

Oust the Bureaucrats—For Lenin's Communism! Workers and Soldiers Soviets Must Rule!



Upheaval in China

AP

MAY 23—The eyes of the world are riveted on Beijing as the dramatic mass outpouring has brought the Chinese capital, and the whole country, to a standstill. Scenes on TV of women lying down in front of armored personnel carriers, students exhorting soldiers, saying the People's Army must not attack the people, workers commandeering trucks, roaring into Tiananmen Square on motorcycles. A hunger strike by 3,000 students. Mikhail Gorbachev arrives for a summit meeting, and as protesters wave his picture the Soviet leader is shunted around, sneaking into

the Great Hall of the People by the back door. Buses are turned into barricades throughout Beijing. The top leadership of the Chinese Communist Party meets behind closed doors as hours drag into days and nights. Beyond the protesters' vague demands, the question is posed: who shall rule China?

The imperialists would like to see in the Beijing spring the flowering of a pro-Western mass movement. Some of the students' appeals are clearly aimed at the American media, such as the banner proclaiming (in English) "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death." But as an

April 27 march of 150,000 students attracted the support of an even larger number of workers, the marchers responded by chanting "Long live the proletariat!" And over and over they sing the *Internationale*, the historic anthem of the socialist working class. Again on the weekend of May 20-21, as the regime headed by Deng Xiaoping and Prime Minister Li Peng ordered troops to remove student hunger strikers, workers streamed into the square to stand with them. But while the workers have been massively present in the protests, they have not yet mobilized

behind their own *class* program—to oust the bureaucratic misleaders of the Chinese deformed workers state and establish the rule of proletarian soviets.

It began a month ago as students converged on Tiananmen Square under the pretext of honoring ousted CP general secretary Hu Yaobang, who died on April 15. Hu was a reputed "liberal" who had been removed for taking a soft line on student "pro-democracy" protests two years ago. The initial demands this time were for freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom to

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U.S. Get Out of Panama!

Complaining that the recent elections in Panama were stolen through fraud, George Bush sent in a brigade-size combat force to "send a clear signal" that such behavior was "unacceptable." What really upset the U.S. president was that these were perhaps the first Panamanian elections that weren't rigged by Washington since it stole the country at the turn of the century. And despite his whining about the "bullying tactics" of "the dictator Noriega," bullyboy Bush's signal grew fuzzier as more than 12,000 U.S. troops sat in the former Canal Zone. Rather than directly overthrowing the Panamanian regime, which could spark opposition in the isthmus and ignite protests throughout Latin America, the White House was appealing to the Panamanian Defense Forces to stage a coup against their chief.

Looking for a macho image in his

"first foreign policy crisis," Bush may have gotten a tiger by the tail. Panama's sleazy strongman General Manuel Noriega continues to run rings around the White House as he did before with Ronald Reagan. Bush managed to get unanimous backing from the pliant, Democratic-controlled Senate and House for his Big Stick policy. But the U.S. embassy in Panama was "vehemently opposed" to sending in the troops, as was the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And contradicting Bush's claim that he was responding to threats to the "lives of our citizens," a spokesman for the Panama-based U.S. Southern Command said flat out, "there is no present danger to the U.S. community" (*Los Angeles Times*, 12 May).

Of course, even by regional standards where "election" is usually an adjective defining a variety of fraud,

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John R. Van Beekum

Bush waves imperialist Big Stick: U.S. Marines land in Panama.

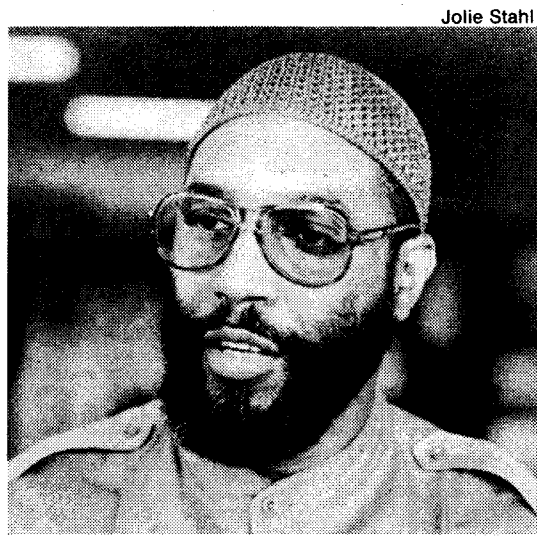
Free Dhoruba! Free All COINTELPRO Victims! FBI's War Against the Panthers

Long after the destruction of the Black Panther Party, former members remain scattered in prisons, victims of the racist FBI Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) which continues to rob them of their freedom. Recently a brief glimpse of the FBI's dirty work was provided when the 31 March New York *Daily News* ran a front-page story headlined "Ex-Panther: I Was Framed in 1971." Richard Dhoruba Moore (Dhoruba al-Mujahid bin Wahad) is yet another victim of the COINTELPRO conspiracy to disrupt and murder black radicals in the 1960s-'70s.

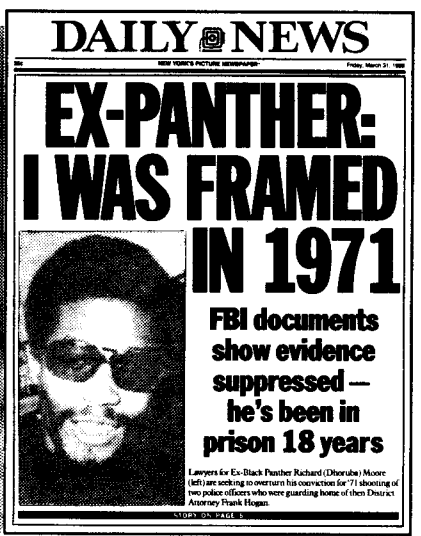
After a decade of legal battles, Dhoruba obtained documents from his COINTELPRO files proving that his

conviction and life sentence, over the 1971 shooting of two New York City cops, was the product of a conspiracy by the New York City Police Department, the FBI and the Manhattan D.A. Moore's attorney, Robert Boyle, told the *Daily News*: "What we have is the police, with the FBI working in the background, manipulating evidence to convict Dhoruba."

Moore was one of the famous Panther 21. In April 1969, 21 members of the New York Black Panther Party were charged with plotting to blow up governmental and other institutions, including the Bronx Botanical Garden, Macy's and Bloomingdale's. The cop concoction was so ludicrous that in May 1971, after *nine months* on trial, the



Jolie Stahl



Former Panther Richard Dhoruba Moore has been imprisoned for 18 years, victim of FBI/cop vendetta.

longest trial in New York State history, the jury only took 90 minutes to acquit Dhoruba and the other Panthers of the 156 counts against them. But the COINTELPRO plot accomplished its goal, keeping leading members of the NY Panther organization behind bars for over two crucial years.

But even that wasn't enough. Six days after the acquittal, two cops guarding Manhattan D.A. Frank Hogan's home were hit by machine-gun fire. President Nixon told FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover "not to pull any punches" to get the Panthers. And Dhoruba was near the top of their list. Two weeks later he was arrested and the frame-up began that has already robbed Dhoruba of 18 years of his life.

It took three trials for the courts to railroad Dhoruba: the first two attempts ended in mistrials. Moore's COINTELPRO files reveal that the prosecution concealed that their chief witness and source of evidence, Pauline Joseph, a diagnosed paranoid schizophrenic, had given more than 25 contradictory statements to the cops during her 20 months in police custody. Before and during the trial Assistant District Attorney John F. Keenan, now a federal judge, refused to disclose that Joseph initially asserted Dhoruba's innocence. When Dhoruba sought to call Joseph back to the witness stand after one of her statements clearing him came to light, the prosecutors denied knowing her whereabouts although at the very moment she was still in police custody! Augustus Qualls, the state's other major witness, has since recanted his testimony, calling it a police "fabrication."

In a March hearing, New York State Supreme Court Justice Peter J. McQuillan admitted that if these facts were known at the time of Dhoruba's appeal in 1973, the "violations in this case would necessitate a reversal of the conviction." But he denied Dhoruba's appeal to overturn the original conviction. On April 13 McQuillan rejected Dhoruba's motions for a new trial and railed against his attorneys for a "pernicious assault" on the reputation of the liar Keenan.

Despite exposure of the frame-up, the courts want to keep Dhoruba behind bars. The PDC sent a message of solidarity to Dhoruba, stating, "Though millions now know of the racist frame-up that has taken 18 years of your life, Judge McQuillan holds that racist American 'justice' requires you spend the rest of your life behind bars. . . . This is an outrage to all decent people." Freedom now for Richard Dhoruba Moore!

* * *

While Dhoruba's COINTELPRO disclosures burst into New York newspapers, former L.A. Panther leader Geronimo (ji Jaga) Pratt continues his fight for freedom. Pratt's struggle was recently given a boost when on March 14 Congressman Ron Dellums introduced Congressional Resolution No. 109 calling for Pratt's immediate release and for an investigation into

the circumstances surrounding his imprisonment.

In a significant reversal, Pratt's case is again before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in California. Last year the court threw out his appeal for a new trial on the legal technicality that the appeal was filed ten days late. To the three-judge panel of Nixon and Reagan appointees "judicial integrity" required that this innocent man be condemned to spend the rest of his life behind bars in order to conceal COINTELPRO's dirty crimes. In October the "full bench" of the Court of Appeals refused Pratt's application for a rehearing. But two months later, the same three judges, unexpectedly and without explanation, vacated their previous ruling and ordered attorneys for the State of California to file a response to Pratt's petition for rehearing.

For 18 years Geronimo Pratt has been locked in a prison hellhole for a crime the government *knows* he did not commit. For 18 years he has fought to expose COINTELPRO's bloody crimes. Despite massive evidence of his frame-up, including FBI wiretap logs proving Pratt was 400 miles away from the scene of the murder for which he was convicted, even after former West Coast FBI agent Wesley Swearingen testified that "Pratt was set up," parole boards and courts refuse to set this innocent man free.

Pratt is asking his supporters to write in support of Dellums' resolution. Send your letters to: Congressman Peter W. Rodino, Jr., Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, 2137 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515, and to your local Congressman. Free Geronimo Now! Free all victims of COINTELPRO!

* * *

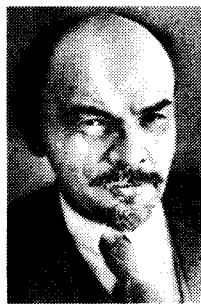
A special issue of *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* on the case of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is now available. We encourage *WV* readers to join our fight to save Mumia's life, and to continue to support the PDC. Become a monthly sustaining contributor. Send a donation of \$5 or more and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send \$1 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■



TROTSKY

For Bolshevism in China!

The Russian Bolshevik Revolution was a beacon of hope for Chinese radical intellectuals struggling for national and social liberation. Thus Li Ta-chao, a leader of the May Fourth Movement and a founder of the Chinese Communist Party who was executed by Northern warlords in 1927, saw in the proletarian internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky the way forward for the oppressed masses of China and of all humanity.



LENIN

The Bolsheviks . . . vigorously protested and proclaimed that the present war is a war of the Tsar, of the Kaiser, of kings and emperors, that it is a war of capitalist governments, but it is not their war. Theirs is the war of classes, a war of all the world's proletariat and common people against the capitalists of the world. . . .

In his book *Bolshevism and World Peace*, Trotsky writes: "In this new revolutionary era a new organization shall be created by unlimited proletarian socialist methods. The new organization will be as great as the new task. Amid the mad roar of the cannon, the crash of temples and shrines, and the wild blast of patriotic songs from wolf-like capitalists, we ought to be the first to undertake this new task. With the death-music of hell about us, we should maintain our clarity of mind, and clearly perceive and realize that ours will be the one and only creative force in the future. . . ."

From this passage it is plain that Trotsky holds that the Russian revolution is to serve as a fuse to world revolution. The Russian revolution is but one of the world revolutions; numerous revolutions of other peoples will successively arise. . . .

The revolution in Russia is but the first fallen leaf warning the world of the approach of autumn. Although the word "Bolshevism" was created by the Russians, the spirit it embodies can be regarded as that of a common awakening in the heart of each individual among mankind of the twentieth century. The victory of Bolshevism, therefore, is the victory of the spirit of common awakening in the heart of each individual among mankind in the twentieth century.

—Li Ta-chao, "The Victory of Bolshevism" (November 1918)

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Jalalabad Defenders Break Siege

After two months of tenacious fighting, Afghan forces have managed to break the murderous siege of Jalalabad by CIA-backed rebels. The London *Independent* reported on 12 May that "Government troops have broken out of the besieged city of Jalalabad and are recapturing key positions taken by the mujahedin, whose strategy is in disarray. An Afghan armored column moving east, clearing the road to Torkhum on the Pakistan border, was able to recapture outposts taken by the guerrillas a few miles from the city." The dispatch from Pakistan added that "the Kabul regime has notched up big success by also reopening the road between Kabul and Jalalabad," enabling fresh supplies of ammunition to reach the city.

The American press, in particular, has been mum on this stunning loss for the U.S./Pakistani-backed *mujahedin*; the *New York Times* even tried to deny it. But confirmation keeps coming in from European sources. Thus the Munich *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (17 May) headlined their article "Rebels Confront Defeat," writing:

"Rebel sources in Pakistan confirmed and announced that the Afghan regime's troops have broken through the siege-ring of the mujahedin around Jalalabad and that the fighting around the east Afghan city has abated."

After abandoning their drive to capture Jalalabad, the reactionary guerrillas turned their fire on the town of Khost, further south, which is only six miles from the Pakistan border. According to a 16 May AP dispatch, Afghan government artillery, rockets and aircraft have killed almost 1,200 rebels since the assault on Khost was launched a week ago.

The favorable turn of events became evident on May 11 when Western papers printed reports direct from Jalalabad. For the first time since the beginning of the assault, the government flew in a dozen reporters to the besieged city. The *Los Angeles Times* (11 May) summed up the visit to the beleaguered city: "The *mujahedeens* rebels' much-ballyhooed offensive against Jalalabad has virtu-



Robert Nickelsberg

Afghan government soldiers man Soviet tank in war to the death against CIA's cutthroats.

ally ended in failure, leaving an urban nightmare of twisted metal, shattered glass, ruined streets and tens of thousands of abandoned homes." Even the *New York Times* had to report the "barage of hostility toward the United States" from residents whose relatives were killed or maimed by U.S.-supplied rockets, while claiming that it was "difficult to determine" whether this "apparent fury" was "typical."

European journalists were more forthright. Tony Allen-Mills wrote in the London *Independent* (11 May):

"Time and again we were accosted by outraged Jalalabad citizens protesting

at foreign intervention in the war. As we toured a ward in the provincial hospital, a mother began to scream that 'America' had hurt her son. She flailed at some nearby reporters, and was swiftly hustled away."

The same reporter wrote of the dramatic helicopter trip to Jalalabad in an admiring article titled, "Defying death and mujahedin with the hero pilots of Kabul." Contrary to the expectations of the *mujahedin's* U.S. and Pakistani "advisers," government soldiers didn't just cut and run as soon as Soviet troops left. Their victory at Jalalabad was made possible by the stream of Soviet arms supplies which continue to reach

Kabul, and by sheer guts and courage. "Country or coffin" is the slogan of the Jalalabad defenders.

