



Mourners of assassinated Archbishop Romero massacred at the Cathedral, San Salvador, Spring 1980.

Chauvel/Sygma

## Reagan Gives the Green Light

# Bloody Junta Terror in Central America

DECEMBER 9—The tiny Central American country of El Salvador, not even a name on the map to most Americans, was forced upon public consciousness following the rape and murder of three U.S. nuns and a Catholic lay worker by a rightist death squad December 2. Somewhere between 9,000 and 12,000 Salvadorean workers, peasants and leftists have been assassinated by right-wing and army terror so far this year. This vicious campaign of white terror was portrayed as a shootout between extreme left and extreme right! They even gunned down the archbishop as he was celebrating mass in the San Salvador cathedral. They also assassinated the entire top leadership of the left-wing opposition in November. Not until last week did Washington and the U.S. show even a note of outrage, but these were *American nuns*.

"This time they won't get away with it. They just won't," fumed American ambassador Robert White, whose job has been precisely to let the U.S.-backed military rulers get away with mass murder. What imperialist cynicism! Twice an hour, round-the-clock, the junta's execution squads dump another corpse along the roadsides. But this massive, daily crime goes unprotested by the U.S. government which preaches "human rights" at the Soviet Union while arming one of the most bloody murder machines in the world. A letter to the *New York Times* (8 December) noted:

"Thus, 5 to 10 mutilated bodies in Guatemala and 25 to 50 in El Salvador *per day* are given only a small fraction of the coverage accorded, say, the tribulations of Andrei Sakharov (untortured and still alive)...."

But horror stories about ravished nuns

are a favorite theme of the bourgeois yellow press, and a lame-duck Democratic administration in Washington was anxious to salvage its tarnished "human rights" image. So Carter froze \$25 million in military and economic aid until a U.S. delegation investigates the brutal murders.

A week earlier the Salvadorean junta's gangs of killers had kidnapped, tortured and murdered the leaders of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), a popular front embracing virtually every political tendency in the country from dissident Christian De-

mocrats to Castroite ex-guerrillas.

Despite the imperialist hypocrisy of the belated media outrage, it is useful that public attention has been focused on Central America just as Ronald Reagan and his right-wing advisers have given military butchers the high sign to unleash even more massive torture and executions in the name of hemispheric anti-Communism. But the Salvadorean masses need not meekly accept a bloodbath. By a revolutionary mobilization of the workers and peasants throughout Central America, backed by working-class solidarity actions in the

rest of the hemisphere, particularly the U.S., the anti-communist butchers and their imperialist masters can be stopped!

### Reagan's Dominos of Death

Despite the president-elect's strident Cold War rhetoric accusing the Carter administration of being soft on the Russians, the global balance of nuclear power may deter him from immediately launching an imperialist nuclear World War III against the Soviets. But Reagan's Panama Canal speeches and other

*continued on page 10*

## The Sinister General Haig

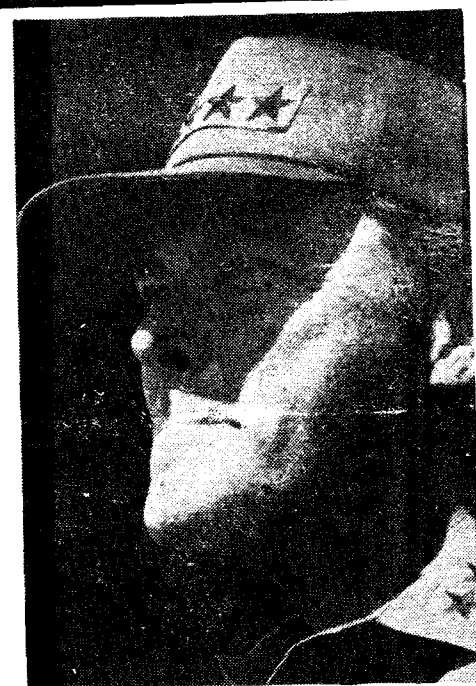
Here comes the Reagan team. Watch out!

Liberals like to take solace in the conventional wisdom that the "awesome responsibilities" of the office of president have a sobering effect on even the most way-out types, but rational men ought not to bank on it. Soothing voices may say that Reagan's style is merely to be "chairman of the board." But even if he does try to run the government as if it were the Chamber of Commerce, look at "the board." Consider the proposal of General Alexander

Haig for Secretary of State or perhaps Defense. A prospect, we are told, that is a concession to the "moderates."

General Haig: ex-NATO commander, ex-deputy to Henry Kissinger, ex-Nixon chief of staff, ex-Watergate plumbing contractor, ex-terror bomber of Southeast Asia, and present contestant for power. By all reliable accounts, Haig is a colorless, mean-minded bureaucrat who will either lick your boot or kick you with his, depending on his perception of immediate advantage.

*continued on page 10*



Bossu/Sygma

Vietnam war criminal looks forward to Reagan years.

## British Troops Out of Northern Ireland!

# Smash H-Block!

As we go to press, Irish Republican prisoners in the British Maze/Long Kesh compound near Belfast are into the sixth week of their hunger strike, with several now reported near death. Three women in the Armagh prison also went on hunger strike December 1, joining seven men in the H-Block of Long Kesh who have held out against their arrogant British jailers since October 27 demanding political prisoner status. International protests continue against the murderous treatment of the strikers by their British jailers, who have been ordered by bloody-minded British prime minister Margaret Thatcher not to force-feed the starving prisoners. On December 6, 500 protested at the British consulate in New York, while in London members of the Spartacist League/Britain marched in thousands-strong protests with a banner demanding "Smash Britain's Torture Camps! Troops Out Now!"

Over 400 men and women in Long Kesh and Armagh have been "on the blanket"—refusing to wear prison uniforms—at various times, many for over four years, since March 1976 when the British began treating them as common criminals by abolishing their

"Special Category" status. The British claim that the nearly naked prisoners have brought their miserable state upon themselves, viciously slandering their desperate protest. But the long battle for status as political prisoners by the tortured and harassed prisoners is a searing indictment of British imperialism in Northern Ireland.

Ever since the introduction of British troops into Northern Ireland in 1969, the British state has ruthlessly enforced police/army terror, overwhelmingly against the impoverished Catholic population. When the mass roundup policy of internment ended, the British simply switched to "Diplock courts" (named after Lord Diplock, who recommended them) in which judges convict suspected IRA Provos or other nationalists simply on the basis of "confessions." Amnesty International and even the European Court of Justice have condemned these kangaroo courts and the extorted confessions as violations of "human rights."

In Ulster today the oppressed Catholic population exists in dire poverty, discriminated against by the dominant Protestant majority and the British state. Socialists defend Republi-



Spartacist contingent protests Northern Ireland torture-jails, London, November 15.

can militants against imperialist repression and Protestant Loyalist terror attacks. But as Marxists, we condemn the criminal random terrorism practiced by both sides, such as the criminal bombing of pubs and innocent families by the Provisional IRA. And in the sectarian conflict which has wracked Northern Ireland in the past decade, we oppose Green nationalism as well as the Orange, for if successful it can only result in reversing the current terms of oppression in Northern Ireland.

There is no possibility of justice for

either the oppressed Catholic or Protestant working people of Ulster within the capitalist framework. From day one of their occupation, the British troops' presence has only had the effect of perpetuating the unjust status quo, thereby prolonging the agony of Northern Ireland. Our fight is for socialist revolution throughout the British Isles. The continued presence of the British only postpones that day of reckoning. Not Green against Orange, but class against class! Smash H-Block! British troops out now! ■

## TLD Demonstrates Against Immigration Ban

# "Let the Jews into West Berlin!"

Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union are now officially banned from settling in West Berlin. Before Hitler, 175,000 Jews lived in the German capital. Today there are at most 7,000 in the Western sector—and now they're saying there are too many Jews in West Berlin again! This hateful policy awakens fearful, not-so-old memories of the Nazi Holocaust, in which six million Jews, 20 million Soviet citizens, and hundreds of thousands of Communists and Socialists were slaughtered. And the West Berlin ban can only feed into anti-Semitic, fascist terror, which has already claimed victims in the October bombing of a Paris synagogue and in the bloodbaths of Munich and Bologna.

The despicable immigration measure is part and parcel of Bonn's policy of reversing the influx of foreign workers (Yugoslavian, Turkish, etc.) which the stagnant West German economy no longer needs. Grotesquely, even prominent Jewish leaders have approved the ban. "We have taken more than our share," said Heinz Galinski, a Jewish leader in West Berlin (*New York Times*, 25 September). What upsets these community leaders is that many of the immigrants aren't religious, or don't fit into "our culture," and simply want the secular benefits of living in the highly subsidized "show window of the West." The Zionists, too, prefer that all Jews go to Israel, which wants the bodies to stake out its own *Lebensraum*.

Still, "It takes a lot of chutzpah to ban Jews from West Berlin!" as our comrades of the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD) said in a leaflet protesting the ban. The TLD was in



Spartakist

## German Trotskyists in anti-Nazi demonstration, West Berlin, November 8.

fact the only left group in West Berlin to protest this atrocity. Participating in an annual memorial march to the victims of Nazi terror on November 8, the TLD raised its demands "Down with the Immigration Ban on Jews in West Berlin!" "Smash the Nazis Through Mobilizing the Proletariat!" and "No Freedom for Mass Murderer Rudolf Hess!" The TLD's sharp intervention embarrassed march sponsors like Berlin's SPD mayor Stobbe and Jewish community leaders who support the ban, but gained widespread sympathy from participants. As the TLD leaflet pointed out:

"Nobody should be surprised that Jews do not wish to be sent to the super-ghetto Israel. This immigration ban plays into the hands of anti-Semitism and race hate. Down with the immigration ban on Jews! Full citizenship rights for all foreign workers!... Zionism oppresses the Palestinians in Israel and protects itself from the Eastern European Jews in West Berlin! Only a proletarian class answer can defend the rights of all minorities and successfully put an end to fascism."

# CP Votes Against Ontario Labor Anti-Klan Demo

TORONTO—Only a week after the Greensboro fascist murderers got off scot-free, an Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) convention here overwhelmingly passed a motion, submitted by Letter Carriers Union of Canada (LCUC) Local 1 in late November demanding that the OFL "call upon its affiliates, the NDP and other socialist groups, other trade union organizations, all minority groups and all defenders of democratic rights to immediately initiate an anti Klan campaign, culminating in a massive demonstration to drive the K.K.K. out of Ontario."

But ironically some Stalinist fake-leftists *opposed* the OFL bureaucrats' call *from the right*, preferring instead to rely on the Canadian capitalist government for protection! From the OFL convention floor a supporter of the Communist Party whined that the resolutions committee had passed up a resolution calling for a government ban: "The Klan must be banned from Canada, from Ontario." Not to be outdone, Judy D'Arcy, a supporter of the Workers Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)—Canadian lapdogs of the Peking Stalinists—appealed to the government to be "evenhanded." After all, the courts "passed anti-labor legislation at the drop of a hat"—they could at least be as stringent with the Klan!

And who should have reminded these alleged "Marxists" of the class character of the bosses' government but the deeply class-collaborationist OFL tops themselves. The chairman of the resolutions committee explained that the motion was brought to the floor *precisely because it didn't call for banning the Klan*: "We think it could be dangerous to set a precedent of banning any organization; it could be us next."

After a few rounds of idiot reformism from self-proclaimed leftists—which ran the gamut from banning the Klan because it is a "terrorist organization" to "outlawing racism"—OFL Secretary-Treasurer Terry Meagher took to the mike to argue that laws have an anti-working-class bias. Who was jailed in the "anti-terrorist" round-up under the

Trudeau government's imposition of the War Measures Act in 1970, Meagher queried—the left and the labor movement. He also had to remind the supporters of the fake-left that you can't "outlaw racism" or "legally" get rid of the Klan. Weren't the fascist bombings in Europe the work of "illegal organizations"?

