or rubber bullets; they simply fire once into the air as a warning, and then fire at the demonstrators. Official policy claims that they are to fire "at the feet." Oh, how reasonable!

Twenty Years of Oppression

It is inspiring to see the Palestinians in the occupied territories rising up in a new wave of struggle against the zionists. This comes after nearly 20 years of occupation, and it shows the unquenchable thirst of the Palestinians

for liberation.

The zionists' record in their 20 years of occupation has been one of unremitting oppression.

Since 1967, 60% of the Palestinian-owned land in the West Bank has been confiscated by Israeli military authorities, and either turned over to Israeli settlers or used for military purposes against the Palestinian population.

The Israelis never hesitate to demolish the house of anyone known as an anti-occupation activist, or simply any house that stands in the way of their "development" projects; at the same time they have blocked the Palestinians from carrying out economic development projects of their own.

Palestinian trade unions are strictly policed and not allowed to admit any new members. Occupation authorities use "administrative detention" to hold people for months without a trial or even any charges against them; and while in prison Palestinians are not allowed any medical care.

Palestinian books and newspapers are subjected to strict censorship, and anti-Israeli journalists are routinely deported. In Palestinian towns, many elected mayors have been assassinated and replaced by Israeli military administrators.

Palestinians Get Boost from Guerrilla Successes in Lebanon

A striking feature of the Palestinian upsurge on the West Bank has been the spirit and enthusiasm of the youth. They have literally been throwing themselves against the Israeli army patrols, taunting the soldiers who shoot at them. This spirit appears to at least be in part due to enthusiasm for the recent victories of Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon. There the guerrillas have had some success in resisting a combined assault on the refugee camps by some of the major military forces there.

A so-called "war of the camps" has been going on for over a year in Lebanon between Palestinian guerrillas and the Shiite Muslim militia Amal. Amal has been supported by Syria, which provides Amal's weaponry and tanks. And Amal's attacks have also coincided with Israeli bombardments of Palestinian camps. There have been hundreds of casualties in this bitter conflict. But the Palestinians have not only managed to hold onto the camps but have even thrown Amal back from some of its attacking positions.

The situation remains very difficult for the Palestinians in Lebanon, but even small victories serve to boost the fighting morale of their brothers and sisters under Israeli occupation. □

French students force a government retreat

For several years now, it has been fashionable among the high priests of the capitalist media to pontificate on how the France of the 80's is no longer a country of mass unrest, quite unlike the France of earlier decades. The French workers and youth, they say, have become conservative and given up on romantic notions of struggle.

But the workers and students of France closed 1986 by proving these shortsighted observers quite wrong. First the students of the high schools and colleges made the streets of the country alive with militant struggle. And now, the workers have launched a powerful strike wave.

Let us examine the developments in the student movement.

In November, students rose in protest against the French government's plan to raise university tuitions and adopt more restrictive admission policies. By December 8, through the strength of their powerful mass actions, they forced the government to give up its plan. But by then the student ferment was moving beyond its original demands and it began to touch on broader mass concerns — to take up the struggle against police repression and racism and to join up with the workers' struggles against unemployment and impoverishment.

Monster Demonstrations and Militant Clashes

As we reported in the December 1 *Workers' Advocate*, the students' demonstration of November 27 had forced Chirac to send his university "reform" bill back to committee "to be re-examined." After this conciliatory gesture, however, Chirac announced there would be no change in the bill's main points. In response the students continued their boycott of classes and devoted their efforts to organizing an even larger demonstration for December 4.

The demonstration of December 4 in Paris brought out at least two hundred thousand participants — that was the conservative police estimate — and maybe as many as a million. Marchers came from all over France in chartered trains and buses. The march itself stretched five miles long, from the West Bank to the National Assembly building. The demonstration lasted all day and into the evening. At the same time students held simultaneous demonstrations in many other cities.

On the evening of December 4 a violent clash occurred between the student demonstrators and riot police massed in front of the National Assembly. This occurred after student leaders returned from negotiations with Rene Monory, the Minister of Education, and reported that the government was still determined to push through its "reform" bill. Enraged, the mass of students started moving toward the National Assembly, and soon objects were flying through the air toward the riot police. The police opened fire with tear gas grenades fired horizontally right into the ranks of the students, injuring hundreds. One student lost an arm, another an eye. Fighting went on for a couple of hours.

The students then dispersed into other sections of Paris, where militant demonstrating broke out in the Latin Quarter, as police "flying squads" tried to disperse crowds. The "flying squads" are teams of two cops on motorcycles; while the driver weaves his way through the crowds, the other cop smacks people on the head with a long stick.

The students continued their protests throughout December 5. Thousands of students marched in spontaneous demonstrations all over Paris, snarling traffic for most of the day. Riot police were run ragged, dashing back and forth in buses trying to chase down

demonstrators.

