



## Condemn the U.S. occupation of Panama!

As the decade opens, U.S. troops have invaded Panama and occupied the country. This so-called surgical operation took place with the heavy loss of hundreds of Panamanian dead. It installed a "Panamanian" government consisting of three Panamanian politicians sworn in on a U.S. military base, acting at the time and in the manner dictated by imperialist chieftain Bush. There is already talk of American troops occupying Panama for months, if not years, until the authority of this "Panamanian government" actually materializes.

So much for a "kinder and gentler" decade where the power politics and blood-letting of the past are forgotten. So much for the spread of peace and democracy. So long as the capitalist gentlemen continue to rule this country, they will continue to exploit Latin America with fire and sword, with invasion and occupation. "Imperialism" is not an old, outdated word, but a description of everyday events. So long as this country is an imperialist power, and not a workers' state, the people's hopes for friendship and peace between nations will always be cruelly disappointed.

The invasion of Panama is no isolated accident. For decade after decade U.S. troops have regarded Central America and all Latin America as their playpen. One country after another has been invaded and new governments installed. Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Cuba, Guatemala, Grenada, and the list goes on and on. What country didn't feel the U.S. "big stick"? How many of the world's most notorious dictatorships were set up as a direct result of U.S. invasions and occupations, from the notorious Duvalier dictatorship in Haiti to the Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua?

Now 1990 comes around, and U.S. troops are occupying Panama. Bush says he wouldn't think of violating the Panama Canal Treaty. He would certainly turn more administration of the

Panama Canal over to Panama. Just so long as he can first take over all Panama itself and purge it of disrespect for the American flag. A house by house search in Panama City and American troops terrorizing the Panamanian countryside are supposed to let everyone know who's the boss.

And everyone knows that Bush and the Pentagon are slowly getting their courage up for greater military exploits. First Reagan tried invading tiny Grenada. Now Bush picks a somewhat

larger target, Panama, although one whose entire adult population is smaller than the U.S. military. And what's next?

Meanwhile Panama isn't the only country in Central America where people are dying because of the Pentagon and the White House.

U.S. "advisors" also continue to direct the bloodletting in nearby El Salvador. Here the right-wing military dictatorship of "President" Cristiani has had to bomb and strafe working class

neighborhoods of the capital city, San Salvador, in order to maintain the semblance of control.

On the borders of Nicaragua, too, a CIA-trained and supplied army continues to assassinate those Nicaraguans who wish to decide their own destiny. And an economic blockade seeks to strangle the country. Ever since Nicaragua overthrew the Somoza dynasty in 1979, the U.S. government has never forgiven the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

Elsewhere in this paper we comment on the lies used by Bush to justify invading Panama. But the lesson of this invasion is clear. If there is to be an end to power politics, we can't expect it from the likes of Bush. We can't expect help from the Democrats, who egged Bush on to this invasion. We can't expect help from the capitalist-owned newspapers and TVs, with their promotion of the "heroism" of dying in action while killing Panamanian people.

It is up to the workers and progressive people in this country to take matters in

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See PANAMA

## Revisionism rots, but the fight for workers' socialism goes on

The end of the 1980's has seen the crumbling of the Soviet-allied regimes in Eastern Europe in the face of upheaval in the streets. Despite all their rhetoric about being socialist, these regimes have shown themselves to be nothing but the tyranny of a small crust of wealthy bureaucrats over the working people.

The Marxist-Leninist Party, USA sheds no tears for the fall of these regimes. Our Party is an anti-revisionist party, the product of a trend born some 20 years ago in the midst of the mass movements of the 1960's. This means that we built our movement from the outset, not just on the basis of fighting U.S.-style capitalism but also by rejecting the phony communism — revisionism — of the contemporary Soviet Union and its allies. We have supported the strivings of the working people of these countries for freedom and held that only workers' socialism can fulfill their ardent hopes and aspirations. We have stood with them — from the heroic revolt of the Polish workers in 1970 through to the current upsurges of today.

The Wall Street billionaires and their mouthpieces crow that "communism is dead." But they celebrate far too soon. What's dying in Eastern Europe isn't communism but revisionist state-capitalism, the perversion of Marxism-Leninism into a special type of capitalist

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Soviet miners at a mass strike meeting, summer '89

### New Year's editorial

#### The Growth of the Proletariat

January 1st closes out the Reaganite 80's and opens up a new decade of hope and struggle for the workers and oppressed. This issue of *The Workers' Advocate* is dedicated to reviewing some of the features of the past decade and looking at the prospects for building up the working class movement in the U.S. and around the world.

Undoubtedly the 1980's has been the decade of the rich, of Reaganism, of unspeakable luxury for the bosses, and degrading austerity for the working masses. But for all of the wealthy's self-congratulations on this new year, the 80's have also been a time when the capitalists have been sowing the seeds of their own destruction. Articles in this paper go beneath the gloating propaganda of the ruling class to point to important developments around the world.

The rich are gloating about the continued expansion of capitalist industrialization into far reaches of the world. Yes, the 80's have seen the growth of large-scale production, and with it the spread of grubby sweatshops, the devastation of the environment, the enrichment of the few and the impoverishment of the masses.

But at the same time, the 80's have seen the most important product of capitalist development, the growth of the militant working class. As the working class has grown, workers' strikes and other struggles have spread ever wider, in South Korea, the Philippines, South Africa, Mexico, Chile, and on. The extension of the workers' movement around the world

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### Romania — A tyrant falls

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### Tasks of workers' communism during the collapse of revisionism

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# New York protest hits Church bigotry

On December 10, some 4,500 demonstrators in New York City protested at St. Patrick's Cathedral against the church's stand against abortion rights and its persecution of gays and people with AIDS. While the bulk of protesters rallied outside the church, several dozen entered during morning services to denounce Cardinal O'Connor, a ringleader of the anti-women, anti-gay crusade of the church. Meanwhile others held a sit-in, blocking traffic near the Saks Fifth Avenue store.

This was a fitting response to the medieval attitude of the Catholic hierarchy. In early November, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops announced a new campaign to ban abortion, which they declared to be their "overriding concern" above any other "human rights issue." New York City's Cardinal O'Connor was chosen to spearhead this drive. He has all the qualifications for this dirty task, having expressed in October his love for the anti-women goon squads of Operation Rescue. The church's stand against abortion rights, along with its stands against divorce and contraception, shows that the oppression of women is one of its basic articles of faith.

Meanwhile the church is also on the rampage against gays. The church's *Ratzinger Letter* goes so far as to justify violent attacks, stating it is not surprising that a "morally offensive lifestyle is physically attacked." My, my. What a "pro-life" position!

In fact, while talking of "sympathy for the suffering," many church leaders can't stop themselves from proclaiming that AIDS is a divine judgment to enforce religious values upon the people. A church spokesman, Rocco Battiglione, got down to brass tacks at the recent Vatican conference on AIDS, declaring that AIDS "is sent by God" as "a strong sign against a certain pattern of human behavior...against the evils of our time." Meanwhile, in the U.S., the National Conference of Catholic Bishops had debated whether AIDS is divine retribution upon sinners. It passed a resolution specifying that, "without condoning self-destructive behavior or denying personal responsibility, we must reject the idea that this illness is a direct punishment by God." This apparently is a compromise — it may not be a "direct" punishment, and the victims shouldn't hold God "directly" responsible for AIDS, but they allegedly have only themselves to blame for violating God's laws.

The pope himself, in his "Global Appeal to Fight AIDS," was on a global rampage against various measures that have effectively curbed AIDS. He



declared that "it is morally illicit to support prevention methods that violate the authentically human sexuality." This means that he bans the use of condoms

to prevent AIDS. For the pope, the real problem is "the immunodeficiency of existential values," i.e. the violation of church rules on sexuality. And if thou-

sands upon thousands of people contract AIDS and die needlessly, well, the wages of sin are death.

The church hierarchy's role as a source of prejudice and anti-people hatred is well-known. But just for this reason, it is a valued part of the capitalist establishment, which opposed the December 10 demonstration. New York's Governor Cuomo, along with outgoing New York City Mayor Koch and Mayor-elect David Dinkins, all condemned the December 10 action. And the police showed up 400 strong to protect the church reactionaries from embarrassment. One hundred and eleven activists were arrested.

But neither police paddy-wagons nor the ravages of AIDS can save the holy tyrants of the church hierarchy from having their "pro-life" stand exposed as a hypocritical cover for their bigotry and prejudice. □

## Boston: Pro-choice movement busts up clinic blockade

On Saturday December 9, the anti-abortion crusaders of "Operation Rescue" (OR) attacked the Repto Clinic in the Coolidge Corner section of Brookline (a suburb of Boston) and were soundly defeated.

Over the past year pro-choice women and men in the Boston area have increasingly rejected advice to rely on the police and courts to defend abortion rights. So when 125 hard-core Operation Rescue fanatics tried to blockade the Repto Clinic, they were quickly surrounded by 250 pro-choice activists who had been mobilized to defend Boston's clinics. The pro-choice crowd was very angry. Shouting "What do we want? Open the doors! When we do want it? Now!" they immediately confronted the OR blockaders.

The police usually remove OR blockaders one at a time. But this time, because of the pro-choice pressure, they were forced to immediately clear a path through OR ranks to allow the clinic to open. Pro-choice activists moved quickly to form human chains to keep OR from re-blocking the clinic. For three hours, groups of OR thugs (mostly the larger men) tried to rush the pro-choice human barricade to get back in front of the door. They failed. OR then resorted to trying to harass and block people they thought were patients walking down the street. Each time they were confronted by pro-choice activists.

All during the confrontation pro-choice activists kept up slogans that denounced Operation Rescue's anti-woman propaganda, and its attacks on abortion rights, as part of the Reagan-Bush attack on the rights of all working people. OR was pounded for hours with slogans such as "Pro-life? Who're you kiddin'? You're pro-war and anti-women!" "From Montreal to Boston, no more attacks on women!" and "Build the movement for women's rights!"

Needless to say, all this was pretty demoralizing to the Holy Bullies. They

had been hoping to revitalize their forces which had been dwindling over the last eight months. OR had held two organizing meetings in the Boston metropolitan area to mobilize zealots and woman-haters for Saturday's attack. They had been given a green light by the government which had dropped all charges from their previous clinic blockades. But once again they ran into the wall of mass resistance.

(Based on a report in the Dec. 16 "Boston Worker," voice of the Boston Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party.) □

## 200 denounce Bush on world AIDS day

December 1 was the second annual World AIDS day, called for by the World Health Organization. In Washington, a number of groups involved with dealing with AIDS took the occasion to denounce the Bush administration for its foot-dragging and neglect. Two hundred demonstrators blocked traffic at the White House. They pointed to the complete inadequacy of government programs. And they also

denounced reactionary policies, such as the government's banning of all foreigners who test HIV-positive from entering the U.S. There was also a demonstration in San Francisco.

There may be no money for working people's health, but there's always money for police and jails. Police arrested 78 protesters in Washington, D.C. □

## Detroit pro-choice action

Pro-choice activists from Detroit and Ann Arbor converged at a meeting place before dawn Saturday morning December 2. When they heard that the anti-abortion fanatics had gone to hit the Women's Center in Farmington, 100 students and workers jumped into their cars and sped to the clinic themselves. On arriving, they declared "this clinic is open" and set up a picket. Slogans denouncing Operation Rescue (OR) and its hypocrisy resounded, like "Pray by day, bomb by night, are the tactics of

"right to life."

Access to the clinic was never cut off. But the doctor refused to show, and all appointments were rescheduled. The police arrested one pro-choice activist for alleged "interference with police."

OR then moved on to harass women at a second clinic, WomanCare of Livonia. Pro-choice activists secured both clinic doors, set up their own picket line to oppose OR's picket, and were successful in keeping the clinic open. □



## Bush censors abortion-safety information

The House Government Operations Committee in Washington revealed in

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# DOWN WITH RACISM!

## Howard Beach racist killers set loose

Four of the racists who beat three black men and chased Michael Griffith to his death on a highway in Howard Beach three years ago were set free in December.

A New York State Appeals Court overturned misdemeanor riot convictions and dismissed the grand jury indictments of three of the racists. None of the three ever saw a day in jail. Following their conviction, the judge sentenced them to only 34 days in jail and they were granted a stay pending the appeal.

A fourth racist who had been convicted of manslaughter and assault in the Howard Beach attack was released from jail December 20, after serving only four months.

Meanwhile, Clarence Brandley — a black man innocent of any involvement in the killing of a white girl — has rotted in a Texas jail for ten years, even after an appeals court overturned his conviction. And Noah Roisten, a black man who simply defended himself from a racist attack, still rots in a Massachusetts prison.

Such is "justice" in racist America. A few of the Howard Beach killers were only brought to trial and convicted in the first place because black people took to the streets in militant protests. But now that the protests have died down they are being let loose. We must build up an organized and militant mass movement if we are going to stand up to the racist gangs and police and courts. □

government's handling of the case. Not only had the government continued to give Lozano full pay while he was suspended and preparing for the trial; not only were his charges reduced from murder to manslaughter; but the courts have even allowed him to remain free on a mere \$10,000 bail after he was convicted! The masses know the courts may yet hand Lozano a light sentence or free

him on appeal, and they don't like that. Various "respectable" black politicians are crowing that the conviction proves that the American legal system will bring racist killer cops to justice. But it proves no such thing. Lozano was convicted only because the ruling class feared the mass struggle of the black people. □

## Protests against racist Houston police

A racist rampage by police has provoked a series of protests by working people in Houston.

On October 31, a 50-year-old black grandmother was shot to death on her way to work by three drunken off duty Houston policemen. On November 15, a 24-year-old black man was shot in the back four times by another Houston cop. This killing makes the cop's third murder of blacks in his seven years on the force. He is a notorious neofascist who writes articles for *Soldier of Fortune* magazine and considers himself a "Rambo." Two other Houston police were recently convicted of rape, and others are under investigation for drug related crimes.

Two hundred people came out to denounce these atrocities at a recent Houston City Council meeting. And

some 500 people joined a "Day of Outrage" protest on November 24. The demonstrators marched from City Hall to Police Headquarters to denounce the racist police brutality. They were joined by supporters of Clarence Brandley, an innocent black who has been on death row in Texas since 1980. In December, the Texas Court of Appeals overturned the conviction declaring it a "terrible miscarriage of justice." But still Brandley rots in jail, as the Montgomery County Texas District Attorney refuses to allow his release while he is appealing the ruling and deciding whether to retry Brandley. Killer cops roam free while supporters of innocent men must fight tooth and nail to win their freedom from the clutches of the racist legal system! Such is apartheid — American style. □

## Black masses celebrate conviction of racist Miami cop



Miami demonstration with symbolic coffins at trial of racist killer Rudy Lozano.

The racist Miami cop, William Lozano, was convicted of manslaughter December 7 for killing two black motorcyclists over a "traffic violation" last January. Such murders are all too common in the U.S. And the police who maintain "order" for the rich seldom receive even a slap on the wrist. So why the conviction? Because the Miami authorities feared that anything less would set off another rebellion by the black masses.

The black masses of Miami have risen up against racist police murders, and their whitewash by the legal system, four times in the last ten years. They battled police and National Guard troops on Miami streets in 1980, 1982, 1984 and 1989.

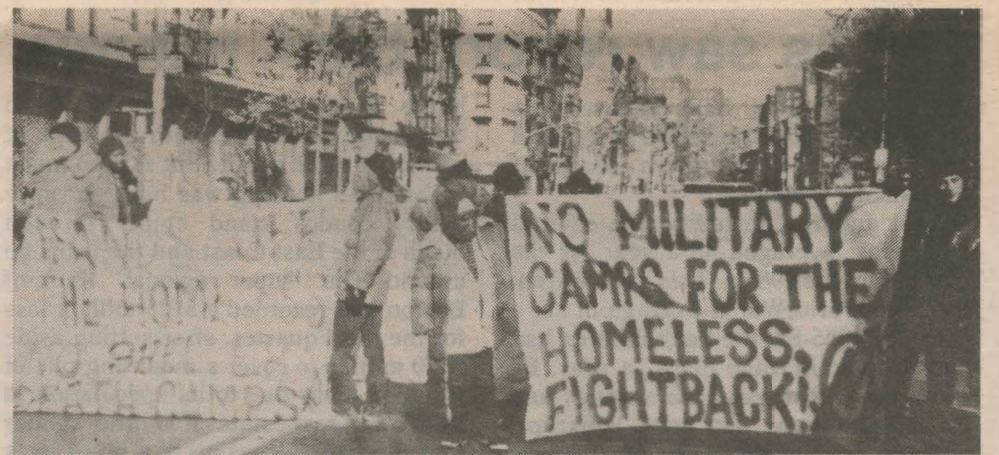
Police officer Lozano's murder of Clement Lloyd and Alan Blanchard on January 16 sparked off three days of mass struggle in Overtown and other black neighborhoods. And the masses refused to let the issue die. Flyers and stickers against the killer cop were circulated. Protests at the trial took place day after day. And people spoke openly of preparations for rebellion if another whitewash of police violence took place.

