

Young Spartacus

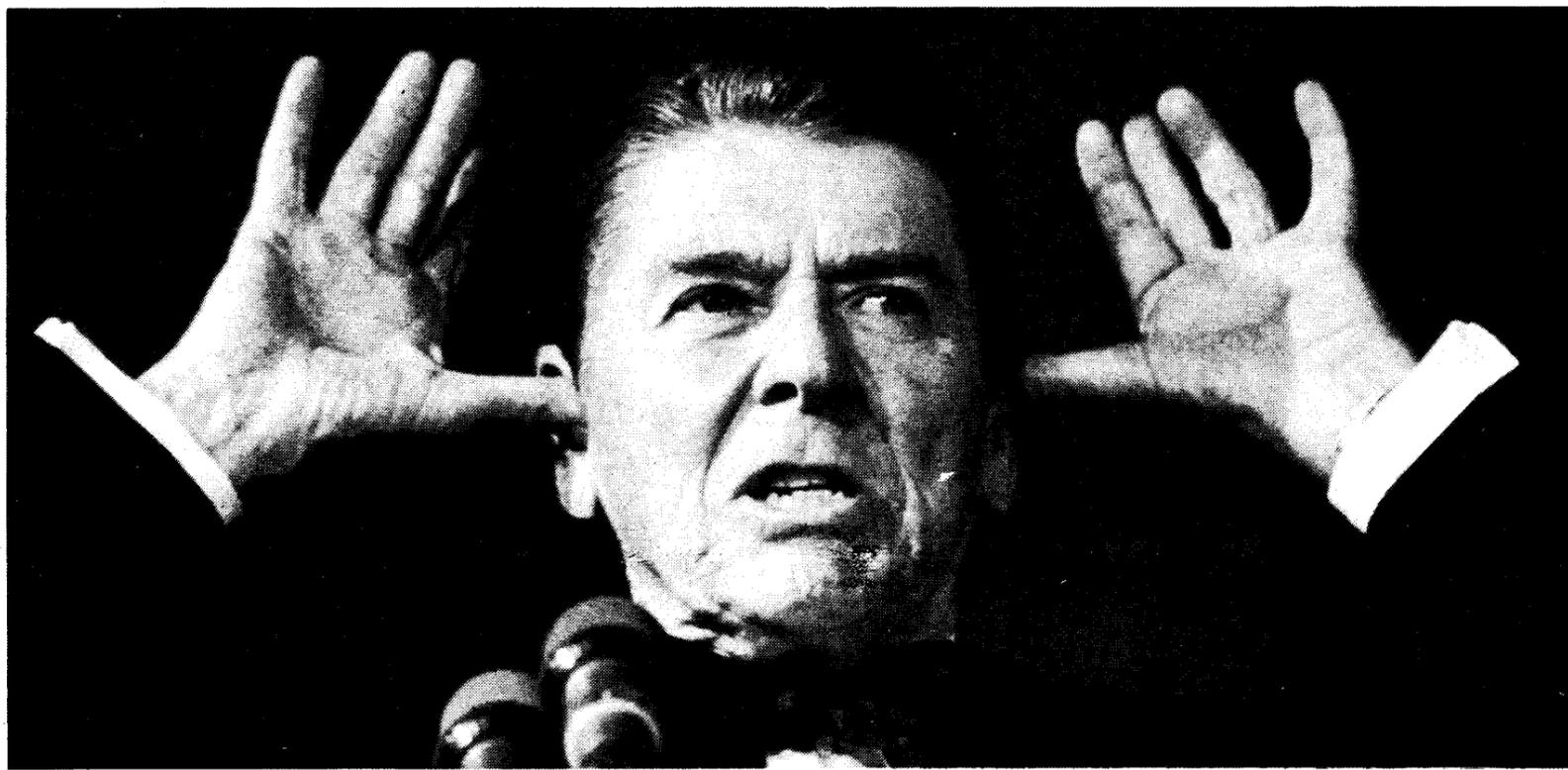
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MAY 1984

Reagan: Anti-Communist Nut



UPI

Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive has now come home to hit many Americans where they live—in front of their TV sets, watching sports. Reagan is on a fanatical campaign to gear up the American population for war against the Soviet Union, so he incited a campaign of intimidation, harassment and violence against the Soviet Olympic team. But, foregoing the temptation of parading numerous gold medal winners in Reagan's face, the Soviets have told Reagan to take his games and shove it. To the consternation of many sports fans the withdrawal of East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, Laos, Afghanistan, Mongolia and Hungary, with the Cubans and Poles expected to follow, deprives the 1984 Olympics of its finest athletes. The games now promise to be a dismal financial and athletic failure, a fitting epitaph for the "first free enterprise Olympics."