The Police Murder a Demonstrator

The fighting resolve of the students stiffened further after news came of the police murder of one of the students. Riot police with nightsticks chased one student, Malik Oussekine, into a doorway; after he was knocked down, the police continued hitting him with batons and kicking him in the head. Malik was taken to a hospital where he died; the government tried to cover up his murder by saying he died of natural heart failure.

Malik's death brought the issue of police brutality and repression squarely to the fore. The murder exposed the government as a repressive force bent on smashing the student movement. The fact that Malik was of Arab descent (his parents were from Algeria) also brought forward discussion of the racist, anti-immigrant policies of the French



French college students take to the streets of Paris, December 5.

government. The spirit of opposition to the government was greatly enhanced.

After Malik died, 20,000 students marched to the hospital where he had

been taken, demanding the resignation of the Minister of the Interior (the head

Continued on next page
See FRENCH STUDENTS

Reformism versus the French student movement

The students in France went into motion recently after several years of relative quiet in the schools. For most of the youth involved, this was their first experience in a mass upsurge. And like every mass movement, the student movement in France did not develop in a straight-line fashion. It did not develop through some automatic unanimity among the students, but through controversy, debate and struggle.

Reflecting society as a whole, there are in fact different political trends among the students. And the rank-and-file students were able to develop their struggle only by standing up to right-wing students and by going beyond the positions that reformist student leaders wanted to impose upon the movement.

Right-Wing Students Worked As Police Provocateurs

As the presence of the multitudes in the streets showed, the great mass of students supported the demands to scrap Chirac's university "reform." But a tiny minority of right-wing students support Chirac, and some of them expressed this by physically attacking the student demonstrations. At the Paris demonstrations these right-wingers assaulted demonstrators with iron bars. And during the height of the demonstrations, December 4-5, they cooperated with the police in this dirty work. A number of scenes of coordination between the police and the reactionary students were captured by television crews.

Naturally, in order to develop their struggle the progressive students had to defend their movement from the rightist thugs.

The Student Movement Went Beyond the Narrow Stands Advocated by the Reformist Student Leaders

The other big problem was within the movement itself, from among the official leaders themselves. These student leaders are the student government types who dominate campus electoral politics. The majority of them are affiliated to the Socialist Party's student organization, while many others are affiliated to organizations tied to the revisionist Communist Party.

It was not a surprise that this type of leadership dominated the struggle; the masses of students are just awakening to struggle and the reformist parties dominate the campuses in the absence of a strong revolutionary alternative. The struggle had yet to give rise to new leaders from among the active students themselves. The reformists in the offi-

cial leadership imposed a narrow framework upon the struggle, but they did not entirely get their way. The movement became a school for student activism. Consciousness grew among the masses of students. The reformist leaders came under pressure from the rank-and-file students and were forced to deal with their developing awareness.

Echoing the conservative mood among the French bourgeoisie and within the social-democratic and revi-

sionist parties, the reformist student leaders preached a spirit opposed to radicalization of the students. They tried to differentiate the present movement from the militant upsurge of the late 1960's.

Thus the official leaders of the movement opposed militant tactics for the movement, promoting pacifism, obedience to the police, and denouncing mili-
Continued on next page
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The French workers are on the move too

A new strike wave has erupted in France. It began as a number of scattered, spontaneous strikes. But by late December it had developed into a big protest against the reactionary economic policies of Jacques Chirac's conservative government. Coming right on the heels of the huge student mobilizations, the strike wave poses a major challenge to Chirac's administration.

Union Hacks Caught by Surprise

The most notable thing about this wave of strikes is that it appears to be the work of the rank-and-file workers themselves.

The opportunist trade union chiefs affiliated with the social-democratic Socialist Party and the revisionist Communist Party were caught by surprise when the strikes began breaking out this fall. Workers formed their own elected strike committees which organized the walkouts. The trade union bureaucrats, left behind by the walkouts, are now scrambling to catch up with the rank and file. While before they had little to say in opposition to Chirac's policies, now they are full of militant talk.

The strike committees do not appear to have completely broken with the influence of the union bureaucrats. Union hacks have now been allowed representation in the strike committees. However, so far the strikes still have not been tamed.

Strikes Centered in Transport

The strikes are centered in the public transport industry, which is largely state-owned. The largest strike is that of the railroad engineers, which has crippled the French rail system. Another important strike is that of the dock workers and seamen, which has

shut down many of France's seaports. Airline crews shut down the French domestic airline, Air Inter, for two days in mid-December. And the workers on the Paris subway system have staged a number of one-day walkouts. In general all of the strikes are against government austerity, demanding, among other things, higher wages.

In addition, the railroad engineers face another major issue: Chirac's attempt to gut the seniority system in promotions. Chirac's administration planned to implement a new hiring system on January 1 which would replace seniority with "merit" as the basis for promotions. (Of course "merit" is a code word for any arbitrary measure management can cook up.)