The government prepared for an outbreak by putting 1,100 police in Overtown, stockpiling new powerful tear gas, and positioning SWAT teams in armored personnel carriers. But in the end, they figured only a conviction of Lozano might quiet the masses. When the conviction was announced

black neighborhoods broke into spontaneous celebration. High school students staged a walkout. People honked horns and danced in the streets. And some two hundred people rallied in an Overtown park shouting "Fight the power!" and "No bail, straight to jail!"

These slogans indicate that the masses are still outraged with the

## NYPD attacks homeless in Tompkins Square Park



100 police in riot gear swept through Tompkins Square Park December 14, evicting homeless people and tearing down their tents and other makeshift structures.

Some 20 homeless people set fire to their own hovels to protest the police at-

tack. After a while, supporters of the homeless from the surrounding community began to arrive at the park. People formed lines to stop the police from moving on yet another structure.

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# A CRISIS WAITING TO HAPPEN

The new year is arriving with another round of layoffs and plant closings across the U.S.

The big three auto monopolies have announced one, two, and three-week layoffs for over 100,000 auto workers in 35 of their 54 assembly plants in January. Each of the big three have also announced further indefinite plant shut-downs. Some parts makers, like Dana and Motor Wheel, are also laying off thousands while others, like Stewart Warner, are shutting down. And the crisis is now spreading to the Japanese auto plants in the U.S.

Meanwhile, AT&T announced plans to cut another 8,500 jobs. IBM wants to eliminate 10,000 positions. GE plans to cut another 1,100 jobs, Honeywell some 4,000, and Lockheed about 1,000. McGraw Hill is eliminating over 1,000 jobs. Conrail declared it would cut 500 jobs in early 1990. And the list goes on.

While the media gloats about the "victory" of capitalism in Eastern Europe, the paragon of the Western "free market" economy — the United States — is shaky.

## Faltering Economy Shows Need for Workers' Socialism

Industrial production in the factories, mines, and utilities has fallen for three months in a row. The hi-tech "miracle" has crumbled. The boom in real estate speculation has collapsed. And although service industries continue to grow, the growth is at a slower pace. Meanwhile, price wars have also begun to spread from one industry to another as competition heats up to unload the over-produced goods and services.

A crisis of overproduction is building. A crisis unique to the capitalist profit system. A crisis where the workers suffer unemployment and privation not be-

cause of a lack of food and clothing and homes and cars, but because they have produced more than the capitalists can sell at the profit they need.

The current situation reveals that the economy has the capacity to eliminate want and misery in the U.S. But the collective production of the workers is held in check by the system of capitalism — the system where not a wheel is turned unless it creates more capital for the wealthy exploiters. That is why the workers, while they fight for jobs and a livelihood, must also build up a revolutionary working class movement to overthrow the capitalists and free the economy to meet the needs of the working masses. This is a fight for workers' socialism. Not the state capitalism and shortages in Russia and Eastern Europe. Nor the crisis-ridden "free market" of the West. But a system run by the working class for their own benefit.

## Crisis Building Through the Decade

Right now the capitalist economists are debating whether the U.S. will plummet into recession or pull out of this tailspin with a "soft landing." But even if they are able to temporarily climb out of this particular downturn, the inevitable capitalist cycle of bust following boom will eventually grab them.

Indeed, throughout the 1980's the economy has lurched from one danger to another. There has been the threat that a major default on foreign loans will bring the banking system crashing down. The capitalists have held their breath as the stock market has crashed twice in the last two years. Meanwhile, the trade war has continued to heat up. The federal budget deficit has remained astronomical. Environmental disasters have mounted, and the unbridled pollu-

tion by the capitalists is now threatening to shake the economy.

None of these and other problems have been solved. Each has been building up. And economic collapse has been put off only at the expense of preparing the ground for an even deeper crisis in the future. On this page, and elsewhere

in the paper, we take a look at various crises that have built up through the 1980's, the severe cost paid by the working masses to keep the capitalist money-grubbers afloat, and the conditions developing for the outbreak of class struggle.

## Third world staggers under debt crisis

The Third World debt crisis emerged in the 1980's, as the menace of defaults on loans threatened to bring a collapse in the banking system. Although various deals were cooked up to temporarily avert the collapse, debts continue to pile up, more and more go unpaid, and the crisis simmers.

In December, the World Bank reported total developing country debt at \$1.165 trillion in 1989, \$9 billion above the 1988 level. If we exclude the production from the U.S., Russia and Western Europe, this debt amounts to over 26% of the Gross National Product for all the remaining countries in the world.

The World Bank also reports a 25% increase in total outstanding arrears, that is in unpaid, overdue debt. It has risen from \$41 billion at the end of 1987 to \$52 billion at the end of 1988.

Why these countries took these loans,

and what they got for the money, is another scandal. One that can't be dealt with here. But they are being squeezed dry to pay off even the interest on these loans. And not only are they driving down the already desperate living conditions of the working masses in these countries, but the local economies are being destroyed. Meanwhile, the threat of major defaults on the loans grows and this endangers the stability of the banks of the imperialist countries.

Recently, the capitalists have been raising hopes that the opening of Eastern Europe will provide an expanded market for investment by Western capitalism. But a number of these countries are themselves in a shambles tied to large foreign loans. Poland's difficulty paying off a \$40 billion debt and Hungary's similar problem with a \$20 billion debt have already contributed to the world debt crisis.



Venezuela — 1989: workers and poor exploded in rage against IMF-ordered price hikes. Throughout 80's, debt weight stirred rebellions.

## 1980's saw record bank failures

The number of bank failures has grown throughout the 1980's as the debt crisis continues to threaten a collapse of the banking system.

Bank failures, including the savings and loans, averaged 45 a year for the first half of the 1980's. This was up from the post-World War II average of six a year. By 1985-87, the bank failures had leaped to an average of 147 a year. By 1988, one out of every six savings and loans institutions had gone bankrupt, and the crisis with commercial banks also continued to grow.

In the third quarter of 1989 alone, the big East Coast banks reported a total loss of \$5.5 billion. The huge losses came because the Bank of New York, Bankers Trust New York, Chase Manhattan, Chemical Bank, Manufacturers Hanover, J.P. Morgan, and others were forced to boost their reserves to cover expected losses on third world loans.

But the debt crisis did not end with the loans to the third world. Banks were also hit by problems with a number of loans for leveraged buy-outs (LBO's), when companies that were taken over through enormous debt were unable to squeeze enough profits out of their workers to make their loan payments.

As well, the collapse in real estate speculation has hit a number of big

banks. Huge loans were given out to real estate developers with the hope of turning a quick profit. But far too much high-priced housing was built and now luxury condos stand empty through much of the East Coast and the loans go unpaid. The "super regional" Bank of Boston just recorded a \$125 million loss for the third quarter, after setting aside \$370 million to cover a mounting pile of troubled loans due to its speculation in LBO's and real estate. It is little wonder that the bank's chasing of a quick buck has also landed it in trouble for handling large sums of money for reputed high-time drug dealers.

The banking failures have already bankrupted the FSLIC, the federal fund insuring deposits in the savings and loans. But far from solving the crisis, the Bush bailout of \$100 billion plus is only handing over billions to financial profiteers like Ford Motor, Revlon, and former Treasury Secretary William Simon to take over the collapsed savings and loan institutions. Often, even guaranteeing they won't lose money if the savings and loans continue to hemorrhage. And even though this bailout has barely begun, there is already talk of the need for a second bailout of the savings and loans.

workers for maximum profits.

This is the freedom of the "free world." No less hypocritical is the so-called "socialism" of the Soviet Union and East European countries. This so-called socialism stands for the exploitation of the workers thereby the bare necessities.

The workers' interests in the U.S. lie in overthrowing the government of the rich and building socialism. Not to plough socialism of the East Bloc bureaucrats, but real socialism constructed on the power of the working people.

## Will there be a 'peace dividend'?

Defense Secretary Richard Cheney made a dramatic announcement of proposed military cuts in December. He claimed that the lessening tensions with the Soviet bloc would bring a "peace dividend" to the American people.

But it seems that Cheney's talk is just another hoax of the warmongers. He promised a \$180 billion cut in Pentagon spending. But it turns out this is not a cut from the current spending level. Rather Cheney would cut \$180 billion from a projected five-year Pentagon budget of \$1.5 trillion. This is only a 12% cut over five years. And further, since the Pentagon budget was projected to grow by 20% over that period, military spending would actually be 8% higher than it is now.

Military spending has grown by over \$100 billion since 1975, amounting to nearly 30% of the entire federal budget in 1989. Over the last few years, however, it has reached a plateau. And real spending has declined slightly when adjusted for inflation. Cheney's proposal would keep the Pentagon budget at this high level.

Despite the talk of "peace," both the USSR and the U.S. want to move very slowly in pulling back troops in Eastern Europe. The USSR fears that a rapid demobilization will further destabilize the economy as the soldiers find there are no jobs to come back to. In the U.S., too, big cuts in military spending would also create major economic dislocation. Rudy Oswald, the AFL-CIO's chief economist, estimates that up to 300,000 direct defense jobs would be lost if the Pentagon budget was cut even by 5%.

What is more, as the U.S. economic

strength weakens, the U.S. imperialists are not about to give up the military strength they use to bully other countries and maintain their spheres of influence. There may be some reductions. And there may be changes in the type of forces, such as building more quick strike forces for invasions like in Panama. But imperialist warmongering remains the order of the day in the U.S.

## Trade war threatens capitalist stability

Throughout the 1980's, a world trade war has been heating up.

Countries devastated in World War II, like Japan and Germany, have rebuilt and compete with the once supreme United States. One result has been the huge U.S. trade deficit. Imported goods as a percentage of domestic demand rose to a record 26.2% in the third quarter of 1989. And the adjusted trade deficit ballooned to \$74.1 billion in that quarter. The news brought a renewed fever for trade war in Washington.

Behind this fever is the scramble by the money-grubbing imperialists to divide markets throughout the world. And as each monopoly produces as it always will win the competition and capture the markets, crises of overproduction break out in this or that industry and threaten to spread through the economy. The growing competition, and the calls for trade war that accompany it, is increasing the instability in the world capitalist economy as a whole.

## FLAG

Continued from back page

the super-rich ruling class as expressed through their government. It does not stand for the workers and poor whose class interests are opposite to that of the rich. For example, the Boeing workers' strike pitted the workers' interests for higher wages and no forced overtime against the company's interests for maximum profits and exhausting overwork. The American flag, and the alleged "freedom" it stands for, is in fact the freedom of the rich to exploit the



# How the workers fared during the 80's

The rich are remembering the 1980's as a time of fun and frolic — luxurious homes, fancy cars, and high living. But for the working masses this has been a time of hardship.

The decade began with a depression. And the capitalist class, Democrats and Republicans alike, united around a recovery program based on slashing the standard of living of the masses. The Chrysler bailout in 1979 began an offensive of job elimination and concessions that quickly spread through every industry. Racial discrimination and a flag-waving crusade against foreign workers filled the air. Strike breaking and union busting — spurred on by Reagan's firing of the striking air traffic controllers — became the all too common answer to the workers' resistance.

This united, bipartisan offensive of the capitalists discouraged the workers, disorganized them and set back their struggle. But as the years have gone by, resistance has broken out here and there. And elements have been growing for a wider struggle by the working class.

## Growing Gap Between the Workers and the Union Leaders

Fierce strikes and other struggles broke out at a number of factories during the decade, and threatened to spread into wider struggles. But everywhere, the union bureaucracy sabotaged strikes, split up workers, and undermined attempts at resistance.

Almost universally, the union bureaucrats sided with the capitalists' hysteria over "foreign competition," and imposed concessions contracts on workers with the lie that these would "save jobs." Many times workers voted down contracts, only to have the union heads demand they vote again. And frequently, union leaders stuffed ballot boxes or imposed takebacks without even allowing the workers to vote. The union leaders split up national contract bargaining in the steel, telephone, auto and other industries. In the coal fields and elsewhere, union bureaucrats limited workers to "selective strikes" at individual companies or work places, where they could be isolated and defeated. And local unions of rebellious strikers, such as at Hormel meatpacking, were taken over by the international leaders and the strikes suppressed.

Meanwhile, a section of mainly local union bureaucrats or bureaucrats out of office formed loyal oppositions, such as the New Directions Movement in auto. While posturing that they sided with the rank and file, these bureaucrats agreed with the top hacks' trade war campaigns, suppressed mass struggles, and diverted the workers' resistance back into the usual, restrictive channels of the union bureaucracy.

While the union leaders were able to hold back the strike movement, down to a record low in 1988, they also alienated the workers. This is sowing the seeds for a rank-and-file revolt.

In 1988, the growing gap between the rank and file and the union heads was manifested in big votes by truck drivers, rubber workers, Chrysler workers, and others against contracts sponsored by the union leaders. The union leaders imposed the contracts over protests of the rank and file. In 1989, nearly 60,000 coal miners refused to listen to their leaders and launched a wildcat strike lasting several weeks. At National Steel, rebellious workers took over their local union meeting and temporarily halted a sell-out deal cooked up by union leaders. The strike of 58,000 workers at Boeing was unleashed because of the initiative of rank-and-file workers who marched through the plant calling for a no-vote, despite the vacillations of the union bosses.

These and other outbursts of initiative by the rank and file helped spur on the strike movement. Strikes by telephone

## What the numbers show

Between 1979 and 1988, the capitalists eliminated 1.6 million jobs in manufacturing and another 237,000 jobs in mining. Even though there was a "recovery" and a growth in jobs in other sectors of the economy, there were 564,000 more unemployed workers in '88 than in '79 (by minimized government figures). And another three million workers were added to the list of those the government considers to not be in the labor force (due to giving up the search for work, problems getting child care, trouble finding transportation, illness, injuries, and so forth).

The job growth that did take place during the decade was in lower-paying jobs. As many as half of the jobs created between 1980 and 1987 were contingent jobs. These were mostly part-time jobs where workers average only 56-60% of the pay of full-time workers, and in which less than a third get some kind of medical insurance and less than a fifth get pensions from the employers. The capitalists also increasingly employed lower-paid workers such as women, immigrants, and children. As a result of this and the wage cutting at the work places, hourly wages (adjusted for inflation) plummeted some 7% between 1979 and 1987. Even for workers still employed in higher-paying manufacturing jobs, real wages and benefits taken together fell 0.2% between 1985 and 1988.

The job elimination, pay cuts, slashing of social benefit programs and so forth spread poverty like a plague. By minimized government figuring, some 31.9 million people lived in poverty in 1988, including nearly 32% of all black people and nearly 27% of all Latinos. A study for 1987 showed that the working poor made up one-third of all the poor aged 16 or over. As many as three million people, many of them workers, have been driven into homelessness.

Meanwhile, in the work places, the capitalists combined jobs and pushed the workers at a faster and faster pace. As a result, crippling job injuries, harassment and firings made the work places into hellholes. □

workers, airline employees, hospital workers, grocery workers, and others broke out this year and gave new impulse for working class solidarity. Rallies of thousands of workers from different strikes and industries were held in most major cities this year. And calls have grown for a one-day general strike to support Pittston miners, Eastern Airline workers, and other hard pressed strikers.

## Class Struggle in the 90's

Other elements of a renewed working class struggle have been building up in the 1980's.

Immigrants have been savagely attacked under the Simpson-Rodino law, which aims to keep them without rights and super-exploited in low-wage sweatshops. But in recent years organizing drives and strikes have broken out more and more frequently against the slave driving of immigrants in meatpacking, food processing, apparel, restaurants, and other shops.