These combat victories have vastly strengthened the position of Najibullah's left-nationalist People's Democratic Party (PDPA) government in Kabul. Rolling back the punishing siege of Jalalabad will build morale throughout the country. And by holding on to this key provincial capital on the road from the Khyber Pass to Kabul, government forces have effectively blocked rebel plans to attack the capital. The *mujahedin* can haul bazookas, Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and ammo across the mountains on their Tennessee mules (supplied by the U.S. Army), but they won't be able to bring up the heavy armor that is indispensable for taking Kabul. Despite the PDPA's backpedaling on reforms in their attempt to conciliate Islamic fundamentalists, the valor of the fighting men and women of the army and militia forces provides hope for social progress in Afghanistan.

The Times Changes Its Tune

The danger is far from over. While the rebels' morale is flagging, their paymasters in Washington want more blood. President Bush is continuing to send vast quantities of military supplies via Pakistan because, as one U.S. "adviser" told *Time* (15 May), "we still think our guys can win." However, this opinion is not shared by other sectors of the American ruling class. Most dramatic was the front-page lead in the 23 April *New York Times* which exploded the myth of the valiant Afghan "freedom fighters" supposedly struggling for "independence" from a totalitarian regime installed by Moscow:

"The frontal assault by the Afghan guerrilla forces on the key eastern town of Jalalabad was ordered by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Government at a meeting of the top civilian and military leadership of Pakistan, in the presence of the American Ambassador. ... "No Afghan was present at the meeting on March 5."

Suddenly a portion of the truth was "fit to print" in the *Times*. The "exposé" *continued on page 4*

Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund

We list here the contributions from April 9 to May 19 to the Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund (JCVAF), launched by the Partisan Defense Committee and joined by fraternal legal and social defense organizations in Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Italy and West Germany. A separate account has been established in each country for the fund drive. All funds collected are securely forwarded to the "Victims of Jalalabad" account established by the Afghan Embassy in Paris as donations clear the accounts. All administrative costs and any costs for publicity connected with the Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund campaign are being paid by the respective legal and social defense organizations in each country. Contributors receive numbered receipts, and the financial records of the fund drive are open to inspection by any bona fide workers organization. Listed are the amounts transmitted to the Afghan Embassy account, the amounts deposited in JCVAF accounts but not yet cleared, and the sum of these amounts which equals the total collected in each country. This is reported in each country's currency and in U.S. dollars, shown in brackets, at the exchange rate in effect on 19 May 1989.

| | Donations Transmitted | + | Donations Deposited (Not yet cleared) | = | Total Collected |
|---|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Australia Partisan Defence Committee Receipts Nos. 1-24 | A \$3,176.47 [\$2,424.60] | | A \$0.00 | | A \$3,176.47 [\$2,424.60] |
| Britain Partisan Defence Committee Receipts Nos. 1-100 & 2/1-2/70 | £3,619.00 [\$5,841.07] | | £56.40 [\$91.03] | | £3,675.40 [\$5,932.10] |
| Canada Partisan Defense Committee Receipts Nos. 95401-95475 | C \$3,277.44 [\$2,753.05] | | C \$535.00 [\$449.40] | | C \$3,812.44 [\$3,202.45] |
| France Comité de défense sociale Receipts Nos. 1/1-1/50 & 2/1-2/16 | FF 28,347.30 [\$4,257.76] | | FF 1,864.75 [\$280.09] | | FF 30,212.05 [\$4,537.85] |
| Italy Comitato di difesa sociale e proletaria Receipts Nos. 1-103 | L. 2,537,145 [\$1,770.93] | | L. 0 | | L. 2,537,145 [\$1,770.93] |
| United States Partisan Defense Committee Receipts Nos. 5001-5154 | US \$11,627.17 | | US \$2,736.53 | | US \$14,363.70 |
| West Germany Komitee für soziale Verteidigung Receipts Nos. 1-71 | DM 7,292.64 [\$3,695.18] | | DM 170.64 [\$86.46] | | DM 7,463.28 [\$3,781.64] |
| International Totals (in US dollars) | \$32,369.76 | | \$3,643.51 | | \$36,013.27 |

Showdown Over Abortion Rights

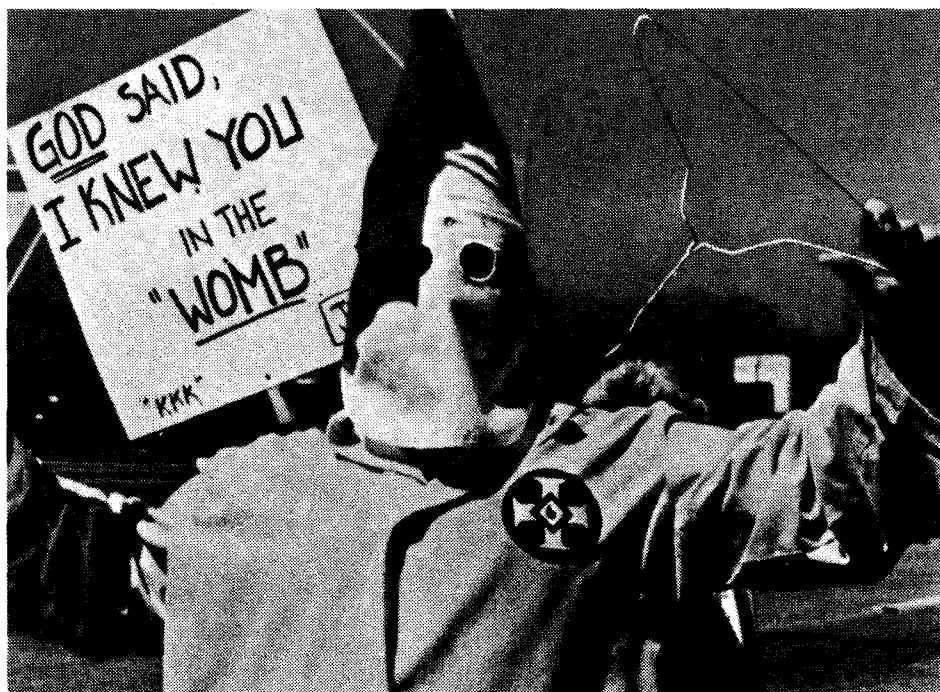
The lynching nightriders of the Ku Klux Klan paraded outside the Routh Street Women's Clinic in Dallas on April 1, wearing their white sheets and hoods. Brandishing twisted coat hangers, these fascists threatened clinic workers and women seeking abortions at the facility. This time the KKK did not pull out their shotguns and blast away, as they did in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1979. But the deadly threat was there. As the *Dallas Morning News* (2 April) reported, the Klan carried signs: "KKK Hates Abortions." A few minutes later, several dozen pro-choice demonstrators showed up, shouting "KKK go away—Women's rights are here to stay!" Across the country, women's rights are under attack by an unholy cabal ranging from the Supreme Court to the fascists on the streets.

Janie Bush, a clinic worker and president of the Texas Abortion Rights Action League, told *WV* that the Routh Street Clinic is the most visible in the Dallas area. It is often targeted by anti-woman bigots. In 1987, she said, hooded Klansmen strutted outside the facility with signs including, "Help the Klan fight Jew-run abortion" and "Three and a half million Jews in all Europe in 1939. How did six million die? The real Holocaust is abortion concentration clinics."

These cross-burning anti-woman terrorists bomb at night, while "Operation Rescue" fanatics blockade clinics in the day. These reactionaries are the paramilitary shock troops of the capitalist state, whose armed guards—the rampaging cop terrorists in blue—beat and murder black people and other minorities across the nation.

Just three days after the KKK provocation, on April 4 shotgun blasts ripped the Dallas home and car of Norma McCorvey, the "real Jane Roe," as she was preparing to go to the mammoth

Klan Targets Dallas Clinic



Fascist hand of death: Klansman brandishes coathanger outside Dallas abortion clinic, April 1.

April 9 abortion rights demonstration in Washington, D.C. McCorvey and her roommate, who were sleeping inside, narrowly escaped death. It was McCorvey's fight for her right to have an abortion that led to the 1973 Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion nationwide, a decision now under fundamental attack. Since going public with her story (a "docudrama" on her case was shown on NBC-TV May 15), McCorvey has been targeted by hate mail, harassment and vandalism, including eggs thrown at her house and baby clothes dumped on her lawn.

Dallas police said they had few leads—not surprising in the city that is the national headquarters of the John Birch Society, where abortion clinics are regularly picketed by reactionary "right-to-lifers." Last February, the Dallas AIDS Resource Center and gay groups' offices were gutted by arson in a huge fire. "Mysterious" fires also broke out in three Dallas abortion clinics last December, the same week in which Dallas judge Jack Hampton awarded a lighter sentence—30 years instead of life in prison—to a convicted murderer because his two victims were gay men! "I

put prostitutes and gays at about the same level," said the judge, "and I'd be hard put to give somebody life for killing a prostitute!" Emboldened by Hampton's remarks, six members of the KKK, wearing surgical gloves, invaded a gay and lesbian church service.

The reactionary backlash against women's rights comes straight from the top. Ronald Reagan was the KKK's favored "Klandate," and now Bush is pushing the Supreme Court justices to legalize abortion. Last week Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy blocked a 15-year-old (already 12 weeks pregnant) from having an abortion in Florida (though the next day the Court ruled the abortion could proceed). The hardest hit by the onslaught against abortion are poor and working women. Democrats and Republicans passed the 1976 Hyde Amendment banning Medicaid funds for abortion. By the next year federally funded abortions had dropped from 295,000 to 3,000 per year.

The fascist KKK and the "Operation Rescue" fanatics can and must be swept off the streets. In Dallas in February 1988, an integrated black, white and Hispanic turnout of over 600 anti-racist militants routed the Klan's attempt to march in support of the Dallas cops. In Philadelphia last November 5, a mass labor/black mobilization, initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee, spiked a KKK provocation at Independence Mall. The waves of anti-abortion bigots blockading clinics have outraged countless thousands, and increasing numbers have sought to defend the clinics. What's needed are massive mobilizations of all defenders of abortion rights, women and minorities, backed up by the power of labor, to preserve and extend women's rights and send the fascist terrorists crawling back into their holes. ■

Jalalabad Siege...

(continued from page 3)

went on to document what had been known for years, that the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence directorate "has shaped the Afghan rebel leadership," and "the Central Intelligence Agency has been the Pakistani directorate's main partner." This Company-inspired piece, which reads like some old CIA cable from Saigon, warned that the siege of Jalalabad had "bogged down" and "brought into question the ability of the guerrillas to achieve an early victory, or any victory, over the Soviet-backed Government." It's amazing what a whiff of grapeshot and a barrage of Soviet Scud-B missiles

can do to clear the minds of these cheerleaders for the *mujahedin*.

Day after day, the *Times* breathes defeatism over Afghanistan: "With Soviet Weapons to Lean On, Kabul Is No Pushover" (19 March). "The guerrillas, as well as many Western military authorities... underestimated the determination of Afghan Government soldiers to fight" (22 March). White House, State Department, CIA and military intelligence officials who "were informally predicting Kabul's collapse within several weeks of the Soviet troop withdrawal on Feb. 15 now say it could take four to six months, or even longer" (24 March). The *Times* still has Donatella Lorch sneaking into Kabul to report on the guerrillas underground. But even this rabid *mujahedin* supporter almost got nabbed by the Khad secret police. (While she may get a thrill hiding for a

couple of days under the folds of a *burqa*, the head-to-toe Afghan veil, how would Ms. Lorch like living in the forced seclusion of *pardah* for the rest of her life?)

Now the *Times* reports (3 May) that a White House official admits that the Jalalabad assault was a "disaster, a terrible mistake," and says the time may come soon for a "reappraisal" and a deal with the Soviets. This semi-official mouthpiece of imperialist opinion is reflecting a faction in Washington that wants to stave off looming disaster. As the *Times* editorialized on 3 April, "now that the Soviet forces have been withdrawn"—i.e., since they can't kill Russians anymore—"it's hard to see what American interests would be served by a fundamentalist triumph in Afghanistan." They want to bank instead on Soviet leader Gorbachev's policy of retreat and treacherous concessions to Washington, by accepting his offer of a "mutual arms cutoff" in Afghanistan.

But meanwhile death and destruction are still raining down on Afghan cities.

All the reporters who visited Jalalabad attested to the horrible slaughter and devastation wrought by the rebels, who have fired more than 130,000 rockets on the city. Even the *New York Times* noted, "Large sections have been bombed and abandoned, while others, especially the mud-walled sections of the old town, have been shattered by the unrelenting rocket and artillery attacks of rebels who have received much of their weaponry from the United States." The *Los Angeles Times* quoted an Afghan official who "said 2,000 Jalalabad civilians were killed or injured in the last two months, 60% of them children."

The graphic evidence of the criminality of the CIA-backed rebels is a powerful reason to support the Partisan Defense Committee's campaign to aid the victims of Jalalabad. We urge readers of *Workers Vanguard* to send contributions, payable to the Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund, to the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■



Friends of Afghanistan Society

Partisan Defense Committee Forum

Stop Racist "Legal" Lynchings!

Abolish the Death Penalty!

Speakers:

Don Andrews
Partisan Defense Committee

Robert Bryan
Attorney and Chairman, National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

Charles Garry
Attorney

David Stewart
Vice President, California Coalition of Black Trade Unionists

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Young Spartacus

Protest Benazir Bhutto!

The following leaflet was issued May 20 by the Spartacus Youth Club in Boston.

Ms. Benazir "Pinkie" Bhutto, prime minister of Pakistan, is coming to Harvard on June 8 to deliver the commencement address at her alma mater. Today Ms. Bhutto, like her father Ali Bhutto and the despotic General Zia who killed him, is a linchpin for the CIA's bloody Afghan war. From bases in Pakistan where they are armed, equipped and organized by the CIA, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, the ultra-reactionary *mujahedin* rain terror and destruction on Afghan civilians. For ten weeks they have tried to starve the city of Jalalabad into submission, firing rockets into Sikh temples, raping young girls, and massacring old men, women and children fleeing the besieged city. But the Afghan people have magnificently fought off these attackers whose aim is to *enslave women*, to roll back every element of social progress and incorporate Afghanistan into a greater Pakistani Islamic state.

The *mujahedin's* failure to take Jalalabad has Bhutto and Pakistan's three armed services chiefs plotting their "strategic options" (London *Independent*, 19 May). The Pakistan army is now preparing to step in: five battalions are massed on the Afghan border to bolster the *mujahedin* losers. And while the CIA's cutthroats pump hot lead into Afghan people, Ms. Bhutto is invited as an honored speaker to babble about "democracy" in Harvard Yard. We must protest this obscenity! We call on every defender of women's rights, every partisan of social progress, to join us in a picket line demonstration at 2:00 p.m. on June 8 at Harvard's Holyoke Center.