When the rail workers' walkouts first began, Chirac refused to negotiate. But as the strike began to take hold across the country and shut down 75% of rail traffic, Chirac was forced to stop stonewalling. He finally agreed to suspend the new promotion system and allow it to be mediated. But the workers, having won this concession, are not budging on their demand that Chirac completely drop the new plan. The workers have also expanded their demands to include the reopening of a wage agreement reached earlier this year; shorter hours; more say in work schedules; and better food and lodging while on the road.

The rail workers' strike has created major problems for the French capitalists, as major portions of France's commercial and passenger traffic move by rail. But the capitalists are also being hit hard by the dock workers' strike, which holds up delivery of perishable goods.

Chirac is blustering that he will not give in to the strikers, but the workers have the recent experience of the student demonstrations to show them that by persisting in struggle they can win. □

FRENCH STUDENTS Continued from previous page

of the police). The students charged a cordon of riot police and forced them to take refuge inside a police station.

The Education Minister Monory went on television to make a national appeal for calm and to announce that the most notorious provisions of the university reform bill would "not be immediately pursued." And Monory's assistant who drafted the bill announced his resignation after Malik's death.

Chirac Backs Down

By now however the students had become conscious of the government's tactics. The government's promises were recognized as attempts to stall their movement, to buy time until the demonstrations died down and then to push through the reactionary "reforms." Not satisfied with Monory's announcement, the students demanded that the reform bill be completely dropped. Student leaders announced another demonstration for December 10, and appealed for support from trade unions.

On December 8, after a number of trade unions came out and endorsed the December 10 march, Chirac announced the complete withdrawal of his reform

bill. The students went ahead with their march on December 10, however, making the focus of it a protest against police brutality and the murder of Malik Ousseki. This was another march of hundreds of thousands in Paris.

The government was none too pleased with the fighting spirit of the students, or the possibility of the students linking up with angry workers. Thus, on December 11 Chirac announced a still further retreat, a "pause for reflection" in his entire legislative program.

Chirac had planned a special session of parliament to begin in January, to push through a number of conservative "reforms" similar in spirit to his university reform. The most controversial of these is a new anti-immigrant bill that will eliminate the automatic granting of citizenship to anyone born in France. Persons born of immigrant parents — like Malik Ousseki, for example — would not automatically be French citizens even though they were born and lived all their lives in France. They would be eligible for becoming citizens, but in the meantime they would be legally discriminated against and subject to deportation. After the December 10 demonstration Chirac canceled the special session of parliament and announced that his administration would "review" all of its pro-

posed bills before the regular session opens in April.

The Awakening of the Youth Startles the Bourgeoisie

That Chirac was forced to postpone his entire legislative program shows the strength of mass action. The student movement caught the French bourgeoisie by surprise, as they had gotten used to bragging about how the students of the 1980's are self-centered and passive, concerned only with carving out their own personal careers. The bourgeois media carried many articles expressing bewilderment as to why such a "mild reform" could generate such a militant protest.

But underneath the facade of calm a storm of protest has been building among the French youth for years, as they face a bleak outlook under capitalism.

The French bourgeoisie brags that its university system provides equality of opportunity for all. But many young people are never given the chance to attend college, tracked into vocational programs at a young age. And among the youth who pass their *baccalaureate*, equivalent to high school graduation in a college preparatory program, only a section go on to higher studies.

Among those who go to college, only 10% are admitted to the *grandes ecoles*, highly specialized academies for science, teaching, administration and engineering. Students at the *grandes ecoles* are paid a salary, and upon graduation are guaranteed a secure job in the state bureaucracy. It is these institutions for the small upper crust that are lavishly funded and backed by the French bourgeoisie. But the other 90% of college students who go to general purpose universities must pay tuition to receive inferior education. These schools are underfunded and allowed to deteriorate rapidly. Even the undergraduate levels of such famous schools as the Sorbonne have been allowed to go downhill. Students there, for example, have no access to computer training.

For the great majority of the youth, who do not attend college, the prospects are even bleaker. The unemployment rate for youth has been rising for

years and is now at 33%. With massive layoffs in basic industry and a government committed to wage austerity, the youth have nothing to look forward to. The government lectures workers that the French economy must modernize, must become "high tech"; but then the same government enforces educational policies that will restrict the access to modern education. With these pressures against them, it is no wonder that the French youth have turned to struggle.

Contrary to the smug claims of the bourgeoisie, the youth and student movement in France is not just a matter of careerist self-interest. The students rose up against one front of a vicious capitalist offensive aimed at the working masses as a whole.

The students are of course not a homogenous section of society. They do not form a class by themselves but come from different class backgrounds. As well, they are mainly in training to be professionals, many of them in fact joining the petty-bourgeois professionals, an intermediate strata between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The different class political trends in society — bourgeois, petty bourgeois and proletarian — are reflected among the students.

Nevertheless, the majority of French students originate from the working class and other toiling people. Large numbers of students retain connections with the working people. Furthermore, the bourgeoisie often steps forward as the champion of the backward things that outrage the students. As a result, when students rise in struggle, they frequently gravitate towards joining up with the workers, the immigrants, etc. — with all those oppressed by capital. One task of the progressive students is consciously to stand on the side of the working class and take the stand of the class struggle.