As more and more workers have been driven into homelessness, a movement has begun to emerge for decent housing. In October, some 100,000 people marched on Washington D.C. demanding housing now. And in most major cities, homeless people with support of other workers have stage sit-ins, occupied abandoned buildings, resisted police evictions, and waged other protests for housing, jobs and unemployment relief. Along with this, demonstrations, pickets, and job actions continue to break out against plant closings and layoffs. These actions are laying the basis for the outbreak of an unemployed movement as the U.S. economy teeters



Women workers were in the forefront of the Watsonville cannery strike, 1986.

and job cuts grow.

As well, working women have come more and more into the struggle during the 1980's. The number of women working has grown through the 80's to some 55 million women in 1989, 45% of all working people. They have been the backbone for the strikes such as at the Watsonville Cannery and in the hospitals. And they are in the center of new organizing drives among clerical, restaurant, clothing, food processing and other workers. Their growing numbers and militancy have pushed forward struggles for particular issues like equal pay, child care, and health care. The

capitalists' offensive against women — such as for workfare, the crusade against abortions, and attacks on other women's rights — aim to keep working class women specially oppressed and super-exploited. But the growing proletarianization of women is providing a base of militancy to fight back.

The 1980's have been a time of all around attack on the working masses and setback for the working class movement. But within this onslaught, the elements have been growing for renewed struggle and the spread of a class-wide battle against the capitalist exploiters. □

## Strikes and workplace news

### Protesters demand GM keep Van Nuys assembly plant open

Over 350 auto workers demonstrated outside GM's Van Nuys, California assembly plant on December 14. They demanded that the company make a formal commitment to keep the plant open. Workers chanted, "We don't want welfare; we want our jobs!"

Van Nuys employs nearly 4,000 workers. Two months ago GM decided the plant would not be used to build the next generation of Chevrolet Camaros and Pontiac Firebirds in the early

1990's. Still, the GM executives denounced the demonstration, claiming they have not yet stated their intent to close the plant and are studying options. But a GM spokesman admitted, "I can't say the plant will remain open."

The UAW local officials have done nothing to oppose the threat of closing the plant. They wouldn't even authorize the December 14 demonstration. The workers have had to take action themselves. □

### Workers rally against planned closing of Stewart Warner

Several hundred workers rallied in the freezing cold outside Stewart Warner in Chicago on December 19. Five hundred jobs have been axed from the plant in the last year. And now 800 more jobs are threatened by plans to close the plant completely. The workers denounced the owners and sang songs against the the closing. Then the rally was moved to a bar across the street.

Stewart Warner, which produces electronic parts for cars and tractors, is owned by the billionaires of British Tire and Rubber (BTR). It claims it is not making enough profits off this factory, and plans to shift production to a low-wage plant in Juarez, Mexico.

Leaders of the United Electrical workers (UE) offered a wage freeze and health benefit cuts totaling \$2.5 million a year if BTR would keep the plant open. But it refused. It is demanding

even more concessions including gutting protective work rules and freeing itself to lay off on whatever basis it wants. The UE hacks are now posturing that they will fight and even close the plant if BTR doesn't agree to a severance package or if the plant is not sold to someone in Chicago. But they won't fight until April (after more layoffs decimate the work force). For the time being, they are only filing a law suit charging BTR with violation of the law requiring 60-day notice before layoffs related to a plant closing. But this law, much praised by the Democrats, won't stop the closing or require severance pay for those who lose their jobs. At most, BTR may face a small fine.

(Taken in part from the December 18 issue of the "Chicago Workers' Voice," paper of the MLP-Chicago) □

More strike news — next page



# New Year's editorial

## Continued from front page

is once again thrusting the working class forward as the force for change, as the social basis for creating an alternative to capitalist exploitation and devastation.

### The Exposure of Revisionist State Capitalism

The capitalists are also crowing about the "victory of the free market" and the final "death of communism." But what is dying in Eastern Europe is not communism. Rather it is revisionist state capitalism, the perversion of Marxism-Leninism into a special type of capitalist tyranny.

For the moment, the collapse of revisionism is giving the Western capitalists a hey-day for propaganda against communism, Marxism-Leninism, and the idea of the working class transforming society. But it is also exposing to workers all over the world the true state-

capitalist nature of these societies and helping to clear the way for an extension of the class struggle on a vast scale.

### The Weakness of Capitalism

The big Western capitalists are also praising what they like to call an unprecedented period of economic growth and stability. And to be sure, they have managed to stave off economic crisis for years. But only by creating conditions for an even deeper collapse in the future.

They like to forget the stock market crash that swept through the West, the Third World debt crisis threatening the banking system, the overproduction crisis in various industries, the growing trade war and scramble to redivide world markets. The potential for destabilization and economic crisis and splits among the bourgeoisie is growing. And this may provide an opening for the working class to again emerge as an independent force able to shape world

events.

### Get Organized

But whether the working class can take advantage of the developing situation depends on finding its own voice and getting organized. Essential for this is the building up of revolutionary working class parties in countries around the world. It is the forces of workers' communism that are taking on this task.

Right now these forces remain scattered, divided, and small in size. But they are bravely fighting and represent the future hope for the working class rising to take the center stage of revolutionary change.

In the U.S. our Party has been beset with the harsh realities of the 80's. Yet it has continued to fight against the betrayal of the union bureaucrats, the belly crawling of the reformists, and the liquidationist despair of the revisionists and trotskysts. It has strengthened its theoretical basis, which has better

prepared it to hold to a revolutionary orientation in the face of the twists and turns of the class struggle. And, despite factory closures and the ebb in the mass movement, the Party has been able to find new ways to maintain its ties with the masses and awaken their independent strivings. It has further built up its local and national press to give the working class its own voice. And, within its limited possibilities, the Party has reached out to link up with the forces of workers' communism around the world.

The 90's are opening with new possibilities for the working class movement. Together with the forces of workers' communism in other countries, our Party must forge ahead. We must help the working class find its revolutionary voice, eliminate the decades of confusion, and hasten the rise of a new wave of class struggle that can challenge the rule of arrogant exploiters. □

## Strikes and workplace news

### Continued from previous page

### Pittston miners still fighting

In Virginia, Russell County Circuit Judge Donald McGlothlin Jr. fined the United Mine Workers another \$33.4 million on December 8, more than doubling the state penalties assessed against the union during the nine-month strike. The penalties were for more than 150 contempt of court violations, including a fine for the four-day occupation of Pittston's Moss No. 3 preparation plant last September.

But the miners are not cowed down. In West Virginia, striking Pittston and A.T. Massey miners have maintained the militant defense of their picket line at Slab Fork Hollow. Some 75 pickets defied marshals and agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and blocked scab coal trucks. Federal officers arrested five pickets. Twenty workers have been arrested here since October 24. □

### Coal miners protest against union hacks

More than 50 miners descended on UMW District 17 headquarters in Charleston on the morning of December 18. They had just learned that the UMW leaders were cutting off strike benefits and medical insurance for about 200 miners who have been on strike for from five months to five years at seven mines in West Virginia and Kentucky. The miners confronted District 17 president Mike Phalen and other officials, and refused to leave until the officials agreed to restore the benefits. That evening, the officials promised to keep the benefits going through February, when they would "reevaluate" the strikes.

Among the miners affected are strikers at Milburn Collieries. They struck in October, 1984. With their "selective strike" strategy, the UMW leaders isolated this, and other strikes, and left them to be defeated. The Milburn miners have been replaced by scabs and face an NLRB injunction banning picketing. Nine of the Milburn miners are currently facing charges of conspiracy to bomb and commit arson, with sentences of up to 80 years. The UMW leaders have refused to help them. And now the hacks are even trying to cut off strike benefits. □

### W. Va. nursing home workers organize

Nursing home workers at the Danville/Madison Nursing Center in West Virginia are striking to win their first union contract. The strike began October 21 with workers occupying the facility and demanding a new contract. But union leaders convinced them to vacate and maintain a picket outside.

The strikers are supported by many of the nursing home patients, who are primarily retired coal miners, their wives and widows. The strikers have also received support from coal miners in the area. The nursing home is located in the heart of the Boone County coalfields. □

### Rally for Hertz strikers in Detroit

Strikers of Hertz Rent-a-Car were joined on their picket line at the Detroit Metropolitan Airport by several hundred auto workers, airline machinists, and teamsters on December 2. The solidarity rally denounced Hertz' concession demands. The greedy Hertz capi-

talists have frozen the workers' pay for the past six years and are now demanding that each worker contribute \$30 per week to cover their medical insurance. This demand comes from a company who posted a \$81 million profit during last year alone. □

### LTV workers call for 1-day general strike

LTV steel workers in Warren, Ohio recently passed a resolution calling upon all labor organizations to unite in a one-day work stoppage throughout the U.S. The LTV workers argued that workers at one plant or company can no

longer afford to watch as other workers are attacked. They specifically targeted the Pittston Co.'s attack on the health benefits of Pittston retirees and compared it to the yearlong attack by LTV steel on retiree pension benefits. □

### Seamless Tube strikers reluctantly accept contract

350 strikers at Michigan Seamless Tube ended their strike after narrowly accepting the company's latest contract on December 9. The new contract provides an immediate wage increase of 65 cents the first year with further increases for each succeeding contract year, and a cost-of-living allowance.

The workers are most dissatisfied by

the company's imposition of a 90-day probation period for eight of their fellow strikers who were fired for their strike activities. USW district head Harry Lester supported the latest contract and threatened that the union leadership would do nothing to support a continued strike. □



On the picket line at Seamless Tube.

### Poultry strikers win their demands

The largely women work force at the Cagle poultry plant in Macon, Georgia approved a contract that contained nearly all their key demands on November 25. The 530 workers walked off their jobs at the end of October. Around-the-clock picketing at the plant and marches by workers in front of the company headquarters in Atlanta forced the company to agree to an immediate 55 cent

an hour raise with guaranteed increases over the next two years. The company has also abandoned its policy of allowing only one restroom break per day, and will now have medical staff on each shift to assist workers hurt on the job. The primary demand by the strikers, a pension plan, has also been installed. The workers are now entitled to collect \$100 per month after they retire. □

### Conn. electrical workers strike for union rights

220 electrical workers at Circuit-Wise in North Haven, Connecticut have gone on strike to win their first contract. The workers voted in the union a year and a half ago. But the company continually stalled contract negotiations, fired as-

tivists and harassed workers. The workers have received solid strike support from other Connecticut workers through rallies and mass pickets. The plant makes circuit boards for Ford and other companies. □

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# Tasks of workers' communism during the collapse of revisionism

A platform of struggle for the consideration of fighters against revisionism, revolutionary activists and class-conscious workers around the world

## Editorial of "The Workers' Advocate" — January 1, 1990 —

The decade of the 90's opens in a period of striking contrasts. While the bourgeoisie sings hymns about prosperity and peace, millions upon millions of toilers face misery and ruin, and the threat of intervention and death squads and invasion faces the oppressed peoples of the world.

Meanwhile the long rot of the bankrupt trend of Soviet revisionism has finally given rise to its rapid break up. In a number of countries formerly ruled dictatorially by revisionist parties, the stagnant system of bureaucratic tyranny is being blown apart. The former ruling parties talked in the name of the working class and communism, but actually stood for the domination of a privileged bureaucracy and had nothing to do with revolution or the masses. Today many are already openly reorganizing themselves as social-democratic parties and dropping their former lying claim to the hammer and sickle of the toilers. The revisionist groupings aren't going to vanish, but they are in decay and are losing their grip.

The Western bourgeoisie is crowing about its victory in the "cold war," and it is stepping up its propaganda campaign against socialism, the capacity of the working class to rule, and the Marxist-Leninist theory. Yet the collapse of revisionism also, in the long run, clears the way for the growth of anti-capitalist mass politics in the countries where the revisionists had state power or where they had dominated the left. It will lead to exposing the economic crisis of the Eastern bloc as capitalist stagnation and depression. Even now the Western bourgeoisie is a bit nervous about the destabilizing effects of the breakup of revisionism. Underneath the anti-communist flood, the revisionist collapse is clearing the way for an extension of the class struggle on a vast scale.

The influence of revisionism has created vivid contrasts in the left movement. The increasing proletarianization on a world scale, the mass upheavals in various countries, and the collapse of revisionism call for the development of revolutionary movement. Yet the revolutionary movement is disorganized and disunited. The great upsurges of the workers and peasants of the past rocked the old world, but mountains of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois reformist, nationalist and revisionist influences accumulated and disorganized the working class. In the name of ensuring rapid progress by discarding the supposedly dogmatic and outdated revolutionary class struggle of the past, these ideologies led to the destruction of much of the fruits of the past revolutionary organization of the masses.

Against the revisionist influences stand the forces of workers' communism. Today, around the world, these forces are scattered and divided and small in numbers. Yet these forces fight to organize the proletariat as a revolutionary class opposed to the capitalist hell. They stand for mass revolution and class struggle. And the present situation is pregnant with upheavals and class conflicts, just as fertile ground nourishes a seed of insignificant size but tremendous potential.

In this situation, it is necessary for the forces of workers' communism to ensure that the coming struggles are led on a consistent revolutionary basis. They must make use of the present time to develop a revolutionary Leninist style of work and organization that differs from the traditions of the past trends that have gone bankrupt, to gain clarity on the practical and theoretical tasks of the revolution, to unite among themselves, and



to encourage other activists and revolutionaries to take up the banner of emancipation from capitalist slavery. In this way, they will contribute to strengthening the working class so that, as a militant class waging a united struggle over the whole world, it can rally the honest forces of change everywhere. In this way the workers' communists will hasten the advent of a new wave of workers' and peasants' struggle that can challenge the rule of the privileged few.

Who are these forces of workers' communism, and what must they do to build up a new world communist movement to spearhead the struggle of the oppressed? In *The Workers' Advocate* we have reported on the struggle in individual countries. The following points express our general views on where these forces come from, what inspires them, and what tasks they must take up.

Our views on these issues are not necessarily shared by any other contingents of workers' communism. We not only didn't remove views of ours that may be controversial, but intentionally included them or even stressed them. We hope in this way that our statement will contribute to the discussion among the world's communists of what is to be done.

**A. The communist activists are not those who simply talk about this or that formula or program, but those who are actually carrying out the class struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism.**

Workers' communism is distinguished from revisionism, and Marxism-Leninism from revisionist treachery in the name of Marxism, by its actual stand in the class struggle. The Marxist-Leninist activists are those who take up communism in the midst of waging a real struggle for the workers' interests, independent of the bourgeoisie and revisionism. They are not those who simply say a few words about the evils of capitalism, or who simply speak in the name of the workers, but those who are actually independent of the capitalist politicians, parties and governments, the liberals as well as conservatives, in their practical work, in their organization, and their politics. They are not those who mumble a few words against the labor bureaucrats, but those who are actually independent of these bureaucrats in their practical work, in their organization, and their politics. They are those who are actually independent of all

the forces of the old world, whether in its liberal or conservative or revisionist or petty-bourgeois nationalist mask.

The revolutionary Marxist-Leninists are those for whom Leninist communism is the theoretical expression of their practical existence.

**B. The communist activists fear the "working-class" and "Marxist-Leninist" mask from the revisionist regimes and parties.**

The communist activists come from those who strip away the pretty disguises used by the revisionists and denounce their crimes against the working class, the revolution, and Marxism-Leninism. They do not hide or disguise or mourn the collapse of revisionism, but expose its significance to all workers and revolutionaries. And they rescue the Leninist and socialist teachings from their ugly distortions at the hands of the revisionists.

The revisionists have used the word "socialism" to describe state capitalist societies where a privileged bunch of bureaucrats and fat cats live like Western capitalists at the expense of the masses. The revolutionary activists show instead the incompatibility of socialism with the revisionist societies, and expose the economic stagnation and political repression of the revisionist societies as typical features of capitalism.

The revisionists have used "working class rule" and "democratic centralism" to describe their bureaucratic tyranny over the masses. The communist activists make the concept of working class rule into a sharp tool against both Western capitalism and revisionist state-capitalist tyrannies. They stand for true democratic centralism as the alternative to the rule of privileged minorities and the way for the toilers to convert their numbers into solid organization.