The hypocrisy of "Fair Hahvahd" is boundless. A book-burner as a university commencement speaker?? In her years as a Cliffie, "Pinkie" Bhutto delighted in the pages of Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics*, yet one of her first acts as prime minister was to outdo her domestic Islamic fundamentalist opponents in whipping up a murderous frenzy over Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*: "We banned the book because... it was in the interests of the state because it is important not to promote blasphemy" (London *Times*, 21

Hail Heroic Afghan Defense of Jalalabad!

March). Ms. Bhutto has carefully constructed two faces—one for the West and one for the East—both propped on the shoulders of the CIA, which uses Pakistan as its main launching pad for

herself) submit to arranged marriages, wear head scarves, and not soil a man's hand with a female handshake in public. In her autobiography Ms. Bhutto comes across like a noxious mix of a col-

Frontier province ruptured ties with Ms. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) over her continued aggression against Afghanistan. Now many oppressed Baluchis and Pushtuns have been forced to flee their homes for Afghanistan.

The embattled Afghan city of Jalalabad is today the front line in a looming international civil war. Afghan women are fighting for their lives. A *mujahedin* victory would mean a return to the darkness of the veil, to the bride price (the outright sale of young girls as property), to illiteracy and a lifetime of confinement in *pardah* (seclusion). The fate



Ms. Bhutto and her generals (above). Pakistani fundamentalist mob burns effigy of Salman Rushdie, whose *Satanic Verses* was banned by Bhutto.



anti-Soviet provocations in the region (Islamabad boasts one of the largest CIA stations on the planet).

What has this first female leader of an Islamic state done for the women of Pakistan? She betrayed the hopes of thousands of women who expected her to do away with the hated Haddood Ordinance against "moral offenses," under which women are condemned to death by public stoning for "adultery" and even prohibited from testifying at their own "trials." Over 3,000 women still languish in Pakistan's prisons and more are dragged in each day. Bhutto issued a *directive* that all Pakistani women should (like the pragmatic chameleon

legiate Gloria Steinem and Marie-Antoinette, who returns to her dynasty and is aghast at the coarse army men "lolling on one of Mummy's delicate blue and white brocade Louis XV chairs."

Ms. Bhutto is firmly following in the footsteps of her father Ali Bhutto, who she would have you believe was a saint. Tell it to the Bengalis, who were robbed for years by West Pakistan and then slaughtered in the war that gave birth to Bangladesh! Ms. Bhutto has quickly moved to establish a regime of nepotism and autocracy. She is her own finance minister, her own defense minister and the prime minister. Her government bleeds the poor to fund the Afghan war and oppress the many different ethnic peoples who live in the prison house that is Pakistan. With 25 percent of the population unemployed, and more living in wretched poverty (particularly women), a whopping 45 percent of public spending goes to the military. As Marxists we are for the right of self-determination for all the peoples of Pakistan: Sind, Baluchi, Pushtun and Punjabi! Only through a common mobilization of the toilers of the region under a proletarian internationalist vanguard can there be a truly democratic solution to the many sectional conflicts and the abject misery of the masses of the subcontinent.

In one breath Bhutto lectures on her democratic "deliverance" of the country, and in the next threatens to dislodge by force the elected government in the Punjab. Two weeks ago, the Awami National Party in the Northwest

of thousands of leftist refugees from Khomeini's Iran and Bhutto's Pakistan also hangs in the balance.

Since the end of World War II, it has been the conscious policy of America's imperialist rulers to shape religious fundamentalism and pre-feudal reaction as an organized force for counterrevolution. John Foster Dulles wrote in 1950: "... the religions of the East are deeply rooted and have many precious values. Their spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism. That creates a common bond between us and our task is to find and develop it."

That's exactly what the U.S. is pushing in Afghanistan. They hope to forge a dagger pointed right at the heart of the Soviet Union, where in 1917 the Russian Revolution ripped one-sixth of the globe away from the capitalist class. Nowhere is the treachery of Stalin's heirs more apparent than in Gorbachev's attempt to appease imperialism by pulling the Soviet troops from Afghanistan today.

A defeat for Ms. Bhutto and the CIA in Afghanistan would be one giant step forward for human freedom. The worldwide campaign initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee (which we in the Spartacus Youth Club support) for material aid to the victims of CIA's cutthroats in Jalalabad is an expression of solidarity that has concretely assisted our international class brothers and sisters. It is in the same spirit that we urge you to join us in protesting Ms. Bhutto at Harvard. ■



Pakistani women march through Lahore last summer protesting Islamic law which enslaves them to the veil.

Bloody Attack at Circle Campus

CIA's Afghan Thugs in Chicago

The Partisan Defense Committee's campaign for material aid to the civilian victims of the CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan has won wide support—and evidently driven some reactionaries into a frenzy. At the University of Illinois-Chicago, a gang of fanatical thugs violently assaulted two Spartacus Youth Club supporters.

Emboldened by the university administration and the police who have been riding roughshod over leftist activists on campus, the right-wing stooges escalated their threats and physical violence. On May 11, an acquaintance of the attackers delivered a death threat to our comrade Mohan Namboodiri: "They are looking for you. They want to kill you." The next day, the gang leader of the May 9 assault, one Mohammed Daoud Miraki (an Afghan who, along with his cohort Nussen Hemmat, was mistakenly identified to us by the police as Pakistani), threatened a PDC supporter, saying: "Those who call our martyrs CIA agents will live to regret it." On May 16 Miraki boasted: "I have killed so many of you people already."

Our comrades were not cowed by threats from these would-be "holy warriors" and redoubled their efforts to distribute literature and collect funds in defense of Afghan women. On May 18, the cowardly woman-hater Miraki struck again. Uttering a gross sexist epithet, Miraki assaulted PDC activist Mary Quirk, and ripped open her blouse. Her husband, Kevin Quirk, a militant in the Amalgamated Transit Union, quickly stepped in and put a decisive end to Miraki's attack.

Then the university administration and campus cops went into action—*against the victims!* William McKay, building manager of the student center, rushed in and pushed Sufyaan Mateen, a black PDC supporter, up against a plate glass door. Next came the campus cops, who arrested Kevin Quirk, cuffed Mateen and threw them both into custody! We demand: Drop the charges against Quirk and Mateen! The cops *refused* to arrest Mohammed Miraki or allow Mary Quirk to press charges against this violent creep, saying that the university's McKay was the "only credible witness"! What is this—some kind of Islamic theocracy like Pakistan where it takes the testimony of two women to equal one man?

Mohammed Daoud Miraki is the son of General Gholam Sadiq Miraki, identified in a recent issue of the *Chicago Crucible*, a right-wing student paper at the University of Chicago, as the former second-in-command of the Afghan secret police. Miraki was a spy for the *mujahedin*, and thus an agent in one of the biggest CIA operations in history. General Miraki was rewarded for his pro-imperialist treachery with a nice home in Chicago. It would appear, however, that his son thinks he can stuff his fists into the faces of women and leftist opponents of the CIA on an American college campus.

The university administration has a long and *losing* history of trying to drive the left off campus. Nine years ago the same Willie McKay "permanently barred" Spartacist activist Sandor John from the campus as an "outside agitator." Our lawsuit against this ban won free speech rights for everyone, student or not, on this state university campus—a victory the university longs to undo. On May 10, the administration brought out massive police force to spike a protest by Palestinians against Israel's racist terror. Anti-CIA protest-

ers still face criminal charges for a campus protest last fall. Now the UIC administration wants to exploit the violence of the *mujahedin* thugs to achieve their long-sought-after goal of silencing leftists. These right-wing sociopaths, aided by the cops and the administration, must not get away with intimidating the campus community!

We reprint below a leaflet issued on May 11 by the Chicago Spartacus Youth Club on the bloody attack on our comrades.

On Tuesday, 9 May at 1:00 in the afternoon, two Spartacist supporters were attacked in Circle Center while



Rightist pro-mujahedin thug Mohammed Miraki (left) led bloody assault on our comrades Mohan Namboodiri and Eric Jostad (wearing bandage).



Young Spartacus Photos

distributing literature and collecting funds in defense of Afghan women who are fighting for their lives against the CIA's cutthroats in Afghanistan. Two socialists, Mohan Namboodiri (a UIC student of Indian descent) and Eric Jostad, were threatened by several *mujahedin* supporters including two Pakistanis, Nussen Hemmat and Mohammed Miraki. These two then attacked. They pummeled Mohan's face, smashed his glasses, gouged his eye and punched his throat. Eric Jostad was punched, kicked, and slashed repeatedly on the head with the sharp edge of a metal can. A student who witnessed the assault pulled one of the thugs off Eric while another student wrapped a towel around Eric's head which was bleeding profusely. A member of the Socialist Workers Party also intervened, placing himself between Mohan Namboodiri and his assailant, which prevented our comrades from being more seriously injured.

Eric Jostad was taken by ambulance to Cabrini Hospital where doctors sewed up a half-inch-deep gash in his skull. We intend to press criminal charges.

This was a premeditated and potentially lethal bloody assault. Two young Marxists were the direct victims of this violent crime, but it was widely aimed at intimidating *everyone* who stands for elemental social decency and progress. In the last few weeks, a broad spectrum of UIC students, teachers and campus workers has responded very positively to the Partisan Defense Committee's campaign for material aid to the civilian victims of the *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. These ultra-reactionaries are armed by the CIA and organized as well by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. They want to enslave women in the veil (chador) and lock them in seclusion (purdah), shoot schoolteachers, stone

"adulterers," execute "blasphemers" and aim to annex Afghanistan into a dominant Pakistani state. But the Afghan working people are heroically fighting back and have repelled the nine-week rain of terror on the city of Jalalabad. In Afghanistan, the CIA's fundamentalist flunkies used to throw acid at the faces and legs of young women at Kabul University who refused to don the dehumanizing chador. Now UIC's would-be "holy warriors," having secured their own right to an education in the safe haven of an American college campus, attack Marxists who are fighting for the right of young Afghan women and men to have an

education and a future.

education and a future. A handful of violent elements must not be allowed to appoint themselves thought-police and intimidate the campus community. Who could be next on their hit list? Students fighting to secure women's abortion rights in this country? Students must make it clear that the right to read socialist literature and engage in leftist political activity *will be defended* on this campus. We warn the right-wing *mujahedin* thugs at UIC: your violence is a profound strategic error. The United States today is an intolerant society. Your political purpose may coincide with that of America's rapacious rulers, but ugly anti-Muslim sentiment is also rife. Don't plant mines on the fields you've chosen to walk.

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Spartacist Forum

No to the Veil—Defend Afghan Women!

**Afghanistan:
Smash CIA's Cutthroats!**

Thursday, June 15, 7:30 p.m.

P.S. 41, 116 West 11th Street

NEW YORK

11th Street near 6th Ave. For more information:
(212) 267-1025

Mayekiso Freed—Save the Delmas 3!

South Africa

Moses Mayekiso, general secretary of the 130,000-strong National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), is free from the noose of the apartheid butchers. In a victory for the working masses of South Africa and the world, the Alexandra 5—Mayekiso, his brother Mzwanele, Obed Bapela, Richard Mdakane and Paul Tshabalala—were cleared in a Johannesburg court on April 24 of all charges of sedition and subversion. When the judge announced the acquittal, the packed courtroom erupted in thunderous applause and shouts of "Amandla!" (power). At a celebration meeting held at a nearby church, Moses Mayekiso told the packed hall:

"I thank the comrades here and all the international groups which made this victory possible. With their support we have won a little bit of freedom.... They supported the working class movement here, and we will carry on the fight against apartheid and capitalism towards socialism and democracy."

But in the same week that the Alexandra 5 went free, three black freedom fighters, members of the *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, the ANC military arm, were sentenced to death. Jabu Masina, Ting-Ting Masango, and Neo Potsane are known as the Delmas 3 because of their trial's location in Delmas, a farming town 50 miles northeast of Johannes-



Moses Mayekiso and his wife Khola leave Johannesburg court.

burg. They join the more than 270 other death row prisoners in South Africa, where 97 percent of those executed since 1980 have been black. "The past 12 months have witnessed a steady tempo of kidnappings and assassinations of anti-apartheid activists," as the *Johannesburg Star* quoted a report written by noted Witwatersrand University professor and activist David Webster. Days later he himself was gunned down, on May 1. Several thousand black and white mourners attended Webster's funeral May 6, the biggest political funeral since the state of emergency was declared in June 1986.

Initially, Mayekiso and his comrades faced charges of high treason, which

carries the death penalty, accused of forming the Alexandra Action Committee, which led the revolt in the impoverished black township in February 1986. The treason charges were dropped at the start of the final argument; sedition and subversion charges were substituted. The essential charge in the case was that the five had usurped the authority of the apartheid state by establishing "organs of people's power," organizing Alexandra residents into yard, block and street committees for defense against vicious police attacks, and forming "people's courts." The *New York Times* (25 April) reported that Justice P.M. van der Walt, at the end of the 18-month trial, ruled that the state

had not proved its case and that the "defendants were only trying to upgrade living conditions in the bleak black township and were not trying to replace the township's council or render Alexandra ungovernable through protests."

After spending two years in jail as one of the "Alex 5," Mayekiso was released on bail last December. Many trade unions and left organizations took up his defense internationally, including the UAW, the Steelworkers and the International Metal Workers Federation. The fight to free the Alexandra 5 was actively supported by the Partisan Defense Committee, along with the Spartacist League/U.S. and other sections of our international tendency.

Despite the acquittal, and the dropping of treason charges, Judge van der Walt set an ominous precedent in South African law, ruling for the first time that "violence" was not a necessary element for a treason conviction, opening the way for more treason convictions on the basis of "thought crimes" against the apartheid state. As Moses Mayekiso stated at the end of the trial: "There can never be justice in apartheid, capitalist South Africa." International solidarity and hard class struggle by South African black unionists were key to freeing Moses Mayekiso—Free all victims of apartheid terror! Save the Delmas 3! Smash apartheid—For workers revolution! ■

Phone Workers:

Strike AT&T and the Baby Bells!

With union contracts for 175,000 phone workers set to expire May 27, AT&T is preparing a massive new attack on what's left of union gains—in particular, the company-paid medical plan—and threatening big layoffs. The struggle against Ma Bell promises to be a test case for the rest of the country. Yet the leaderships of the two unions involved—the Communications Workers of America (CWA) with 135,000 technicians, operators, clerks and others, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) with 40,000 workers concentrated in manufacturing—are downplaying strike talk in favor of a toothless consumer boycott and a weak-kneed "in-plant strategy" (read: work without a contract). This is a strategy of defeat—it will take a solid strike, with picket lines that *nobody* crosses, to beat the company's take-back schemes. No contract, no work!

The bosses' flagship newspaper, the *New York Times* (2 May), spelled out the attack on the medical plan, noting that the bargaining at AT&T "could set a pattern for many large corporations," starting with the seven "Baby Bell" operating companies (BOCs), whose contracts with 450,000 unionized phone workers expire in August. AT&T wants the workers to pay for a much larger part of the skyrocketing costs of the medical plan—"cost-shifting," in lawyers' jargon. One example of what this will cost workers: having a baby will go from \$55 to \$820. In addition, the company announced that some 16,000 jobs will be "phased out over the next five years," on top of

the 78,500 non-management jobs lost at AT&T alone since 1985. Meanwhile, AT&T is making money hand over fist: profits were \$594 million in the first quarter of 1989 alone, a 21 percent jump over last year.