Of course, no one should believe that the OFL leaders have discovered Marxism; it's just that they don't trust the *current* bourgeois government (as opposed to one led by, say, the NDP). While they have been upset by the mounting anti-labor legislation coming from Ottawa, the union brass have yet to *do* anything besides capitulate. But this motion calling for a labor-centered demonstration against the Klan must not be allowed to collect dust in the OFL offices. It was the example of the successful "stop the KKK/Nazis" demonstrations in the last year which inspired LCUC militants to fight for a labor/minority demonstration in Toronto. Only organized mass labor action can sweep the fascist scum off the streets—the capitalist cops and courts will let them get away with murder. Implement the OFL anti-Klan resolution—Demand mass labor action! ■

## CORRECTION

In the article "RWG: Cult for Scabbing" (*WV* No. 269, 28 November) we incorrectly stated that the RWG-supported CMDUAW refused to sign the petition to fire the Klan-hooded foremen at Ford's River Rouge Complex. They signed it and then denounced the petition as a diversion even though this gathering of mass support succeeded in driving the racist bosses out of the plant. What they refused to sign was the united-front statement initiated by Rouge militants calling for union action against the Brass Knuckles Caucus, which had anonymously circulated a right-wing hate sheet threatening beating a member of their own CMDUAW.



# Show Trial for Gang of Four

The colossal Peking show trial of the "Ten Evil Heads" is underway. Among the ten are Chiang Ch'ing, Mao Tse-tung's widow and leader of the notorious "Gang of Four"; Mao's former political secretary, Chen Po-ta; and four ex-generals, members of the Lin Piao group. The main purpose of this showcase trial is for the survivors of the 1960s Cultural Revolution, led by the ever resilient Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-p'ing) who now holds the reins of power, to take their revenge against the Mao/Chiang/Lin faction in the bureaucracy and stabilize their bureaucratic domination. The main problem is to accomplish this without fundamentally implicating the Great Helmsman, and thus discrediting themselves. For both accuser and accused are the heirs of Mao.

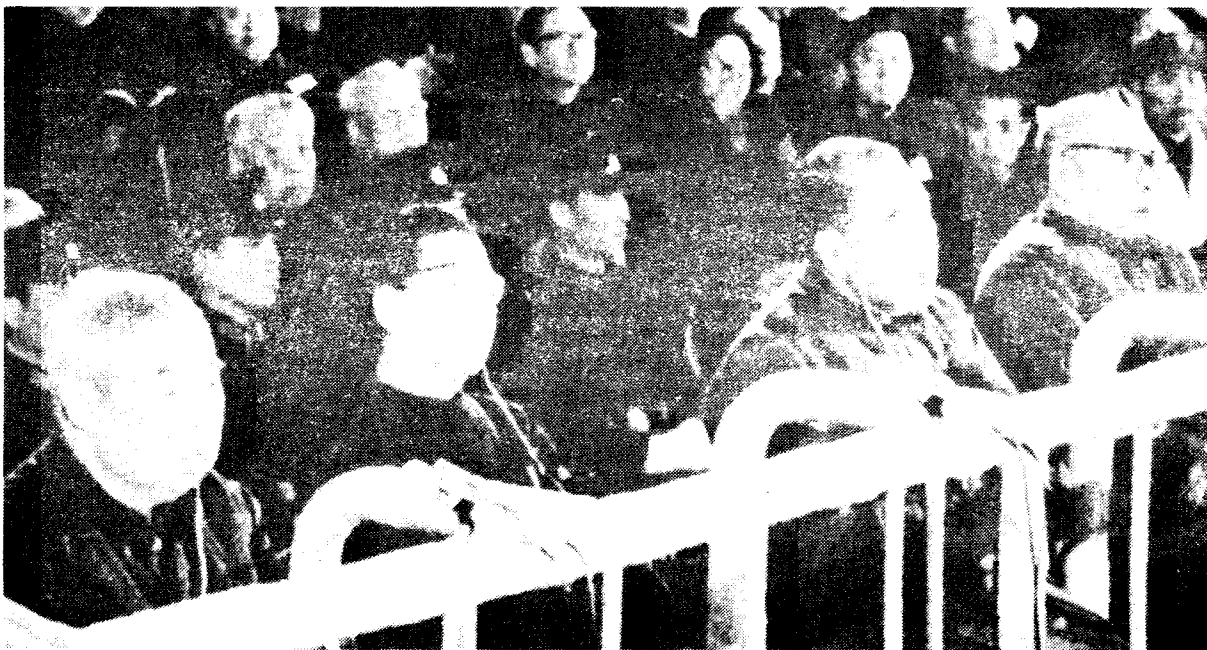
There is even political life after death in Deng's China. The deceased Kang Sheng, former minister of public security and close confidante of the late chairman, has been publicly excoriated and expelled from the party. At the same time, some of the most prominent victims of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," notably former head of state Liu Shao-chi, have been posthumously rehabilitated and restored to their "rightful place" in the party. This concern with the spirits of the dead reminds one of the famous "de-Stalinization" congress of the CPSU in 1956 where an old woman delegate recounted how she had been visited in a dream by Lenin, who told her to denounce Stalin's crimes.

"We all know it is not a trial but a power struggle. If Jiang Qing [Chiang Ch'ing] had won, it would be Deng who is on trial, or worse, hauled before a mass rally," said a Chinese woman in the street to the *New York Times* correspondent. Certainly nobody can claim this is anything like a fair trial. There are no defense witnesses, only prosecution witnesses; the main prosecution witnesses are those who have turned state's evidence after many years imprisonment; the witnesses read set-piece speeches; and the main business of the "defense" lawyer is plea-bargaining. Even Fox Butterfield, one of the most credulous journalists of our time, admits: "The trial so far seems more an act of vengeance by the victims of the Cultural Revolution than a careful attempt to trace responsibility for the persecutions and dislocations of the period" (*New York Times*, 6 December).

The four principal charges against the "Ten" are: framing and persecuting party and state leaders in a plot to seize power; persecuting and suppressing large numbers of cadres and ordinary citizens; plotting to assassinate Mao as part of a "counterrevolutionary" attempted coup d'état in 1971; and plotting an armed rebellion in Shanghai in 1976 to seize power following Mao's death. The "Gang" are accused of ordering the murder of 34,274 people, and the persecution and torture of some 700,000 others. And the indictment contains lurid accounts of the alleged plot to kill Mao: schemes to strafe his personal train, backed by infantrymen, armed with bazookas and flame throwers, who then dispose of the train in a deep gorge by blasting a railroad bridge to pieces.

Predictably, most of the defendants have confessed. But the two most prominent, Chiang and fellow "Gang" member Chang Chun-chiao, have refused to admit the charges (Chang has refused to say a word). Under the new penal code, confession is now no longer

1980:  
Chiang Ch'ing  
and some other  
"Evil Heads" in  
the dock.



1967:  
Maoist Red  
Guards  
humiliate party  
cadre.

necessary to establish guilt. But confession (extracted in pre-Communist China by the liberal use of torture) played such an important part in traditional Chinese jurisprudence that a defendant's refusal to admit his/her alleged crimes raises doubts in the minds of the population as to their guilt. Thus Chiang and Chang's recalcitrance is clearly a black eye for Deng and his colleagues.

A Stalinist show trial? Yes. There is, nonetheless, an important difference with the most famous Moscow show trials in the 1930s. Under Stalin's gun were Old Bolsheviks with a genuine revolutionary past—Nikolai Bukharin, Gregory Zinoviev, Karl Radek and others—accused of fantastic crimes they did not commit. Whether or not they are guilty of the specific charges against them, the Mao clique are first-class Stalinist criminals. They are directly responsible for the blood of thousands if not millions of innocent people during the Cultural Revolution frenzy of 1966-68. Among these were old Communist Party cadre who had played honorable and heroic roles in the Chinese Revolution. The old guerrilla chief Ho Lung and the commander of the Chinese army in the Korean War, Peng Teh-huai, were reportedly done to death by the Red Guards in slow and brutal ways.

But their Dengist judges have no cleaner hands than the fallen Gang of Four. How many innocent workers, peasants and intellectuals were victimized under the Liu-Deng regime of the early 1960s, a regime not exactly known for its liberalism and respect for legality? And what of the Chinese Trotskyists jailed in 1953 and kept in prison ever

since? Here all of the squalid and murderous cliques/factions of Chinese Stalinism could unite in suppressing genuine proletarian revolutionaries. Perhaps Deng's greatest crime against socialism was in early 1979 when he sent thousands of young Chinese workers and peasants to kill their class brothers in Vietnam, a war undertaken in collusion with U.S. imperialism.

### Haunted by the Cultural Revolution

It is really the Cultural Revolution that is on trial. The indictment abandons the previous characterization of the "GPCR" as a movement worthy in its original intentions that later went very wrong. Now it is presented as from the very beginning a conspiracy by "leftist" radicals to seize power from the wiser veteran leaders. But what of Mao? Marshal Peng, for instance, first incurred the Chairman's wrath for denouncing the economically disastrous Great Leap Forward of the late 1950s.

The present ruling Chinese bureaucrats cannot repudiate the cult of Mao altogether without calling into question their own legitimacy. So they are forced to present Mao as so incompetent or senile in the last eleven years of his life that he let China be dominated by a gang of scheming and venal "ultra-leftists." Nonsense! Everyone in China who was politically aware at the time understands that Mao was the prime mover of the Cultural Revolution, from Lin Piao's palace coup in mid-1966 through the anarchistic violence of 1967 to the termination of the Red Guards in August 1968. Reportedly one of the reasons the trial was so long delayed was

the fear that Chiang would defend herself by stating that she had only carried out her husband's direct instructions.

In the late 1960s most of the Western left viewed the Mao-led Cultural Revolution as a bonafide anti-bureaucratic mass uprising, accepting its official description as establishing a "Paris Commune-like state." But to think that the deified leader of Chinese Stalinism and his hatchet man, army commander-in-chief Lin Piao, could lead the working class against the bureaucracy is equivalent to assigning to Stalin and Beria, or Brezhnev and Yuri Andropov, the leadership of the proletarian political revolution in the Soviet Union. As we wrote at the time:

"The Cultural Revolution was, in its origins and essence, a faction fight between two wings of the Chinese bureaucracy. It is now clear that there were no substantive differences between the two tendencies and that the argument that Liu Shao-chi represented a 'rightist,' or 'pro-Soviet,' or 'pro-capitalist' tendency was without foundation. It was in 1959 as a result of being saddled with the consequences of the Great Leap that Mao lost the chairmanship of the government to Liu and was allowed to hold only the largely honorific title of Party Chairman. The Cultural Revolution was Mao's successful recapturing of the Chinese state and Army, which incidentally included the destruction of the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] by the Red Guard youth."

—"Chinese Menshevism,"  
*Spartacist* No. 15-16,  
April-May 1970

The Cultural Revolution was essentially a giant Stalinist purge, which got  
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## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# SWP Curses Fred Halliday

When Ayatollah Khomeini came to power by overthrowing the butcher shah two years ago, virtually the entire left in Iran and internationally hailed his clerical-reactionary regime as "progressive" or even "revolutionary." But as his fanatical followers massacred Kurdish villages, smashed strikes by Arab oil workers, bloodied the left and stoned to death so-called "sinners," even some of the more enthusiastic partisans of the "Islamic Revolution" began belatedly to criticize the mullahs' dictatorship. However, when the long-simmering blood feud between Iran and Iraq erupted in war two months ago, anti-Khomeini leftists such as the majority Fedayeen once again made common cause with the Persian-chauvinist clerics, volunteering to serve as loyal "soldiers of Islam" in the *jihād* against the "infidel" Ba'athist colonels' regime in Baghdad.

This capitulation to the reactionary groundswell of "national unity" has had its repercussions among the European "far left" too. Adapting to the shifting mood among the Iranian Fedayeen, the Mandelites wing of the United Secretariat had begun to discreetly distance itself from Khomeini. But when the Abadan oil fields started burning, the Mandelites too were quick to join the chorus calling for "defense of the Iranian revolution." One exception to this slide into vicarious social chauvinism by yesterday's halfhearted critics of Khomeini has been the well-known British journalist Fred Halliday, a member of the *New Left Review* editorial board on generally chummy terms with the Mandelites. An eclectic radical, Halliday at least has the all-too-rare virtue of honestly reporting what has been happening in the Middle East.

Simply on the basis of the empirical evidence, Halliday recognizes that the Iran/Iraq war isn't in the interests of the working people or oppressed minorities on either side. In an article that appeared in the 8-14 October issue of the American social-democratic weekly *In These Times*, Halliday states:

"Bereft as it is of the remotest legitimacy, this war—the product of the nationalist follies of both governments—will cause immense damage to the people of the region. It has almost ruined the economies of both countries. It will fan the flames of racial hatred and prejudice for many years to come. It will force both governments, who vaunt their independence so much, to rely on foreign assistance, and it directly increases the possibility of direct intervention by other powers."