The forces of workers' communism have developed in struggle against revisionism. In one way or another, the origin of most of the present contingents of workers' communism traces back ultimately to past struggles against revisionism, such as the major confrontations with revisionism which took place as part of the upsurge of mass struggle of the 1960's and 70's. And the continued existence of the forces of workers' communism has required conscious struggle against the major revisionist trends, Soviet, Chinese, Cuban or otherwise, and against the revisionist ideas that the Party of Labor of Albania and its loyalists have embraced more and more in the past years.

**C. The communist activists are those who stand for class politics based on the working class, for the politics of class struggle.**

The communists base their work on the class interests and class organization of the working class. They place stress on organizing the working class to stand up as a force in its own right. They take part in the struggles of the workers for their immediate interests, as well as use every means to mobilize the workers for their broader, revolutionary interests. They focus attention on agitation at factories and other work places and seek to develop communist activities and organization there. They work to bring the working class into all aspects of the revolutionary movement, both political and ideological as well as economic.

The communists bring forward the real class-based nature of contemporary politics, and expose the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois myths of above-class politics and ethics. They stand for building up the independent political movement of the working class separate from bourgeois trends and hostile to petty-bourgeois conciliationism with the bourgeoisie. They develop the class instinct of the workers against liberalism and reformism in the imperialist countries, as well as against conservatism, and against petty-bourgeois nationalism in the oppressed countries. In democratic movements and national liberation struggles, they bring forward the independent interests of the workers and toilers.

The communists organize the workers as a revolutionary force which aims at building up the new social-

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The **Workers' Advocate**



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# Tasks of workers' communism during the collapse of revisionism

## Continued from previous page

ist and communist world. They inspire the workers with the task of standing at the center of the whole stream of revolts against capitalism and imperialism. It is the proletariat, when it is revolutionary and class conscious in the full sense, which alone can provide the unified guidance to unite the streams of struggle into a single revolutionary torrent.

### D. Socialism and the classless communist society is the alternative to the capitalist hell of exploitation and oppression.

Today the capitalists are on a rampage to discredit the very idea of the workers building an alternative to the endless capitalist hell where the exploitation of the majority is carried out for the privileges of the minority. The communist activists are those who stand to build up this new world against the bourgeoisie.

Through all the different stages of the struggles, through different stages of the revolution, the communist activists stand for the goal of building a communist society. They encourage the self-confidence of the workers and revolutionaries that they can dispense with capitalism, and embark upon building a new society, first a socialist society and then the classless communist society.

The coming society will abolish exploitation of person by person by abolishing the ownership of the productive forces of society by a privileged handful. Instead of production for the profit of the few, there will be production for the benefit of the whole people. The existence of the means of production and of the consumer goods as commodities, subject to the iron control of the market and of the monied classes, will be abolished. The division of humanity into separate classes will come to an end, and the state itself will wither away.

The possibility of communism is based both on the tremendous technical achievements of the last two centuries and also on the development of the modern working class. Planned economy and the abolition of the tyranny of the few over the economy are in turn necessary to solve the gigantic problems of waste, environmental poisoning, and exploitation of huge underclasses, that go hand in hand with how capitalism utilizes modern technology.

The communist activists know that such a communist society cannot come into being all at once. At present, even from the most advanced industrial economies, the socialist revolution will usher in a period of transition to reach first socialism and then communism. The bourgeoisie will not surrender its privileges voluntarily, as its huge military budgets show, as the massacres with which it has suppressed people's movements around the world has shown. The dictatorship of the proletariat will be the rule of the working class, which will be needed to eliminate the stranglehold over the politics and economy of the bourgeoisie. This however will be the rule of the majority unlike the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the counterfeit revisionist societies of privilege. It is the opposite of the revisionist society of privilege.

The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 ushered in the historic era of attempts at building socialism. A great deal of lasting value was accomplished in pioneering the methods of transition towards socialism, despite the difficulties faced by the working class in an economically backward country surrounded by the bayonets and boycotts of a hostile capitalist world. Eventually a capitalist restoration took place, with a new bureaucracy crystallizing as a new privileged, capitalist class. The Soviet Union and its allies have become state-capitalist societies, as are Yugoslavia and China.

The Chinese revolution was an immense struggle that shook the imperialist domination of the oppressed countries and inspired many revolutionaries around the world, as did the Maoist denunciation of Soviet revisionism. But Maoism proved incapable of passing beyond a petty-bourgeois concept of socialism and it eventually collapsed altogether into outright revisionism.

The Albanian toilers took power in a profound people's revolution and overthrew the old exploiting classes. But although the Party of Labor of Albania sought for a time to oppose the Soviet revisionist concepts and defied Khrushchov and later Soviet leaders, it only went part way. Despite some scattered remarks, the PLA failed to disassociate itself from the revisionism of the Soviet Union, and especially Stalin, from the mid-30's to the mid-50's. And the PLA has been stagnating and going backward for many years now. We do not have sufficient information to judge where Albanian institutions have already degenerated decisively into capitalism, but the PLA's stagnation has had harmful and dangerous consequences for Albanian politics and

economics.

Thus there are no presently existing models of socialism. The workers' communists stand for Marxist-Leninist revolutionary socialism, which enriches the general principles of socialism with the positive and negative experiences since the Bolshevik revolution.

### E. The communist forces are faced with the task of maintaining contact with the masses as the condition of their revolutionary work.

The organization of the working masses does not proceed in an unbroken straight line, but has its ebbs and flows. These days in particular revolutionary forces around the world often have had to deal with periods of relative stagnation and setbacks, which can be protracted periods of many years duration. It is necessary for the activists to know how to maintain work among the masses in times of stagnation or retreat, as well as in the turbulent times of revolutionary advance.

The size of mass actions differs depending on the degree of initiative among the oppressed. During times of stagnation and prevailing reaction, even the independent protest of a handful of toilers may show the live contact of the revolutionary forces with the masses. But to carry out such actions the communist organizations must pay constant attention to the actual concerns and moods of the masses, and to the desire for struggle that manifests itself even in periods of ebb.

Communist work in the mass movement involves linking up with the struggle, while knowing how to put forward independent communist politics. It neither gets carried away with the spontaneity of the mass struggle, nor stands aside in a sectarian fashion. Instead it is necessary to find the tactical slogans that lead the mass movement forward step by step and cut against the reformist and liberal ideas, while rallying the most conscious elements into communist organization.

Building the revolutionary workers' movement should not mean neglecting all but "purely proletarian" issues either. The working class must put its stamp on all the streams of revolt. If it is to deal with transforming the entire social and economic system, and not just restrict itself to tinkering with the system of exploitation, the working class cannot focus its attention solely on itself, but must deal with all issues affecting society as a whole.

Communist activists have paid special attention to the fight against imperialism, the struggles against racism and national oppression, the development of the women's movement, and other issues. These struggles are also necessary in order to develop the unity of the working class across national lines and between women and men. The anti-nuclear movement also has reached mass proportions at various times, and it was up to the communist activists to put forward an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist orientation in it. Such issues as the struggle against environmental poisoning and devastation are also spreading.

Leaflets, struggles, even of small size, a press that speaks to the needs of the downtrodden are among the ways of building contact with the masses. As well, there has to be attention to united front tactics to unite the masses and encourage their struggle even while they are under the influence of diverse ideologies of the enemy class.

### F. The communist activists must unite the masses by leading them into struggle.

The communist activists are faced with the need to develop united front tactics that bring together workers to fight for their class interests even while they are still under the influence of diverse ideologies of the enemy class. And they are needed not just with respect to the workers, but for rallying other toilers and progressive elements around the working class.

The basis of united front tactics is that the masses do not take up revolutionary ideology simply from the propagation of ideas, but from involvement in the class struggle. It is only through the development and encouragement of the class struggle that the communist ideology can spread widely and that the difference between Marxism-Leninism and the liberal, reformist and conservative ideologies of the old world can become real to the majority.

United front tactics must not be based on the idea of the weakness of the class conscious forces or on the desperate search for some opportunist or bourgeois force to rely on. Instead they must be based on conviction in the capacity of the class conscious and revolutionary forces to influence the masses, help them forward, and grow in the midst of struggle. Only in this way will united front tactics serve to build up the independent working class movement and actually advance the revolution.

United front tactics require first and foremost that the revolutionary organizations develop their own agitation and links with the masses and that they learn to judge and influence the moods of struggle that exist. It requires finding ways to develop the open face of the communists in such actions. The heart of united front tactics is not whether some agreement or coalition does or does not exist with various hostile forces, but whether the communists have correctly found the points of struggle upon which the class forces are opposing each other at the particular point of time and whether vigorous attention is given to attracting new sections of the working masses into the struggle.

Depending on the circumstances, it can come about that united front tactics require changes and compromises in the method of denouncing the crimes of the reformists, or liberals, or petty-bourgeois nationalists, etc. But in one way or another the content of the exposure of opportunism must be maintained and even strengthened, and the spread of this exposure among the masses ensured. If the united front tactics actually intensify the class struggle, and if the class conscious workers do not abandon their political independence, the progress of the struggle will generally itself provide profound material to win over toilers under the influence of other ideologies and to show the treachery of opportunist forces.

Sometimes united front tactics simply involve taking part in struggles in which other forces are involved or dominate, without any direct or negotiated agreement with such forces at all. At other times, it may involve various types of agreements or "coalitions" with unsteady and vacillating mass forces or even with diehard opportunist organizations or other hostile forces, even though these forces or their leaderships are consciously waiting for the moment to destroy the communists. But the point of the tactics is to gain access to and bring into struggle toilers under the influence of such forces, and by so doing win them away from opportunism and the bourgeoisie.

### G. The Leninist party is the model of the revolutionary organization needed for the proletarian struggle.

There has been a genuine revolt against the bureaucratic tyranny of the revisionist parties. They have replaced true democratic centralism with a straitjacket on the revolutionary activists, and inner-party ideological life with blanket denunciations of any opposition. The hatred for the revisionist parody of party spirit has helped reinforce both anarchist disdain for organization and social-democratic looseness.

But anarchism and social-democratic models, along with liberal bourgeois theories, have again and again proven to be disorganizing factors that also sap the revolutionary energy of the masses. To fight the economic, political, and state power of the exploiting classes, the proletariat has only its numbers and its united will. Only when they build and rally around a political party can the working masses step forward as a serious force that cannot just fight against injustices, but build a new world, not just carry out a revolutionary struggle, but ensure that the fruits of this struggle belong to the people.

The Leninist party is a party of action, built in the course of the struggle against the bourgeoisie. It is a party of activists, a party of those who are willing to face the fury of the bourgeoisie, of those who are willing to join together with others in a united struggle against both the ideas and the material force of the class enemy.

The Leninist party combines a united will with an active inner-party life that encourages the conscious participation of all its members. Its combination of democracy and centralism can only be achieved, not simply by formulas, but in the process of waging an active struggle. It is only when a party is actively involved in struggle against the class enemy, when the very requirements of the struggle show the need both for centralized will and the consciousness of each member, that democracy and centralism join together in democratic centralism.

The face of the party of workers' communism should not be hidden from the masses. This would hold back the political initiative of the toilers, and put a wedge between the Leninist party and its class basis. Even when the party is underground, ways must be found to show its role to the masses. The terrorist measures of the bourgeoisie against the masses and the revolutionaries require careful measures of organizational secrecy. But one way or another must be found to spread knowledge of the party and its political stands among the masses, and not just among political circles.

The building up of the party press, and the working class press as a whole, is essential to give the working class its voice. This press must deal not only with the



# Tasks of workers' communism during the collapse of revisionism

economic struggles, but with the political issues and ideological questions. This is necessary to develop the political consciousness of the masses and to have the struggle of political trends take place openly before the working class and revolutionary activists. The spread of the party press and party leaflets among the masses is one way of developing the links of the party with the masses. And it is vital to the development of the party itself.

The proletarian political party represents the highest form of class organization of the working class, and the extent to which it has been built and its influence spread is a sign of the maturity and revolutionary spirit of the workers and activists. Besides the party, there is a multitude of other organizations of working class and toilers' struggle. But the building of the party is an essential condition for ensuring that the working class is able to coordinate harmoniously its whole complex of different organizations.

## H. Marxism-Leninism will triumph over the collapse of revisionism and the ideological offensive of the bourgeoisie.

The healthy development of a revolutionary movement requires revolutionary theory. The communist organizations and the working masses must not be totally immersed in the inevitable day-to-day minor concerns of any struggle. They must be inspired by the revolutionary perspective, and encouraged to take up the hard work of obtaining a consistent revolutionary world outlook. Imbuing the working masses with socialist concepts and Marxist-Leninist theory remains one of the foremost tasks of workers' communism. And the present disorientation of the revolutionary forces also puts on the agenda theoretical work to solve many burning questions of the revolution.

This is true at all times, and today, it is particularly true in the midst of the bourgeois ideological offensive. The collapse of revisionism and the exposure of its crimes has fostered a mood of non-politicism among the masses. This has encouraged the spread among the radical youth of anarchism, of non-political "green" ways of dealing with the environmental issues, and of the prejudice that Marxism is old-fashioned stuffiness.

Marxist-Leninist theory differs from simple bookishness. It is a materialist theory that is linked indissolubly with practice. It cannot develop apart from consideration of the burning issues of controversy in the revolutionary movement and summation of the generalized experience of the working class movement.

The works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin have a special place in revolutionary socialist literature. They provide a detailed elaboration of the basic communist principles and theoretical framework, as well as an example of consistent revolutionary work. The study of the basic principles of socialism and of materialist politics is vital in providing a solid foundation for further advancing theory through the further consideration of present-day problems and the experiences of the past decades of struggles.

A number of theoretical tasks are particularly important at this time. Throughout the world, the analysis of socialism and the study of Soviet history is being taken up. The collapse of both Soviet revisionism and the inadequacy of the traditional critiques of revisionism creates the need for carrying through a new study of Soviet history and a new study of the basic principles of socialism. It is necessary to rescue the concept of socialism from the views made common by Soviet revisionism.

It is necessary to show what communist society really should be, and it is also important to study the question of the transitional measures that have to be used to obtain socialism after a victorious revolution. These transitional measures cannot be regarded as a minor issue to be put aside as quickly as possible, but are the reason why socialist revolution is possible at all. They will immediately become practical questions whenever revolution is imminent. And the study of Soviet history is in essence the study of what was done right and wrong in such measures.

The theoretical tasks of the day are by no means restricted to the analysis of Soviet history. Many other issues of strategy and tactics of the revolution must be dealt with, from the nature of revolution in the oppressed countries to the question of united front tactics. The repudiation of the revisionist platform set forth by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International (CI) in 1935, and championed and further developed by Stalin and other Soviet leaders, is connected to many of these issues. While the workers' movements of the time continued to wage struggles after this congress, the influence of its platform undermined the tactics followed and had tragic results.

These issues of revolutionary tactics and organization

cannot be dealt with solely by characterizing the revisionist stand in a simple slogan, or by observing the motive of betrayal behind the revisionist mistakes on these issues. As well, the communist activists need an elaboration of the correct general approach in itself.

Revolutionary theoretical work necessarily involves continuing the struggle against the various revisionist and reformist trends. For example, many of the Maoist concepts, and its traditions of tactics and organization, still have influence among the revolutionary forces in certain countries, even among activists repudiating Chinese revisionism, because of Maoism's close connection with the revolutionary struggle for many years.

Another opportunist trend that must be consciously combated is Trotskyism. With the ongoing collapse of Soviet revisionism, Trotskyism is seeking to present itself as the remaining communist stand. It is vital that the forces of workers' communism puncture this fraud. While the Trotskyites are divided into dozens of sects with varying views, their common Trotskyist framework replaces Leninism with social-democratic and opportunist ideas. Were Trotskyism to gain major influence among the revolutionary ranks, the work of building an independent proletarian movement would be perverted into the typical Trotskyist trailing of whatever opportunist force appears large and powerful at the moment.

The Trotskyites usually use flaming revolutionary rhetoric to present basically social-democratic stands. In one way or another, they denounce the communist stand for proletarian independence. This includes their opposition to Leninist party concept, which dates back to Trotsky's denunciation of Lenin's building up of the Bolsheviks as allegedly anti-democratic and dictatorial. It includes their difficulties in dealing with struggles and revolutionary movements that are not directly socialist, or with partial demands, in both of which cases they vacillate between utopian denunciation and reformist cringing and tailism.