The fact that the AT&T contract expires over two months before that of the seven BOCs—splitting the phone workers' struggle—is the product of *conscious sabotage* by CWA president Morty Bahr, who volunteered to move up the AT&T contract expiration date from August to May. When the CWA struck AT&T for a month in June 1986, Bahr enforced the companies' notorious "two-gate" policy, in which different entrances to the same workplace were created for AT&T workers and the local Bell workers. The obscene result was workers in the same union crossing each other's picket lines to work for the "non-struck" company.

Adding insult to injury, this time the AFL-CIO and CWA tops are planning "electronic picketing" instead of strike action; workers are supposed to use non-union Sprint long distance service instead of AT&T! This will have about as much impact as the AFL-CIO leaders' boycott of flying to "support" the PATCO air traffic controllers in 1981. The lesson of PATCO is that all the phone unions must *strike together to shut down AT&T and the "Baby Bells."* It will take real class struggle to win, and that requires throwing out the traitors who are running the phone unions today, replacing them with people who have a real vision of a future where the workers rule.

Black Muni Driver Sentenced

Stand By Greg Wiggins!

SAN FRANCISCO—After a six-month-long nightmare at the hands of the racist American injustice system, Greg Wiggins, a black Muni bus driver, was sentenced on April 26 to 30 days in the county jail, three years probation, outpatient psychiatric counseling, a \$100 fine plus \$25 per month for probation costs! This is an outrage!

On 19 October 1988 while Wiggins was waiting to move his bus through a traffic roadblock on Bayshore Boulevard, he was subjected to racial epithets by SF police. Then the beating by the cops began which gave Wiggins severe injuries to his neck, back and throat, and a fractured hip that has kept him in constant pain. The beating was followed up with the standard police operating procedure—trying to frame the victim, Wiggins, with phony charges of battery and resisting arrest.

On March 3, Greg Wiggins was acquitted of the cops' trumped-up charges of battery on a police officer. But with the twisted logic inherent in racist, capitalist America, that he must have done something to trigger the police violence, he was found guilty of resisting arrest. Judge Paul Alvarado gagged the defense, disallowing testimony that exposed the cops' violent records, and systematically favored the racist district attorney Farrell. The jury was chosen from a panel with almost no blacks.

Wiggins and his lawyer Tito Torres plan to appeal the March 3 verdict and the recent sentencing. Angry unionized Muni drivers, members of Transport Workers Union Local 250A, turned out daily at the court in solidarity with Greg. Unionists, from BART workers here to New York City transit workers, sent letters to the D.A. demanding the charges against Wiggins be dropped. The D.A. complained during the sentencing about the Muni drivers that attended the trial. Because of this labor support, Muni manage-



WV Photo

Greg Wiggins

ment backed off from its earlier threat to fire Greg. These labor militants must continue to stand by Wiggins!

The police have a green light from San Francisco mayor Art Agnos, the liberals' darling, to terrorize blacks, trade unionists, leftists and homosexuals. Last September, United Farm Workers leader Dolores Huerta, a personal friend of Agnos, was brutally beaten into unconsciousness by the cops at an anti-Bush demonstration. In response, Agnos gave the SF Police Officers Association its payoff for supporting his '88 mayoral campaign as his police commission completely exonerated the cops.

The struggle against racist cop terror must be taken up by the multiracial trade unions. Bay Area labor must fight to overturn the frame-up of Greg Wiggins. The TWU must demand Wiggins immediately receive retroactive workmen's comp and assault pay due him. The union must also fight for two-man crews in Muni which would give drivers added protection as well as creating hundreds of jobs. Hands off Greg Wiggins! ■

Perestroika Fuels Economic Chaos and Nationalist Upheaval

Gorbachev's Troubled Harvest

The elections in mid-March to the Congress of People's Deputies sent shock waves through the Soviet Union and around the world. Prominent Communist officials and senior military figures were defeated. Rabid nationalists gained a majority in the Baltic republics, and various "reformers" won elsewhere in the USSR. In early April at least 19 people were killed in Georgia when troops were sent in to break up nationalist protests. The *New York Times* (4 May) reports a wave of strikes "to protest pay cuts resulting from new economic laws that require factories to be more cost conscious and tie a worker's pay to output." The Soviet Union under Gorbachev has become a seething cauldron of political passions fueled above all by economic discontent and resurgent national antagonisms.

A previous article, "Soviet Elections: A Vote for What?" (*WV* No. 475, 14 April), looked at the immediate results of the elections, and also discussed how Gorbachev's market-oriented perestroika (restructuring) has worsened the economic shortages and introduced bureaucratized anarchy into Soviet industry. In particular, food shortages in the state shops, accompanied by extortionate prices in the private markets, are producing the conditions for a social explosion. Once again, as so often in the past, the imbalance between industry and agriculture is putting enormous pressure on Soviet society, from the top to the bottom.

What's wrong with Soviet agriculture? For Western bourgeois ideologues and many Gorbachevite intellectuals, the answer is simple. Stalin's forced collectivization, they contend, ruined the agrarian economy. And the only solution is a return to private farming. In fact, the neo-Bukharinites who now set the tone for Soviet intellectual life see Stalin's "great turn" of 1929-30, abandoning the market-oriented New Economic Policy (NEP), as the root of all evil in the present-day USSR. Agri-

cultural collectivization is portrayed, for example, in Anatoli Rybakov's highly acclaimed and widely read novel *Children of the Arbat*, as the product of megalomania and ideological dogmatism run riot—a kind of political madness on a grand scale.

The historical reality was very different. By 1927-28 the inner contradictions of NEP had led, as the Trotskyist

while borrowing from Western financiers to import more food. Such a policy would have simultaneously depressed the already grim conditions of the urban working class while strengthening tendencies toward capitalist restoration both from within and without.

At this point Stalin broke with the Bukharinites and lashed out at the peasantry with an unplanned, ill-conceived

after they were established that has unbalanced the Soviet economy to this day.

The Trotskyists always linked collectivization to the *modernization* of agricultural production. The 1927 *Platform of the Opposition* called for "the systematic and gradual introduction of this most numerous peasant group [the middle peasants] to the benefits of large-



Soviet-built combines harvest grain on a state farm near Saratov on the Volga.

TASS from Sovfoto

Left Opposition forewarned, to a deepening economic crisis. The better-off peasants were cutting down the acreage sown, hoarding grain and in many cases attacking Soviet officials, especially tax collectors. Growing food shortages threatened the fragile urban Soviet economy. The Left Opposition saw the only solution to preserving the unity of the urban proletariat and peasant masses (the *smychka*) in promoting collectivization and agricultural modernization (tractors and electricity). As against this, the Bukharinite Right proposed to pay peasants higher prices

and brutal policy of forced collectivization. The peasants resisted with the mass slaughter of livestock, including draft animals. An estimated three to four million peasants were either killed outright or starved to death in the famine arising from the enormous dislocation of the agrarian economy.

Anti-Communist propagandists have since wildly inflated the number of victims of Stalin's "revolution from above" as well as the Great Purges of the late '30s, claiming the number is comparable to or even worse than the Nazi Holocaust. For example, Sovietologist Robert Conquest, now of the Hoover Institution, claims the Stalin regime killed 20 million people before 1939. This figure is endorsed by the American neo-Bukharinite Stephen Cohen, who declares: "Judged only by the number of victims, and leaving aside important differences between the two regimes, Stalinism created a holocaust greater than Hitler's" (quoted by Alexander Cockburn in the *Nation*, 6 March). Cockburn points out that both Soviet and Western scholars like Stephen Wheatcroft have demonstrated "that there is no demographic evidence to indicate a population loss of more than six million between 1926 and 1939 or more than 3 or 4 million in the famine."

The weaknesses of Soviet agriculture do indeed have their roots in the Stalin era. But the blame does not lie with collectivization per se nor even primarily with the savage and destructive way it was carried out. It is rather how Stalin treated the collective farms (*kolkhozy*)

scale, mechanized, collective agriculture." However, in his one-sided concentration on heavy industry during the 1930s, Stalin kept agriculture at a primitive level. Only 10 to 15 percent of total investment was expended on state and collective farms, although these accounted for well over half the labor force. In 1940, ten years after agricultural collectivization, only 1 percent of the electric power generated in the USSR was consumed in rural areas!

To extract the maximum produce from the *kolkhozy*, procurement prices were frozen at the 1929 level despite the rapid inflation of consumer goods prices. Although real industrial wages fell sharply during the 1930s—perhaps as much as 40 percent—conditions on the collective farms were so terrible that *kolkhozniki* flooded into the cities looking for jobs. Those who could not find employment were rounded up and shipped back to their villages—or, if they resisted, to Siberian labor camps. Peasants were legally bound to the *kolkhoz*, and the whole system maintained by a totalitarian police-state regime in the countryside.

Even during Stalin's lifetime this system began to break down. The enormous social dislocations of World War II undermined the *kolkhozy*. The children of collective farmers, especially demobilized soldiers, found ways to escape the wretched fate of their parents and grandparents:

"Young people approaching working age did not want to enter the *kolkhozy* and conscripted soldiers refused to



Ogonyok

Going shopping in Gorbachev's Russia: scarcity means lines, and who polices the lines? "Such is the starting point of the power of the Soviet bureaucracy" (Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*).

return to them after completing their army service. Imprisonment or forced labor for refusal to work on the *kolkhoz* was deliberately courted as a means of getting out of the village. More and more peasant families retained only one person (usually one of the grandparents) as a *kolkhoz* member as a pretext to qualify for an allotment [private plot]. The other members of the family went on living in the village, but tried to find work elsewhere.... The result was that the rural population remained at a level of 108 to 110 million between 1947 and 1956, but the number of working *kolkhoz* members fell after 1948 by 0.5 million each year."

—Zhores Medvedev, *Soviet Agriculture* (1987)

Thus the last Stalin years saw the exodus begin of young, energetic people from the collective farms and eventually from the countryside altogether. With the relaxation of police-state controls after Stalin's death, this exodus would become a flood.

Soviet Agriculture: From Khrushchev to Brezhnev

When Stalin died in 1953, the chronic food shortages threatened the continued rapid growth of industry and urbanization. His successor, Nikita Khrushchev, declared that "solving the grain problem" was the most pressing task facing the USSR internally. To this end he greatly improved the condition of the *kolkhozniki* both as a stimulus to production and to halt the flight from the collective farms. During Khrushchev's ten-year reign procurement prices for grain were increased tenfold, for



WV Photo

Plenty of food is available in private markets for those who can afford it. But state shops, selling at low official prices, are empty.



Der Spiegel

entific footing." Agriculture ceased to be, as it had been in Stalin's day, the abused stepchild of the Soviet economy. For the past two decades over 30 percent of planned investment has gone into the *kolkhozy* and *sovkhozy*. Zhores Medvedev estimates total resources invested in agriculture (e.g., buildings, farm machinery, chemical fertilizer) roughly tripled between the mid-'60s and the mid-'80s. Initially, this greater investment paid handsome dividends. Agricultural output increased almost 30 percent between 1965 and 1970.

once vast gulf between the conditions of the rural labor force and of the urban working class has narrowed appreciably, if not disappeared entirely. A PBS television series on Russia in the mid-'80s noted that "Soviet farmers' earnings are for the first time growing at a faster rate than those of industrial and office workers." A case in point is the October collective farm in the Kuban region of southern Russia. One member, Mariya Kulinich, is an illiterate old peasant born in tsarist times. Her son Slava, a combine-harvester operator, earns three times the Soviet average national wage during the harvest period when he works twelve hours a day, seven days a week. He is even able to afford a car:

"Like most Soviet motorists he paid for it in advance and has had to wait a year for delivery. He is lucky—if he lived in one of the northern cities the wait might be much longer. Here in the south the process is relatively quick. Owning a car is still a luxury in the Soviet Union."

—Alan Bookbinder et al., *Comrades: Portraits of Soviet Life* (1985)

However, a luxury some *kolkhozniki* can afford.

Meat and Oil

Key to the exceptional internal stability of the 18-year Brezhnev reign was the marked rise in living standards. The diet of both the rural and urban population improved substantially. Meat consumption per capita increased more than 20 percent between 1970 and 1980. By the early '80s the average Soviet citizen was eating as much beef as a worker in Thatcher's England, and far more pork and fish.

Given the relatively low productivity on the *kolkhozy* and *sovkhozy*, the Brezhnev regime decided to import much of the grain needed to feed the rapidly growing Soviet livestock herd. It was able to do this due to the financial windfall from the oil-price explosion

engineered by the OPEC/Seven Sisters cartel. During the 1970s the price of oil and natural gas—the principal Soviet exports to the West—increased tenfold.

Much of this massive inflow of Western currency was expended on purchasing animal fodder from the farms of the American Midwest, the Canadian plains, Australia and Argentina. In the late '70s-early '80s Soviet imports accounted for 20 percent of world trade in foodstuffs. At the UN and other international forums, representatives from poor Third World countries even criticized Soviet agricultural policies for driving up the world market price of food.

The Kremlin oligarchy was willing to live with this diplomatic embarrassment as long as it had the money to buy social peace at the dinner table. But in 1981 the oil-price boom went bust. At the same time, the costs of extracting fossil fuel from the frozen Siberian tundra were rising sharply—a 70 percent increase from 1975 to 1985, according to Gorbachev. Addressing last year's Communist Party conference in Moscow, Gorbachev told delegates: "We covered over the entire miserable situation with the money that flowed in as a result of the oil boom. Now there is no oil boom, and we're stuck in a hole" (*Der Spiegel*, 30 January).

Soviet grain imports were hostage not only to the wild gyrations of the world oil market but also to imperialist economic warfare. When in December 1979 Brezhnev sent Soviet military forces into Afghanistan to combat the CIA's counterrevolutionary "holy warriors," the Carter administration immediately cut off food shipments to Russia. In this period the Brezhnev regime backed the bloody Argentine junta—then waging the "dirty war" against its own people—in order to placate a major supplier of foodstuffs.

In any event, by the time Brezhnev

continued on page 10



Wide World

Stalin's forced collectivization at its height: Banner calls for "Liquidation of Kulaks as a Class." Left Opposition advocated voluntary collectivization with the incentive of tractors produced by growing socialist industry.

meat fifteenfold. Yet many *kolkhozy*, especially in the non-"black earth" regions of central Russia, were so backward that even at prices many times higher they still could not cover their cost of production.

Instead of concentrating agricultural investment on improving the existing *kolkhozy* and state farms (*sovkhozy*), Khrushchev undertook an unprecedented extension of the area under cultivation. This was the so-called Virgin Land program in the semiarid steppes of southern Siberia and Kazakhstan. Initially, the project appeared wildly successful. Leonid Brezhnev first came to fame as the man who brought in a 20-million-ton grain harvest in Kazakhstan in 1956 (more than the entire output of the Ukraine that year). But soil erosion soon set in, and the dry steppe lands began to lose fertility (although these regions continue to supply a sizable share of Soviet food grains). In the early '60s harvests fell below the level attained in the late '50s. In 1964 so did Khrushchev: the failure of the Virgin Land program to solve the grain problem contributed to his ouster at the hands of Brezhnev.