Halliday's article provoked a furious response from the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), who've been among the most shameless and craven apologists for "the imam." The SWP's *Intercontinental Press* of 17 November carries a three-page (!) polemic against Halliday by David Frankel. Evidently the SWP was piqued when Halliday bluntly said the emperor (or imam) has no clothes. Leaving aside the grotesque insults ("If Halliday had one-fifth the political judgment of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini...") and slanders ("He does not have a word to say about the continuing imperialist threats against Iran, including threats from his own government"), Frankel's polemic boils down to the claim that U.S. imperialism is attacking "the most important people's revolution in the Middle East in this century" through Iraq.

Iraq a tool of the U.S.? Just who does Frankel think he's kidding! Iraq has been a military client of the USSR ever since Ba'athist leader Ahmad Hasan Bakr took power in a 1968 coup. Although relations between Baghdad and Moscow have become strained

**Khomeini's troops hailed in downtown Teheran. The SWP joins in.**



recently—the Baghdad colonels brought the boot down on the mass-based Iraqi Communist Party in 1978 and criticized the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, while Moscow is still trying to sweet talk the Iranians and has just signed a "friendship treaty" with Baghdad's rival Ba'athist regime in Syria—Saddam Hussein is certainly not Washington's man, yet. When he peddled military aid to press the war with Iran, Hussein sent his envoys to the USSR, not to the U.S.

And what about the "sweeping anti-imperialist measures" Frankel claims

**Moscow has armed and diplomatically backed the Ba'athists despite their fierce repression of the Iraqi Communist Party, which historically has been the strongest working-class party in the Middle East. When a section of the Hashemite officer corps led the popular uprising of 1958 that overthrew King Faisal and brought the bourgeois-nationalist general Kassem to power the CP grew by leaps and bounds. But, wedded to the Stalinist dogma of "two-stage revolution," the CP used its mass following simply to pressure Kassem and engage in maneuvers within the military command and government bureaucracy. In a debacle prefiguring the Indonesian coup of 1965, the CP was vulnerable and unprepared when the Iraqi generals struck. They were told to surrender by their mentors in the Kremlin, who agreed to liquidate what could have been a successful proletarian bid for power in Iraq as the price of admission to Eisenhower's Camp David "peaceful coexistence" confab.**

Tragically, the CP repeated this disastrous policy under the Ba'athists. When the Ba'athists came to power, the Iraqi CP threw its support behind the regime, in return getting positions in the "National Front" government in 1973. But after five years of toeing the line, the CP again had become enough of a threat that the regime struck, executing 21 party members accused of forming clandestine cells in the army, and jailing a reported 15,000.

Khomeini has taken? The SWP to the contrary, demagogic rhetoric (calling America the "Great Satan"), diversionist diplomacy (the U.S. embassy seizure) and endless mass rallies chanting "god is great" do not an "anti-imperialist revolution" make. Using these empty criteria, one could make the case that Iraq is more "anti-imperialist" than Iran. After all, the Ba'athists still claim to be "scientific socialists," denounce U.S. imperialism and Israeli Zionism, pose as the most "rejectionist" of all on the Palestinian question, and long ago booted out American diplomatic and military personnel (during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war).

Equally absurd is Frankel's babble about "Washington's responsibility for inciting the war" against Iran. Angling for a hostage deal with the Iranians, the last thing the Carter administration wanted was war in this already unstable, volatile region. Seeing Iran first and foremost as a strategic bulwark against the USSR, the Carter administration has consistently warned against the "disintegration" of the country—which is why early on the CIA funneled weapons to Khomeini for use against the Kurdish guerrillas. Once the Iran/Iraq war was on, however, U.S. imperialism took a clear tilt toward *Teheran*. While the U.S. suspended delivery of six turbine engines made for Iraqi warships, it offered to "unfreeze" the \$400 million in weapons and badly needed spare parts previously purchased by Iran, if a hostage deal could be arranged.

At bottom, the SWP's line—and the deeds of its "fraternal cothinkers" in Iran—is that of the treacherous Social Democrats at the time of the outbreak of WW I: who was the "aggressor," which imperialist power was manipulating which Balkan conflict, which capitalist country had "revolutionary traditions" that had to be defended, etc. Bourgeois patriotism took the place of proletarian internationalism. Of course, the Iran/Iraq conflict is a regionally limited war between backward bourgeois states, and not the inter-imperialist world war of 1914-18. But a social-chauvinist is a social-chauvinist, in Iran or Iraq no less than in Germany or France.

Forced here to abandon even the facade of Trotskyism, the SWP takes over classless Stalinist terminology and dubs Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution"

a "people's revolution." But even if Iran were in the throes of a radical bourgeois-democratic revolution (which it decidedly is not), Leninists would still take a *revolutionary defeatist* position toward both sides. In Russia between the February and October revolutions there were authentic soviets, an emerging dual-power situation, a popular-front regime and a Bolshevik party struggling for political hegemony over the working class. *Even then*, Lenin maintained his revolutionary defeatist position, denouncing the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries who lined up behind their "own" bourgeoisie by calling for defensism.

War can poison the class struggle with national chauvinism, or it can be the mother of revolution. As the Iraqi military dictatorship and the highly unstable clerical regime in Iran exhaust one another in combat, as the national minorities on both sides grow more rebellious, as the working class is ground down and decimated, a prerevolutionary situation can arise in the region. But what is lacking are Trotskyist parties rooted in the proletariat of Iraq and Iran guided by the internationalist perspective of permanent revolution. The task facing revolutionists today in Iran and Iraq is to swim against the stream, struggling to turn the nationalist war into a civil war that will sweep away the mullahs and the bonapartist colonels and lead to the establishment of a socialist federation of the Middle East. ■

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## Interview with Israel Shahak

# Religious Fanaticism and Zionist Terror

Israel Shahak, chairman of the Israeli League for Civil and Human Rights, was interviewed by *Workers Vanguard* on November 12 during his recent four-city tour of the U.S. Born in Warsaw in 1933 and a survivor of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, he immigrated to Palestine in 1945. Shahak's opposition to Zionism has been strongly shaped by the parallels between Zionism and the anti-Semitism and fascism he experienced firsthand as a Jewish youth in East Europe.

These parallels have been accentuated by the coming to power in Israel of Irgun terrorist Menachem Begin and the accompanying growth of a Jewish clerical-fascist movement closely associated with his government, the Gush Emunim. Zionist fascism has become a significant political force at the same time the Israeli economy has experienced its severest crisis: inflation is officially at a 170 percent annual rate and workers have experienced an unprecedented 14 percent fall in real income in the first six months of this year. This "tribute" to the effectiveness of Friedmanite "free market" policies has generated a mass of spontaneous strikes and even "bread riots" from Israel's combative if politically backward working class.

For Friedman's economic policies to be completely implemented, this working class must be crushed by an Israeli Pinochet. Shahak states in the interview that the possibility of a military coup is now taken seriously in Israel, especially when Begin meets his almost inevitable defeat in the upcoming elections. At the same time morale in the armed forces outside of the elite units is so low that sabotage and enlisted men shooting officers have become common.

As if providing dramatic and atrocious confirmation of Shahak's indictment of Zionism, on 17 and 18 November Israeli soldiers in the Occupied Territories fired live ammunition into crowds of Palestinian students protesting the closing of Bir Zeit University during that campus' Palestine Week. The *Washington Post* ran a disapproving editorial entitled "Shooting Teenagers." And even a U.S. State Department spokesman tut-tutted: "The use of potentially lethal force to disperse unarmed demonstrators can lead to grave and far reaching consequences." As if the Zionist regime hadn't been using such terror tactics for years.

Shahak points out that the armed forces are not the only or even the main form of Zionist anti-Arab terror. In the tradition of Begin's Irgun, any chauvinist-minded Jew can intimidate, beat up or even shoot any West Bank Arab with almost total impunity. The most vicious and sinister are American Zionists who visit Israel for only a few weeks or months but who volunteer for temporary duty in anti-Arab vigilante squads.

Shahak also describes the exploitation of Jewish religious obscurantism in the service of Zionist chauvinism. But he is not a vicarious nationalist who believes that the plight of the oppressed is alleviated by disguising their oppression, including their ideological oppression. Thus he discusses as well the role of Islam as a sectarian and reactionary force among Palestinian Arabs both in Israel and the West Bank.



Israel Shahak: Israeli civil libertarian, defender of Palestinian rights.

**WV:** One of the questions you wanted to address was the question of religious fanaticism, so why don't we start with that. We have pointed in our press to the reactionary role of Islamic forces in Iran, where they became a mass movement, in relationship with Khomeini's rise to power. It is also true that behind the coming to power of Begin were forces of fanatical orthodox Judaism. So perhaps you could say something about the role that these forces are playing now in the state of Israel as well as in the Occupied Territories.

**Shahak:** Thank you. First of all, in short about the forces of Islamic fanaticism in the Occupied Territories of Israel, and then I will speak more extensively about the forces of Jewish fanaticism.

Well, actually since you mentioned Khomeini, the supporters of Khomeini in the Occupied Territories in Israel among the Palestinians are not religious fanatics but are so-called "progressives." This is because of the differences, of course, between Sunni and Shi'ite Islam. The religious fanatics among the Palestinians are opposed to Khomeini. They are mobilizing Sunni Islam, and the nature is different in Israel from the Occupied Territories. In the Occupied Territories they are from the most conservative, pro-Jordanian, but not only pro-Jordanian, strata of the population.

In Israel itself the situation is more serious because of the absence of more direct and immediate forms of persecution. There, Muslim fanaticism is relatively much greater. It has conquered, I would say, 20 to 25 percent of the population—quite considerable. They are much bolder in physically attacking their opponents. Of all their opponents they physically attack Rakah supporters (the Israeli Communist Party), they attack individual Palestinians, they attack Jewish visitors. What is very important and very interesting is that in Israel they have a direct alliance, recognized by many people, with the Israeli security police. This is carried out directly by the Israeli government, which imports imams for them from Egypt and gives them privileges—

financial support and so on.

I don't know how it will develop. I think that they have more or less reached the summit of their influence, they have grown in the last two years. But still they are becoming more aggressive and their alliance with the police is becoming more open. In the many smaller villages, they are literally ruling with the help of day-to-day terror. Literally they are beating up people who are known not to fast during Ramadan—as happened during the last Ramadan—and even in their present size this can become dangerous.

**WV:** A substantial portion of the Palestinian population is Christian. How do they view this development? And secondly, how does the PLO—insofar as it is able to manifest itself, I realize it is illegal both in the Occupied Territories and Israel proper—deal with the problem, especially in relationship to their demand for a secular Palestine.

**Shahak:** Again we have to divide it between the Occupied Territories and Israel. The Christian sentiment of the Palestinian population is very important in the Occupied Territories because it is concentrated. Ramallah and Bethle-

hem are Christian towns and so are several villages. In Israel itself the number of Christian villages is relatively very small. The Christian population is divided between several towns, in none of which they have a majority. Nazareth has a very substantial Muslim majority by now, so it is completely different.

In the Occupied Territories when the Muslim fanatics were beaten by the direct help of the PLO, when about a year ago they tried to hinder Christian/Muslim/Palestinian cooperation, they sent their agitators to all kinds of Palestinian meetings and even to illegal demonstrations shouting, "Christians Out!" "Let No Christians Speak!" "Palestinians are a Muslim People!" and so on. There was both a very strong popular and PLO reaction. Except in Gaza where Israel employs a paid troop of several hundred fanatics which are connected with the Egyptian Islamic Brotherhood, and supported directly by Sadat and the Israelis—a powerful combination. This is the town of Gaza, not the Gaza Strip. They were beaten in the Occupied Territories.

In Israel itself there are no concentrations where the Christian population is dominant. There are, however, not only villages but whole areas where there are no Christians at all. Those are the areas where this type of Muslim reaction has taken place. I think in those areas the Muslim fanatics are building Sadat, or alternatively, the Islamic Egyptian Brotherhood as an alternative to the PLO. They are going so far as to say that Yassir Arafat is not a Palestinian, but sometimes they say that he is a Syrian, sometimes he's Egyptian and so on. I have heard unsupported rumors that they are even saying that he is a Jew and so on. Fanaticism has now no limits.

You know, of course, this type of slander from very many historical parallels, and their alliance with the Israeli secret police is based on opposition to the PLO. They oppose the PLO because of its secularism. So they will say that [PFLP leader] George Habash is a Christian and so on. I accept all your correct criticisms about Khomeini from the beginning, but you must say that they are worse than Khomeini; they have opposed Khomeini because he allowed non-Muslims to be elected to the Iranian Majlis. So this shows you

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"Every strike enriches the experience of the entire working class. If the strike is successful it shows them what a strong force working-class unity is, and impels others to make use of their comrades' success. If it is not successful, it gives rise to discussions about the causes of the failure and to search for better methods of struggle."