The Trotskyites present themselves as the greatest opponents of Soviet revisionism, because of the fight between Trotsky and Stalin. And their own attitude to Soviet revisionism has been utterly shameful and tailist. Most Trotskyist groups render support to Soviet revisionist state-capitalism as some sort of socialism, even if a deformed or degenerated type. Under such doubletalk as "military but not political support," they have even rendered support to various bloody crimes of revisionism. Today many Trotskyist groups hope that the collapse of revisionism will give them an opportunity to link up with splinters of the diehard revisionist forces. This stand by the Trotskyists is not a deviation from Trotsky's stand, but related to his history of maneuvering between factions, which he opposed to Lenin's fight against opportunism.

As well, there are some Trotskyist groups, the main international grouping of them being the "International Socialists tendency," that denounce Soviet revisionism as capitalism. But such groups have no more political independence in their practical work than the other Trotskyist groupings. And I.S.'s critique of revisionist state-capitalism is flawed and, in its origin, owes much to capitulation to the bourgeois cold war atmosphere.

Stalin ended up as one of the chief architects of Soviet revisionism, which he led for many years. But, to make a contribution to world communism, it is not sufficient to curse Stalin, but it is necessary to oppose Soviet revisionism from the standpoint of revolutionary communism. And it is necessary to oppose the social-democratic framework set forth by Trotsky in his fight against Leninism. In fact, the Trotskyist groupings oppose the fundamental ideas of Leninism in the name of fighting Stalinism. And they tend to group together many different trends and practices arbitrarily as Stalinism, a practice which bears a close resemblance to cold war mindlessness.

## I. Although organized separately in each country, the communists must unite throughout the world.

The struggle of exploiter versus exploited takes place all over the world, and the class conscious proletariat must unite into a world force across national lines. This requires that the unity of the communists must be manifested at every stage of the struggle. There must be active solidarity and support for the revolutionary struggles of other countries. At present, the conditions do not exist for a world communist organization. Nevertheless it is essential that the communist organizations extend fraternal support to each other, learn from each other, and develop close bonds. The real unity of the world's workers is not just a formal question, but is based on their common struggle for socialist revolution and their adherence to Marxist-Leninist ideology. And every manifestation of this unity dramatically encourages the workers and activists of

the countries involved and increases their fighting spirit immeasurably.

Inside each country, the proletariat must unite in a single party embracing all different nationalities, races, and ethnic backgrounds, and including immigrants as well as the native-born. The division of the workers according to nationality or national origin would condemn the revolutionary organizations to impotence.

The unity of workers of all nationalities requires that the workers from the dominant nationalities and ethnic groups take up the struggle against racist oppression alongside their oppressed comrades. And it means that the communists and activists of the oppressed groups not only oppose national oppression but also oppose the bourgeois nationalism of the bourgeois and elite strata of the oppressed nationalities. True communist unity does not impede the struggle against oppression, or the solidarity movement in support of the struggle in the homeland of immigrant communities, but gives it a powerful impulse and broader sweep.

The revolutionary party of a country may need party organization in other countries to carry out certain tasks directly related to the struggle in its own country. But with respect to the class struggle in the country of residence, all communists should unite into a single party or devote the utmost attention to creating conditions for such a party. It is harmful and undermining to the spirit of class struggle for the workers' communists to allow themselves to be split into different groups in the same country. This has been proved over and over again in practical experience.

Proletarian internationalism must not be degraded into simply a matter of fine wishes or future intentions. It is not something that can be postponed until the revolutionary forces are stronger. On the contrary, it is essential to allow the forces of workers' communism to solve the theoretical and practical problems of today which hold back further growth. □

## WORKING CLASS Continued from page 10

strikes. Workers also took part in the struggles against military dictatorships and death-squad regimes — from Chile to El Salvador.

What's driving the great upheavals of the working class — from Eastern Europe to the Third World? The collapse of many economies because of worldwide recession and the ruthless offensive of IMF austerity are obviously major factors. But there is something else as well: capitalist development since the end of World War II vastly expanded the ranks of the industrial working class the world over — including the revisionist countries, Latin America, and the Afro-Asian countries which won independence with the collapse of the old colonialism. The exploiters' regimes tried to keep the workers hamstrung with repression and demagoguery, but the working class has been learning how to build its struggle and organization.

Meanwhile, in the traditional centers of capitalism, in the developed capitalist countries of Europe, North America, Japan, etc. the working class was hit during the 1980's with major concession drives. Restructuring of capitalist economies became the watchword from the U.S. to New Zealand. The workers' movement was set back, but despite the weight of the massive trade union bureaucracies arrayed against them, workers in these lands mounted some powerful strike actions. Such as the British coal miners, French rail workers, German metalworkers, U.S. miners and meatpackers.

The role of the working class as the force for change is noted in its numbers, in its concentration at vital points of the bourgeois system, and especially in its class position as exploited wage slaves with no interest in exploitation.

But where the workers have their potential brought out fully, they have to be organized independently in their class interests. They must have forged their unity around a platform based on their class interests and goals. For this they need their own organization, and especially a proletarian party.

And at the end of the 20th century it is here that the international working class movement is the weakest. This is why, despite massive sacrifices in struggle, the workers have the fruits of their battles stolen by pro-capitalist forces. They can shake up Eastern Europe, but it is others who take the reins of government. The same is repeated in many other places, where old tyrannies have been replaced by more subtle forms of capitalist domination.

Thus the crying task facing the workers the world over is the task of building their independent political movements. Free of liberal and reformist influences. With the orientation of class struggle towards socialism and communism. □



# Imperialist rivalries continue, as Warsaw Pact collapses

The changes in Eastern Europe have major consequences far beyond that part of the world. In particular, the collapse of the Soviet bloc regimes has undermined the current world setup of imperialist blocs and rivalries, giving way to a fluid and uncertain situation. For decades, the world has lived under the shadow of the confrontation of two big imperialist blocs — U.S.-led NATO and the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact. This order is crumbling.

What does that foretell? Does this mean that the people of the world can now rest easy, that now world capitalism will finally usher in an era of peace, prosperity and international cooperation for the good of all humanity? That's what liberals and reformists — from East and West — are telling us these days.

But that is a pipe dream. Capitalist imperialism very much remains alive. And that necessarily means exploitation, oppression and the threat of war. We are moving from a period of world politics being dominated by the rivalry of two superpowers to a period marked by the intensified rivalry of a number of big world capitalist powers.

## The Weakening of Soviet Imperialism

The most significant change is that Soviet imperialist power has been forced to retreat in the 1980's. Because of its deep economic crisis, it has been forced to concede many things. Above all else, its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe has been deeply undermined. The new regimes here are still in the Warsaw Pact but they are looking more and more towards the West. The Warsaw Pact has become a shell. Meanwhile, the economic difficulties of the Soviet Union have also led to it losing influence in many of its smaller allies in the Third World.

All this however doesn't mean that the Soviet Union is no longer imperialist. Soviet imperialism's strength has in large part been military, not economic. And it still remains a big military power and a major weapons supplier around the world. It is also working hard to recoup its economic strength. Moscow still retains imperialist ambitions and very much wants to remain a big world power.

## U.S. and Western Imperialism -- Allies in Increasing Competition

The U.S.-led world camp still remains intact. NATO holds together, today much stronger than the Warsaw Pact. And other U.S. alliances largely remain in place, although the 1980's have seen growing frictions, such as between the U.S. and West Germany, New Zealand, etc.

Frictions within the U.S.-led alliances have of course existed for many years, but the 1980's have seen a marked increase in the undermining of U.S. supremacy in the Western imperialist camp. This has been largely economic, not political or military, and it has taken place principally because of the economic growth of Europe and Japan side by side with the economic malaise of the U.S.

Thus, while the political alliances hold, the all-round relationship is shot through with contradictions. On one hand, the largest part of Western Europe seeks to integrate closer into a union, while at the same time, different European powers are also seeking to exert themselves more as national powers. Meanwhile, the economic competition with Japan — both U.S. and Western European — is reaching a fever pitch.

The changes in Eastern Europe, despite being welcomed so eagerly by the West, have in fact dramatically

added to the forces undermining the U.S.-led camp. They have unleashed new centrifugal forces.

The biggest factor here has been the collapse of the regime in East Germany. West German imperialism has rushed forward, seeing this as a golden opportunity to forge a reunited German imperialist power, which would overshadow any other power in Europe. The other European powers have responded with great jitteriness; they fear that Germany wants to go it alone and climb on top of Europe. Thus they look at each other with a common worry and look for support from both Washington and Moscow against the potential of German uppityness. Meanwhile, the momentum towards closer West European integration is also being subject to new centrifugal tendencies.

## The Future

The world is headed towards a situation where a number of big imperialist powers dominate politics, instead of just two superpowers. So much is still fluid today that it is hard to predict precisely how these powers will line up — which rivalries will prevail or what new alliances will be formed. What's clear is that the old order is crumbling. It's not yet gone, but definitely disintegrating. And the new setup which will replace the old is yet to take shape.

But it won't mean peace and goodwill. It should not be forgotten that both World War I and II took place in periods when the world was dominated by the rivalry of several big imperialist powers.

Capitalist imperialism means the search for profits. It means division and redivision of the world among world powers and international monopolies. This necessarily translates into imperialist rivalry, economic and political, which tends towards military confrontation and war. This point about the nature of imperialism, sharply pointed out by the international working class movement before World War I, remains true as ever. Lenin drew this out in his famous work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, a work which is well worth rereading in these days of heady propaganda about the end of world tension.

True, for the moment military tension between the two blocs of NATO and Warsaw is subsiding. But this does not eliminate the possibility of military confrontations, either in Europe or elsewhere.

For one thing, the military balance in Europe has been massively destabilized. And this comes when Eastern Europe remains in a highly unstable situation. The new regimes there have yet to consolidate; there is the danger of big social explosions against economic privation; there is competition among different European big powers for influence in this region; there are political winds in West Germany who would like to alter the post-World War II borders in Eastern Europe; and there are major national conflicts simmering, such as those within Yugoslavia. All these issues could lead to the possibility of resumption of military conflicts in the not-too-distant future.

We may well be entering a period where the big powers talk incessantly about peace, disarmament, and cooperation among one another. Military tension among them may be at a low point for a while. But the economic competition can be expected to grow from bad to worse. And at some point this will also have its political and military consequences. Take note especially that in the U.S. and Japan today, an increasingly shrill atmosphere is being whipped up against each other. Anti-Japanese chauvinism here and anti-U.S. chauvinism there play widely

in establishment circles. Over this past year a number of books came out here casting Japan as the enemy which will replace the "Soviet threat."

As well, it must not be forgotten that U.S. imperialism has not by any means abandoned its self-proclaimed role as policeman of the world. Even in the last few months, as the media tells tall tales of peace on hand, we've seen Bush intervene in the Philippines, back up the death-squad regime in El Salvador, and invade Panama. As the world changes,

Washington very much wants to show that it will militarily defend its dollar interests worldwide, especially in what it considers to be its backyard. Military planners have already drawn up plans for further wars in the Third World.

Workers and progressive people must keep up our fire against U.S. imperialism and its chauvinism and global militarism. Only the struggle to overthrow imperialism altogether can usher in the peace and prosperity the world desperately hungers for. □

## The working class is the force for change

As the fake "workers' states" in Eastern Europe collapse, we again hear the refrain that the working class is passe. This is not a new cry. Ever since the mid-1800's when the workers first came out with their own movement and mounted the stage of history, the paid mouthpieces of Capital have regularly pronounced the death of the proletarian movement. Today, it is being pushed with vengeance.

But is that so?

Interestingly enough, in the decade that passed by, the working class emerged as a force in the shaking up of revisionist state-capitalism.

- In 1980, it was the working class of Poland which stood up. Its struggle could not be snuffed out and kept peaking through the repression of martial law.

- In China, as Deng Xiaoping carried out his market reforms, working class unrest began to rise. Strikes broke out. And in the spring of '89 when the students demonstrated, the regime panicked precisely when the workers began to join the students.

- In the Soviet Union, the miners' strike this summer marked the first big upheaval of the working class in decades.

- This year, students, youth and intellectuals have been in the streets of Eastern Europe. But it was more often than not when the working class came out that the regimes began to topple. Such as in Czechoslovakia and Romania.

The working class showed its potential as a major force in these countries. But because the workers have not had

their own class programs or their own independent political movements, it is pro-capitalist forces who are the ones getting into the new governments.

The powerful role of the working class could be seen throughout the world over the last decade.

In Asia, the capitalists have lovingly spoken of the miracles of the "Asian tigers," where capitalist development has mushroomed. But these miracles were built on low wages and harsh labor repression. The workers of South Korea rose up strongly and said, Enough! The first strikes in Taiwan in many decades broke out. Thailand saw a major strike wave. Elsewhere in that continent too, the workers waged a number of militant labor campaigns. In the Philippines, India and Bangladesh.

In Africa, the black workers of South Africa showed themselves to be the backbone of the great upsurge against apartheid. The rest of Africa also saw explosions by the working people. The capitalists speak of the 80's as a great decade of prosperity, but the African working people were hit worse than anyone else by the crisis of world capitalism. Against austerity and IMF dictate, workers in diverse parts of Africa rebelled in the streets — in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Zambia, Morocco, and Nigeria.

Depression worsened by IMF austerity also repeatedly brought out the workers of Latin America and the Caribbean. The continent was shaken by massive strike waves and general

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# From the MLP delegation to the Philippines

## The rise of independent workers' organization

In October and November, a delegation of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA was in the Philippines. They were there visiting with the communist organization, Union of Proletarian Revolutionaries of the Philippines. This article, on the trade union movement, is the second in a series of reports from our comrades on what they learned there.

Imagine getting out of a bed shared by three or four others at dawn, washing in a bucket without running water, cooking a bowl of rice over a single white-gas burner placed on the ground outside the front door, taking an hour and a half to travel a short distance because public transit is so congested, and coming home at the end of eight hours of work with less than \$5 in wages.

Hold that image. You've got a picture of the average factory worker in the Philippines.

The Aquino government tries to attract foreign investments to the Philippines by advertising the low wages there. "Industrious, hard working people, and you don't have to pay them a dime!" That's the gist of Aquino's promises to the international capitalists.

But the workers have a different message. They are fighting to find a way out of their misery. Their strike movement is a sign that their anger is boiling over into action.

### A Vigorous Strike Movement

During our recent visit to the Philippines, we went to the picket lines of garment workers, food processing workers and chicken processing-plant workers. We felt the impact of the workers from the light rail transit system who held a one-day work stoppage snarling already impossible traffic. We spoke with teachers on the island of Negros who were taking part in a nationwide teachers' strike that lasted over two weeks and involved tens of thousands of teachers. There were other strikes going on as well.

In a couple of instances the actions we saw were part of a continuing wave of strikes that came up last spring demanding an increase in the minimum wage. At the end of May, half a million workers participated in strike actions from Manila to Mindanao. They were pressing for a 30-peso-per-day wage hike across the board. The May actions were preparation for a nationwide general strike called for June 1. On May 31, just as ten thousand workers camped outside the Congress to press the demands, the government settled on a 25-peso-per-day increase — but only for some workers, in certain geographical areas.

The government thought this might cool off the strike movement, but the workers are still fighting — this time to make sure they receive the increase. The capitalists have done everything they can to avoid paying the new wage. As a result the teachers' strike, for example, was over the issue of retroactive pay: Was the new minimum going to be paid to them from July, or was it to be calculated from September? The chicken processing-plant workers were fighting just to get the minimum raise in the first place. The capitalist owner was refusing to pay them the increase because their work place is outside Manila city limits and he claimed they were agricultural workers.

### The Union Centers

In the Philippines various political trends have their own trade union centers.

On the right wing is the TUCP (Trade Union Congress of the Philippines),

which was the government trade union center during the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship. It has ties with the AFL-CIO and is rabidly anti-communist. The TUCP is fast becoming the trade union center for the government of Cory Aquino. This is only one side of the government's reactionary policy towards the workers. The "people power" regime of Aquino has also taken to using vigilante death squads to repress the workers.

Then there are the more reformist, nationalist or social-democratic unions: FFW (Federation of Free Workers) associated with the social-democratic trade union international based in Amsterdam; TUPAS, linked with the pro-Soviet party; and CAMAO (Christian Alliance of Nationalist Workers). In general these centers are known for their class collaboration policy and selling out the workers.