The new Brezhnev regime denounced Khrushchev's "harebrained schemes" and vowed to put agriculture on a "sci-

1973 saw a record grain harvest of 225 million tons, almost double the average production of the Khrushchev decade. However, from the mid-'70s onward it became ever harder to boost farm output, while the urban population continued to swell.

At the same time, the Brezhnev era saw striking changes in the conditions and very nature of the rural labor force. A 1966 decree guaranteed collective-farm members cash payments at a rate comparable to state-farm workers performing similar tasks. Since many *kolkhozy* could not afford to make these cash payments out of their incomes, they had to borrow heavily from the State Bank. When they could not repay, they simply declared bankruptcy and transformed themselves into state farms. The *kolkhozniki* were perfectly satisfied with this outcome, which left them better off. Thus the Brezhnev years saw the wholesale self-liquidation of the *kolkhozy*, not back into private smallholding, but into state farms. In 1960 there were 22 million collective-farm members and only 7 million *sovkhoz* workers. By 1985 the number of *kolkhozniki* had fallen to 12.5 million, while state-farm workers had increased to about the same number.

During the past quarter century the



AP

Stalin and Bukharin in 1929. Their program of "socialism in one country" was a repudiation of the October Revolution.

Soviet Agriculture...

(continued from page 9)

died in 1982, the USSR no longer had the financial resources to import 20-25 percent of its grain supply and buy the advanced technology necessary to re-tool and modernize the country's aging industrial plant. At the same time, the massive investments in the *kolkhozy* and *sovkhozy* were unable to make up for reduced imports. Gorbachev complained last fall:

"The fixed production assets of agriculture in 1987 totaled 347 billion rubles, or 3.3 times larger than in 1970.... You see what huge capital investments have been made, but they are not yielding the necessary return; the state has not received what it hoped for."

—Pravda, 14 October 1988

Why not?

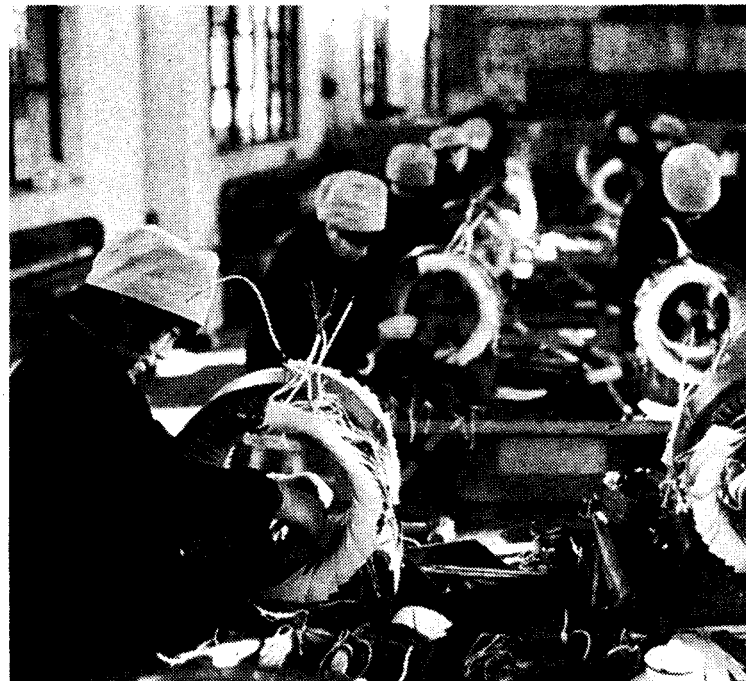
First, it should be noted that much of the output that is produced never reaches the urban consumer, due to the wretched state of rural transportation and storage facilities. (Partly due to historical fears of famine, the big Soviet grain terminals are located near the cities rather than in farm areas as in the U.S.) Many *kolkhozy* and *sovkhozy* are accessible only by dirt roads. Fruit rots on trees or in trucks bogged down in mud. Milk curdles for lack of refrigerated storage facilities. However, the basic problem with Soviet agriculture is not the underdevelopment of the transportation/distribution infrastructure.

The real problem lies in what Russians call the "*chelovecheskii faktor*" (the human factor). Modern agriculture demands a highly technically competent labor force. A big American commercial farm has on average more capital per worker than a steel mill! However, in the Soviet Union the enormous inflow of machinery, fertilizer, etc., into the state and collective farms has been accompanied by a massive outflow of the labor necessary to utilize them efficiently. For example, in the mid-1950s there were 15 drivers and mechanics for every ten tractors and combines. By the mid-'70s there were only eight drivers and mechanics for every ten farm machines they operated and serviced. Moreover, the tractors and combines had become far more technically complex.

Soviet agriculture has been crippled by the headlong flight of young, energetic and educated people from the farms to the cities. In 1970 the percentage of people in their 20s in rural areas was half what it had been a decade before. Today, many collective farms have become practically retirement villages. In 1984 the principal government newspaper, *Izvestia*, reported that of the 440 members of a typical *kolkhoz* in



Der Spiegel



Peter Paz

Two faces of Stalinist bureaucracy in China: Mao's Great Leap Forward (left) produced economic chaos; Deng opened up China to imperialist exploitation (Otis elevator factory, above).

central Russia 230 were old-age pensioners, most of them widows of Red Army veterans.

And imports can no longer compensate for these weaknesses. As Gorbachev put it last year: "We could borrow a billion dollars and with it purchase commodities, securing provisions, for a year or two. But what will we do in the third year?" So the Gorbachev regime chose to cut back sharply on food imports. But faced with the shortages now fueling popular discontent, the Soviet government has recently begun large-scale imports of grain (and other consumer goods). Thus, improving agricultural productivity has become a do-or-die issue for the advocates of perestroika.

Soviet Farmers Say Nyet to Decollectivization

Gorbachev is personally familiar with life on Soviet farms. Indeed, his father and other relatives were in the vanguard of the collectivization drive. But now he sees the only salvation in the spur of individual acquisitiveness and the whip of market competition. He blames the problems of Soviet agriculture on the fact that the rural labor force now has the mentality of proletarians, not peasant small-holders:

"What has happened is that on collective farms and state farms man has been torn away from the land, from the means of production.... A person comes to a farm as a hired laborer, in order to put in a certain number of hours doing something or other; after all, he has to earn a living. There once was a certain incentive, of course, but this worker was not what a peasant on the land, on a livestock farm, should be...."

—Pravda, 14 October 1988

Gorbachev's solution: to lease land to rural families on a permanent basis, and to allow these leaseholds to be bequeathed to the children. The Soviet leader also proposed to disband any *kolkhoz* and *sovkhos* which does not show a profit—about half the 50,000 units in the USSR—thus forcing state-farm workers and *kolkhozniki* to become private farmers, form cooperatives on a strictly "free market" basis or find jobs elsewhere. Needless to say, this proposal did not go over very well down on the farms. Yegor Ligachev, Gorbachev's conservative rival in the Kremlin, saw a chance to score some points as he demagogically told *kolkhozniki* in the Siberian city of Omsk: "We did not establish Soviet power to treat people and work collectives so shamelessly." Aware that on this issue public opinion, especially in the countryside, was behind Ligachev, Gorbachev has backed off. A key Kremlin meeting in mid-March to decide agricultural policy decreed that the division of collective farms into individual leaseholds was not mandatory; members of every *kolkhoz* could decide for themselves.

Some of the Western media is acting as if wholesale decollectivization of Soviet agriculture were about to begin. But unless the regime dismantles the *kolkhozy*, against the will of their members, not much is going to change. An opinion poll taken by the official newspaper of the Russian republic, *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (reported in the *Wall Street Journal* [10 March]), indicated that 45 percent of farmers did not favor leasing land while only 5 percent were even willing to try it! Gorbachev admits his land-leasing operation is not exactly booming:

"Leasing is also received with caution by part of the collective farmers and workers who have lost, over many years, the habit of working conscientiously and got used to steady incomes irrespective of the end results of their work."

—Atlanta Constitution, 16 March

Echoing Gorbachev, the right-wing London *Economist* (11 March) complains: "The farmers themselves have been collectivized into a rural proletariat; few of them, it seems, are keen to become hard-working peasants...." It is second nature for the haughty editors of the *Economist* to denounce the supposed "laziness" of the lower orders, whether in Thatcher's England or Gorbachev's Russia. Soviet state-farm workers and *kolkhozniki* lead a damned hard life—a hell of a lot harder than that of Kremlin bigwigs and Fleet Street editors. And they know that their lives would get even harder if they tried to survive as peasant small-holders like their grandparents.

Furthermore, the mass of Soviet working people—both in the cities and the countryside—despise the money-grubbing, price-gouging entrepreneurs

who have been spawned by perestroika. Soviet collective farmers do not want to see a new class of *kulaks* (rich peasants) flaunting their wealth and turning their less fortunate neighbors into hired hands. The *Washington Post National Weekly* (5-11 September 1988) gave a sympathetic account of the travails of one Yuri Danilov, who tried to set up a private ("cooperative") pig farm not far from Moscow:

"The cooperative members were derided as 'money grabbers' and 'new bourgeoisie.' One night, a fire broke out in their barn. There was damage, but not enough to shut down the farm. Danilov figured it was an accident, but in March another fire destroyed half the barn. No longer was there any question that it was arson. In May, someone set fire to what was left of the building, reducing it to ashes."

Soviet Working People Against "Market Socialism"

This kind of response to the emergence of petty capitalism is not unique to Russia. The same thing is happening in China. China's market-oriented "reforms" have been held up as a model for Russia both by Western bourgeois ideologues and Gorbachevite intellectuals. For example, the Moscow weekly *New Times* (10 January) ran a gushing, sophomoric piece on economic life in China: "The people in China have already had a taste of a freer and wealthier life.... In short, a Soviet visitor sees something he has never seen or has seen a long time ago: abundance." Abundance, yes, for small-time capitalists, corrupt officials and well-placed intellectuals. But not for the mass of China's workers and peasants.

And abundance for the few is secured only by the repressive police power of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. In Inner Mongolia the government provides special bodyguards to protect private entrepreneurs from their hostile neighbors. Last year in the northern city of Shenyang a young worker killed his capitalist boss and was promptly executed for it. The *New York Times* (April 6) reports that "he became a minor folk hero because the boss was regarded as a tyrant who deserved what she got." In Deng's China, popular opposition to "building socialism with capitalist methods" has been gathering gradually over the past ten years. But in Gorbachev's Russia, working-class hostility to market-oriented reforms has been strong from the outset.

For decades Cold War propagandists have depicted Russia as a totalitarian police state where the Communist despots suppress the people yearning to live like in the capitalist "free world." But since Gorbachev took over the Kremlin, Western bourgeois ideologues have reversed their line. The Soviet leader is seen as a Westernizing reformer who wants to introduce more



TASS from Sovfoto

A dining room on the Zarya Kommunizma collective farm.

NYC Restaurant Workers Strike Against "Travesty on the Green"

Central Park West at 67th Street was alive with music, chants and cheers as New York unions rallied May 17 in support of striking Tavern on the Green restaurant workers. The Musicians Union came with their instruments, there were Teamsters, city workers, and a contingent of Eastern airlines strikers, who were greeted by a sign, "Tavern Strikers Support Eastern Strikers in Solidarity." Tavern workers voted in January to join Local 6 of the Hotel Trades Council, but management refused to recognize the union, and in retaliation canceled the workers' medical insurance! As the strikers' banner says, it's "Travesty on the Green."

While New York's swank set and well-heeled tourists plunk down \$350 for dinner in the tasteless "Crystal Room" at the Tavern, America's top moneymaking eatery, in "the back of the house"

nearly 300 mainly Hispanic and black waiters, busboys and dishwashers slave at starvation wages. As *Daily News* (3 May) columnist Mike McAlary described it:

"The elegant got by the strikers too easily. Once you have found the strength to ignore a homeless man as you walk into a Broadway theater, a striking busboy offers no problem."

A woman walking her poodle on a gold leash said the strikers' chants and hollers were bothering her dog. McAlary quipped, "Only in New York could a protest against a dog's wages upset a dog."

But the Tavern strikers do not stand alone. Hundreds have come out to man picket lines. Teamsters now say they won't deliver food, and even some cab drivers are refusing to deliver the tourists to the door. Victory to the Tavern on the Green strikers! ■



New York unionists join striking restaurant workers at Tavern on the Green. WV Photo

L.A. Teachers Strike...

(continued from page 16)

is giving union cards to striking teachers to work on the docks during the strike. Teamsters have honored UTLA picket lines, halting deliveries to the schools.

But the leaders of the other key school union, Local 99 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), have issued a grossly misnamed "Strike Bulletin" to order 18,000 cafeteria workers, bus drivers, janitors and teaching assistants to *stay on the job*. Hiding behind a "no strike" clause in the Local 99 contract, the SEIU bureaucrats are not only sabotaging the teachers strike, they are knifing their own membership, whose contract expires in September. And the UTLA leadership has *discouraged* other L.A. unions from beefing up the strikers' rallies and picket lines, as

they push the line that teachers are "professionals" apart from the rest of the labor movement. Picket lines mean don't cross! A solid, militant UTLA strike backed up by the other school unions can lead to a single union for all workers in the L.A. school system!

The scabberding by the SEIU tops is aiding the attempts of the board and LAPD cops to keep the schools open. The schools have been turned into jails, where scabs are paid up to \$330 per day to force students to sit and watch reruns of "Daffy Duck" and "Pet Sematary." On the eve of the strike cops from the 77th District complained that "all these little predators" would be out on the street (*Los Angeles Times*, 15 May). This from the trigger-happy racist cops who have gunned down scores of black youths! Last fall, Los Angeles Democratic Party mayor Tom Bradley, an ex-cop who has backed the notorious LAPD to the hilt, boasted that over 20,000 youths had been arrested in their current South Africa-style "anti-gang" roundup!

The UTLA strike bulletin, "On The Line in '89," details dozens of incidents of pickets hit by scab cars. On May 22, the LAPD brutally arrested eleven teachers, including many UTLA officers, during a protest outside school board headquarters. And the cops are rounding up "truants," including student leaders who support the strike.

Much of the student and community support for the strike has come from Latinos, who comprise almost 60 percent of the student population in the L.A. schools. Student strikes in support of the UTLA earlier this year were centered in heavily Hispanic East L.A. (see "L.A. Student Walkouts Back Teachers' Demands," *WV* No. 471, 17 February). At a May 17 rally in Hollenbeck Park, several strikers carried signs that said, "I Support Bilingual Education." In a school district where 81 languages are spoken, where more than a quarter of the students are not proficient in English, there has been a racist mobilization against the bilingual education program.

Within the teachers union, racists in the Learning English Advocates Drive (LEAD) mobilized to force a vote in the UTLA against extra pay for bilingual teachers in an attempt to scuttle the program. The UTLA leadership, which had earlier balked at defending bilingual education, this time condemned the LEAD initiative, as it "pits teacher against teacher, and threatens to divide the union from the community" (*United Teacher*, 7 April). The union campaign against the LEAD initiative was crucial in winning the widespread, integrated support which has powerfully backed the strike.