—V.I. Lenin, "Draft and Explanation of a Programme for the Social-Democratic Party" (1895)

MILANO—The most important strike of a single company in the entire post-war period in Italy ended on October 17 in a stinging defeat for the 150,000 workers of FIAT. But the workers were not defeated by a stronger enemy, nor because of passivity or lack of militancy on their part. For 35 days they had carried forward an all-out strike, completely stopping production in the most important plants of the FIAT group. This working-class combativity was all the more significant since in Italy, unlike in other European countries and the United States, there are no strike funds to compensate for the loss of wages due to strikes. The causes of this defeat are to be found instead in the treachery of the bureaucratic labor tops, and the lack of a powerful organized revolutionary opposition in the unions.

At issue was the capitalists' assertion of a right to lay off "excess" workers. Earlier, in July, the "center-left" government of Christian Democratic prime minister Cossiga had attempted to gut the sliding scale of wages, a national escalator clause which has kept the pay of unionized workers roughly equal to inflation in recent years. Both moves are part of a Europe-wide bourgeois austerity drive to place the cost of the capitalist economic crisis on the backs of the workers. In Italy this meant a direct attack on the conquests of the "Hot Autumn" of 1969 when the bosses conceded some of the most far-reaching trade-union demands in order to cut short a mushrooming pre-revolutionary situation that was spreading down the peninsula from the huge FIAT works in Torino. Now the employers have managed to take back some of these gains won through hard struggle, and the consequences of this defeat will be felt by workers throughout West Europe.

### Marx Not Wojtyla

The reformist bureaucrats have consistently indicated their willingness to "understand the problems" of FIAT and Italian capitalism. CGIL union leader Lucio Lama expressed the need to "make the workers fully comprehend the gravity of this crisis" (interview in *Panorama*, 24 November). Underlying this strike is the financial crisis of the automobile division of FIAT, which lost \$116 million in 1979 on total sales of \$8.5 billion. Probably errors in management were added to difficulties deriving from a shrinking share of the world auto market—FIAT is in direct competition with Japanese producers for the small and medium-size car market—leading to a situation of "excess capacity." But at the root of the problem is the anarchy inherent in the capitalist mode of production, in which the productive forces must periodically be cut back (destroyed) when their saturation in a given sector has become greater than the market's capacity to absorb their products. FIAT boss Agnelli felt it in his disappearing profits and resolved to make the workers pay.

In the period from June to September, the company put on temporary layoff (*cassa integrazione*) 78,000 of the 114,000 workers in its automotive division for a week at a time. But then FIAT asked the government in Rome for a substantial part of the \$2 billion in subsidies scheduled for the auto industry; otherwise, it would permanently lay off 12 percent of its labor force. The tug-of-war between government, unions and company brought no results and on

# Italian CP Knives Fiat Strike



Strike rally at FIAT headquarters, September 25. WV Photo

## 23,000 Unionists Purged— Gains of Hot Autumn '69 Defeated

September 10 FIAT headquarters in Corso Marconi sent out 14,469 layoff notices, setting off the most important labor struggle of the last decade. When the government fell in the midst of the strike, Agnelli suddenly retracted the firings, but proceeded instead to put 23,000 workers on "temporary (technical) layoff"... for 18 months.

The reaction of FIAT workers was immediate and combative. On September 11, when the union leaderships declared a three-hour work stoppage the ranks turned it into a total strike. A week later 20,000 workers jammed into an assembly of the mammoth Mirafiori works in Torino to cheer their leaders' call for a one-day national metal workers strike and general strike in the Piemonte region. Workers throughout

Italy understood that their own future was at stake in this crucial battle, and demonstrations of solidarity multiplied. The one-day strikes on September 25 were a success as more than 80,000 from all over northern Italy gathered in the auto capital. Sections of the four columns converged on the main square chanting, "Potere Operaio! Potere Operaio!" (Workers Power) and singing "Bandiera Rossa" (Red Flag) with their fists raised. The Lega Trotskista d'Italia was there, too, and our comrades were met with shouts of "Bravi!" (good job) for their bulletin headline, "Afghanistan: Victory to the Red Army!"

There has been a lot of comment in the press (and among pseudo-Trotskyists here) equating Torino and Gdansk, but from the beginning the

FIAT workers took their distance from the Polish strikes. Where the gates of the Baltic shipyards were adorned with portraits of the madonna and Pope Wojtyla, here the strikers hung pictures of Karl Marx at the Mirafiori entrance. (In the course of the struggle, these were flanked by other portraits of Engels, Lenin, Gramsci and even Che Guevara.) The militancy was not just verbal and graphic, moreover. When the trade-union federation of the CGIL/CISL/UIL called a national "general strike" (of four hours) in support of the FIAT workers on October 10, in the midst of a cabinet crisis in Rome, more than ten million workers took part. Yet a week later the FIAT strike had collapsed, the victim of union and party leaders who tremble at the first threat by the bourgeoisie.

### "A Victory for the Bosses"

The bosses' warning was a back-to-work march of 10,000-plus in Torino October 14. It was of course arranged by Agnelli, who paid the marchers a day's wages, and most were either foremen or white-collar employees. Nevertheless, it was trumpeted as the first large anti-union demonstration in Italy since World War II, and certainly drew some thousands of workers demoralized by a strike that appeared to be dragging on aimlessly. The blame for such a dangerous development must be laid at the doorstep of the reformist bureaucrats. They refused to organize mass picketing, which could have effectively sealed off the plants and company offices by mobilizing the ranks; nothing was ever done to occupy the factories, turning the struggle into a powerful sit-down strike with FIAT's expensive equipment held hostage; they refused to organize against the company's back-to-work march, and the "solidarity" actions were simply pressure tactics rather than widening the struggle. The reason was simple: the labor skates were afraid that such militant actions might "get out of hand"; they were not prepared to win the strike and so at the first opportunity they called it off.

Despite their Socialist (PSI) and even Communist (PCI) labels, the workers' misleaders accept the bosses' "need for profitability" and simply want to have a piece of the action, even when this means "participating" in the firing of tens of thousands of workers. And so two days later they capitulated miserably, agreeing to FIAT's order putting 23,000 workers on "temporary layoff"—for 34 months, until mid-1983! This sellout was so shameful that the French CP, after talking about union control over "a certain reduction in the workforce" (layoffs!), adds in a parenthesis: "The union's position can only be understood strictly in the context of FIAT and Italy" (*L'Humanité*, 17 October). Significantly, the list of workers laid off (with 80 percent of their salary paid by the state) contains many of the Communist Party supporters at FIAT, and almost all the militants of groups to the left of the PCI, not to mention a particularly high percentage of women. The defeat of the strike was thus sealed with a massive anti-red purge in the plants aimed at breaking the back of the unions and factory councils.

To get workers who had defended the picket lines for 35 days to swallow this catastrophic sell-out agreement, the union bureaucracy brought its biggest guns into the field. Nevertheless, according to figures published in the PCI's *l'Unità* (17 October), the accord was rejected in second-shift meetings by majorities of 55 to 90 percent in various plants, while in the first shift it was approved by a "majority" including foremen and scabbing white-collar employees. On the first day, the bureaucrats prevented a FIAT delegates meeting from taking a formal vote to reject the deal. Some union tops tried to



sell the pact outside plant gates, and barely escaped. CGIL chief Lucio Lama, a PCler, and the social-democratic UIL leader Giorgio Benvenuto were threatened, while Pierre Carnitti, head of the Christian Democratic CISL, was kicked and beaten with fists and umbrellas outside Mirafiori, and two cars in which he tried to escape were damaged (*Corriere della Sera*, 17 October).

The Italian and international bourgeois press, of course, cheered the conclusion of the strike, a considerable victory for the Agnellis, and also judged it a defeat for the PCI which had thrown its weight into the balance. "Victory for the bosses," wrote the conservative British *Economist* (25 October), while the American *Business Week* (3 November) commented that "the spectacular labor agreement at Fiat on Oct. 17 could put all Italian industry firmly back in the hands of management after a decade of rising union power, continuous strikes, and near industrial chaos." That all depends on the lessons drawn from this defeat by the advanced layers of the Italian working class. What is certain is that for the first time since 1969, Italian employers can in fact impose unemployment on tens of thousands of workers. And they will surely try to follow the FIAT example.

### Crisis of Leadership

The sellout resulted from the lack of a program to win the strike on the part of the unions and the PCI. And this was evident to the bosses from Day 1 of the clash. *Business Week* noted, "There are signs that Fiat may win the current bout, or at least force a compromise. Union leaders, worried about the company's precarious financial state and the deepening Italian recession, did not stonewall...." Instead they put forward proposals such as rotating layoffs, which FIAT had put forward last year! Meanwhile, over the last year and a half management at Corso Marconi has been gearing up to deliver a real blow against the union.

After the conclusion of the metal workers' contract battle in June 1979, that October FIAT fired 61 of the most combative militants, who were known for their leading role in labor struggles. The unions and the PCI criminally stood aside, saying the victimized workers were nothing but "wreckers" and "extremists" (only one of those fired belonged to the Communist Party). While unenthusiastically calling a protest strike (which a quarter of the

workforce followed nonetheless), the bureaucracy tried to wash its hands of the whole affair, claiming "the ranks won't go along in this struggle." Yet in the plants things were getting tougher on the workers, accused of wholesale "absenteeism." This year alone dozens have been fired as "individual cases of absenteeism" while the union did nothing.

In the course of the campaign of repression that has been going on since April 1979, many hundreds of left-wing militants have ended up in jail, accused of being terrorists, "aiding and abetting" or simply being friends and relatives of other prisoners. In this context a number of FIAT workers were arrested, and one killed, on suspicion of membership in the Red Brigades or some other guerrilla group. This allowed the bosses to make the equation "militant worker equals terrorist." And of course the unions didn't lift a finger, except to attack "terrorism." While Trotskyists politically oppose the impotent individual terrorism of the Red Brigades et al.—a petty-bourgeois program which despairs of mobilizing the proletariat—we defend them against the repression of the bloody imperialist state. In contrast, the phony Communists of the PCI and the union tops have made one of their main tasks defending the bourgeoisie against the attacks of left-wing terrorists.

Meanwhile, they join Agnelli and Cossiga in forcing "austerity" on the working class. The official policy of the unions over the past few years has been the so-called "EUR line," a program of "social peace" outlined by Lama in his notorious interview with *La Repubblica*:

"...the union proposes to the workers a policy of sacrifices, not marginal but substantial ones.... Let's remember that the companies, when it's certified that they're in crisis, have the right to lay off."

In 1977, when the policy of "national unity" (a popular front without ministerial portfolios) was at its height, PCI leader Enrico Berlinguer himself proclaimed that "austerity is an opportunity for renewal, for transforming Italy!" This criminal attack on the gains of the workers movement was, felt Berlinguer, the necessary price for enticing the perennially ruling Christian Democrats into a "historic compromise" with the Communists, agreeing to share some of their ministerial portfolios and government patronage. Such treachery did not bear fruit, however, and so today the PCI places itself at the head of the

workers' protest. "We will fight with you to the bitter end: not one layoff," declared Berlinguer to the FIAT workers. But simultaneously the PCI tried to put a brake on militancy.

This was made clear over the issue of occupying the factories, a crucial tactic that was discussed by factory council delegates in Torino from the first day of the strike. Speaking to a workers assembly outside Mirafiori's Gate 5, Berlinguer even took up this demand: "If the negotiations don't succeed, it will be necessary to think of tougher methods of struggle, including [plant] occupations." But aside from this playing with matches, the PCI tops sprayed water on the fires, doing everything in their power, both before and after Berlinguer's demagogic speech, to prevent the occupation of any FIAT plant. And in this they were joined by the union leaderships, from the CGIL/CISL/UIL federation to Bruno Trentin's FLM and even the Torino FLM, widely viewed as the Rock of Gibraltar of the "trade-union left."