Militant mass action and the fighting unity of all the working masses — there lies a powerful possibility for blocking the capitalist offensive. And as the movement against capital grows among the workers and other oppressed, the logic of struggle will once again develop on a wide scale ideas of socialism as the alternative to all the evils of the capitalist system. □

SANCTIONS Continued from page 3

immigration law, he made an appeal to "hire Americans." For the employers this simply means look for blue eyes and names like "Smith" when hiring.

Already there are countless reports of employers firing immigrant workers under the pretense of the sanctions. Sure, in the wording of the law, employer sanctions don't apply to legalized immigrants, or to the undocumented who were hired before the Simpson-Rodino Bill was passed last November 6. But the fine print doesn't mean a thing to the bosses and managers who do the hiring and firing.

"Anti-Discrimination" Hoax

For years, the plans for employer sanctions have drawn the fire of protests as plainly racist, anti-immigrant, and discriminatory. But leave it to the Democratic Party liberals to hold up a fig leaf to cover for this nakedly reactionary law.

Representative Barney Frank, that liberal of liberals, successfully attached to the Simpson-Rodino Bill an "anti-discrimination" clause. It creates an office in the Justice Department to deal with "charges of discrimination stemming from unlawful immigration-related employment practices."

Of course, in the hands of Meese and his good ole boys at the Justice Department, such an ambiguous clause will probably be a dead-letter. Or worse. They may just try to twist it to bring "reverse discrimination" charges against the oppressed immigrants.

What's more, the "anti-discrimination" clause is counter-balanced with flagrantly racist qualifiers. The new law, for instance, gives its blessing to discrimination not only against the "illegals" but also against fully legal immigrants, making it clear that given a choice between two equally qualified people, an employer has the right to discriminate against legal residents who have not yet gained citizenship. This is just to make sure that no one takes the "anti-bias" clause too seriously and forgets the bill's racist and anti-immigrant purpose.

A National I.D. System

Employer sanctions require employers to check the documents of all newly-hired employees. Exactly what will be determined as acceptable is not fully

clear; but so far it looks like a U.S. passport, a birth certificate, a certificate of naturalization, a social-security card, or a driver's license, or some combination of these, will do.

At the same time, despite all the denials to the contrary, Simpson-Rodino gets the ball rolling towards a national I.D. system. It allows the president to set up, after the approval of congress, a "secure document verification system," which amounts to a national I.D. system by a different name.

Social Security Commissioner Dorcas Hardy announced that experiments with such a system are already underway in Dallas, Fort Worth, El Paso and Corpus Christi, Texas. Some 70,000 Texas businesses will be able to call up to verify if the Social Security numbers of job applicants match their earning records. If this pilot program works, it could become a national system by the time employer sanctions are to be enforced in June.

This looks like a bureaucratic nightmare. People have enough trouble getting things straight with Social Security. But when you are applying for a job you don't have months and years to iron out computer snafus in Washington.

More than that, this is a potentially dangerous weapon in the hands of the capitalists and the government against the working class. At first, of course, the undocumented will be the main victims. But what is to keep this system from being broadened as a tool against all workers?

Once such a system is in place, the push will be on to expand it. Besides just earnings information, it would not be that difficult to step by step include things like work performance, strike and political activity, etc. In other words, if the government finds it necessary, it would have the machinery for a national system to blacklist from employment all types of "undesirables," especially militant and revolutionary-minded workers.

All in all, the Simpson-Rodino Bill is a threatening challenge. It condemns the undocumented to an even worse hell of superexploitation and despair. It unleashes even worse discrimination and oppression of the Latino and immigrant workers. And it has all the makings of a police state measure against the working class as a whole. Let us meet this challenge with mass struggle against the government's every step to put in force this racist, anti-worker law. □

REFORMISM Continued from previous page

tant action of the students when they did break out. As well, they preached that the movement should be restricted to the issue of educational reform. They worked to narrow the scope of students' concerns, shying away from other issues on the minds of the students, such as the anti-racist struggle.

But in the course of building their movement the masses of students went beyond these stands.

In the first place, they had to deal with the question of what attitude to take toward the police forces of the capitalist state. In the earliest demonstrations last fall, the students, following their pacifist leaders, were inclined to chant "CRS join us" when they were confronted by lines of police (the CRS are the riot police). But by late November, after being attacked a number of times, their chants changed to "CRS-SS!"

The student leaders worked throughout the movement to chain the students to a non-confrontational stand. For example, they wanted the December 4 demonstration to be nothing but a day-long rock concert. And they worked to make the December 10 memorial action for Malik Ousseki a call for national unity instead of a sharp denunciation of the police.

The mass of students also wanted to push forward their victory over Chirac and demand the resignation of the Interior Minister; but the student leaders, following the Socialist Party politicians, opposed this.