On the left are KMU and BUKLURAN. KMU (May First Movement) is the trade union center associated with the Maoist-oriented Communist Party of the Philippines. BUKLURAN is the trade union center of the Union of Proletarian Revolutionaries of the Philippines (KPRP).

The KMU union center bills itself as an independent force and has a definite leftist reputation. It is active in the strike movement. It is, however, guided by a Maoist orientation and therefore has a soft spot for liberal politicians and for domestic Filipino capitalists whom it considers to be a progressive force.

When we visited the KMU picket line at the chicken processing-plant we were told by the leader there that the main problem they were facing was U.S. imperialism. Without denying that the U.S. is a grave enemy of the workers, we noted that this KMU cadre failed to denounce the capitalist who actually owned the plant, an extremely wealthy and powerful Filipino. And this in the midst of a strike that KMU was carrying out against this exploiter.

BUKLURAN (Unity of Independent Unions) is an organization made up of several independent trade unions that are banding together to build a fighting workers' movement. It is working to build a revolutionary movement rooted in the independent action and organization of the workers and poor peasants.

### Workers Are Turning to Independent Organization

As more workers gain experience in the factories the luster of Filipino capitalists and bourgeois liberals of the Aquino type wears thin. Workers have begun to see that subservience to middle class politics is stunting the growth of the movement. As a result they are breaking with the Maoist KMU and other trade union centers and moving in the direction of building independent union organizations.

In the Philippines, unionized workers hold a certification election every three years to determine which trade union center they will belong to. We do not have an exact parallel to this in the U.S. union movement. It would be similar to having a union recognition election every three years, where workers have to choose between competing trade union centers associated with different political trends — except that here the AFL-CIO is basically the only union center.

These certification elections become a battleground for the different trends in the labor movement. The policy of each union center and its record in defense of the workers' interests become compelling issues. Was the union a fighting one? Did it do anything to mobilize the workers as an independent force? These are the type of questions workers ask.

The development of BUKLURAN by the KPRP means that the trend for independent working class politics has an organization capable of waging a fight right inside the working class on issues that draw in broad sections of ordinary workers. More and more workers are turning to BUKLURAN at certification time.

### On BUKLURAN's Picket Lines

We visited two picket lines where the unions were affiliated to BUKLURAN.

In the Philippines, workers on strike move right out to the picket lines and live there with their families for the duration of the strike. They cook and eat there. They set up places to sleep. A visitor gets a real feel that these workers are in it for the long haul.

The basic issue in both these strikes centered around the right to organize and to have certification election results recognized. At one factory the boss had declared a walkout illegal and punished workers when they went to a meeting to swear in the new officers of the union. The other strike started after the union president was fired.

The capitalists in these cases were trying to smash the momentum of BUKLURAN. They know it is the militant among trade union centers. They felt secure in their attempt to run roughshod over trade union rights because the government itself has declared "total war" against any militants in the trade unions. Apparently what they didn't count on was the workers themselves.

The workers organized and went on strike. When we visited them they told us they were prepared to stay out until victory.

### Drawing Worker Activists Into Communist Political Work

We were able to hold several meetings with workers associated with the KPRP and active in the unions organized under BUKLURAN. More than 80% of these workers were the first in their families to leave the countryside and come to Manila to work in a factory. After running into capitalist exploitation, their thoughts turned to organizing. And from there the KPRP cadre reached out to them, drew them into the independent union and the study of Marxism-Leninism, and pointed out the necessity of revolution. KPRP takes very seriously the training of working class leaders. Young militants are encouraged to take on organizational work: to speak, to teach what they grasp about Marxism, to build organization in the factory and community.

To us, it was clear the more we talked to these workers that they represented the future. Yes, their organization was small — especially when compared to the immensity of the problems in the Philippines. But, we thought, the movement of the working class, when it is conscious of the goal of revolution and fights to put the proletariat and poor peasants at the center of all its efforts, is in the long run invincible. □



1988 May Day in Manila: Independent unions mobilize followers on march.

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# WHAT'S NEXT IN EASTERN EUROPE?

Ten years back, Soviet bloc revisionism posed as supremely confident. From Moscow to Berlin to Prague, they sang the glories of "real, existing socialism."

But beneath all the flowery words, Soviet bloc state-capitalism was rotting to death. Economic stagnation and crisis was at the center of this rot.

It showed up first in the deeply debt-ridden countries. Especially Poland. There another round of price hikes sparked off a massive working class upsurge, against misery and for democratic rights. The Warsaw regime eventually decided to crush that struggle with martial law. But it had lost all semblance of mass support, and tanks could not put right the economic malaise.

Meanwhile, Brezhnev and his crew still tried desperately to cover up reality. Eventually, as the old leaders died off, the Soviet revisionists elected a new chief, Gorbachev, who had to acknowledge what was going on and seek a new policy.

## Gorbachev Admits Bankruptcy

Gorbachev declared for a program of economic and political restructuring, which amounted to Western-style reforms. This itself was a big admission of the bankruptcy of revisionist state-capitalism. Not only had state-capitalism failed, but it had no solutions to offer other than to rig up a caricature of Western capitalist society.

Despite slogans about renewing socialism, Gorbachev's *perestroika* was really an echo of the Reaganite-Thatcherite policies of cutbacks and privatization, a policy of forcing the workers to bear the costs of economic restructuring. It is nothing but a typically capitalist policy — which has today become the fashion from Moscow and New York to the capitals of Africa.

For all his promises, Gorbachev's "market socialist" program has only added to the Soviet Union's economic ills; the Soviet people face a very difficult winter this year. But for the moment, he has succeeded in keeping the Soviet revisionist party in power, mainly thanks to his program of loosening the screws of political repression as a safety valve. But people cannot eat *glasnost*, the economic demands of the working people grow daily, and powerful, destabilizing national forces have emerged across the Soviet Union.

But in Eastern Europe the revisionist regimes have not had Gorbachev's luck.

## Revisionism in Eastern Europe Crumbles

In Poland, the crisis went from bad to worse, and Jaruzelski's party never succeeded in regaining any mass support. It continued to be plagued by strikes. The revisionist party decided that it had to strike a deal with the Solidarity leadership and by this time it itself had come around to a common view with them — in favor of all-out privatization and a Western-style capitalist economy. They were trounced in national elections and forced to allow Solidarity to lead the new government, although they retain key positions within the coalition.

The revisionists in Hungary who had long adopted Gorbachev-style economic reforms also decided to move to an openly Western-style economy. They too launched schemes to privatize industry and have rushed to drop the labels of Marxism and communism. They have scheduled elections in 1990 and are not expected to fare too well.

There remained others who tried to hold back. East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania said they had no crisis. Why, some of them declared, things were better than ever. They tried to cast themselves as true, socialist alternatives to Gorbachev-style reforms.



Mass demonstration in Leipzig, East Germany.

But they were sitting on a house of cards. In the fall of 1989, that house came tumbling down. It did not come easy. It was mass upheaval in the streets which had to force the retreat of the state-capitalist overlords. And the cost was a heavy one in Romania.

Today there is an unstable situation across Eastern Europe; the present governments are very much transitional. The revisionist parties still remain within the governments and still control key positions in the armies, police forces and bureaucracy. But they have been forced to share power, they have little following among the masses, and even their membership — heavily based among those who joined for careerist reasons — is quitting in droves. Meanwhile, they are rapidly shedding communist pretenses and becoming open cheerleaders for capitalism.

## Collapse Exposes Regimes of Capitalist Greed

The collapse of these regimes has finally exposed for all to see the inner workings of these governments. The slogans about socialism and loyalty to the working class have been shown to be complete frauds. In one country after another, the masses have come to see how their rulers lived — in lavish housing, awash in Western luxury goods, even with foreign bank accounts.

That's precisely what revolutionary Marxist-Leninists like our party have been saying about these regimes. These facts bring out that these regimes were not some kind of workers' states at all, but state-capitalist systems, where the officials and managers lived off the exploitation of wage labor. Just like the capitalist countries of the West.

True, the parties in power in these places are descended from forces which were at one time revolutionary workers' parties. But the leaders of these parties many decades ago abandoned socialist principles.

After World War II, the new governments set up in these countries did abolish the hated old regimes of aristocrats, landlords and capitalists. They introduced reforms which provided a certain economic security for the toilers. And to one extent or another they began with the goodwill of large sections of the masses. But they did not bring the working class to power. Instead they consolidated a rigid and repressive political order and a special form of state-capitalist economy. In the 20th century, state-capitalism is a feature found across the capitalist world, but in the revisionist countries of the East, the state sector overwhelmingly dominated the economy and the officialdom itself formed the ruling class of exploiters.

The revisionists squandered their popular base and alienated the masses, who eventually would gather the strength to push them aside.

## Pivotal Role of the Workers

And that's the other big lesson in the collapse of these regimes. It shows again that it is the masses who are the makers of history. The change in Eastern Europe did not come from the generosity of the ruling cliques. And it certainly did not come from the warheads of NATO.

The role of the workers is especially worthy of note. The Polish workers' struggles opened the way. In Czechoslovakia, it was the threat of general strike by the workers which finally forced the regime to retreat. In Romania, Ceausescu fled when factory workers brought out to cheer him turned on him with vengeance.

## But It's Not the Workers Who Capture the Fruits

But while the working masses pushed ahead the changes, they do not control the changes. They are not able to put their own stamp on the new order which is being born.

The present governments are uneasy coalitions. The revisionists are still there, now swearing allegiance to capitalism. The forces which dominate the new governments, like the Solidarity leadership in Poland and Civic Forum in Czechoslovakia, are made up of various pro-capitalist forces — from social-democrats to bourgeois liberals and even conservatives. These forces have the backing of the big powers, in NATO as well as Moscow.

These governments are carrying out the social-democratization of Eastern Europe. Politically they are setting up bourgeois parliamentary systems, and economically they seek a social-democratic model of mixed economy, with both state and privately owned corporations. The "free market" is the declared goal everywhere.

To varying degrees, these regimes enjoy the acquiescence, if not support, of the masses. Since the major demand in the mass upheavals has been for democratization, the masses have been willing to support various political forces calling for democratic reforms.

## What Kind of Democracy?

The fact that workers and aspiring capitalist forces stand together today under a common banner of democracy is not at all unique. It is seen also in other democratic upheavals in which the common hatred for tyranny obscures differences in class interests. But history also shows this to be temporary. As soon as the veil of tyranny lifts, and the different forces express their real political and economic interests, workers and aspiring capitalists begin to part their ways. Because, in truth, no matter how things appear on the surface, there are two different and opposed interests at work here.

In Eastern Europe, the workers have developed hopes in Western-style parliamentary democracy because they see this as the alternative to state-capitalist dictatorship. Ideas of proletarian democracy became discredited among them, because the revisionists draped their bureaucratic tyranny under those slogans. They converted the idea of proletarian organization into a means to control the workers instead of something which mobilizes their initiative and draws them into democratic participation. They converted the idea of a partisan press into censorship and systematic lying. And so forth.

But the new leaders of the opposition that are coming out on top in Eastern Europe do not offer the kind of democratic perspective that really reflects the mass aspirations. In some places, when necessary they are willing to have the workers as a striking force in the streets to topple the old regimes but they are not interested in building democratic organs where the workers can actually affect public affairs. It is a striking feature of the Eastern European upheavals that the new leaders emerging never give calls to set up workers' councils or town and neighborhood committees.

The workers have come out because of their deep hatred for bureaucratic tyranny. You would think there would be discussion about how to replace this tutelage with a different kind of society. But the new leaders don't encourage this. They themselves do not have new bureaucracies set up, but they shy away from setting up workers' councils as a replacement. Instead they make deals with the existing bureaucracies and keep them intact until they can replace the old bureaucrats with their own favorites.

What is more, the new leaders are taking steps to prevent the working class from embracing class-based political activity. In Hungary, for example, in the name of banning the revisionist party from having party organization in the factories, parliament outlawed all political organizing at the workplace. In other countries too, similar ideas are being floated. These are all aimed at keeping the working class out of the political arena, to have it simply be a producing class for the capitalists.

The only role they want the workers to have is the chance to vote for parliamentary politicians. True, the masses resented the old setup where the elections became a charade. But the economy is being handed over to private capitalists and the old bureaucratic and armed apparatus is maintained. All the serious issues will still be taken care of behind the backs of the people. In effect, under parliamentary democracy, the old methods of lying and deception are merely being replaced with a more subtle style of the same old trap.

## The Class Struggle Will Break Through!

Bourgeois democracy may speak in the name of all the people and promise freedom and prosperity to all, but in reality it defends the interests of the wealthy and those aspiring to join them. And these interests will come out even more as the new governments launch their economic programs.

The program of the "free market" means stepped-up assault on the livelihood of the working people. Throughout Eastern Europe, economic restructuring is to bring the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs, the closing of many plants, the cutting of wages, and the increase of prices in necessities, housing, transportation, etc. Already, such things have begun in Poland and Hungary. Soup kitchens have been set up in Warsaw and Polish pensioners hawk their belongings, while in Hungary people abandon their cars.

Continued on next page  
See E. Europe



# A tyrant falls in Romania

Two years ago, on November 15, workers in the city of Brasov, Romania exploded in rage against the regime of Nicolae Ceausescu.

They had gathered outside city hall to register their obligatory votes for the city council. But the mood was angry, because paychecks that day had been cut and extra work demanded. The workers stormed the city hall and

burned pictures of the country's tyrant. The police used guns and tear gas to suppress the workers but it took them five hours. By that time, cars in the square had been turned over and burned. And workers had put up a stiff resistance.

That rebellion was in fact the beginning of the end for Ceausescu. It was the first big crack. It would only take the

momentum from this fall's mass upheaval in the rest of Eastern Europe to encourage the majority of the people to lose their fear and turn out for the revolutionary explosion of December 1989.

## Ceausescu's Rule — Personal Tyranny and a Regime of Harsh Austerity

Ceausescu's Romania was a member of the Warsaw Pact, and like its allies it too called itself socialist and communist. In fact, in some ways it struck a pose that it was even a purer and more revolutionary country than the others. However, in many ways, Ceausescu's Romania was closer to Haiti under the Duvaliers than its neighbors.

After World War II, the old pro-Nazi regime had been wiped out and a system like the other revisionist countries of Eastern Europe was set up. And although the state-capitalist economic structure remained similar to its neighbors, after Ceausescu came to power in 1965 he consolidated a far more brutal political order.

There was nothing socialist or Marxist about this regime whatsoever. The tyrant ruled as an individual dictator. He was setting up the dynastic rule of his family, as relatives occupied many key posts in the regime. He had sidelined the revisionist "Communist" Party; this remained a part of his regime, but the real force in the state was the Securitate, the secret police which was personally loyal to the Ceausescus.

This rule had created great bitterness among the Romanian people. But that was compounded by the savage economic and social policies Ceausescu spearheaded in the 1980's.

In the 60's and 70's, the country had taken out large loans from Western banks. Ceausescu then was the darling of Western governments. He was wined and dined by Nixon, Ford and Carter. Why, he was even knighted by the Queen of England. Because he had some contradictions with the Soviet Union, the Western imperialists were eager to court him as their favored friend in the Warsaw Pact. (Of course, today they act as if they are shocked by the realities of his regime.)

Romania, however, began to have difficulty paying back the loans. So Ceausescu went on a program of selling off most of the country's production in order to pay off the debt — never mind that this meant starving and overworking the masses. Electricity, food, gas, etc. were all rationed, and often shortages prevented people from even getting their meager rations. People have frozen for the last several winters. Medicines were not to be found and the people's health began to deteriorate. Meanwhile, the regime kept up its ban on abortions to carry out its goal of expanding the country's population.

As well, Ceausescu went on a crash program of bulldozing villages and resettling the rural population. This was directed particularly against the Hungarian minority and was seen as an attempt to work up national rivalry in order to keep the masses split and oppressed.

## The People Refuse to Take Any More — Revolution in the Streets

As 1989 wound to a close, the other revisionist capitals of Eastern Europe had already collapsed. Ceausescu struck a defiant pose. But the people had other ideas, and it ended up a repeat of Custer's last stand. The idea of mass upheaval was infectious and provided the final encouragement they needed.