### A Program for Victory

The inability to answer Agnelli's frontal attack on the gains of the workers movement revealed again the glaring crisis of revolutionary leadership. A Trotskyist party would have demanded that factory occupations be organized from the beginning of the struggle, when combativity was at a peak. Production in all FIAT plants should have been stopped, not only in the automotive division but also in steel and airplane plants. Torino metal workers should have been brought out in an unlimited strike, to be then extended to all other categories of workers in the auto capital and to all metal workers throughout the country. And in case that were not enough to bring this clan of high-handed bosses to their knees, the Trotskyists would call upon the Italian labor movement to gird for a general strike—not the one-day (or one-hour) gestures of protest so beloved by the reformists, but a genuine all-out mobilization of the power of the FIAT workers and the rest of the proletariat for a showdown with a class enemy out for blood.

Strong workers defense guards should have been constituted, moreover, to nip in the bud any provocation by the fascists and the armed gangs of the bourgeois state attempting to break the strike. But who could lead this struggle? Certainly not the sell-out union bureaucrats nor their left-



Enrico Berlinguer

In These Times

opportunist camp followers. Nor could the task of negotiating with the bosses' representatives be left in their hands: the bargaining should have been conducted not in Rome but in Torino, under the scrutiny of the strikers. What was needed was an elected national strike committee, the members of which would be responsible to workers strike assemblies. Thus the since-bureaucratized and cumbersome "workers councils" (in the Mirafiori "consigliere" there are 800 delegates), established in 1969, could be reinvigorated or replaced, leading to soviet-type bodies of direct proletarian democracy.

Agnelli's attack was directed against the "factory council unions" (*sindacati dei consigli*), as the synthesis of the conquests made by the Italian working class in the great struggles of the "Hot Autumn." To defend these gains it is necessary to return to the level of struggle of '69 and surpass it. The "factory council union" is a hybrid fruit of the relationship of forces between the workers and the bureaucrats, the lieutenants of the bourgeoisie within the workers movement. But such a compromise solution is unstable because in the era of imperialist decay there is no room for reformist unionism. As Trotsky wrote:

"The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

—"Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (August 1940)

If all the forces of the Italian proletariat had been brought into the struggle, FIAT would have given in quickly, perhaps even before a real nationwide general strike occurred. But a ringing defeat of the auto giant, the bellwether of Italian capitalism, by a working class sure of its power could have led to a pre-revolutionary situation. Certainly that is what worried the bureaucrats, who will try to preserve capitalist rule by every means. Nevertheless, even in the absence of an authoritative revolutionary leadership, a Trotskyist nucleus with roots in FIAT would have sought to defend and extend the workers' gains, organizing on the basis of the Transitional Program not a vague "trade-union left" but a genuine class-struggle opposition, one that could eventually overcome the reformists by drawing the lessons of their betrayals.

### A Revolutionary Opposition?

Where to look for such a revolutionary opposition to the Lamas and Berlinguers? In the past a whole gamut of left groups have made their presence

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Milano, October 10: Workers demonstrate in support of Fiat strike.

WV Photo

# Fiat Strike...

(continued from page 7)

felt at FIAT, including sizable organizations to the left of the PCI. But over the period 1969-75, there were significant changes in the political map at FIAT, most notably the disappearance of Lotta Continua, the centrist group which at various points embodied a combative mood among the metal workers rank and file. The total bankruptcy of the spontaneist line, the LC's inability to break with the Mao/Stalinist politics of the popular front, its vacillations over participating in elections of delegates to the factory councils—all this contributed to dissipating a great potential force, demoralizing thousands of militants who had hoped to find in the LC an alternative to the class-collaborationist line of the PCI.

Within the Communist Party attention has been drawn to a loose group of militants termed the "Afghans" because of their support for the Soviet intervention against imperialist-backed Muslim reactionaries in Afghanistan, in contrast to the official Eurocommunist line of alignment with the warmongering anti-Soviet campaign of NATO and the U.S. In the battle over the sliding scale of wages in July, these militants put up a hard fight, particularly in Genova and Milano, against the government's attempt to slash wages *with the approval of the unions*. But with PCI tops interested in making a little political hay out of worker unrest against the "Cossiga 2" cabinet, the "Afghan" dissidents only fed into Berlinguer's attempt to upstage the increasingly unpopular union leaders (result: the so-called Lama trial, in which the head of the CGIL was called on the carpet at a meeting of the PCI leadership last summer).

During the FIAT strike the Communist misleaders were responding to pressure from their own militants threatened with firings, and in turn trying to use the struggle as a pressure device on the government, to show that "Italy is ungovernable without the participation of the PCI." Sure enough, the day after Berlinguer's tough-talking speech at Mirafiori, the government fell. What the PCI did *not* do was try to win the strike. A genuine Trotskyist party would seek to take advantage of this contradictory position to drive a wedge between the Stalinist/Togliattist leaders' defeatist reformism and the Communist ranks' will to fight. At FIAT an organization was present which lays

claim to the mantle of Trotskyism—the Lega Comunista Rivoluzionaria (LCR), part of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USec) which falsely goes under the name of the Fourth International. But the LCR failed to present a program countering the bureaucrats' betrayals; instead it replaced revolutionary clarity with opportunist tailism.

At strike assemblies the LCR was allowed to speak as one of the recognized political parties, and its posters were prominent around the Italian auto capital. What these pseudo-Trotskyists told the FIAT workers, however, was to support the "very clear positions" of the Torino FLM leaders (*Bandiera Rossa*, 5 October). And what were these? To "continue the mobilization and maintain the forms and levels of struggle of the last few days." Coming just after the national metal workers demonstration and Berlinguer's grandstand play at Mirafiori, with the strikers' militancy still going strong, it is hardly surprising that the local bureaucrats vowed to "maintain the level of struggle." But was this static policy a program for victory? The catastrophic results speak for themselves. After the fact, to be sure, *Bandiera Rossa* (16 November) criticizes a "whimpering document" signed by 25 representatives of the Torino "trade-union left," charging that it simply repeats "the political line that brought the politically unprepared workers to the confrontation and that it is at the origins of the sudden defeat." Whatever happened to those "very clear positions" and "positive decisions that are being supported and upheld" only a few weeks earlier?

On the trade-union level, the core of the LCR's agitation was a fetishistic call for "35 hours work for 40 hours pay." This transforms the Trotskyist transitional slogan of a sliding scale of wages and hours into a mere reformist demand. Just how does the call for a 35-hour week unalterably lead to "one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat"? It doesn't, and it wouldn't even provide sufficient additional jobs to cover FIAT's layoff of one-fifth of its workforce. In fact, this demand was raised by the European social democracy and even the West German metal workers union during the elections for the Strasbourg "parliament" last year. Thus for the USec, the slogan of a 35-hour week is a way of making common cause with the reformist bureaucracy. At the political level, this tailism was embodied in the LCR's constant call for "PCI-PSI unity" and a "PCI-PSI government." Again, this is a parliamentary-reformist caricature of the Bolshevik-Leninist revolutionary slogan of a workers government.

At times like the autumn of 1969—in the beginnings of a pre-revolutionary situation, with embryonic dual power appearing in northern factories—it would have been possible for revolutionaries to raise the call for a PCI-PSI-PSIUP-trade union government based on and responsible to the factory councils, to carry out the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. Such a call would make clear that concretizing the workers government slogan means demanding that the present leaders of the working class break with parliamentarism and govern on the basis of organs of proletarian power. Thus it can be a key tactical lever for the Trotskyists in splitting the bourgeois workers parties on a class axis, between the proletarian base seeking socialist revolution and the pro-capitalist tops. But raising the slogan of a "PCI-PSI government" in conditions of normal functioning of the bourgeois parliamentary regime is simply capitulating to illusions in the Stalinists and social democrats—and what's worse, discrediting Trotskyism in the eyes of advanced workers. Moreover, at a time when the reformists themselves are talking of a "left government," the LCR's slogan, if realized, would simply be the antechamber to a popular front.

Occasionally criticizing the LCR from the left, the much smaller Gruppo Bolscevico-Leninista (GBL) engaged in some phony "mass work" during the FIAT strike of the kind that for centrists usually takes the place of hard Bolshevik programmatic struggle. In a leaflet distributed during the four-hour "general strike" of October 10, the GBL did not once mention the LCR, widely seen as "the Trotskyists" around Torino, *nor even the Communist Party* (or any other political organization). The main demand of this workerist outfit was "nationalization of FIAT without compensation under workers control." This slogan is just a left cover for classic social-democratic schemes to prop up decaying capitalism at the workers' expense. The GBL, it seems, would like the Italian proletariat to have its own version of British Leyland: speed-up and layoffs! Not to mention the fact that it would take nothing short of proletarian revolution to expropriate this bastion of Italian private capital.

## For a Trotskyist Party!

Following this bitter defeat—which some of the union leaders are nonetheless trying to claim was a "reasonable basis" for settlement—the workers must prepare themselves for the coming struggles, both at FIAT and throughout the country. The sellout union mislead-

ers and their PCI partners in crime are claiming that the real "rank and file" is represented by the march of foremen and scabs, that what is necessary is a "new EUR" in which the working class makes even larger sacrifices for the bosses' profits. But while a battle has been lost due to defeatism and sabotage, the war is not over. Any attempts to purge leftists and militants from the unions must be rejected; factory councils must continue to include the laid-off workers. All attempts to replace union meetings by pseudo-democratic referenda (mail ballots) must be opposed. Class-struggle militants must fight for a genuine sliding scale of wages to replace the present "contingenza" swindle; and for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay, to provide employment for all—layoffs must be stopped by national strike action.

The real answer is not passivity and sacrifice but to group the most conscious and combative militants around a program of consistent class struggle, the Trotskyist transitional program for proletarian revolution. In the aftermath of this defeat, the Italian proletariat will doubtless be confronted by a host of aspiring union bureaucrats seeking to oust the discredited bigwigs most directly responsible for the FIAT debacle. Many will be local Metal Workers leaders known for their discontent over the EUR line; among them there will be officials who played honorable and militant roles during the struggle. But unless these new would-be leaders come to grips with the *political* lessons of the class battles of recent years, unless they break completely with all forms of class collaboration (whether "historic compromise" or "left unity"), they too will necessarily succumb to the powerful pressure exerted by the capitalists and their labor flunkies.

The combativity repeatedly displayed by the Italian working class over the last dozen years has not yielded a leadership to match this quality. Nor will more militant struggle alone produce such a leadership. It is the task of the Trotskyists to win the most advanced workers to a class-struggle program that breaks through the limits imposed by the reformist misleaders, the bosses and the capitalist state. Only a revolutionary proletarian dictatorship, a workers government, can bring Italy out of its present state of economic and political chaos. For an Italian October, prepared by a Trotskyist party armed with the Bolshevik-Leninist program, built in the struggle to reforge the Fourth International! This is the goal to which the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, sympathizing section of the international Spartacist tendency, has pledged its struggle. ■

# Gang of Four Stalinists...

(continued from page 3)

out of hand and eventually backfired. We will not go into its domestic effects other than to state that it set the Chinese economy and educational system back at least a decade. In foreign policy the Cultural Revolution helped lay the basis for China's alliance with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union which Mao and Chou En-lai made in 1972. All the ideological garbage of the "GPCR"—"capitalist roadism," "the red bourgeoisie," "the bourgeoisie inside the party"—had as one of its central purposes the claim that Brezh-

nev's Russia had become a "capitalist-imperialist" superpower, one becoming more dangerous than the U.S.

During the Vietnamese liberation struggle against U.S. imperialism, the Red Guards obstructed arms shipments from the Soviet Union to North Vietnam. After all, they didn't want Vietnam to become a "colony" of "Soviet social-imperialism." Hanoi actually had to officially protest this outrageous action by the Chinese "Cultural Revolutionaries." In this the Red Guards were just anticipating the policy of their leaders. It was the Mao/Lin Piao regime which first referred to Brezhnev's USSR as "fascist," especially over the Kremlin's 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia to suppress the liberalizing Prague Spring.

The imperialist bourgeoisie, as usual, were sharper about the nature of Chinese Stalinism than the impressionistic New Left, which looked on Mao's China as a left alternative to the long-since stodgy Soviet Union. The capitalists understood that when a Stalinist regime calls another government "fascist," it is an opening for a bloc against the "non-fascist" presumed lesser evil. In his memoirs Henry Kissinger calls attention to the fact that:

"The Chinese Communist Party news-

paper *People's Daily* on March 17, 1969, for example, called the Czech invasion 'armed aggression and military occupation' by the 'Soviet revisionist renegade clique.' It denounced the Brezhnev Doctrine of Limited Sovereignty as an 'out-and-out fascist theory'....

"There was no question that the Soviet Union was emerging as the principal Chinese foreign policy concern."