Another crucial question that came up

in the student movement was the question of allies. The masses of students gravitated towards seeking the support of the working class. For the big national demonstrations the call went up for a general strike, for the workers to come out en masse in support of the student protests. But instead of taking this issue directly to the workers, the student leaders tied up this proposal in negotiations with the opportunist trade union leaders.

As a matter of fact, the trade union bigshots, connected to the SP and CP, had no interest in organizing a powerful mass mobilization against the government. They raised the need to avoid an upheaval like that which happened in 1968. The union endorsements were very slow in coming, and even when they did, trade union leaders on the shop floor refused to tell the workers in the plants about it. When workers asked the union leaders, they were told "We don't know...maybe..." Such was their disgusting treachery.

The reformist student leaders also heavily preached the slogan of "apoliticism." This was to obscure their own partisan connections with the reformist parties. There is a widespread disgust among the masses with the Socialist and Communist Parties. The SP and CP ruled France in a coalition from 1981 to 1983, and the SP ruled alone from 1983 until last year. Despite their leftist labels, these parties carried out pro-capitalist policies against the masses.

However, despite all their attempts to shackle the movement, the reformist student leaders were not able to prevent the students from winning their demand against the educational reform bill. □

ASTURIAS Continued from back page

ship," that is to say, a government of the workers over the bourgeoisie.) The factories, mines and banks were taken over. To suppress hoarding and speculation, money was abolished and a system of rationing was set up to ensure basic necessities for the people. The workers also took steps on the front of health care, sanitation and other needs of the masses. All this was done in a matter of days and in the midst of constant and bloody fighting with government troops.

On the military front the workers' revolution also showed its might. Some 30,000 workers were armed and organized for the defense of the uprising. The workers seized munitions factories and worked them at full speed, turning out small arms, artillery and armored cars around the clock. Telephone and other military communications systems were also set up across the province.



"Dinamiteros" — Asturian miners armed with dynamite — come to the defense of Madrid against Franco's fascist forces in 1936.

Reformist Sabotage

Among all the other odds stacked against them, the workers faced the sabotage and cowardice of many of their reformist leaders. Some fled and some hid, while their main energies went towards showing the workers that fighting was hopeless and to negotiating a surrender with the government.

The provincial revolutionary committee in Oviedo was supposed to be at the head of the uprising. When the fighting broke out the social-democratic members

of the committee panicked and ran (they returned several days later only to convince the workers to accept the terms of surrender). A mass rally of workers in Oviedo elected a new committee, this time placing the communists (as it turned out very briefly) in the majority of the leading committee of the uprising. While many of the social-democratic leaders shamed themselves in the struggle, the communists gained considerable prestige as they fought tenaciously on the front lines of the battle.

The Aftermath

To put down the Asturian workers, the republican government finally dispatched the Foreign Legion, battle-hardened in the slaughter of the North Africans in Morocco. Under the command of none other than General Francisco Franco, the Legion carried out a bloody repression. Several thousand insurgents were shot. Workers' meeting halls were turned into prisons and torture chambers. Some 30,000 workers were locked up as political prisoners in the wake of the Asturias uprising and the other October events.

But in defeat the Asturian miners had scored a victory for the whole Spanish working class. The whole country was gripped by what they had done. The wealthy classes were terrified. The workers and the poor were electrified by the example. The demand for the release of the political prisoners became a sharp political crisis for the government, which was forced to back down from the death sentences that it had imposed on many of the workers.

The Asturias "commune" or "soviet" was compared at the time to the experience of the Paris Commune and to workers' soviets in Russia's 1905 revolution. Of course, Oviedo wasn't Paris or Moscow or St. Petersburg. But Asturias showed that Spain was pregnant with revolution with the working class standing at the head of all the exploited and oppressed. And like the Paris Commune and the soviets of 1905, it provided the toilers with a test run for their revolution. The Spanish working class rallied to the banner of "Red Asturias" as it prepared for new battles against fascism and the exploiting classes.

A Dress Rehearsal

The country was teetering on the brink of civil war. The capitalist rulers were preparing their fascist onslaught to crush the revolutionary strivings of the masses. And the action of the Asturian miners had provided a dress rehearsal indicating the general path of struggle needed to confront this onslaught.

The Asturias events were another example of the falseness of the social-democratic ideas which build a brick wall between the fight against fascism and the revolution of the toilers. It was precisely in confrontation with the mounting repression and threatening fascism that the class struggle in the Asturian coal fields was raised to a fever pitch — raised to the point that a reactionary change in the cabinet was answered with an organized insurrection. This goes against any schemes which slight the struggle against political reaction and fascism as though it were a diversion from higher revo-

lutionary aims. It equally goes against the prejudice that the fight against reaction demands postponing the class struggle to future generations.