On December 8, workers at the Red Star factory in Brasov struck. They refused to work in the cold, and suggested that management try to work under those conditions. Their action was put down.

A week later, the police went to arrest

a Hungarian minority priest in Timisoara. Demonstrators surrounded the church to prevent his arrest. Ethnic Romanians joined with the Hungarian minority in this struggle. The security forces responded with gunfire. Hundreds were killed and buried in mass graves.

As tension built, Ceausescu had to return from his trip to Iran. He had factory workers in Bucharest pulled out to a rally to cheer his rule. The workers defied him, shouted against him, tore up and burned the placards and pictures they had been forced to carry. The security police fired on them and the battle was on for the streets of Bucharest.

Seeing the writing on the wall, the army split from Ceausescu and rebelled against him and the Securitate. As the tyrant fled, the masses took over his palace and put it to the torch. Hundreds of thousands poured out to vent their rage and celebrate their victory.

For a few more days, fighting went on between the army and the secret police, but the old regime had clearly fallen. Ceausescu was caught and the army executed him in a secret trial.

In the following days, the masses got to see how the tyrant lived — in extravagant luxury. It came out that he and his family had been lining their vaults as the masses starved and froze. He who had posed as the champion of socialist purity had turned out to be an apostle of capitalist-style greed. This again exposed the truth that revisionist state-capitalism, despite its slogans, is in reality a capitalist system, where the rulers live off the exploitation of the workers.

## New Regime Decrees Reforms, But in What Direction?

As Ceausescu fell, a provisional government took over. The backbone of this government is the army. Besides a few cultural figures, its prominent civilian leaders include former top-level figures from the revisionist Communist Party, who had been suppressed over the years by the tyrant. They are primarily Gorbachovian in outlook and they foresee a turn towards Western-style economics and politics.

Many of the new reforms have been popularly greeted. People are now able to eat. They do not have to keep their house temperatures at 53 degrees. The ban on abortions has been lifted. The people can speak out and gather without fear of the secret police.

But the new leaders have not made one step towards encouraging the masses to rule. They have not supported the setting up of workers' or citizens' councils. Indeed, one of their first steps in power was to demand that the masses who had seized weapons to fight the secret police return them to the army. Not the armed people, but the old army, will keep order. Not the councils of the workers and people, but the old bureaucracy, will carry out the day-to-day functions of government.

Thus Ceausescu is gone, along with his family, but the new leaders are merely setting up another form of the same exploiting system of rule. This will not be as crude and blunt, but through more subtle means will also set up a regime of capitalist privilege. Instead of one family, the profits taken from the masses will go to a new, larger elite. That is the promise of bourgeois, parliamentary democracy being held out before the masses.

The working people played a heroic role in bringing down the hated tyranny. But they do not yet have their independent political movement, which is needed if they are to put their mark on what system is to be set up in place of Ceausescu's. That is their urgent need today. This will not be granted to them by the new leaders — it must come out of their efforts. The salvation of the working class has to be its own task. □



Romanians celebrate the fall of Ceausescu.

## E. EUROPE

### Continued from previous page

because of the cost of gas.

They don't mention this often in the U.S. news media, but they are already being forced to admit that a difficult and painful period is coming in Eastern Europe. As *U.S. News and World Report* put it, "Everywhere the year ahead will bring lower living standards, and greater social unrest to a region already scarred by poverty, housing shortages and dreadful pollution." (Dec. 18)

This shows that the bourgeoisie knows well that the workers of Eastern Europe will not take the economic assault lying down. Meanwhile, the response to these struggles by the new regimes will show up the limits of bourgeois democracy, as strikes are banned, union activity is curtailed, and worker protesters are repressed.

### The Seeds of Workers' Resistance Can Already Be Seen

It does not take a fortune-teller to see why the Eastern European workers can be expected to resist the "free market" assault on their livelihood.

For one thing, the workers have been learning the power of mass struggle through the recent upheavals in the streets.

For another, the Eastern European workers have a strong sense that economic security is a right. This is being raised as a major obstacle by the Western experts. From them comes a strong refrain that the Eastern European workers will have to get rid of these allegedly backward ideas derived from socialist values. One of Poland's capitalist advisers complained recently, "Our people hate Communism, but when you start talking about privatization, many of them act like Communists." (*New York Times*, Nov. 30).

What's more, across Eastern Europe, the upheavals have also shown a deeply-felt hatred for privilege and greed at the top. The workers are not about to eagerly accept wealthy private capitalists as their overlords after rising against the privileged bureaucrats.

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Still, since the workers lack organization independent from the pro-capitalist forces, because they are not clear enough about their own goals separate from the rich, it is doubtful that the workers can rise up immediately and put their stamp on the new order. What can be expected are various kinds of spontaneous explosions of struggle. But in this emerging class struggle will be the seeds for revival of anti-capitalist organization, opposed to both the state-capitalism of the past and the "free market" capitalism of today.

The capitalist pundits are waxing eloquent about how a new era of business prosperity is due in Eastern Europe. All sorts of capitalist hustlers are going there to get a share off the profit to be made. Big Western corporations are greedily looking at exploiting cheap skilled labor, so closely situated to the big West European market.

Of course, some will prosper in Eastern Europe — but at the expense of others. It is part of capitalism's nature that some sections will be improved at the expense of the rest. The gap between rich and poor can be expected to mount.

But even so, stability is another matter. For some time to come, Eastern Europe is faced with a new period of economic and political instability. The emerging bourgeois ruling class is deeply fractured, caught up in many rivalries and squabbles. As well, they may be singing the glories of capitalist democracy today, but who can rule out that the bourgeois governments won't enforce new iron-fisted regimes to quell workers' struggles and stabilize profits. It's also the case that the bourgeoisie may well set the different nationalities at one another in order to split the working people. It's happening in Yugoslavia, and in other places too, one sees the old garbage of national hatred being revived. There is also the competition between different Western capitalist powers to see who will grab the biggest share of profits to be made.

All in all, it's not a pretty picture. The hope for the workers lies in being able to proceed towards working class revolutions. For this to happen, the workers need to build independent class organization. As other classes and strata form parties, they too must form their party. They have to establish bonds of solidarity across the national borders of Eastern Europe and with the workers and oppressed around the world. Many more twists and turns are yet to come, but the path of working class struggle and renewal of workers' communism is the path forward. This is the hope of the future. □



## Palestinian uprising:

# Two years and still going strong

A heroic battle for the freedom of a long-oppressed people is going on today in the eastern Mediterranean. Every week, there are demonstrations and standoffs against armed security forces. The entire community resists with a single will, taking on heavy economic sacrifices to keep the flames of freedom burning strong. Every few days, more of these people — including children — are killed. Thousands languish in jail without trial.

But you don't see Tom Brokaw or Dan Rather or Peter Jennings reporting from their midst. You hardly see them on TV these days. And the newspapers bury their story in back pages, if they write on it at all. And you never, ever see President Bush or the Senators and Congresspeople making solidarity declarations with this struggle for freedom.

That's because these people are the Palestinians. Who suffer under the jackboot not of one of America's adversaries but of its closest ally in the Middle East — Israel.

Two years the Palestinian uprising has raged, braving all odds. And their struggle continues today, showing the great determination to fight on until victory is won.

### Repression Couldn't Prevent Anniversary Protests

December 9 was the second anniversary of the Palestinian *intifada* (uprising). The Israeli army prevented large demonstrations on the anniversary by imposing massive, round-the-clock curfews in the occupied territories. Nonetheless there were widespread protests the first week of December, which show that the *intifada* is still a powerful force.

Israeli soldiers shot two Palestinian boys to death in Jerusalem the first of December. In response, Arab Jerusalem was shut down by a three-day strike. And Nablus was shut down the entire week to protest against Israeli soldiers infiltrating into Arab towns to spy on the *intifada*.

### Deep Popular Support

These actions show that strong popular support continues for the *intifada*. The Palestinians have taken many casualties in the past two years — over 700 killed, 70,000 wounded, and 16,000 sentenced to long prison terms. But these are accepted as the necessary price paid for the liberation struggle.

The uprising began at a time when the Palestinians' cause was at a low ebb. Following the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, the Palestinian struggle had been declared by Israel and its allies to be a dead cause. The Palestinians were abandoned by bourgeois Arab governments, and the national-reformist leadership of the PLO proved bankrupt in offering a strategy to revive the struggle. The uprising emerged out of this stagnant situation — it galvanized the oppressed population in the West Bank and Gaza, and for the first time their liberation struggle became the activity of the entire Palestinian community in the occupied territories.

### Organization Carries Struggle Forward

Despite ferocious repression, the *intifada* has become a highly organized endeavor. Local committees mobilize for strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations, and organize defense of localities against attacks by army patrols and Israeli settlers. Committees also organize schools, day-care centers, and a variety of economic cooperatives. Committees organize political prisoners into political work inside the prisons so that when prisoners are released, they are ready for higher level activity back in their localities.



The Palestinians have kept up a strong opposition to Israel on the economic front as well. Despite growing poverty, the Palestinian communities have boycotted Israeli goods with remarkable success; they have used periodic strikes to undermine the stability of those Israeli enterprises which live on super-exploited Palestinian labor; and they have even carried out some effective tax strikes.

Both the costs of suppressing the *intifada* and the costs of the Palestinians' economic struggle have been heavy for Israel — to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars.

So far, the *intifada* has stymied all attempts by the Israelis, the Arab governments and the imperialists to divide and stifle it. Unfortunately, the national leadership of the uprising is dominated by those tied to the reformist leadership of the PLO. This keeps the goals of the uprising limited to demands for an international peace conference and through that, to the hopes of a mini-state achieved through a deal with the Israeli oppressors.

The other major trend in the leadership, the Islamic movement, offers no revolutionary alternative. Their radical-sounding pose against Israel is geared towards setting up a reactionary Islamic fundamentalist order. And in practical politics, they are susceptible to the attempts by the Israeli regime to set up a counterweight to the PLO. This is reflected by their willingness to take part in the elections proposed by Israel with the aim of undercutting PLO activists.

Meanwhile, Israel has remained intransigent and continues to believe that repression will be enough to solve the Palestinian question. And because the diplomatic games are going nowhere after all the promises thrown around a year ago, more Palestinians are considering the question of how to further develop the *intifada*.

### A Revolutionary Alternative Is Needed

And that is indeed the issue before the Palestinians. It is their mass struggle that has brought them this far, not the diplomatic hobnobbing advocated by the PLO leaders.

What is needed to carry this struggle forward is the development of the independent movement of the Palestinian toilers, which can forge a path distinct from the reformist daydreaming of the bourgeoisified PLO leaders. Such a path would be a revolutionary perspective — one which works for the overthrow of the ruling Israeli bourgeois state and its replacement with a consistently democratic order with equal rights for all who live there — Arab and Jew. Such a path would seek to create the solution which is most conducive to the development of

struggle for the social and economic interests of the working people.

Instead of hopes in diplomacy, the Palestinian toilers must develop an all-sided revolutionary strategy. This includes the work to develop the *intifada*. It includes work to mobilize the Pales-

tinians in Israel proper who are also held back by reformist leadership. It includes organizing support from Palestinian toilers and other Arab toilers in the neighboring lands. And it includes linking up with progressive Jewish workers. □

### HOMELESS Continued from page 3

The police arrested three people while loud voices rang out with the call, "No housing, no peace!" "Housing is a right!"

When they couldn't prevent the clearing of the park, about 100 homeless people and squatters marched to a semi-abandoned apartment building near the park and took it over. The police drove the protesters from the building and arrested 11 people. The demonstrators kept up the chant "Stop warehousing apartments, stop evictions!"

In New York, welfare hotels around the city are being closed and "Operation Enforcement" is driving homeless people out of the subway stations. As a result, up to 300 people were seeking shelter in Tompkins Square Park, many

spending weeks insulating their structures against the bitter cold. During the police raid on the park, the "benevolent" commander of the Ninth Precinct declared, "If they want, the homeless people can come back later with blankets and sleeping bags. They just won't have the structures." Sure they can stay at the park if they're willing to freeze. Several protesters surrounded the commander chanting "Sieg Heil" and "New York City, you can't hide, we charge you with genocide."

The homeless can't expect any help from mayor-elect David Dinkins. Although during his election campaign Dinkins postured as being a friend of the poor, on December 13 he made a statement supporting the destruction of the homeless structures in the park. The homeless will have to defend themselves through mass struggle. □

### NY homeless retake abandoned building

On December 10, a group of homeless people retook the ABC Community Center, an abandoned building a few blocks from Tompkins Square Park. A month ago, homeless people who had taken over this building were forcibly evicted by police and over 40 were arrested.

From the building the homeless declared their demands: 1) Stop the at-

tacks on the park; 2) Tompkins Square Park stays open; No curfew, no evictions; 3) No concentration camp shelters; 4) This building, other abandoned buildings, run by and for the homeless.

Four days later, three people were arrested when they crossed police lines to bring food to homeless occupiers. But the occupation continued. □

### Earthquake homeless protest in Oakland

200 people rallied in West Oakland's mostly black DeFremery Park neighborhood on December 9. This is the area where the majority of Oakland's 2,500 newly homeless people are from. The protesters demanded decent housing, jobs, quality education and preventative health care. They denounced the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Red Cross for closing down operations in the Bay Area even

though 60% of the West Oakland residents who had applied for aid from the earthquake were denied help.

Earlier, on November 27, pickets descended on San Francisco City Hall demanding that the city government provide low-cost housing for all homeless people and create a massive jobs reconstruction program, by taxing big business and getting federal funds. □

### Boston homeless protest budget cuts

20 homeless people were arrested November 15 for sitting in at the rotunda of the Massachusetts State House. 100 demonstrators outside the building chanted support for the sit-in. "Tax the rich, don't kill the poor! Don't cut the budget anymore!" Following this action, around 1,000 people joined a candlelight action against the cuts.

The protesters denounced the deep cuts in funding of homeless programs. The emergency winter shelter program has been slashed by \$700,000, from \$2.2

million to \$1.5 million. The legislature proposed to also cut \$2 million from a rent subsidies program which provides assistance to families in privately owned apartments. Other proposed cuts include: \$29 million from emergency aid provided to help families avoid evictions and utility shut offs; \$17.7 million cut in affordable housing monies; a \$37.7 million cut in Medicaid; and a \$17.6 million cut in the universal health care program, eliminating health coverage for 7,000 people. □



# Revisionism rots, but the fight for workers' socialism goes on

Continued from front page

tyranny. Still, since anti-revisionist communism doesn't presently exist as a mass political current in these Eastern European countries and because the communist label has been paraded around by the revisionist traitors for so long, it is not hard to see how many workers there may blame communism for the crimes of revisionism. And for the moment, there is certainly a mood of euphoria over what's seen as the alternative — Western-style politics and economics.

But it won't last. The innate cruelty and insanity of capitalism cannot be glossed over. Many expectations are being freed in Eastern Europe — they will not be met by the Western-style setup which is replacing the revisionist system. The workers can be expected to resist the great economic hardships being put before them. As well, the suppression of workers' initiative under the banner of parliamentary democracy will not easily stifle the desires of the masses to act on their own.

Meanwhile, around the capitalist world, the gap widens between the handful of rich living in unspeakable

luxury and the working majority which keeps getting ground down. As well, the contrast stands sharper than ever between the amazing technological advances achieved so far and the inability of capitalism to provide for the needs of the majority of humanity.

The seeds of revolutionary, workers' communism lie in the experience that workers have of the cruelty of life under capitalism.

The MLP believes that the collapse of revisionism, despite the temporary strengthening of anti-communist propaganda, will help clear the way to a new revival of workers' communism

worldwide. A communist movement built on the shoulders of the international working class which has grown immensely. A communism built on the promise of using the technical marvels of humanity to fulfill the real needs of humanity. A communism built on the basis of hostility to all forms of capitalist tyranny — East or West. A communist movement lifted out from under the shadow of the U.S.-Soviet rivalry of the cold war.

In this paper, we carry additional articles on the impact of the collapse of Soviet revisionism for the working class movement. □

## What Dinkins will mean for New York City

The next mayor will have to ask for, and sell, sacrifice to all New Yorkers, most notably the poor citizens hurt most by reductions in city services. Mr. Dinkins seems better qualified to persuade all New Yorkers to share the burdens ahead.