—*White House Years* (1979)

In consolidating Mao's alliance with U.S. imperialism, Deng has shown himself to be a legitimate executor (no less so than Chiang Ch'ing) of the Cultural Revolution's legacy. Peking's alliance with Washington, supported by all wings of the Maoist/Stalinist bureaucracy, greatly increases the danger of nuclear world war III.

Upon taking power in 1976 right after Mao died, Deng promised the Chinese people a rationalized, prosperous economy and "socialist legality." But the new regime's program of making China into a modern industrial power of the first rank by the year 2000 (expressing the Stalinist myth of "socialism in one country") is in its own way as utopian as Mao's backyard steel furnaces of the Great Leap Forward. And its talk of democratic rights for the masses is simply the Stalinist big lie. The funda-

mental transformation into a modern industrial society and the establishment of workers democracy require a proletarian *political* revolution against all of Mao's heirs at home and social revolutions in the imperialist centers to create a world socialist order. ■

## NOTICE

**Workers Vanguard skips a week in December.**

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# Shahak Interview...

(continued from page 5)

that they are really in many ways a very extreme form of fanaticism and directly opposed to the PLO. I am not saying that as an advocate of the PLO but as showing you the facts of the situation.

**WV:** And on the question of Jewish religious reaction...?

**Shahak:** First of all, there is a revival of fanatical Judaism, a return not only to Jewish religion but to the more fanatical forms of Jewish religion. I believe also [this is happening] in other countries but I will speak of where I know it, in Israel. It began immediately after the '73 war. But it has grown very much in the meanwhile. I agree that it is one of the important factors that helped Begin to rise to power. But it has increased very much after he acquired power. I will only mention in passing the long-term effects, which are that Begin's Minister of Education, Mr. Zevulun Hammer, is now turning all Israeli Hebrew education on its head. Removing all the secular Hebrew elements, removing all the Hebrew modern poets who have been "infidels," like a poet called Sammi Hofsky, who used to be recognized as one of the two most important poets.

There are religious fanatics of the worst type, the followers of this Lubavitcher rabbi here in New York, who are brought to schools—not only to give so-called "religious lectures," not only to bring the lowest kinds of magical superstition. They tell little children that if your house doesn't have the correct mezzuzah or if your parents do not go to synagogue then you will have tragic incidents—you will be killed or your mother will be killed and so on. Nobody dares to contradict them. But they also incite against Arabs and against all non-Jews. Actually during those lectures, which are compulsory, he tells them that the world is divided into five parts: the inanimate, the plants, the animals, the speaking ones, and the Jews. And one shouldn't use the word "human being" because there is this quotation that there is the same distinction between the Jews and non-Jews as between the non-Jews and the animals. The non-Jews are officially designated in such lectures for children in state schools as speaking animals. So this gives you just an idea of what is going on and you feel it.

The second stage in brainwashing is the army. In the army, under General Eytan, who is chief of the general staff, religious brainwashing is being inflicted on all the soldiers by hired members of the Gush Emunim. Those people, in addition, are openly against all ideas of democracy. If they are asked in the media if the Israeli parliament will determine that for a peace solution some settlements will have to be removed, their answer is: their religion, or the law of god, or historical rights, or whatever they say, is above democracy—"We will oppose democracy by our weapons." They have begun already to use their weapons. They have developed a habit in the National Religious Party of attending party meetings and party conventions armed, with their automatic weapons, which was not Israeli custom until last year. All those things have caused apprehension and by now a fear, not only from people like us but by wider sections of the Israeli public.

It may be that, not for the sake of Palestinians and not for the sake of any rational or just solution, but for the sake of the continuation of Israel as it is, that the Labor Party, [if it is] allowed to come to power, will take armed action against them. In fact, the parts of the Labor Party which advocate this with the greatest intensity are some of the most hawkish parts, which want to keep the territories and to take action against the Gush Emunim because of reasons of state. Because they are openly supposed

to be a state within a state. I don't know what will develop, but this danger is certainly very serious, especially because of the quite close alliance between them and some generals, including the chief of staff of the Israeli army.

One possibility, as I said, must be a crisis, and one possibility during a crisis is a fascistic takeover based on the Gush Emunim with support of parts of the army generals, and based on fanatical Jewish ideology. All fascistic takeovers have to have some ideological justifications. Until a few years ago I agreed that such ideological justification was lacking. Now you must be aware that ideological justifications are here and there is a minority group, small but coherent, which will not be afraid, if allowed, to take any course in this direction.

**WV:** You mentioned earlier that with the inflation now at 170 percent... What are some of the effects of inflation on the general population? You were describing earlier starvation... .

**Shahak:** I include both Palestinians and Jews in this. There is first of all a segment of the population, 10 to 15 percent, which is literally on the verge of starvation. And this first of all includes people who are old, people who are dependent on their pensions, welfare cases and so on. And some relatively small parts of the working class. I mean two cases. First of all, small towns which are dependent on one or two or maybe three factories. In big towns where the workers have some power, they are getting around it not so much by additional pay, but by [giving out] food. By now it is a very usual practice that management, which is in a relatively weak position, will offer every week or every month food to the workers, which is not formally part of the wages.

And another group which is in especially weak positions are the young men—among Palestinians people of the age of 18, among Jews people of the age of 21, after the army. Because one feature of Israeli social life is the rule that the worker who has worked fully one year has "tenure," like here in academic life; he cannot be thrown out, except by agreement with the workers committee. Therefore, the whole weight of unemployment falls on the people who either are 18 or are 21. This, by the way, lies behind the great extend of Jewish emigration to the United States or to other countries. People cannot obtain jobs, except in the army. And this causes quite a lot of discontent; but in fact, emigration is playing the role here of a safety valve.

**WV:** What does this have to do with Soviet immigration?

**Shahak:** Oh, almost all of them drop out in Vienna. Very small numbers of Soviet Jews are now coming to Israel. Actually, much lower than the statistics show. The official number for this year is 75 percent dropout and 25 percent who come to Israel. But even from those 25 percent, most of them leave within one year or something like this. Soviet immigration or any other Jewish immigration is practically nonexistent. This is a very important factor because if you take the psychological effect, not the real effect, I would say that the Israeli establishment feels more threatened by the emigration of Jews out of Israel than by the economic situation. I will quote to you the statement of General Dan Shomron about the Israeli Army, who says two things. First of all, that he finds in reserve units that many people do not appear on reserve because they are outside the country permanently. It is not allowed to say that they are emigrés, because the Israeli government officially denies that Jews emigrate from Israel. So it's only allowed to say that they are permanently out! That he doesn't see them. And secondly, he said something else, very serious for an Israeli general to say publicly. He said that this may be the beginning of the loss

of Israeli willingness to fight a war.

**WV:** I notice that you also gave an interview to the *Village Voice* and in the interview it has you stating that, "So long as the situation in the Middle East remains as it is now, so long as there are states in the Middle East which may be presumed to be hostile to Israel, I quite agree and accept that Israel needs military security, which can best be achieved exactly on the Egyptian model." Was this an accurate quote?

**Shahak:** Yes. Because of this it began, "so long as there are states...": since I observe that in the next future, what can be established [is] some peace within



Israeli/Gamma-Liaison

## Zionist terror on the West Bank.

states; then during some peace which you or I will accept as a temporary lesser evil, Israel will need military security. That was always my position, that in the present anything that will tend to remove Israeli occupation of the territories, especially inhabited territories, is necessary and is to be supported.

**WV:** I guess I don't understand the link between...

**Shahak:** There is occupation of the people versus military patrols or anti-tank ditches. The link is, the present occupation oppresses the people. I speak about military security.

**WV:** Of course the military security is going to be used to suppress the people.

**Shahak:** No, not this type of thing, not ditches and patrols and so on. This is completely different, as the Egyptian treaty has shown. The Egyptian treaty gives Israel the right to have patrols and ditches and very many things, but not to oppress the people of Sinai.

**WV:** Did you basically support that portion of the Camp David treaty that dealt with that?

**Shahak:** Yes, of course. Even to the

extent of saying that if it will be applied on all other fronts it will be a lesser evil.

**WV:** Just out of curiosity, you were not defeatist in the 1967 war; you were defeatist on the Israeli side. That is, you were not for Israel's victory in 1967 or in 1973, were you? What is your position now?

**Shahak:** Well, basically I was not for Israeli victory, but in '67 I think it was very clear. In '67 I was neither for victory nor defeat. But certainly, so long as—the key phrase—so long as there are states, I am not for Israeli defeat. I am for a situation of neither victory nor defeat, because only [in] such a victory is there an opening for popular action. But so long as there are states, I am not for defeat.

**WV:** Even if the defeat, as occurred say in Russia in 1905, might actually be an opening for a mass mobilization or a revolutionary upheaval?

**Shahak:** The situation in 1905 was completely different. From Vladivostok to Moscow it is a very great way, and it cannot be called a defeat, maybe a battle is defeated but...

**WV:** Yes, but the Bolsheviks were defeatist in Vladivostok as well as in Moscow.

**Shahak:** If it was such a sort of defeat, for such a sort of defeat I certainly am. But for entrance of the armies of the present Arab countries into Tel Aviv I certainly am not. For a defeat on the border...

**WV:** You realize that there's a difference between being defeatist on the Israeli side, and at the same time, holding the position of being defeatist on the Arab side. As you know, our position in both the 1967 war and the 1973 war was to be defeatist on both sides.

**Shahak:** Yes, I know. I realize this position. But my position in this respect is different because one of the terms of your position, which I really don't accept, is that you never accept a lesser evil. Certain lesser evils like Khomeini I do not accept, but other forms of lesser evils I will accept.

**WV:** We think that the defeat of Israel in a military conflict with the Arab states in these two wars was a lesser evil. And that it's the responsibility, especially if there was a revolutionary workers party in Israel, to stress that. Whereas in the Arab countries it is necessary to stress that the defeat of their governments would be the lesser evil, because of the fact that the military victory of neither side would benefit the peoples of either side. Whereas defeat, military defeat, could very well open up the situation to social struggle.

**Shahak:** Well, a stalemate would be the best. If so, I assure you, under Israeli conditions a stalemate would open the revolutionary situation much better than anything else. But all right, I understand your position, you understand mine. ■

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# Bloody Junta Terror...

(continued from page 1)

"big stick" outbursts make it plenty clear that the same can't be said about U.S. intervention in "America's backyard." Like Teddy Roosevelt, Reagan considers the Caribbean an American lake, and he intends to do some rough-riding over the region's impoverished masses. He clearly believes that if the killer colonels and genocidal generals south of the border aren't propped up pronto against the left, before you know it the International Communist Conspiracy will be riding up the Pan-American highway toward El Paso. Reagan told NBC newscaster Marvin Kalb:

"I think we are seeing the application of the domino policy which is really worldwide and is going on from the communist bloc of nations. And I think it's time the people of the United States realize that under the domino theory, we're the last domino."

—NBC News White Paper,  
"The Castro Connection,"  
3 September

So on November 4 there was a night-long spree of pistol fire in the wealthy districts of San Salvador celebrating the Republican election victory, and a couple of days later two bullet-riddled corpses were found by a road with cardboard signs reading, "With Ronald Reagan it's the end of spoiled children and guerrillas in Central America and El Salvador." When a businessmen's group sent a delegation to Washington to check signals with the new administration they were given an unambiguous go-ahead:

"President-elect Ronald Reagan's advisers on Latin America have assured visitors from El Salvador that the new administration will increase military aid, including combat equipment, to security forces fighting leftist guerrillas."

—New York Times, 29 November

But the escalating bloodbath cannot be blamed exclusively on Reagan, the CIA and the generals. The Salvadorean bourgeoisie has lined up solidly behind the junta (unlike Nicaragua in the last months of Somoza's rule), and Carter had repeatedly assured the junta of Washington's support. The sadistic criminals who deal out this white terror are not just crazed extremists but the enforcers of a panicky ruling class run amok, resorting to the most revolting barbarism to protect their millions extorted through decades of bloody exploitation.

## U.S.: All Hands Off!—For Central American Workers Revolution!

But as popular protests in El Salvador continued to mount up to the summer, despite the thousands of dead, Washington worried that the "contamination" by Sandanista Nicaragua might spread and the U.S. prepared for more direct involvement in the region. A recently publicized "Dissent Paper on El Salvador and Central America" by "current and former officials" of the CIA, Defense Department, State Department and the National Security Council, reports that, "Various U.S. Government agencies have taken preparatory steps to intervene militarily in El Salvador" (quoted in *New York Times*, 1 December). Among the steps are "setting up adequate supply lines and stockpiling materiel"; "increasing cohesion and coordination among various command structures within Salvadorean armed forces"; "establishing and/or improving communications and cooperation among armed forces and paramilitary organizations in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras." In addition, "A paramilitary strike force made up of former members of the Nicaraguan National Guard, anti-Castro Cubans, Guatemalan military personnel and mercenaries has been formed in the past year."