The Asturias action revealed the energizing power of class consciousness and the revolutionary struggle for the workers' own interests. The Asturian miners did not lay down their lives out of love for the bourgeois republican regime, a regime that was strangling them and nurturing the fascists. They fought with such enthusiasm full of hopes of building a new society where the workers would be the masters of their own destiny. They put their lives on the line inspired by the ideals of socialism and knowing that they were fighting for the cause of the exploited against the exploiters. All the miracles which the insurrection accomplished — on the military front, in establishing a fighting discipline, in production, etc. — were inseparable from the workers' thirst for revolutionary change.

The Asturian workers also gave a valuable lesson in how to achieve unity of their ranks. The militant rank and file and the communists who stood with them did not look for unity by compromising the class struggle so as to more easily reach accommodation with the reformist leadership. On the contrary, they succeeded in realizing a relatively high level of unity in action by pushing forward the class struggle despite the desires of the reformist leaders. Unfortunately, the struggle to expose and isolate the PSOE and SMA misleaders had not succeeded in destroying their influence, particularly when the reformists started to posture to the left. With the approach of the uprising these chameleon-like opportunists started to talk like the biggest insurrectionists of them all. But the revolution did not make the reformists into revolutionaries; they continued their dirty work of undermining and sabotaging the workers' cause.

The CPS Leaders Turned Their Backs on the Asturias Experience

At the cost of a great deal of blood and sacrifice, the communists and workers had gained critical revolutionary training in the Asturias rising. However, by the time the Civil War broke out 21 months later, the leadership of the CP of Spain had already turned its back on this experience. The CPS adopted an orientation that harnessed the revolution to the bourgeois republic. It attempted to suspend the class struggle, placing the revolutionary movement of the working class and poor peasants behind a flabby alliance with the social-democratic chiefs and the capitalist liberals. Despite the heroism and self-sacrifice of the communists, this orientation was fundamentally wrong and brought harm to the anti-fascist resistance.

This policy of the CPS was not an isolated mistake; it was in line with the new and wrong orientations adopted at the 7th Congress of the Communist International in the summer of 1935. Dimitrov and other CI leaders saluted the heroic Asturian miners in their speeches at the Congress. But, unfortunately, the orientation that the Congress ratified went straight against the revolutionary path taken by "Red Asturias." □

SOUTH AFRICA Continued from page 10

Roundup of White Sympathizers of the Struggle

The racists are also afraid of white support for the black majority. Draft resistance among the white population against compulsory military service has been a growing problem for the racists. According to the regime's own statistics, the number of whites failing to report for military service in 1985 was 5,589, almost five times the number for 1984. And almost half the eligible white youth did not register. The new laws now made the draft resistance movement illegal.

Thus, besides brutal attacks on the black masses, another feature of the latest repressions has been a crackdown on the anti-draft movement among the white population. On December 3 the security forces detained 13 members of the End Conscription Campaign and placed restrictions on the political activity of a dozen more members. A total of 75 anti-draft activists have been held during the "state of emergency."

Hushing Up the White Parliamentary Opposition

As well, statements from the liberal

opposition in parliament, primarily those of the Progressive Federal Party, cannot be reported or repeated outside parliament if they are "subversive." (The right-wing ultra-fascists can, of course, continue their criticism of the government for not doing enough stomping on the black people.)

The white liberal Progressive Federal Party is a party of the white ruling class which supports some reforms within the bounds of the white racist domination. But its timid criticisms are now too much for Botha. Thus, besides removing all political rights from the overwhelming majority of the population, the black South Africans, and ruling with the whip and the gun, the racist regime even gags dissenters among the privileged few. This is what the Reagan administration calls a "democracy," albeit an "imperfect" one!

Invading Swaziland

Moreover, immediately after the December 11 decrees, South Africa invaded Swaziland, abducting several people including two Swiss nationals, and murdering a 15 year old in the process. This is simply the most recent of the never-ending series of the apartheid regime's raids on neighboring countries.

A New Black Municipal Police Force

This past month has also brought revelations about a recently created black police force based in the segregated townships. This new force has already established a reputation for savagery. Among other things they have committed rapes, and beaten and tortured prisoners. Several prisoners were even kept in a deep freeze unit at a temperature of 20 degrees.

This new police force is composed of the worst dregs among the black people including police spies and other backward elements who have been bought off with high pay to serve the white masters.

A New Challenge for the Mass Movement

The new fascist decrees are a major challenge for the mass movement. They mean that virtually all the remaining popular forms of legal struggle have been choked off. By their savagery, they may impose temporary setbacks on the movement of the oppressed.

The present situation makes it more obvious than ever that liberation will never come through the legal channels of apartheid. The strategy of centering the struggle on alliance with the liberals

and on the search for legality has gone bankrupt.

But banning the movement will never bring the masses to their knees. Time and again the toilers have demonstrated their capacity to smash through the obstacles placed in their path by the racists. Militant rebellions have broken out despite the "state of emergency." And take the black trade unions. These unions were built up despite utter illegality. And it was only when the regime saw that the unions survived outside the law that it finally granted them a bit of legality for the time being in an attempt to channel them away from the anti-racist struggle. It was mass defiance, not lawyers, that forced the hand of the regime.