The Los Angeles teachers strike is hugely popular—black, white and Latino students and their working-class parents know that if UTLA wins, everybody wins. L.A. teachers have taken a stand, and the class unity across race lines shown in the strike points to the multiracial workers party that must be forged to lead a socialist revolution that will deliver decent education and jobs for all. ■

and more elements of capitalism into the Soviet economy. But, alas, the Soviet people want no truck with "free market" economics. For example, Margie Lindsay of the London *Financial Times*, in a book expressly directed at Western businessmen, writes:

"The biggest stumbling block to the reforms, both political and economic, is the people. Until and unless Gorbachev and his Party manage to change attitudes and mentality, for all the laws, decrees, resolutions and exhortations, nothing will really change."

—Gorbachev's *Perestroika: Implications for International Business* (1988)

That house organ of international financiers, the London *Economist* (11 March), likewise laments:

"After decades of being told that the state will provide, many ordinary Russians (if not some of their more business-minded comrades in the smaller republics round Russia's rim), expect it to go on doing just that. When Mr. Gorbachev rattles on about the need for competition and a market, even a 'socialist' one, he meets blank incomprehension. Talk of unemployment and higher prices provokes outright hostility."

In their own way these Western capitalist ideologues are acknowledging the *strong elements of socialist consciousness* among Soviet working people. And this is not simply a desire for economic security—a guaranteed job and a stable cost of living. Soviet workers consider it a violation of basic social morality that some people should live, and live well, by exploiting others. The *only* genu-

inely popular economic measure of the Gorbachev regime was its earlier drive (a continuation of the campaign launched by the late Yuri Andropov) against corrupt officials, black marketeers and speculators. The highly influential Soviet sociologist Tatyana Zaslavskaya, herself an ardent advocate of market-oriented reforms, recognizes, "that such fortunes exist in our country is an outrage in the eyes of our working people. They object to the ostentatious life styles of moneyed people who do not work—an affront considered the worst kind of injustice" (*Soviet Economy*, October-December 1987).

Nonetheless, Western bourgeois ideologists and Gorbachevite "free marketeers" are right in one fundamental respect. A purely conservative economic program cannot work in Russia today. One cannot turn the calendar back to the seemingly halcyon days of the late 1960s-early '70s, when living standards were going up by 5 percent a year while the Soviet military was achieving strategic nuclear parity with the Pentagon. Dollars, deutschmarks and yen were rolling in as the world market price of Soviet oil and natural gas skyrocketed. U.S. imperialism was externally weakened and internally demoralized by the long, losing, dirty colonial war in Vietnam.

However, Brezhnev's policy of détente gave U.S. imperialism the needed breathing spell to partially recover from the "Vietnam syndrome." By the mid-'70s Washington was laying the basis for

a new Cold War offensive through Jimmy Carter's anti-Communist "human rights" crusade. To match the Pentagon arms buildup, aimed at restoring nuclear first-strike capability, the Brezhnev regime sharply cut industrial investment while trying to maintain living standards. As a result, by the early '80s the Soviet economy had entered what Gorbachev termed "a pre-crisis situation."

The Kremlin bureaucracy under Gorbachev has responded to this pre-crisis situation by dismantling centralized planning in favor of market-oriented "reforms," encouraging petty capitalist entrepreneurs and foreign investment in

joint ventures, and appeasing Western imperialism from Afghanistan to Angola. The liberal Stalinism of Gorbachev has enormously strengthened the forces of capitalist restoration, especially by fueling the poisonous passions of nationalism. To defend the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from its enemies, both within and without, the workers and collective farmers must sweep away the Kremlin oligarchy, restore genuine soviet democracy and re-establish the Soviet Union as a bastion of world revolution. Return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky!

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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China...

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demonstrate, more money for education, and disclosing the private bank accounts of top bureaucrats. But the students had tapped a deep vein of discontent, as demonstrations quickly spread to 20 cities around the country. And then came the workers, first individually, later in organized contingents. It is the hundreds of thousands of workers pouring into the center of China's capital which has stayed the hand of the bureaucracy.

Most dramatic is the immobilization of the army. Li Peng's order for a military crackdown was essentially ignored. Not only were the units which ventured into the capital surrounded by the populace, subway workers and management refused to transport them underground. The 38th Army, which is based in Beijing and includes many draftees from the capital, reportedly refused to move on the crowds. (The commander's daughter is supposed to be among the hunger strikers.) Now a letter has surfaced from seven former high-ranking military leaders, and signed by more than 100 officers, opposing bringing troops into the capital: "The army absolutely must not shoot the people" (*New York Times*, 23 May). The *Paris Libération* (18 May) quotes a former officer saying, "the situation in China currently rather resembles Hungary in 1956, except there is no possible Soviet intervention to save the regime."

In the face of this explosion of mass



Independent [London]

the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy with its constant, sharp zigzags. In the 1950s and '60s students were drawn to the utopian voluntarism of Mao Tse-tung with his promise of Great Leaps Forward and instant Cultural Revolutions. Used by Mao to terrorize intellectuals and intimidate his factional opponents in the

rampant corruption. A Japanese VCR costs the *annual wage* of an average worker.

Tremendous resentment has been building among the have-nots of Deng's China against the beneficiaries of "building socialism with capitalist methods." In one eastern Chinese city, a privately owned factory had its windows smashed and its power supply cut off, while local residents sued for a share of the profits. The owner decided to sell the plant back to the government. In Inner Mongolia the government provides special bodyguards to protect capitalist entrepreneurs from popular outrage. Now troops from Inner Mongolia are brought into Beijing to put down popular revolt. It is the seething economic discontent which turned the relatively small student protests for "democracy" into a mass upsurge that is threatening the bureaucracy's rule.

To some extent the students, a privileged, petty-bourgeois layer—in many cases themselves children of the bureaucracy—have stood opposed to the felt needs of the toiling masses. Initially they raised demands against inflation in order to reach out to the workers. But they quickly *dropped* these demands when they realized that inflation is the by-product of market-oriented policies which they by and large support. The students' hero of the moment is Zhao Ziyang, the CP general secretary, who is known as a consistent and enthusiastic supporter of Deng's economic "reforms." Moreover, Zhao's two sons are notorious examples of the corruption and nepotism the students are denouncing. As if to stress the students' self-conscious elitism, they formed cordons to keep workers from joining in the huge April 27 march by checking for student IDs!

Despite this mandarin-like disdain for commoners, the central, overriding demand of the students is "democracy."

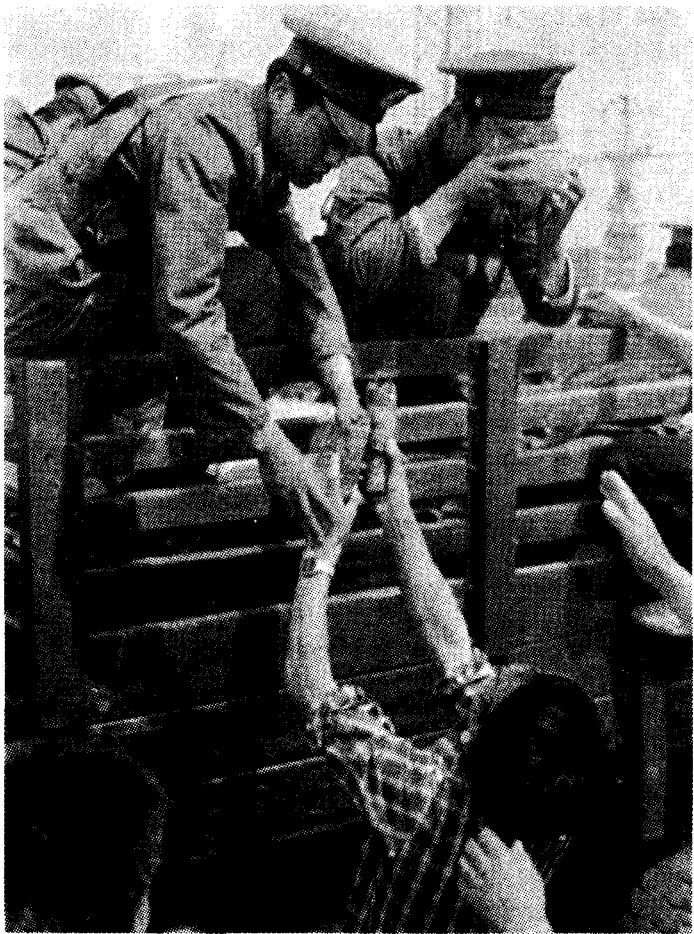
bureaucracy, the student-based Red Guards were then suppressed by the army when they got out of hand. The more troublesome ones were sent to the countryside "to learn from the peasantry." There they encountered the vast poverty of a country which has 21 percent of the world's population but only 7 percent of the planet's arable land.

A decade later a new generation of students were drawn to Deng's "Four Modernizations," but this program ended up spawning a new class of rich peasants in the countryside and petty entrepreneurs (equivalent to the Nepmen in Soviet Russia in the 1920s) in the cities. In contrast to the Soviet Union, China today is a country of extreme and visible inequalities, of conspicuous consumption amid real hardship. Anywhere you go you can buy a Japanese rice cooker, as well as domestically produced consumer goods. But the mass of urban workers cannot afford them. Nor can other state employees (minor officials) on their salaries—hence the



AP

Beijing erupts in protest as students occupy Tiananmen Square (left). They are joined by workers (above) whose banner reads "Students: The workers have arrived."



Student protesters fraternize with soldiers. Officers' letter says "People's Liberation Army" mustn't shoot the people.

discontent, Deng called for "tough tactics," to "spill blood" if necessary to stop the protests; Gorbachev warned against "hotheads." While Bush and other Western leaders worry in public about "stability" in Beijing, privately they talk of counterrevolution. But it's far from clear that the inchoate mass upsurge is going in any such direction. What the Chinese working people urgently need is *genuine communism*, a genuinely Marxist and Leninist communist party to replace the bureaucratic regime with *workers and soldiers soviets* at the head of the poor peasantry. Instead of the nationalism of the Chinese Stalinists from Mao to Deng, which has led China into a counterrevolutionary military and diplomatic alliance with the U.S. against the Soviet Union and Vietnam, what's needed is *communist unity against imperialism*.

Behind the Student Protests

The extreme volatility of Chinese student protests reflects the instability of

"I don't know exactly what democracy is," said one Tianjin University student, "but we need more of it" (*New York Times*, 28 April). Another, reflecting Chinese students' sympathy for Gorbachev's new course in the Soviet Union, said that "Gorbachev perhaps has chosen the right way to begin with political reform, but it will be a while before Chinese democracy will reach the stage of the Soviet Union." Gorbachev's glasnost may offer a degree of social truthfulness, but his market-oriented perestroika economic policies promise the growth of the kind of social inequality which Chinese workers (and many of the students) are rebelling against.

The Chinese students' enthusiasm for Gorbachev-type reforms and for "pure democracy" stems in good part from the *false* identification of militant Communism with Maoism—economic primitivism and "barracks socialism" (communal dining halls), the adventurism of the Great Leap Forward and destructive frenzy of the Cultural Revolution. Just as Stalin's crimes and perversion of Leninism have fostered liberal illusions within Gorbachev's Russia, so Mao's perversion of communism has done so in Deng's China. When Deng came to power in 1977, he benefited from popular reaction against Maoism. But now popular opposition to Deng takes the form of demanding "more democracy."

The students' thinking on how to organize "democracy" in the concrete conditions of today's China remains murky but, the yearnings of the Western and Japanese imperialists notwithstanding, it is significant that thus far there are no reports of the development of a mass pro-capitalist movement like Polish Solidarność whose leaders looked to Wall Street and revered the interwar fascist dictator Pilsudski. The analogous development on the Chinese mainland would be a movement hailing Chiang Kai-shek and



Students' poster greets Gorbachev at Peking summit.

demanding unification with Taiwan on the basis of a "free market" economy. Nonetheless, the students' illusions in classless "democracy" could help open the road to capitalist counterrevolution in China.

For Workers Soviets in China!

The workers' involvement in the recent round of demonstrations is a new, and for the bureaucracy ominous, development. One Western diplomat reported that they had to send an embassy car to pick up Chinese officials, who feared that "once they got out of their compound their drivers would join the demonstrators." The 18 May *New York Times* reported on Wednesday's massive demonstration in Beijing that "the demonstration today was the realization of one of the Government's worst nightmares—organized worker participation in what began as student protests." The *Times* has written of small isolated workers' groups calling themselves "desperados" and "kamikazes" who are roaming the streets to confront troop mobilizations. But European papers speak of mass contin-



AP
Cultural Revolution 1967: Mao used student Red Guards in bureaucratic power fight.

gents of workers. The 19 May Paris *Libération* noted:

"...workers make up the majority of the hundreds of thousands of people who marched in the streets of the Chinese capital, converging on Tiananmen Square. They came into the city on an armada of trucks, buses and all sorts of vehicles, banging drums, gongs and cymbals and waving red flags.... The demonstrations are organized by *danwei* (work units), often with the assent and even instructions of leading cadres. A change is visibly under way in the largely spontaneous oppositional movement which was dominated until yesterday by students and intellectuals desiring democratization and basic freedoms. Thursday at Tiananmen the talk was rather about wages gutted by inflation, of corruption of the cadres and incompetent leaders. Communist militants were also more numerous and visible. Several hundred of them even marched behind a banner saying: 'Xiaoping, party members demand that you leave to take a rest!'"

It was the threat of a general strike on Saturday, May 20 which reportedly led the Deng regime to declare martial law.

The workers have not taken to the streets in order to create "a beautiful, perfect system," as one of the student hunger strikers expressed his goal. They have been driven to defend their livelihood. The Chinese Stalinists' attempts to modernize the economy through reliance on the discipline of the market and the rule of bureaucratic fiat has seriously eroded the gains of even the *bureaucratically deformed* 1949 Revolution. Significantly, a number of the workers' contingents who marched into Tiananmen Square last week were carrying portraits of Mao and Chou En-lai.

But the workers have not yet entered the struggle as an *independent* political force, speaking in their own *class* interests. What's needed are *workers and soldiers soviets* (councils) as the organizing center of the proletariat standing at the head of all oppressed sections of Chinese society.

In recent years, tens of thousands of young workers have been stripped of even trade-union protection in the face of profit-gouging/job-slashing attacks by the new entrepreneurs and their Western and Japanese imperialist partners in the "special economic zones." These workers are increasingly active and conscious in their opposition to attacks on their job security and living standards. They are now faced with the threatened elimination of the system of lifetime employment, the "iron rice bowl"—a key gain of the revolution. Whereas prices scarcely rose in the first three decades after the revolution, inflation is now running at over 30 percent a year. Businesses openly flout laws forbidding child labor, while the sale of young women into marriage or prostitution is rising.