So the plans for direct imperialist

intervention are pretty far advanced. But despite military superiority a Santo Domingo-style "peace-keeping" intervention, whether with U.S. troops directly or by means of mercenaries and the armies of neighboring dictatorships, could blow up in Reagan's face. The level of terror and resistance is such that a messy civil war could explode in Central America by desperate masses driven beyond endurance. The key to victory in such a conflict is the broadest revolutionary mobilization of the workers and peasants fighting for socialist revolution throughout the region. This could also ignite protest and unrest elsewhere in Latin America.

But that is not the policy followed by the bulk of the Salvadorean left, nor by the Sandinista leadership in Nicaragua. The petty-bourgeois radical nationalist rulers in Managua have failed to give significant material support to the left in El Salvador, seeking instead to arrange a deal with Washington support for private enterprise and détente with its neighbors. Yet this "moderation" only allows counterrevolutionaries within and without greater possibilities of "destabilizing" the economy and organizing reactionary forces to overthrow the present Sandinista regime.

In El Salvador the policy of popular frontism adopted by all the significant left organizations has meant that workers, peasants and the urban poor have been limited in their struggles to what petty-bourgeois and a few liberal bourgeois forces would agree to. This led to the failure of an attempted three-day general strike last August when the small business association pulled out. The subsequent political disorientation is behind the inability of the various guerrilla groups to mount an offensive against the rightist terror in El Salvador since the summer.

The Stalinist-reformist program of "two-stage revolution" is as suicidal here as it was in Chile where it opened the road to Pinochet; but the nationalist delusion of building "socialism in one county" is even more dangerous in this closely intertwined region of artificial states ruled by Washington's puppet dictators. Not only will there be no "socialism in one banana republic," an isolated Nicaraguan (or Salvadorean) workers state would be massively vulnerable to imperialist-sponsored counterrevolution. It is only by establishing revolutionary proletarian rule throughout the region that Central America can be freed from its imperialist chains. That perspective is the program of permanent revolution and requires the leadership of a Trotskyist party built in the struggle to reforge the Fourth International. No U.S. intervention—whether hypocritical "human rights" manipulation or overt military involvement! For workers revolution in Central America! ■

## Haig...

(continued from page 1)

A ruthless militarist with an appetite for mass terror and little attachment for bourgeois-democratic parliamentary norms and processes. If he had more imagination he might swagger.

Haig had always been one of Reagan's top choices. But as the time to announce the cabinet closed in, even some conservative feet got colder. Two weeks ago ex-Nixon flack turned columnist William Safire pleaded for practically anybody but Haig for Secretary of State (*New York Times*, 24 November). Make him the head of the Joint Chiefs, send him back to NATO, but not on the cabinet. Safire himself knows the stench of Watergate when it gets into his nostrils and he wants to save the Republicans the embarrassment. Safire points out the possible embarrassment of "trotting out the tapes" of the Haig-Nixon consultations. (At one point Haig coaches the dim

Nixon in the low art of stonewall: "You just don't recall," explains the White House chief of staff.) And enthusiasm has further dampened for those in the Reagan camp who may have thought they might sneak Haig through a confirmation hearing without remembrance of cover-ups past. Democratic Senate majority leader Robert Byrd (himself an admitted ex-KKKer) assured them that, "it would be irresponsible of the Senate if Gen. Haig's name is submitted not to take a very close look at his Watergate role" (*Washington Post*, 7 December).

## Misdemeanors and Massacres

It's not only that Haig could be an embarrassment. There is cause even among other bourgeois politicians to fear his stealthy ambition. Haig arranged the firing of special prosecutor Archibald Cox, Attorney General Elliot Richardson and the others of the Saturday Night Massacre when they began sniffing too close to Watergate. As the de facto president in Nixon's final days, he performed valuable services for the entire capitalist class in mopping up the Nixon presidency while he distorted the evidence and covered up the crimes. (In his diary, Nixon praises "the iron will of Haig.") Haig, who once called Fulbright a "traitor" for his criticism of the Vietnam War, told Cox's successor Leon Jaworski that it was okay to break into Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office because it was done for "national security." With Kissinger and the FBI he wiretapped high-ranking officials in the State Department and the Department of Defense. "Whenever there is a click on my phone," writes Safire in half-jest, "I cannot help saying, 'Hi, Al!'"

It is understandable why Haig scares even some certifiable reactionaries. But the real point of his Watergate record is that it expresses a criminal M.O. of secrecy and independent action without parliamentary restraint. But for what kind of independent actions? From the point of view of the working class, Haig's violations of the "Geneva convention" of bourgeois guerrilla warfare are small potatoes. Not his "Saturday Night Massacres" but his bloody massacres in Southeast Asia, in Chile are the real crimes of Haig.

The U.S.' 1969-70 dirty war in Cambodia was above all the project of Haig. He issued the command to exclude the State Department from all knowledge of the invasion. And it was when the extent of that war began to be leaked out of State and Defense that Haig went to wiretaps and his black bags. But the war in Cambodia was no secret to the peasants of that tragic land. Between March 1969 and August 1973, the U.S. bombers dropped 539,129 tons of bombs on a population of only 7,000,000, creating 600,000 casualties and 3,390,000 refugees—a devastation from which that people was unable to recover (*Southeast Asia Chronicle*, December 1977).

Haig also urged the decision to bomb Haiphong Harbor and proposed the infamous Christmas bombings in 1972. So it is that Haig is not so much a Watergate criminal as a war criminal. It is the connection between his appetite for mass military terror on a holocaustal scale and his bonapartist methods which gives his political personality its special quality. When Haig okayed the COINTELPRO "Huston Plan," he knew it was just a domestic reflex for the war.

Haig was a conspirator for imperialism not only in Southeast Asia, but worldwide. He was one of the overseers of the infamous "Track II" campaign of assassination and terror in Chile, which unsuccessfully worked to bring about a military coup in 1970 to prevent the Allende government from taking office. Again, it was a secret CIA operation. According to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (20 November 1975): "The Agency was to take this action without coordination with the Departments of State or

Defense and without the U.S. ambassador in Chile.... In practice, the Agency was to report, both for informational and approval purposes, to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs, Henry Kissinger, or his deputy [Alexander Haig]." All of the bloody business of Track II in Chile will probably never be known. But the assassination of Chilean army commander in chief, General René Schneider, who opposed the coup, is well documented. He was gunned down on October 22, 1970.

Others in the Nixon-Kissinger crew are tainted by their détente policies in the eyes of the Reaganites. But not Haig. He always had the main enemy of American imperialism in his sights. A premature opponent of SALT II, he took over the NATO command in 1974, saying he was alarmed to find that "there was very little concern about the nature and character of the relentless growth of Soviet and Warsaw Pact military power." Haig seized upon the neutron bomb as one answer to Soviet tank superiority. Alexander is a nuclear first-striker whose time has come.

## Haig, Nixon and the Reagan Years

A most revealing angle of vision of the political life of the incoming administration is offered by the presentation of Alexander Haig as the "moderate" candidate for Secretary of State. The certified pure Reaganite candidate for the job is Senator John Tower of Texas. But the Republicans figure they need him more in the Senate.

The Reagan "transition team" is the most unashamed big business heyday in government since Eisenhower appointed GM's Charles Wilson Secretary of Defense under the slogan, "What's good for General Motors is good for the country." Now with Gen. Haig as president of the corporation with the third largest number of defense contracts, perhaps the slogan should be, "What's good for United Technologies is good for the country." The corporations have simply bought the "transition." The oil companies will take over the regulation of oil prices. Boeing has sent their men in to take over the aeronautics board.

Southern California may understand that San Clemente is back in office, but there are important differences between Nixon's administration and Reagan's. Nixon was personally more nutty and insecure. He surrounded himself with banal Madison Avenue yes men. But the Reagan administration is further to the right in a social sense. This group of reactionary ideologues is even more removed from social reality and world politics than the Nixon gang.

Most of the Reagan ideologues have never met an actual Russian. For them the Russians exist as caricatures of anti-Communist mythology, images of personified evil culled from Hoover's *Masters of Deceit* and 1950s Cold War movies. This kind of all-round ideological shift to the right means that at bottom the government will be a bunch of true believers quite capable of starting World War III against the Russians without believing they had done it.

John Tower may be the ultra-conservative Reaganite, but he is a parliamentarian. Haig is more sinister, a military bonapartist awaiting his chance. He didn't get it under Nixon because the delusional bonapartist appetites of the Watergate president couldn't be realized in the America of the Vietnam syndrome. Now things have gone rather further in his direction, but American society is still too stable and staid for Haig's liking. Haig has talked in the past about running for election to the presidency once or twice, but the role doesn't suit him. He is one who would clearly hope to ride to power, preferably, to borrow liberal journalist Anthony Lewis' image, as the "secretary on horseback." ■



# Oakland CWA Condemns Killer Klan Acquittal

At the November 18 meeting of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 9415 in Oakland, California members voted overwhelmingly for a motion protesting the acquittal of the Greensboro KKK/Nazi assassins and calling for labor action. Condemning the racist court action as "a green light to these Nazi/Klan terrorists for further murderous attacks on the labor movement in this country," the motion calls on the Alameda Central Labor Council to "organize a mass labor/black/Latino demonstration to protest this racist travesty of justice." It also makes the demand to "Jail the killer Klansmen/Nazis—Drop all charges against the anti-Klan protesters."

The next day, Militant Action Caucus (MAC) members in San Francisco Local 9410 found a good reception for a similar motion demanding working-class protest against the KKK/Nazi murderers being let loose on the streets to kill again. Local president Jim Imerzel bureaucratically adjourned the 9410 meeting when MAC challenged his refusal to put the motion to a vote. According to a Caucus spokesman, Imerzel referred to the all-white jury's

refusal to convict in spite of videotaped proof as "this so-called miscarriage of justice." This disgusting apology for racist Jim Crow justice is a new low, even for Imerzel, who has sought to equate the labor, leftist and black victims in the Greensboro massacre with their fascist murderers.

But the MAC's class-struggle program for fighting fascism has struck a responsive chord in the ranks. In recent elections for a plant department executive board spot, MAC candidate Kathy Ikegami received almost 20 percent of the vote (112 out of 600) in her first campaign for that post, while Imerzel's all-out campaign for Ernie King scrounged up barely one-quarter of the total votes. (The election was won by Bob Carreras, with 25 percent of the vote, not because he offers a strategy to defend CWA members from Ma Bell, but only because he has not yet had to take official responsibility for the union's retreats.) In the CWA, only the Militant Action Caucus has put forward a program of powerful labor action to stop the KKK/Nazi nightriders and the capitalist wage- and job-cutting offensive. ■

## Contra Costa...

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elderly occupants. The shots reportedly came from a camper van which the police admitted was registered to the "grand cyclops" of the local KKK. But after a three-month "investigation," the DA has just announced there is "insufficient evidence to prosecute." And on August 23, when the NAACP held a demonstration against police brutality in Richmond, they were harassed by Klansmen in full KKK regalia under police protection.

### No Reliance on the Cops—Build Labor/Minority Defense Guards!

The response of union officials has predictably been routine and ineffective since the bureaucrats refuse to mobilize the membership to stop the racist attacks. The president of ATU Local 192 announced a \$10,000 reward "for information leading to the arrest and conviction of..." etc. But with the police denying Klan involvement, that offer has gone unanswered. ILWU Locals 6 and 10 officials met with the sheriff's office December 3 and issued a bulletin to the membership advising:

"The union suggests that our members living in Contra Costa County form community watch groups and call the Sheriff's Department so they can send someone from their Accident Prevention Department to assist you..."

The ILWU leaders are merely trying to wash their hands of the whole matter, by creating the dangerous illusion that the police will provide protection. Yet these same cops absolve the Klan terrorists of guilt!

At two community meetings this week, 150 people heard Contra Costa police officials at the podium portray the attacks as isolated acts of youthful vandalism. The mood of the black residents was bitter. Several in the audience testified that they had turned license numbers over to the police, and even caught one attacker brandishing a two-by-four, but the authorities refused to do anything. Speakers demanded to know if it will take a death before the attacks are taken as more than pranks, and the three victimized families stalked out of the hall furious.