As evidenced by his May 9 speech on Central America, which featured the right-wing wet dream of a Sandinista-Cuban plot in connivance with the Libyans, PLO and Kremlin to spread "chaos and anarchy toward the American border," Ronald Reagan is a traditional American anti-Communist fanatic. But far from being a lunatic on the fringe of American politics, Reagan is the president of the United States.

Russians Stand Up to U.S. Olympics Provocations

And while the Democrats might differ with a few of Reagan's more outrageous anti-Soviet provocations, Reagan has bipartisan support for his drive to overcome the "Vietnam syndrome" so U.S. imperialism can wage war against Russia.

From Carter's attempt to coerce Soviet ballerina Ludmila Vlasova to "defect" to the U.S. by holding an Aeroflot jetliner at Kennedy airport for three days in August 1979, to the cruel kidnapping of 13-year-old brat Walter Polovchak from his Soviet parents in July 1980, the Democrats paved the way for Reagan's more serious anti-Soviet provocations: ramming Soviet subs in the Sea of Japan, mining Nicaraguan harbors and blowing holes in Soviet

ships, manhandling Soviet diplomats during the invasion of Grenada. Then there was the use of Korean Air Lines Flight 007, a civilian airliner carrying 247 passengers, to test Soviet air defenses. The list of provocations is endless and world wars have started for less than some of them. The fact that Soviet and American athletes can't meet on the sports field (especially on American soil) is just more evidence of the war intentions of U.S. imperialism.

"Who Wants to Be Killed or Humiliated?"

The Americans are crying so many sour California grapes, claiming that the Soviet withdrawal is nothing more than revenge for the U.S. imperialist boycott

of the 1980 Moscow Olympics to protest Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Well, Reagan supported Carter's 1980 boycott and at the time he called for the cancellation of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. As president, Reagan has done everything possible to turn the Los Angeles Olympics into an anti-Communist extravaganza. Far from engaging in a tit-for-tat boycott, the Soviets have simply said "nyet" to Reagan's attempt to use the Olympics for another round of anti-Soviet provocations.

The Reagan administration was collaborating in particular with a melange of right-wing crackpots, South Korean anti-Communists and East European émigrés known as the "Ban the Soviets Coalition," which planned to "recruit" defectors and had set up a network of "safe houses" for this purpose. David Balsiger, an advertising executive who is the group's main spokesman, met several times with administration officials at the White House and has frequently been a guest on programs of the CIA's Radio Free Europe.

In response to expressed Soviet concerns that far-right fringe groups like the "Ban the Soviets" crowd would stage provocative, probably violent, anti-Soviet demonstrations the Reagan

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LONG LIVE THE FRENCH REVOLUTION! See page 6

Letters

Blacks and School Prayer

8 May 1984
Chicago, Illinois

To the Editor:

In the article on school prayer ("To Hell with School Prayer!", *Young Spartacus* No. 117, April 1984), an aspect that was not addressed was the influence of religion in black America. While you have Reagan and Falwell in the forefront, the attempt to reinstitute school prayer also extends to black politicians, first and foremost black Democrat presidential candidate Jesse Jackson. Jackson has come out in favor of "voluntary" prayer in schools. Also at the time of the Congressional discussion

parcel of his courting the racist Southern vote for the Democrats. He's for prayer, he whistles Dixie with arch racists George Wallace and Governor Faubus of Arkansas. He denounces busing while calling for racist quotas on Japanese products. Yes, there is a reason why the Dixiecrats look kindly upon Jesse Jackson as one of the "good ones."

Throughout American history most black leaders have had some link to the black church. Also religion was a significant part of the school day in black Southern schools. Before the rise of the CIO the only place where blacks



All in the family... Democratic Party hustler Jesse Jackson in cozy chat with infamous racist and fellow Democrat George "Segregation Forever" Wallace. An advocate of "voluntary" prayer in the schools, Jackson plays into the hands of racist, fundamentalist reaction.

on the school prayer amendment, several black sport and entertainment personalities rose to join hands with the racist bible thumpers. One-time footballer and Robert Kennedy's ex-bodyguard Rosey Grier not only spoke out in favor of the prayer amendment but also endorsed the campaign of Jesse Helms, the racist Republican from North Carolina. Grier states that he "want[s] to see men in political office who know God and want to serve God" (*USA Today*, 7 May 1984). Jesse Jackson, while not supporting the school prayer amendment, does come out foursquare for "voluntary" prayer. This is due not solely to Jackson being a preacher. For Jesse this is part and

could organize was the church. Black churches were often targets of racist vigilante attack. This explains the support to the amendment in some sections of the black population.