Meanwhile, ten years of Deng's Bukharinite program has almost totally decollectivized the countryside, where 80 percent of China's population still lives, and has opened the door to the Western and Japanese imperialists, objectively creating an extremely powerful force for capitalist restoration. Unlike Russia or Poland, where the bourgeoisie was basically wiped out, the Chinese bourgeoisie is alive and well and organizing from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The 4 May *New York Times* notes that Taiwan's influence on the mainland is substantial. The same article quotes a prominent Beijing economist, Wu Jinglian, who declared, "We have to build a system very close to Taiwan's...."

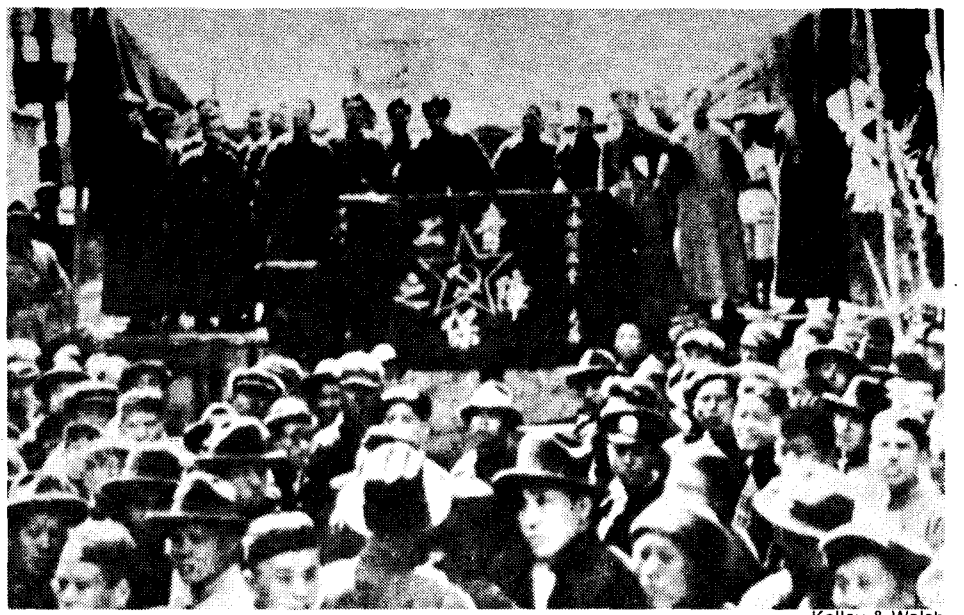
It is still, however, a long step from today's developments in China to the imperialists' goal of capitalist restoration. This would involve a series of acute social struggles culminating in a civil war. While Chinese Stalinism has certainly created conditions favoring counterrevolutionary forces, these same conditions can spark a movement leading to a proletarian political revolution based on soviets of workers which would also embrace the poorer peasants and other oppressed sections of society.

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

What is the political character of the mass protests, what are the attitudes of the participants? A statement by Wang Gang, a young designer at a Beijing sweater factory, seems typical: "The Communist Party is generally good, but the problem is that it is manipulated by a handful of people like Li Peng and his puppet Government. They claim they are practicing Communism and they use the Chinese flag as their flag, but the people of the country feel these leaders are not real Communists" (*New York Times*, 22 May). The *Times* then adds: "Many Chinese demonstrators, like Mr. Wang, believe that democracy is possible under Communism."

In fact, *only* under proletarian rule, under *soviet democracy* such as was established in Bolshevik Russia under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, can the working people rule directly in their class interests. Not even the brutal civil war, finally won by the Bolsheviks, could reverse these gains. Whence, under conditions of isolation and poverty, the rise of the parasitic Stalin bureaucracy—the model for Mao Tse-tung.

What would be the result of Western-style parliamentarism in China today? In a country where the majority of the population consists of peasants rather than workers, and where collective farming has virtually been eliminated, a parliamentary regime based on univer-

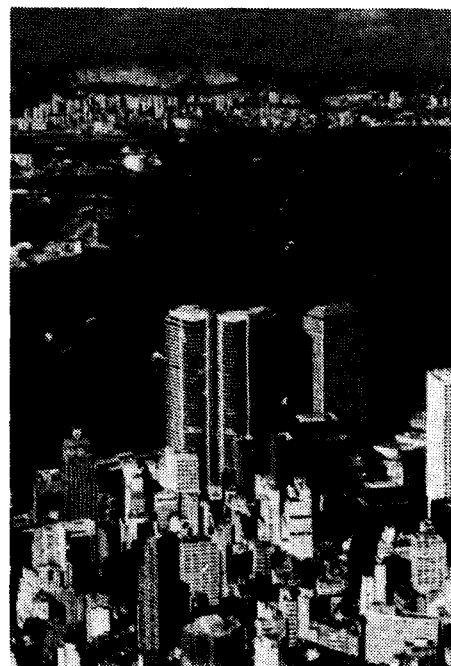


Kelley & Walsh
Spring 1927: Mass meeting of Shanghai workers on eve of Chiang Kai-shek's massacre of Shanghai's revolutionary workers.

sal suffrage would represent peasant small-holders, some of them relatively wealthy. Under the relentless pressure of the world capitalist market, these petty proprietors would become dependent on Western and Japanese industrialists and financiers...and on the Chinese of the offshore island of Taiwan and Hong Kong. "Pure democracy" could only be a bridge—a very short bridge—to bloody capitalist counterrevolution and renewed domination of China by imperialism.

Today's Chinese workers and radical intellectuals must recapture the *proletarian internationalism* which originally inspired Chinese Communism. The current student protesters like to identify themselves with the May 4th Movement of 1919. This protest movement was sparked when that exemplar of Western bourgeois democracy, Woodrow Wilson, revealed himself as just another rapacious imperialist politician by offering up Shantung to Japan, a U.S. ally in World War I. The May 4th Movement thus marked a decisive shift among the radical Chinese intelligentsia and advanced workers away from bourgeois democracy toward Bolshevism. A number of the leaders of the May 4th Movement became founders of the Chinese Communist Party, which they soon built into a mass revolutionary workers party in close collaboration with the Soviet comrades.

Despite all their heroic revolutionary struggles during the 20th century, the Chinese masses have never known the *democratic rule of workers and peasants soviets*. The national-democratic revolution of 1911, led by Sun Yat-sen, toppled the Manchu dynasty. But the aftermath was the division of China by rival warlords backed by the various imperialist powers. Under the inspiration of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution and with direct Soviet aid, during the 1920s China experienced an incipient proletarian revolution. However,



A-O-A Ltd.
Danger of capitalist restoration: Chinese capital is alive and well in Hong Kong (above) and Taiwan.

the misleadership of Stalin and Bukharin tied the Chinese Communists to the militarist Chiang Kai-shek, paving the way for Chiang's annihilation of the revolutionary proletarian vanguard in 1927. In the aftermath, a number of Chinese Communist cadre, including the party's founding leader Chen Tu-hsiu, adhered to Trotskyism, the international left opposition to Stalin's perversion of Lenin's revolutionary internationalist program. However, Chinese Trotskyism was destroyed by savage repression by Chiang's Kuomintang, while the few survivors were imprisoned under Mao.

When Mao's peasant-based Red Army overthrew Chiang's militarist clique in 1949, China experienced a *deformed* social revolution. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their forebears had been exploited from time immemorial. The rule of the murderous warlords, rapacious landlords and wretched bourgeoisie was destroyed. Barbaric practices rooted in the old Confucian order, such as the binding of women's feet, were abolished. A nation which had been ravaged and divided by imperialist powers for over a century was unified and freed from foreign subjugation. Forty years of Stalinist bureaucratic rule have undermined and now threaten these revolutionary gains. Only a proletarian political revolution can defend them and open the road to socialism.

But China's nationalist Stalinist leaders have formed an alliance with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union, a *military* alliance repeatedly consolidated in blood. Mao signed the U.S./China accord with Richard Nixon in 1972 as American bombs rained down on the Vietnamese workers and peasants. In 1979 Deng attempted a military invasion of Vietnam, and, though the attack was repelled, the Chinese bureaucracy has kept up constant military pressure on Vietnam's northern border and been the key supplier of arms to the barbarous Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea. Revolutionary-minded workers and youth in China today must demand massive aid to embattled and heroic Vietnam, and an immediate halt to Chinese aid to the CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan!

The Beijing bureaucrats' alliance with American imperialism also colors all the talk of "human rights." Today, Bush urges Chinese leaders to avoid bloodshed and not send troops against the student protesters. But barely two months ago he was soft-pedaling brutal government repression in Tibet, in which at least a dozen people were killed. The Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy is deeply nationalist, and its treatment of the Tibetan population is suffused with Han chauvinism. During the Cultural Revolution bands of Chinese destroyed more than 3,000 monasteries, and moved in massive numbers of Han settlers to swamp the native population. Of

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Panama...

(continued from page 1)

the Panamanian vote was as phony as a three "balboa" bill. (The Panamanian currency is the Yankee greenback, adorned with the likeness not of the Spanish conquistador but of George Washington.) The Americans did their best to buy the election, bankrolling the opposition to the tune of \$10 million (via the National Endowment for Democracy). The CIA set up a clandestine radio station so secret that nobody listened to it. And they sent in scores of "election observers" including former presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, plus Bush's own bipartisan "dirty tricks" team headed by the two Senators from Florida who called for taking back the Canal almost from the minute they landed at the U.S.' Albrook Air Force Base.

Subtlety is not Noriega's strong point, so when election returns were running three to one against the official candidate, his brother-in-law Carlos Duque, the general dispatched soldiers to seize the vote tallies. Then he staged a classic *autogolpe* (self-coup) by annulling the elections on account of fraud. When pro-government "Dignity Battalions" beat opposition presidential contender Endara and vice presidential candidates Arias Calderón and Guillermo Ford bloody, with TV cameras rolling, Bush saw his chance. If Libya's Colonel Qaddafi was the bogeyman of the Reagan administration, the target of virulent "terrorist" hysteria-mongering and murderous bombing raids whenever U.S. imperialism needed a distraction from some foreign policy disaster, Noriega has been cast in that role by Bush. The pictures flashed around the

world of bloodsoaked Guillermo Ford were exactly what the U.S. was looking for.

Bush sent in 70 C-141 transports loaded up with infantry and armor, yanked out the American ambassador and demanded backing from the Organization of American States, that "Yankee ministry of colonies," as Che Guevara dubbed it. In return for promising to fork over some of the \$50 million in back U.S. dues, he got a resolution, rewritten to Washington's specifications, accusing Noriega of "abuses" in Panama and sending an OAS delegation to "investigate." Noriega replied that "Today it's Panama, tomorrow it will be the other countries, because this is a United States mechanism for aggression" (*New York Times*,

18 May). Bush obviously wants to pull another Grenada, recalling Reagan's rape of the tiny black Caribbean island. But a lot of Panamanians know the Yankees too well to welcome an invasion. We say: "U.S. troops out of Panama, now, all of 'em!"

Up the Canal Without a Paddle

"The fact is that, except for Puerto Rico, no other Latin American country has been so dominated by the United States, suffering 18 military interventions and the continuous occupation of the Canal Zone," wrote the North American Congress on Latin America (*Report on the Americas*, July-August 1988). Southcom's HQ in the former Canal Zone is the largest U.S. military station in Latin America, the launching

pad for U.S. support to the contras, spy flights over El Salvador and Nicaragua, and dispatching troops for imperialist adventures in the Caribbean. The massive U.S. military presence a decade after the Canal was supposedly transferred to Panamanian sovereignty is a very sore subject locally. Even opposition candidate Endara declared, "We are not in accord with military intervention by any country. It will cause more problems than it solves."

While Bush intoned that "the crisis in Panama is a conflict between Noriega and the people of Panama," in fact the country is wracked with big class and race divisions. The opposition is headed by the inbred aristocracy who ran it as a private "cousins' republic" for three-quarters of a century. And the anti-government "civic" demonstrators consist of young professionals who made it big in the banking boom following the signing of the 1977 Canal treaties. In this combination Zürich/Miami by the Canal, they live in Florida-style subdivisions and work in U.S.-owned "offshore" banks whose Swiss-style numbered accounts facilitate money laundering, whether for the CIA or drug mafias. The upper-class opposition is known locally as *rabiblanco*s, or "white tails," referring both to its tendency to turn tail and to its racial composition.

The *rabiblanco*s are filled with contempt for Panama's poor, black and mestizo population. But to the chagrin of the country club set, that is who has the guns. As the *New York Times* (17 May) noted:

"In Panama, unlike many Latin American countries, the officers do not come from the social and economic elite. The armed forces are mostly recruited from the poor of Panama.... The soldiers are poorly educated and loyal to leaders that take care of them and their families.



U.S.-supported opposition vice presidential candidate Guillermo ("Billy") Ford is beaten by Noriega's "Dignity Battalion" thugs.

China...

(continued from page 13)

course, the various lamas (Tibetan religious leaders) see themselves as the living incarnation of counterrevolution, and the Dalai Lama led a CIA-aided feudalist uprising in 1959. But Marxists oppose the racist notion of "reactionary peoples" that are to be obliterated. Chinese revolutionaries must reject the Great Han chauvinism which has characterized the bureaucracy's policies toward all national minorities: Uighurs, Mongols, Koreans, etc.

For Leninist Internationalism

Without the Soviet Union the People's Republic of China would simply not exist. Despite Stalin's treachery, Soviet-supplied arms were key to the victory of the Red Army over Chiang and in enabling China to prevent U.S. imperialism from overrunning the Korean peninsula in 1950. Only fear of widening the war to the Soviet Union prevented the U.S. from atom-bombing China during the Korean War. In itself, the fact that Soviet and Chinese leaders are today on better terms represents a net loss for imperialism. Deng, after all, has been Washington's pre-eminent anti-Soviet ally. But the preconditions for this *rapprochement* are dangerous indeed: Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Kremlin pressure on Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia, and economic "reforms" which strengthen capitalist-restorationist forces at the expense of the working people.

For diplomatic reasons, imperialist leaders have been circumspect in their public comments on the events in Beijing. But their journalistic mouthpieces are more blunt. *Der Spiegel's* 22 May cover story headlined: "Uproar in China: The End of Communism?" The uproar in China is the result of a deep crisis, not of communism and Marxism but of decades of Stalinist bureaucratic rule. This is recognized by such high-

ranking Soviet spokesmen as *Izvestia's* top political commentator Aleksandr Bovin, who said in a recent interview with the *Los Angeles Times* (15 May):

"What we have is Stalinism. It may be neo-Stalinism or Maoist Stalinism or Brezhnevian Stalinism or some other sort of Stalinism. But what we are trying to change, here in the Soviet Union and in China, is a system created by Stalin."

But the "solutions" put forward by Gorbachev and Deng and the rest of the bureaucratic "reformers" have nothing in common with the program of communism. In fact, they directly threaten the revolutionary underpinnings of workers rule.