— New York Times editorial endorsing Dinkins, October 29, 1989

Twelve years of Koch have meant 12

years of Reaganism with a New York accent.

In contrast, the Dinkins campaign promised a breath of fresh air. But this promise is fast proving empty.

For example, Dinkins steadfastly refuses to condemn Koch's tax breaks for construction in Lower Manhattan. These giveaways subsidize investments by the likes of Citibank and Trump in office towers and luxury high-rises at the same time that the city is crying it

has no money to do anything about housing for the poor. In general, Dinkins is all for housing for the poor. But on the specifics, he is unwilling to stop giving the money away to the rich.

In general Dinkins is for safeguarding social services. But when it was announced that New York City is facing a \$500 million deficit, Dinkins swiftly called for across-the-board cuts in every department — except for the police. This, of course, was exactly what Koch was doing. In general, Dinkins is for government with a human face. But on the specifics, his bottom line is no different than Ed Koch's.

This is because Dinkins comes out of the same political machine as did Koch and is tied to the same interests. Koch's reactionary policies did not just come from meanheartedness. They came from serving the interests of Wall Street. Take a look at a list of Dinkins' advisors and it reads like a *Who's Who of Wall Street*, from David Rockefeller on down. At bottom, Dinkins' program is little different from Koch's because he is tied to the same interests. Promises are one thing. But you cannot serve the interests of Wall Street and those of working people at the same time.

The one palpable difference between Dinkins and Koch is that under Dinkins, Gracie Mansion will not be a soapbox for racist demagoguery like it was with Koch. But this does not mean that

racism will disappear. Cities from Philadelphia to Los Angeles have already proven that black faces in high places do not mean an end to police brutality, job discrimination or any other aspect of racism for the 95% of black people who are not politicians, lawyers or radio station owners.

What it does mean is that Dinkins will be in a position to try to forestall a mass upsurge of the anti-racist movement with appeals for patience. This is something Rudy Giuliani could not do, and is an important reason why the *New York Times*, the *Daily News* and a large part of Wall Street backed Dinkins. In fact, calling for patience may prove to be Dinkins' most important job as mayor.

Fiscal crisis is looming in New York and cutbacks are in the air. In many ways, the Dinkins administration is likely to be a re-run of the Beame administration: an administration overshadowed by the fiscal crisis and the severe cutbacks dictated by the banks, with the mayor a voice calling for patience in the face of the cuts.

But patience cannot fill empty bellies or put a roof over a family's heads. Our response must be to build a mass fight against wage freezes and lay-offs, against any cuts in essential services, and for making the rich pay for the crisis.

(Excerpted from "New York Workers' Voice," paper of MLP-New York.) □

## FBI continues crusade against libraries

America's political police, the FBI, have begun another program to spy on its critics. This time it is trying to intimidate all those who think libraries are a place for reading and study, and not for FBI super-sleuths.

The FBI has long found public and university libraries a source of danger to the country. For several decades, at least since the 1960's, the FBI has conducted secret surveillance of libraries and sought to recruit various librarians into making reports on "suspicious" readers. This is the FBI's so-called "Library Awareness Program." The FBI claims it concentrates on scientific and technical libraries in New York City, as if this justified it.

When this program offended, among others, the American Library Association, the FBI was galvanized into action. It did not blush for shame, and it certainly didn't drop the "Library Awareness Program." Instead it did what it is paid to do — it began to make more secret files on possible left-wing individuals. It has been carrying out a secret investigation of critics of the Library Awareness Program.

So far, the FBI has acknowledged starting files on 266 more critics. In the eyes of the FBI thugs, anyone who opposes them can be labeled a possible Soviet spy. So they decided, in their own words, "to determine whether a Soviet active measures campaign had been initiated to discredit the Library Awareness Program." It is not known whether they found it necessary to investigate whether libraries also exist in the Soviet Union, and whether there are subversive inter-library loans between Russian and American libraries.

This investigation takes place as the FBI was trying to explain its way out of its years of investigating opponents of U.S. intervention in Central America. Under pressure, the FBI admitted there were some problems with one tiny bit of its operations, a special program of spying on the reformist organization CISPES in 1983-85. Chief FBI cop William Sessions finally said he thought that this program was a mistake, naturally not committed by him but by his predecessor, former chief political policeman William H. Webster. This is

hardly reassuring, because Webster has since been promoted to be Director of the CIA, where he can now spy on the whole world and help assassinate foreign leaders. And what about the allegedly scrupulous Sessions? Under his directorship, the FBI began its investigation of the "suspicious" individuals who oppose its Library Awareness Program.

### Liberals to the Rescue

Meanwhile the liberals, who have wrung their hands over the absurdities of FBI behavior, nevertheless keep trying to improve the FBI's image. Take liberal Democrat Don Edwards, chairman of the House judiciary subcommittee on civil and constitutional rights. He was quite satisfied with the FBI when it simply agreed to transfer some of its secret files on anti-war protesters to the National Archives. He didn't even want the files either made public or destroyed, to say nothing of destroying the political police, or even punishing William Webster, who was FBI Director during the 1983-85 spying. No, Don Edwards thinks it suffices to put the files in the National Archives to "protect the thousands of innocent individuals whose names appear in these files..." — until the files are consulted again by the FBI or any other police agency, of course.

As to the American Library Association, which has aroused such suspicion in the eyes of the FBI, it only wants FBI spying on the libraries to be regulated by law. Such laws, which already exist in some states, don't ban library spying. Instead they legalize it, provide conditions under which it is allowable, and extend the privilege to all law enforcement agencies. It would have been more helpful if the ALA had instead started a program to destroy unnecessary records automatically to keep them out of the hands of the police or taken other measures by its own direct action. But so long as the librarians believe in the beauty of ruling class law and order their scruples won't lead them too far. But these scruples will suffice to get them their own personal mention in the secret files of the FBI. □

## BUSH Continued from page 2

December that the Federal Centers for Disease Control suppressed information that shows abortion to be safe. The Reagan administration had demanded that its Surgeon General, Dr. C. Everett Koop, prepare a report condemning abortion as damaging to women's health. The Reaganites didn't care about the actual health problems of women, but simply wanted ammunition to enforce their right-wing agenda against women.

But Dr. Koop knew this was a lie. At 27 private meetings with both anti-abortion figures and advocates of choice he stated that legal abortion was physically safe and did not increase the risk of infertility or of miscarriage or premature births in later pregnancies. All medical procedures carry some risk. But, by way of comparison, he found that legal abortion under proper medical supervision was safer than giving birth. As well, in his opinion, it had not been shown that there was a high frequency of long-term harm to the women psychologically.

Since the report didn't back up the right-wing agenda, under the Bush administration, the Federal Centers for Disease Control suppressed Koop's findings.

Furthermore, this wasn't the first time that medical information was suppressed. Five years ago, under Reagan, the Federal Centers for Disease Control stopped comparing the death and injury

rates from abortion to those of women carrying pregnancy to term. They had wanted to scare women with the dangers of abortion, but the comparison showed that giving birth was seven to twenty-five times more dangerous. If the Reagan administration had been truly concerned about women, it might have taken this as a sign that its health cutbacks and the capitalist offensive against the living conditions of the workers were fatal to many would-be mothers. Instead it simply suppressed the research, since it didn't support its right-wing anti-abortion crusade.

Meanwhile the "free market" hasn't done any better than the Reaganite government bureaucrats. Over the last decade, neither drug companies in the U.S. nor government bureaucrats have conducted almost any research into contraception. Improvements in contraception would not only improve people's lives, but help cut down the number of abortions without restricting anyone's freedom of choice. But, it turns out, contraceptives are just as suspect as abortion in the eyes of the most religious fanatics and Reaganite anti-abortion crusaders.

The suppression of medical research and information shows that the "pro-life" movement has nothing to do with protecting life and everything to do with oppressing women. □



# Bush's lies about Panama

What aren't they telling us about the U.S. invasion of Panama? The TV networks obediently rebroadcast the big lies of the White House justifying the occupation of Panama. Every thinking person should challenge what we are being fed.

The U.S. military is trampling on the people of another country. Bush has ordered them to burn and murder and terrorize for the global interests of the U.S. corporations. The "official" story for this invasion just won't wash.

## Lie #1: "Defending Our Citizens"

This is the oldest lie in the book of invaders and aggressors. Hitler used it to invade Czechoslovakia. The U.S. used it countless times over the last hundred years to invade its Caribbean and Central American neighbors.

Yes, an American soldier was killed. And a big fuss was made. But so was a Panamanian police officer killed by a U.S. soldier. No fuss about that. Because in the mentality of the American overlord, a Panamanian life doesn't mean much. But for an American officer — send in the rapid-deployment forces!

And if hundreds of Panamanian working people are mowed down to revenge a single soldier fleeing Panamanian authority, well, what does Bush care?

If George Bush is so worried about the dangers of living in Panama, why doesn't he remove the huge U.S. military presence in Panama? Why doesn't he leave Panama and Central America to the people who live there?

## Lie #2: "Bringing Democracy to Panama"

Bush says he is only overthrowing a dictator and bringing "democracy" to Panama. Just like the U.S. imperialists brought "democracy" to Chile by unleashing a fascist bloodbath. Just like Reagan and Bush have been bringing democracy to Nicaragua by blocking it for a decade after it had the audacity to overthrow the Somoza dynasty.

Freedom is not going to come to the Panamanian people out of the barrel of a U.S. tank. Just look at the miserable U.S.-backed "democracies" of El Salvador, Honduras, or Guatemala — where death squads rule and the villagers dodge bombs "made in the USA."

Look at how the American troops restore "democracy." They seek to terrorize the poorer sections of the population into passivity. Take the arrival of the Americans in the fishing village of Vacamont. The American invaders came in and arrested the entire population for questioning. They stormed into any large buildings, smashing down doors with concussion grenades and bazookas and breaking up the contents of storehouses. Is this how liberators or occupiers behave?

Noriega has been a tyrant. But it is up to the working people of that country to settle accounts with their oppressors. When they have their say, the working people will get rid of the Noriegas as well as the old pro-American gang that wants to get back its own exclusive ride on the backs of the Panamanian workers.

## Lie #3: "Restoring the Legitimate Government"

The so-called legitimate government of Panama consisted of three men sworn in at a U.S. military base just before the U.S. invaded — "President" Guillermo Endara and two vice-presidents. (Oh yes, let's not forget the ambassador to Washington. It was a four-man government.) What a remarkable coincidence. They just happened to decide to form a government at midnight, just minutes before U.S. troops went in. Or perhaps this was not the formation of a sovereign

government but the actions of miserable puppets of the White House and the Pentagon.

The Endara government is just a hollow shell. The U.S. troops are the real power, and that's one of the reasons Bush administration spokesmen give to justify a long U.S. occupation.

Bush says these men won more votes than Noriega's candidate in the elections that were canceled. This is quite likely. But these elections were held in a way that prevented the working masses from exercising any initiative. Noriega had his pressure from one side, and the United States was holding the whole country hostage on the other. Meanwhile, once Endara and company mentioned that they were going to call in a U.S. invasion, they canceled with their own hand the meaning of any previous vote.

## Lie #4: "Bringing Noriega to Justice"

The U.S. military is supposedly simply enforcing an arrest warrant issued in Florida. Wow! Think just how ludicrous this is.

Here is the U.S. world policeman in action. It sets the law. It passes judgment. And then — wham! An airborne invasion at midnight to topple foreign governments and blow foreign leaders to bits.

And wait! There is something else to the Noriega story that this lie is intended to cover up.

Wasn't Noriega groomed by the CIA? Wasn't it a man named George Bush who was at the head of the CIA who took part in the handling of this CIA "asset"? Weren't Noriega's drug deals closely linked with the cocaine trafficking that financed the CIA-organized anti-Nicaraguan *contras* who were the beloved heroes of the Reagan-Bush administration?

In fact, as late as 1987, Noriega's Panamanian Defense Forces were being trained and supplied by the U.S. Southern Command as a strike force against revolution in Central America. And the CIA negotiated with Noriega on carrying out assassinations inside Nicaragua.

But the love affair with Noriega went sour. To describe the divorce proceedings as bringing Noriega to justice makes as much sense as to describe Al Capone's St. Valentine's Day massacre as bringing mobsters to justice.

## Lie #5: "Eliminate Drug Trafficking"

This is of course part of the lie about bringing Noriega to justice. But it deserves some mention on its own because the White House is using this excuse to justify growing U.S. police and military operations elsewhere in Latin America as well.

There is something that this fairy tale of the knight on horseback taking on the drug lords conveniently overlooks. The same White House that shouts against other people's drug dealings finds nothing wrong with the drug dealings of its friends. We have mentioned the drug dealings that are part of the CIA's *contra* operation. There is also the flood of drugs flowing to the world from the fields of the CIA's friends in Afghanistan. The Reagan and now Bush administrations have paid the better part of a billion dollars a year to give arms to Afghan reactionary bands who supplement U.S. aid with hundreds of millions of dollars of drug money.

If Bush wanted to close down all drug traffickers, why doesn't he start with the *contras* on the borders of Nicaragua, or the CIA-paid bands in Afghanistan? It seems that Bush's right hand knows not what his left hand is doing.

## Lie #6: "A State of War Existed"

Supposedly Noriega had already declared war. No such declaration had been received by the American government. No shots were fired at American troops. But some hot rhetoric in the Panamanian parliament supposedly sufficed.

In this case, does Bush propose to sign a peace treaty with his hand-picked Panamanian government? And will this be supposed to supplant the last Panama Canal treaty?

## To Hell with Bush and All the Imperialist Liars

Republicans and Democrats are lining up in Washington to give their blessing to the invasion of tiny Panama. They

repeat the same lies. They accept that the U.S. has the right to make and break governments. That might makes right. That the bully is the hero. And that the only concern is whether the bully can get away with it without shooting himself in the foot.

If we want to be free, we have to challenge these lies. Otherwise we will be bound hand and foot to the imperialist war machine. Otherwise we will be giving credibility to the same bourgeois propaganda ministry that shouts lies against the struggles of the workers and oppressed here in the U.S. as well.

(Taken in part from the Dec. 20 issue of "Bay Area Workers' Voice," paper of the MLP-San Francisco Bay Area, which called upon the workers and progressive people to join the protests against the invasion.) □

## PANAMA Continued from front page

our own hands. We must build up an independent workers' movement to challenge the Democratic and Republican parties of war and bloodshed, and the capitalist system which profits from this strangling of other countries.

And we must link hands with the workers and peasants of Central America. Because imperialism, with all its airplanes and missiles and artilleries, faces an opponent who is potentially far stronger. All over Latin America there are millions upon millions of toilers seething with hatred at the alliance be-

tween their local exploiters and the American corporations. They are not going to simply put in a word of protest at the UN, like the bourgeois Latin American governments, but they are going to fight for a better life, free from exploitation, free from imperialist domination. Let us raise our voice in support of their aspirations and revolutionary movements! Let us join with them by developing our own revolutionary movement, so that we won't be ruled any more by a handful of wealthy parasites, for whom the checkbook is everything and the people nothing but a source of cheap labor! □

## Seattle activists protest U.S. war in El Salvador, December 10



## Seattle activist: Why I burned the flag

*Congress, in a fit of flag-waving chauvinism, recently passed a law punishing those who show a lack of respect for the flag with prison. Immediately a wave of protest crossed the country, with flags being burned from coast to coast. In Seattle, both veterans and radical youth took part in burning the flag on October 27 midnight at the Capitol Hill post office. Eventually, seven people were indicted on charges that included destruction of federal property and desecration of the flag. They are to be tried in Federal Court on February 5 this year.*

*Below is the speech given by one of the youth at a press conference in front of the Federal Courthouse in Seattle on December 1:*

My name is Aden, and I am a supporter of the Revolutionary Action

Group. I participated in the mass defiance of the unconstitutional and undemocratic flag-burning law in order to demonstrate that it is not the Constitution and the legal system that defends democratic rights, but the struggle of the masses — against the legal system of the capitalist state — that defends democratic rights.

For example, in the struggle to defend abortion rights it is not the legal system that should be relied on to defend abortion rights. In fact the Supreme Court is in the forefront of undermining these rights. It is the workers and poor that must be mobilized to fight against the ruling class' courts and police to defend abortion rights.

The U.S. flag stands not for the people of the U.S. but for the power of

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See FLAG