Today the masses face the task of finding the forms of revolutionary struggle and organization needed to continue the movement in defiance of the police-state measures. Revolutionary organization must be built that does not rely on the "tolerance" of the racists and that can withstand the conditions of illegality. The regime of white minority rule is not about to sign a legal order for its own abolition. Only the development of the revolutionary movement can unleash the full force of the masses against racist tyranny. Only the revolution can smash the system of white minority rule. □

Revolution and civil war in Spain—Part 2

The Asturias Uprising of 1934

In the first part of this series we presented our general views about the Spanish Civil War and about the orientation of the Spanish Communist Party (CPS) in the struggle. We outlined how, despite the heroic struggle and sacrifice of the communists and the working masses, the leadership of the CPS followed a policy that was fundamentally flawed. (See *The Workers' Advocate*, October 1, 1986) In this and future articles we will examine in closer detail the positive and negative lessons provided by the rich experience of the Spanish revolution of the 1930's. In this issue we are going to go back a step and look at an important episode from the days prior to the Civil War itself and prior to the backward turn in the line of the international communist movement at the 7th Congress of the Communist International in 1935. This is the heroic workers' uprising of October 1934 in the mining region of Asturias.

When King Alfonso was forced out and the Republic was installed in 1931, there were great expectations that this would bring a better life for the downtrodden and hungry workers and peasants. The social-democratic misleaders of the workers preached that the Republic would assure universal happiness. But this was not to be.

The aristocracy, the giant landowners (including the Catholic Church), the oppressive bureaucracy and all the forces of old Spain continued to weigh on the toilers like a ton of bricks. The big industrialists and financiers made common cause with these backward forces against the working masses. The Republic and parliament did not and could not change these basic facts of life. The desperate cries of the Spanish workers and peasants for liberation could only be realized through a revolution: either by a people's revolution to overthrow this backwardness, followed by the socialist revolution; or by a directly socialist revolution of the workers of town and country, with the power to sweep away the forces of old Spain in its wake.

Nonetheless, the hopes that came with the inauguration of the Republic served to stimulate the revolt of the oppressed. The historic role of bourgeois democracy is to open the way for the sharpening of the class struggle. So it was in Spain. The class antagonisms grew to the point of open class battles; and the most critical of these was the Asturias uprising.

The insurrection held power for only two weeks and was isolated to a single province. Even so, the action of the Asturian miners changed the equation of Spanish politics. It confirmed that the class contradictions gripping Spain could not be resolved within the framework of the bourgeois Republic but required a revolution of the working masses. And it revealed the power of the revolutionary workers' movement as the mainspring of the Spanish revolution.

The Brewing Revolution

In the years 1933-34, Spain was gripped by an acute crisis. Bitter strikes crippled factories and mines and the workers were growing evermore impatient for revolutionary struggle. Starving peasants and farm laborers set the countryside ablaze with strikes and land seizures. Conflicts also arose between the central government and the Catalan and Basque regions as Madrid reneged on promises for autonomy for these nationalities.

The capitalist ruling class was frightened out of its mind. Massacres of peasants, new laws against strikes, and police raids of workers' meeting halls were the order of the day.

In the November 1933 elections, the liberal republican and social-democratic coalition government was replaced by the more conservative Radical Party government of Alejandro Lerroux. The "popular" veneer was quickly peeling off the Republic. The social-democratic leaders (and even a section of the bourgeois liberals) now posed as fiery opponents of the government, accusing it of betraying democracy and the Republic.

Meanwhile, right-wing military plotters, monarchist conspirators, and fascist movements stepped up their activities as Spain's big capitalists and landlords were growing increasingly alarmed that something more had to be done. The new republican and parliamentary forms of capitalist rule were proving incapable of holding off the revolutionary movement. The push was on to rig up a new dictatorship.

Things were coming to a showdown. In the fall of 1934, the Lerroux government took the provocative step of inviting the Catholic-fascist party of "El Jefe" Gil Robles (the CEDA, Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas) to take part in the cabinet. These were the days after the coming to power of the Nazis in



Demonstration in Barcelona in 1934 supporting the uprising of the Asturian miners.

Germany and of the regime of the local fascist Dollfuss in Austria. So the entrance of the CEDA into the government — a party that took the regimes of Mussolini, Dollfuss and Hitler as its model — sent a message that was not lost on the Spanish workers. The Spanish working class was determined to meet the fascist challenge with revolutionary action.

In this intense situation, the leaders of the social-democratic Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), who also led the UGT, the largest trade union federation, called for a countrywide insurrection. But they did not have a serious struggle in mind. In fact, these reformist demagogues were simply play-acting with insurrection.

First they tried to trivialize the demands of the uprising to the most ridiculous reformism: that the CEDA must not join the government, but if it does it must first pledge in words its loyalty to the laws of the Republic. Then the PSOE leaders played the game of postponing the threatened rising in order to give Lerroux more time to "reconsider the consequences" — which only meant giving the government more time to prepare to put down any attempts at a revolt. When they could delay no longer and called for the rising, Largo Caballero and the other PSOE leaders hid away in attics and basements.