Today Chinese workers can't afford to buy the necessities of life, Russian workers can't find them in the stores... and Polish workers in the Lenin Shipyard find their jobs on the chopping block. Less than a decade ago, the Polish workers, goaded by the gross economic mismanagement of the bureaucratic Stalinist rulers, under the leadership of Solidarność consolidated around an anti-socialist program in the interests of the Vatican, West German and Wall Street bankers, and the CIA. So today the hated Stalinist regime is now carrying out part of Solidarność' program—by laying off thousands in the shipyards at the behest of the bloodsucking International Monetary Fund. The situation cries out for an authentic communist opposition to recover the historically socialist traditions of the Polish proletariat.

It is the Trotskyists who stand with the Afghan defenders of Jalalabad against the murderous *mujahedin* backed by the U.S. and China; the Trotskyists who defend Polish strikers against their Solidarność leaders and Stalinist rulers in league with the IMF bankers; who call for communist unity of Chinese and Russian workers against imperialism, through proletarian political revolution from Beijing to Moscow and in the rest of the Soviet bloc.

Given China's economic backwardness, the Stalinist program of building

"socialism in one country" is more obviously utopian than in the Soviet Union. The efforts of the nationalist bureaucracy in Beijing, from Mao to Deng, to rapidly transform China into a great world power have led to one dead end after another. Socialist construction in China is integrally linked to extending the revolution to the advanced capitalist countries, especially Japan, the industrial powerhouse of Asia. The road to the modernization of China can only be based on international socialist planning. No step can be taken on this road without breaking China from the imperialist warmongers in Washington.

Time magazine (29 May) commented with uncommon insight for a bourgeois journal:

"Thus China's turmoil is not surprising in light of its inhabitants' mounting

frustrations. Nonetheless, true revolutions, as opposed to coups or intermittent mass protests, are extremely rare and all but unheard of in situations in which the state wields so much force. Without a core of ideologically inspired revolutionaries, without its own Jacobins, Bolsheviks or even latter-day Long Marchers, China is unlikely to have a full-scale revolution."

As Leon Trotsky insisted half a century ago, "the historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership." For the struggles of the Chinese students and workers to avoid the trap of bureaucratic co-optation, or worse, serving to strengthen the forces of capitalist reaction, a Trotskyist party of the proletariat must be built in China, part of the struggle to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. ■

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Roman Orozco
Noriega uses nationalist rhetoric against U.S. attacks to rally support among Panamanian minorities and poor.

"General Noriega has closely identified himself with the poor and keeps their loyalty. His paramilitary Dignity Battalions, which apparently carried out the beating of opposition candidates last week, were recruited among the unemployed...."

Pockmarked Noriega, locally known as "pineapple face," is a prime example—and in a country where some one-third of the families were barely surviving before the crisis began, the patronage of Noriega's army is a powerful incentive. Furthermore, the *rabiblanco*'s "bosses' strikes" have thrown the Panamanian workers out of work and closed the stores where they bought food; over the last year, soup kitchens have sprung up around the country.

Panama's minorities in particular know all too well that the U.S. is no friend of theirs. Not only were thousands of Caribbean black laborers imported to build the Canal, but they died from accidents and disease in proportions far above their numbers. "It was nothing less than slavery," said one retired black union leader, whose father died on the Canal (*New York Times*, 16 May). The Americans, these paragons of the "free world," also introduced and maintained strict racial segregation in the Canal Zone. Much of the Panamanian poor and middle class hates Noriega, but they have no use for the "opposition" either. A popular slogan at Panama's national university is "Neither the *rabiblanco*s nor the dictatorship."

The aggressively white, technocratic opposition's protests during 1987-88 were mostly limited to honking from their comfortably air-conditioned cars and banging pots and pans from balconies. And often they didn't even go that far:

"As General Noriega refused to fall before the protests his opponents had, by September last year [1987], lost their stomach for battle. A few hot-heads made tape recordings of honking horns and bashed pots and pans and played them at full volume out of street-facing stereo speakers.

"But 'confrontation,' as they call it, was finally called off after word spread that the general had flown in 50 Aids victims from Miami especially to sodomise captured protesters."

—*London Independent*
 (1 March 1988)

In the days following the elections, as Noriega failed to topple in the breeze from the waving handkerchiefs of the opposition and a May 17 "general strike" fizzled, they started to get "yuppie flu" from the tension, complaining of sniffles, sneezing, upset stomachs and bad dreams!

Moreover, as *New York Times* reporter Lindsey Gruson pointed out in response to charges by the U.S. ambassador that Noriega was trying to as-

sassinate opposition vice presidential candidate Ford, while the government "routinely uses torture," human rights groups "note that unlike most countries in the region except Costa Rica, political killings in Panama are rare, and even opposition leaders said an attack of the kind portrayed by the Ambassador was uncharacteristic of General Noriega" (*New York Times*, 17 May). Compare this to the U.S.-initiated death squads in El Salvador, who have killed tens of thousands of workers and leftists, or the CIA's contra cutthroats in Nicaragua, who routinely murder peasants and attack government health clinics and schools!

While he is now spouting nationalist slogans, Noriega is certainly no defender of Panamanian independence. To the contrary, for years he was on the CIA's payroll as a prized "asset," becoming the second-highest-paid U.S. government employee after the president himself. The Company's ardor cooled, however, when Noriega, for reasons best known to himself, refused to go along with a December 1985 proposal by then-National Security Advisor Admiral Poindexter and Ollie North, of Contragate fame, to aid a planned invasion of Nicaragua. So the Reagan administration decided to pressure Noriega out with a Florida indictment on drug trafficking charges. (The same U.S. Attorney, Leon Kellner, who indicted Noriega also quashed the prosecution of Contragate drug-and-arms

Spartacist contingent in May 16 Times Square demonstration against U.S. imperialist intervention in Panama.



traffickers on then-Attorney General Ed Meese's orders.)

By screaming "Drugs!" Reagan and Bush hoped to get an easy score in Panama and make up for their frustrations in Nicaragua and the Contragate fiasco, all with the full backing of Congress. But Noriega didn't take the hint and stayed put, leaving the U.S. exposed as an imperialist colossus with feet of clay. Florida Democratic Senator Bob Graham ominously remarks:

"If Noriega can get away with stealing this election from the Panamanian people, then a destructive precedent will have been set concerning Nicaragua's election, scheduled for next February. Thus, the future of Panama is directly linked with the future of democracy in this hemisphere."

—*Los Angeles Times* (12 May)

Graham would like to send the Marines into Panama City, rip up the 1977 Canal treaties and then go on to Managua. But if Reagan couldn't pull it off with his loser contras, Bush isn't likely to either.

For a Socialist United States of Central and South America!

In the wake of the 1810-1820 Latin American revolts against Spain, many of them financed and armed by Great Britain, U.S. president James Monroe warned the British against empire-building in the Western Hemisphere. Ever since, while advocating an "open door" in the Far East and other colonial regions, the United States has tried to keep the door closed on European pow-

Oligarchy-led opposition known as "white tails" demonstrate May 17.



ers and, recently, Japan fooling around in its "own backyard." Add to this imperial arrogance Washington's Cold War crusade against Communism. So today, though the Canal's importance as a naval avenue is diminished since the U.S. Navy's biggest ships can't squeeze through it, Panama is a key financial and transportation crossroads of Latin America, and Washington and Wall Street will fight to hold on to their neocolony.

The left press has focused on Panamanian "national sovereignty" as codified in the treaties signed by President Carter and General Omar Torrijos in

Canal treaties" (*People's Daily World*, 11 May). Yet Panamanian "sovereignty" under Torrijos or Noriega is a fiction. This appeal to the Carter treaties legitimizes the presence of 17 military bases in the former Canal Zone and the U.S.' supposed "right" to intervene in Panama (under the so-called "DiConcini Condition").

The petty-bourgeois nationalist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua stated that "if the United States intervenes militarily in Panama, we Nicaraguans will know how to act in accordance with our Latin Americanist spirit" (*New York Times*, 11 May). But in the face of Bush's waving the Big Stick over Noriega, Latin American rulers have crawled before Washington. The answer to the bribes, loans, threats and military intervention which have held Latin America in thrall, subjecting the millions to plunder and starvation at the hands of the imperialists and their local junior partners, is not nationalist rhetoric but internationalist class struggle, including in the heart of the colossus of the north. Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, stated the case plainly over 50 years ago:

"The American bourgeoisie, which was able during its historic rise to unite into one federation the northern half of the American continent, now uses all its power, which grew out of this, to disunite, weaken and enslave the southern half. South and Central America will be able to tear themselves out of backwardness and enslavement only by uniting all their states into one powerful federation. But it is not the belated South American bourgeoisie, a thoroughly venal agency of foreign imperialism, who will be called upon to solve this task, but the young South American proletariat, the chosen leader of the oppressed masses. The slogan in the struggle against violence and intrigues of world imperialism and against the bloody work of native comprador cliques is therefore: the *Soviet United States of South and Central America*."
 —Leon Trotsky, "War and the Fourth International" (1934) ■

the late '70s. Thus the rad-lib *Guardian* (17 May) says that "defending Panama's sovereignty also involves organizing to demand that Bush honor the 1979 [sic] Panama Canal Treaty." The Communist Party, whose Panamanian comrades are part of the pro-Noriega coalition, frets that "the United States will use Noriega as an excuse to abrogate the

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SPARTACIST
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¡Guerra a muerte contra las bandas asesinas de la CIA!

Batalla por Afganistán

Página 4

Partido del gobierno radical-socialista apoya se alian para combatir a las "guerrillas asesinas" de la CIA.

¡No al velo—Defender a las mujeres afganas!

¡Apoyar a las víctimas de los asesinatos de la CIA en Jalalabad!...2

¡Por apoyo militar internacionalista al gobierno de Afganistán!...5

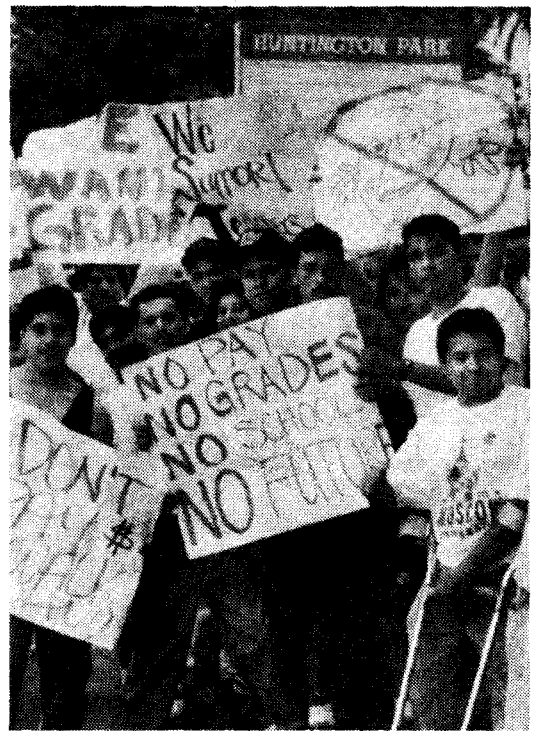
WORKERS VANGUARD

Students Join Teachers on the Line

Victory to L.A. Teachers Strike!

LOS ANGELES, May 22—Over 23,000 teachers here have struck the Los Angeles Unified School District for the first time in 19 years. Thousands of pickets, members of the United Teachers—Los Angeles (UTLA), rallied across the city and surrounded schools with picket lines on May 15. School board head Leonard Britton had dared the union to strike, in an attempt to break the back of a union protest. Since February teachers have been withholding grades in order to force the board to negotiate a contract after 15 months of bargaining. After a week the strike is solid, as UTLA holds out for its demands of a two-year, 21 percent wage increase and more power over curriculum, schedules, teaching methods and school budgets.

Many non-union substitute teachers have joined the lines and there has been a huge outpouring of student and community support for the strikers. On the second day of the strike, teachers rallied in Exposition Park and then marched to nearby Manual Arts High School, surrounding it with a picket line of 2,000 which swelled with students. The same day, 500 Franklin High School students staged a "jumpout" to join teachers' picket lines. Escaping the police and school administrators who



Teachers rally in Exposition Park on May 19 (left). Students have poured out of the schools to support the strike.

had locked them in, students climbed over fences and tied up traffic in solidarity with UTLA.

Workers and minorities in the scores of communities that make up the L.A.

school district—the second largest in the nation, with 594,000 students and 32,000 teaching employees—recognize that a victory for UTLA is crucial for labor in low-wage, non-union South-

ern California, and particularly for the future of the heavily minority students. Local 13 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union

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Explosion on the Third Rail

NYC Transit

On the graveyard shift May 17 on the A line under Brooklyn, subway workers were removing a cracked rail with a pinch bar. The adjacent 600-volt "third rail" was left on while they did their job. Suddenly, the half-ton rail sprung loose, there was a huge explosion, and the 12 transit workers were engulfed in a fireball.

Track workers Norman Anthony, Tyrone Vaughn and Philip Boone were taken to the burn unit of New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center with second- and third-degree burns over large sections of their faces and bodies. Anthony and Vaughn remain in critical condition as we go to press.

This was no accident! *It was the result of deliberate NYC Transit Authority policy.* And it has happened before. The obsolete exposed "apron" that bridged two sections of the covered 600-volt third rail on the curve where the men were working was supposed to be removed, along with 355 others, after a similar accident severely burned track worker Charles Hart in June 1986. It was this "apron," covered only with the 1/4-inch rubber mat laid over it by the workers, that was contacted by the rail, producing the short circuit and resulting fireball. But anyone who gives a damn about workers' lives can see



Track gang in NYC subways. "Death on the tracks" is transit bosses' policy.

instantly that when work is being done inches from the third rail, *power must be shut off!*

TA president David Gunn *now* says he's going to "err on the side of safety" and "put the burden of proof on justifying why [the power] should be turned on" when track is replaced. This cynical hedging from a union-buster who has

helped turn the NYC transit system into a deathtrap is small consolation for the injured track workers and their families, who ought to sue the TA for millions!

When two signal workers were run over last March by a train that couldn't be stopped in time, the TA first checked the urine of the horrified motorman for drugs and alcohol, then decided to hang

the dead men. But it was TA policy *not* to inform train operators that Stewart Melsinker and David Davis were on the tracks at Astor Place station. They died the victims of a deceitful system that substitutes workers' blood for capital investment.

NYC transit workers are members of the powerful Transport Workers Union Local 100. Militants in the Committee for a Fighting TWU are fighting for elected union safety committees with the power to *shut down* unsafe and dangerous work on the spot (see "New York Transit: Death on the Tracks," *WV* 475, 14 April).

But the TWU bureaucrats who run the union (and who can't even pronounce the word "strike") look for every opportunity to cut a deal with management when workers' lives are at stake. Local 100 president Sonny Hall alibied the bosses when Melsinker and Davis were killed; then laid a wreath at Astor Place as part of a hollow AFL-CIO-sponsored "Worker's Memorial Day," whose slogan might as well have been "Mourn the Not Yet Dead." As the transit militants wrote:

"Sonny Hall says: 'Do It and Grieve It Later.' That means 'Die First and Grieve It Later'.... The only way workers have ever won anything, including safety in the workplace, is by wielding their power in defiance of the bosses' laws.... We spend every day in the tunnels and barns and under the buses and cars and we know what works. Without us, the city doesn't move. You can bet if we ran transit, we'd make it run safe!" ■