At a previous meeting people hooted NAACP leaders who urged residents not to arm themselves in self-defense. "Why not!" vociferously demanded more than a dozen members of the audience. Meanwhile self-styled "peace-

ful" patrols of small numbers of "leftists" calling themselves the East Bay Organizing Committee have tried to substitute themselves for real mass defense guards, while actually hoping to pressure the police into action. In an incident on December 5, a pickup truck twice attempted to run one of these patrols off the road, and the volunteers could only try calling the cops for help. The next day, three women "watchers" outside the Presley home were threatened and followed as they sought to find a telephone. "We didn't think it would be anything serious to be there," they told reporters. "We didn't think anybody doing the guarding would be harassed." What did these pacifists think they were doing there, then?

As Spartacist supporter Diana Coleman, recent candidate for SF Board of Supervisors, said on a KGO-TV news report of a December 6 demonstration against the racist Greensboro acquittal of fascist killers, "We can't rely on the cops, courts, the Justice Department or the Democratic Party to fight against the Klan and Nazis... What's needed here is workers defense guards based on the trade unions." Bay Area labor has the numbers and social power to put a stop to these vicious attacks. The ILWU and ATU, whose members have been attacked in their homes, have a special responsibility to take the lead in organizing round-the-clock defense. This is not only an elementary duty in defense of black working people; the defense of the entire labor movement is at stake. ■

## "Black Party" ...

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elections a genuinely independent black party growing out of mass struggle and fighting for black rights against the twin capitalist parties. The Black Panther Party of Lowndes County, Alabama in 1964-65 was an example of where Marxists could intervene through the tactic of critical support to present an independent working-class-centered perspective. But that was light years away from the National Black Political Assembly and its offspring, the "National Black Independent Party."

If there is one thing that is clear about this shadowy "NBIP," it is that this is not a break with the Democrats. Nor, given its constituent parts, could it be.



Chicago Spartacist League  
Film and Discussion

## Labor Must Smash Fascist Threat!

Film: Night And Fog by Alain Resnais

Discussion Panel:

Bill Hampton, brother of murdered Black Panther Party member Fred Hampton

Don Alexander, Spartacist League Central Committee, organizer, Detroit labor/black anti-Klan rally, Nov 10, 1979

Hazen Griffin, president Local 372 SEIU

Sam Hunt, USWA Local 1010

Friday, December 19  
7:30 P.M.

Blackstone Hotel (Gold Room)  
Michigan and Balbo

For more information call: (312) 427-0003

Peppered by reporters at a November 22 press conference, Ron Daniels blurted out: "We're not saying every black Democrat must leave the Democratic Party." In an interview with *WV* he was even more explicit as to the eight-year history of the NDPA:

"We tried to lean towards progressive elements in the Democratic Party, such as Conyers and Ron Dellums. We have in the past and will always have close working relations with them. We think it would be a mistake not to work with those people as they try to exploit the contradictions in the Democratic Party." [our emphasis]

The other figures around the "new black party" are no less close to "progressive" Democrats. For some time now Daughtry in NYC has been trying to put together a bloc between the more maverick "community control" Democrats like Al Vann in Brooklyn and establishment black Democrats like former Manhattan borough president Percy Sutton, former New York deputy mayor Basil Patterson and Harlem Congressman Charles Rangel. The large Philadelphia delegation at the conference included a number of people involved with the anti-Rizzo recall campaign and dissident black Democrat Charles Bowser, who ran as a candidate of the "independent" Philadelphia Party. So while most of the BEOs (black elected officials) still in office didn't show up for the conference, they are by no means out of the picture.

And what have the Dellums, Conyers, Hatchers, Rangels as well as the smaller-fry black Democrats brought to the impoverished American ghettos? Jimmy ("Ethnic Purity") Carter, who paved the road to Reagan reaction with his policies of "malign neglect" which are shared by the rest of his racist, capitalist party. Many blacks have looked to the Democrats in the past as friends of minorities or at least a "lesser evil." But it was the liberal Democrats who voted down busing, not Reagan; a Democratic Congress which dismantled the poverty programs.

### For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Racism!

The only real answer to black oppression is a revolutionary, united working-class struggle against all the bourgeois politicians. Otherwise, as the out-of-power Democrats use cheap demagoguery (like Carter's threatened veto of anti-busing bills) and dust off their old New Deal/Great Society rhetoric, blacks will once again be sucked in to this phony

"people's party" of the racist American ruling class.

While the Philadelphia conference didn't and couldn't do anything about anything, some of the "NBIP" types are capable of a little "activism," channeling black anger into isolated ghetto-based struggles. Last fall, for example, with the announced closing of Sydenham Hospital in Harlem, 2,000 people were mobilized for militant action: sit-ins, street action, picketing, clashes with the cops. But the whole direction was to pressure some capitalist politician to deliver crumbs. Racist NYC mayor Koch, knowing the ghetto-based protesters had little social power which could threaten him, at first told them they could sit in forever. When things died down, he dragged the sit-in leaders out. And in the end he quietly closed the hospital down.

Yet American blacks do not have to endlessly suffer such defeats. They are not a hopelessly isolated minority facing a monolithic racist society. Black people are not only segregated at the bottom of American society, they are also integrated into strategic sections of the industrial working class in whose hands lies the economic and social power to shatter this racist capitalist system. The mass black struggles of the 1960s were defeated in large measure because of the failure of the labor movement, under the misleadership of pro-capitalist bureaucrats, to take up the cause of black equality. But the economic austerity and war drive of the Reagan years may well throw black and white workers into struggle to defend their common interests against the capitalists.

Key to winning these struggles would be the rise of an integrated workers party that would fight to link the ghetto masses to the power of organized labor, that would fight for labor/black defense against Klan/Nazi terrorism, that would fight for massive welfare increases and a sliding scale of wages and hours to create millions of new jobs—a party that would fight for a workers government. The Spartacist League is dedicated to building a working-class revolutionary party with the only program that leads not only to survival but to genuine emancipation—the Trotskyist program of black liberation through socialist revolution. Blacks will be in the forefront of the American socialist revolution, or there will be no revolution and Reagan reaction will head toward "equal opportunity" nuclear barbarism for all. ■

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Brokers for the Democrats

# "Black Party" Hoax: No Answer to Reagan Racism

Ronald Reagan as president: in every ghetto in the U.S., on the shop floor and the college campus, black people got the news and it's bad. Racism rides more often now in white sheets with burning crosses and smoking shotguns. Blacks see not only this rising racist terror at the fringe, but also the threat of more open racist policies by the government which strike at the heart of the ghetto. Most blacks understand the election victory of the preferred candidate of the KKK better than the Urban League's Vernon Jordan, who said that they should "give Reagan a chance." The fears of black America are so clear that even *Newsweek* caught them in an article, "Worry Time for Blacks," noting that minorities fear "this year's election will wash away many of their social gains."

There is the desperately felt need to fight Reagan racism. The official black leadership has led nothing since they led the mass black struggle for equality in the 1960s to defeat. After a decade with no significant mass black struggle in the face of increasing racist attacks there is no black movement, no black leadership. Now blacks are being officially declared expendable in a time of deepening economic crisis for American capitalism. Black people are disorganized and vulnerable. And with the Reagan victory, they feel increasingly isolated and politically under siege.

Seeking to cash in on this post-election mood among blacks, a disparate group of black politicians has attempted to rush into the obvious vacuum of black leadership. At a conference in Philadelphia on November 21-23, attended by some 1,300



**"National Black Party" meeting in Philadelphia. Blacks need class-struggle politics not squabbling to pressure the Democrats.**

people and, of course, cheered on by the reformist left, they declared themselves the new "National Black Independent Political Party." Not surprisingly, the organizers are pork-barrel politicians with no pork, black "unelected officials" and ghetto community hustlers—camp followers in the unfought "war on poverty." Directly hit by the cut-off of welfare programs, black studies programs, etc., which Reagan is threatening, they would like to use their "black party" to get more clout than they have had lately as dutiful Democrats.

The "black party" organizers call for a

return to the tactics of the early '60s, to put blacks on the streets again. But such tactics achieved their largely token gains only because the government to some degree welcomed the pressure to dump Jim Crow laws. And when the civil rights movement of King and SNCC went North, coming up against the root cause of black oppression—de facto segregated housing, schools and jobs, mass unemployment and poverty—then pressure tactics were worthless. What is needed now, as then, is the policy of class struggle, not pressuring "friends" in the government, but mobilizing the

social power of the labor movement and blacks to fight in their own interest.

### Turf Squabbling and Red-Baiting

There were two main blocs at the Philadelphia conference, one the leadership grouping from the National Black Political Assembly (NBPA), the other some New York-centered Pan Africanists, backed up by Rev. Herbert Daughtry's Black United Front operation. This would-be founding conference was unable to agree on any program whatsoever as it broke down into a battle over influence in the leadership of a non-existent group, and ended by calling for yet another "founding conference" next summer. In the end the squabbles were covered over by electing an interim organizing committee which, trying to conciliate the diverse political blocs, excluded Ron Daniels, the main NBPA leader for the past half decade.

One of the few things the wrangling black politicians could agree on was red-baiting. Just to get matters straight from the get-go, conference organizer Zoharah Simmons warned against "disrupters." Daniels then spelled it out in his keynote address:

"Oh, I know some of you are going to try and come here and make this a revolutionary vanguard party. It's not a revolutionary vanguard party. I want my mother to be in it and she may not be able to deal with all the narrow constraints of the isms yet...to study Mao, Marx, Lenin's politics."

The left groups turned a deaf ear to this slimy anti-communism...except for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) which supported it. After applauding anti-communist speakers, SWP leader Andrew Pulley called for voting in a loyalty clause which could be used to exclude leftists!

The conference leaders' red-baiting did not prevent the reformist left from hailing it. Far from it. Communist Workers Party leader Nelson Johnson (unsuccessfully) campaigned for a seat in the leadership of this politically undefined "black party." And the SWP went all out in praise of it, running a banner front-page headline, "1,500 Blacks Launch Independent Party" in the 5 December *Militant*, and a two-page spread of speeches from the conference the next week. For the SWP this is nothing new. In the late '60s they supported Carl Stokes running for mayor of Cleveland on the one occasion when he ran "independent" from the Democrats. In 1972 they hailed the "Black Agenda" written under the aegis of Democrat Richard Hatcher, mayor of Gary, Indiana, and the Congressional Black Caucus.

### Tied to the Democrats

There are times when a revolutionary vanguard could critically support in

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## Bay Area Unions: Stop Klan Terror in Contra Costa!

OAKLAND—Ku Klux Klan nightriders shooting into black homes, threatening trade unionists. Black protesters harassed by robed Klansmen in broad daylight with the help of local cops. These aren't scenes from the Deep South or even Orange County, but from Contra Costa County in the historic labor and Democratic bastion of the Bay Area. The fascists have kept their heads down in the San Francisco Bay Area since the militant union struggles of the 1930s. But the setbacks suffered by northern California labor in recent years, increased KKK activity (such as the Metzger campaign in San Diego) and the rightward shift signaled by Reagan's election have noticeably changed the political climate. It is the urgent duty of Bay Area unions, linked

with minority organizations, to mobilize an effective defense and stop the racist terror attacks.

### "They're Not Running Me Out"

Fifty-year-old ILWU member Roosevelt Presley, a black resident in predominantly white El Sobrante, found a note together with a KKK hood taped to his family car: "If you don't leave we will force you. Leave Nigger. We will kill you." Then his home was repeatedly vandalized, and at 1:30 a.m. on November 20 a shotgun blasted his front door. Contra Costa County sheriff Richard Rainey commented to the press, "There is nothing at this time to indicate this is Klan activity." With his wife expecting a second child, Presley vowed, "I'm not running anywhere.

They're not running me out," and he is looking to his union for help.

Over the past two months, black families in suburban Tara Hills have had their windows broken, tires slashed, lawns torched and children chased with tire irons after receiving KKK-signed threats. On November 22, Otis and Geraldine Ireland, both black AC Transit bus drivers and members of the Amalgamated Transit Union, had their living room wall caved in when a car was deliberately rammed through it. A day earlier, a black resident in Pinole found a cross burned into his lawn.

These are just some of the most recent incidents. Earlier, on July 26, shots were fired into a predominantly black Rodeo housing project, narrowly missing two

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