Without leadership or organization the national uprising fizzled. There was sporadic street fighting in Madrid and in cities and towns of Catalonia and elsewhere. Almost everywhere the government held sway, quickly arresting the PSOE leaders and thousands of workers. But in the midst of this fiasco emerged the "commune" or "soviet" of Asturias — a giant step forward for the working class movement.

Class Struggle in Asturias

An historic hotbed of working class militancy, the mining region of Asturias was at the head of the strike movement of the early 1930's. The militant miners pushed forward the class struggle despite the best efforts of the social-democratic leaders of the SMA, the miners' main trade union. When the first republican government was formed in 1931, the reformist SMA chieftains denounced the strikes as allegedly playing into the hands of the employers and "monarchist sabotage of the new regime." The miners were supposed to wait for Largo Caballero and the other PSOE ministers in the government to satisfy their demands. But the strikes continued despite the no-strike policy. The gulf widened between the reformist leaders and the militant rank and file. One social-democratic newspaper commented that the coal fields were "charged with passion and madness; only our comrades are holding the lid on."

The communists, however, stood with the militant miners. The Communist Party (CPS) was still relatively small and it was plagued by ideological unclarity and vacillations in its tactical orientation. But irrespective of its weaknesses, the CPS maintained features that were critical to a revolutionary policy: it did not reconcile

with the bourgeois republic; it attacked the social-democratic policy of class collaboration; and it was a militant organizer of proletarian action against the capitalists and reactionaries.

The CPS led a fighting trade union of the Asturian miners (originally in combination with the anarcho-syndicalist CNT and after 1931 on its own). Although it only organized a minority of the miners, the CP's influence was felt much further and contributed to the revolutionary ferment gripping the rank and file of the SMA.

In the fall of 1933, the Asturian miners became a special target of the Lerroux government's crackdown against the workers' movement. This in turn fanned the fires of revolt. Economic strikes began to be combined with political strikes against the growing reaction. In February '34, there was a 24-hour general strike of solidarity with the Austrian working class and its unsuccessful revolt in Vienna against fascism. A wave of strikes swept the coal fields against police searches, killings and newspaper confiscations. Two general strikes were called by the CPS in the face of menacing rallies of the fascist CEDA; the powerful September '34 strike against the CEDA shut down most of the province, including the trains and highways, blocking many of the CEDA-ists from arriving at their fascist show of force.

These strikes took place over the heads of the SMA chieftains. As the revolutionary temper of the masses heated up, the reformist leaders resorted to fiery "revolutionary" speeches. But their rhetoric was only part of a desperate effort to "hold the lid on" and avoid being swept away by the militant workers. In fact, they were as stubborn as ever against the class struggle, now arguing that strikes and other mass actions would only sap the workers' strength "before the final struggle."

The workers' powerful impulse towards the class struggle began to break down the divisions in their ranks. The militant workers within the SMA clamored for united action against the class enemy. Although they continued to harbor illusions in their social-democratic leaders, they began to challenge the reformist splitting imposed by these leaders against the communist and anarcho-syndicalist workers. As well, within the anarcho-syndicalist trade unions the rank and file began to break through the dogmas that tended to hold them aloof from the economic and political battles facing the whole working class.

Liaison committees were set up to coordinate joint actions among the workers of the different trends. Despite some objections from the PSOE leadership, mass meetings began to be addressed by both PSOE and CPS speakers. By the fall of 1934, when the coal fields were on the edge of explosion, the workers had established a broad class solidarity. Their rallying cry was "UHP!" (Unity of Proletarian Brothers).

The Uprising

The PSOE leaders in Madrid may have been playing games with their call for an insurrection. The workers of Asturias, however, were deadly serious. Upon the entry of the CEDA into the government, on the night of October 4, the Asturian miners launched their uprising. Armed with the dynamite of their trade and other arms, the miners first overwhelmed the Civil Guards throughout the coal fields and later, with bitter street fighting, successfully routed the army garrison in Oviedo, the provincial capital. Control of most of the province passed into the hands of the workers.

At the outset, the declared aims of the Asturian workers' action were within the same limited framework which had been set by the social-democratic leadership nationally. But this changed with the smashing up of the capitalist authority. The first taste of working class power unleashed enormous revolutionary energy. Cries for the Socialist Republic were made at the rallies of the insurgent workers. The struggle became far more profound than the PSOE's narrow plans. Vivas for the Socialist Republic were on the workers' lips; and in a desperate two-week struggle they took a number of dramatic steps against the hated bourgeois order.

The revolutionary committees became the government authority. The committees and militias of the workers replaced the old police, courts and bureaucracy. A high level of working class discipline was established. (It should be noted that the Asturian anarchists were compelled by events to bend their dogmas and even they reportedly recognized the need for the workers to establish at least a "temporary dictator-

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