Regardless of some black support, as the *Young Spartacus* article pointed out, this issue has galvanized white racist sectors of society. A good example of this is the case of Ishmael Jaffree. Against heavy odds, Jaffree, a resident of Mobile, Alabama, challenged Alabama's law that allowed teacher-led prayer in public schools. After a long and expensive battle, he won in the U.S. Supreme Court. This was 20 years after the original laws were passed in regards to such matters. Jaffree's case has

Racist Massacre at Fort Pillow, 1864

3/18/84 dispatch afterwards:

To the Editor:

One hundred twenty years ago this month, the Union garrison at Fort Pillow, Tennessee fell to rebel forces. After the surrender of the fort, hundreds of black soldiers were massacred. It was an event which galvanized the will and determination of the black freedmen to carry the Civil War to the bitter end, no matter what the cost.

Before the Civil War, Nathan Bedford Forrest was a slave trader. After the Civil War he led the Ku Klux Klan. On April 12, 1864, he was the Confederate General commanding the forces surrounding Fort Pillow. After hard fighting and numerous casualties, the troops remaining inside the garrison—half black and half white—surrendered. What followed was probably the worst racist atrocity of the whole war, as the rebels butchered hundreds of their prisoners of war. As Forrest gloatingly reported in his

"The river was dyed with the blood of the slaughtered for 200 yards. The approximate loss was upward of 500 killed, but few of the officers escaping. My loss was about 20 killed. It is hoped that these facts will demonstrate to the Northern people that negro soldiers cannot cope with Southerners."

—quoted in U.S. Grant,
Personal Memoirs of
U.S. Grant, 1952

After the Fort Pillow Massacre, Union commanders noted that their black troops would neither allow themselves to be captured, nor take any rebel prisoners. When they went into battle, black troops fought like demons, with the cry "Remember Fort Pillow!" on their lips. We remember the martyrs of Fort Pillow. Their deaths will be avenged when their descendants, America's black proletarians, rise together with their white class brothers, and bring down this racist system of wage slavery. Finish the Civil War! Forward to the Socialist Future!

Brian Manning

April 12, 1864: Confederate army massacres all captured black Union soldiers at Fort Pillow.



spawned a political battle in Mobile. Jaffree, a 40-year-old black man who says he is an agnostic, was outraged when he found out his children were forced to take part in teacher-led prayer. Things blew up when Jaffree's son, Chioke, age eight, told a classmate that their teacher could go to jail for leading "grace" before lunch. Young Chioke was sent from the classroom. The Jaffree family has been constantly harassed. Jaffree's wife has had her car splattered with eggs. His neighbors called Jaffree's ten-year-old daughter Akeba filthy and racist names. The family has also received numerous threatening phone calls. Ah tolerance! This is what school prayer means in practice—crazed racist thought police run amok.

When the civil rights movement came "Up South," its liberal policies of moral suasion based on reliance on the "Christian charity" of the federal government ran smack dab into the structural racial caste oppression of black people in the urban centers both North and South. This caused much confusion and a hell of a lot of rethinking by the young militants of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), for instance, whose political lives had begun under the leadership of Martin Luther King. The black movement's "loss of innocence" and the decisive break between the black preachers and young militants coincided with the 1962-63 Supreme Court decisions to remove prayers from the schools. Some black preachers, who wished to work "within the system" and with the Democratic Party, decried these decisions as a loss of the right to preach the gospel of "turn the other

cheek" reformism. The young SNCC militants had already broken, in however contradictory a way, with the liberal pacifism of the preachers. This break led many in the direction of radical politics, including to the founding of the Black Panther Party. (For more on SNCC, see "SNCC: 'Black Power' and the Democrats," *Workers Vanguard* No. 327, 8 April 1983.)

Bernard Vance

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"Swing Further, Wider"

To the Editor:

- We are always happy when the youth press
 - scoops *Workers Vanguard*, or
 - qualitatively improves coverage on a given subject.
- The youth paper should not imitate the party paper (e.g., *YSp* No. 117, pp. 1,12).
- Taking account of both the special interests and lower frequency of the youth press, it should swing further, wider, be more idiosyncratic and, to repeat, not seek imitation of the party paper. Rather it should seek to impart its own special qualities taking into account the above.

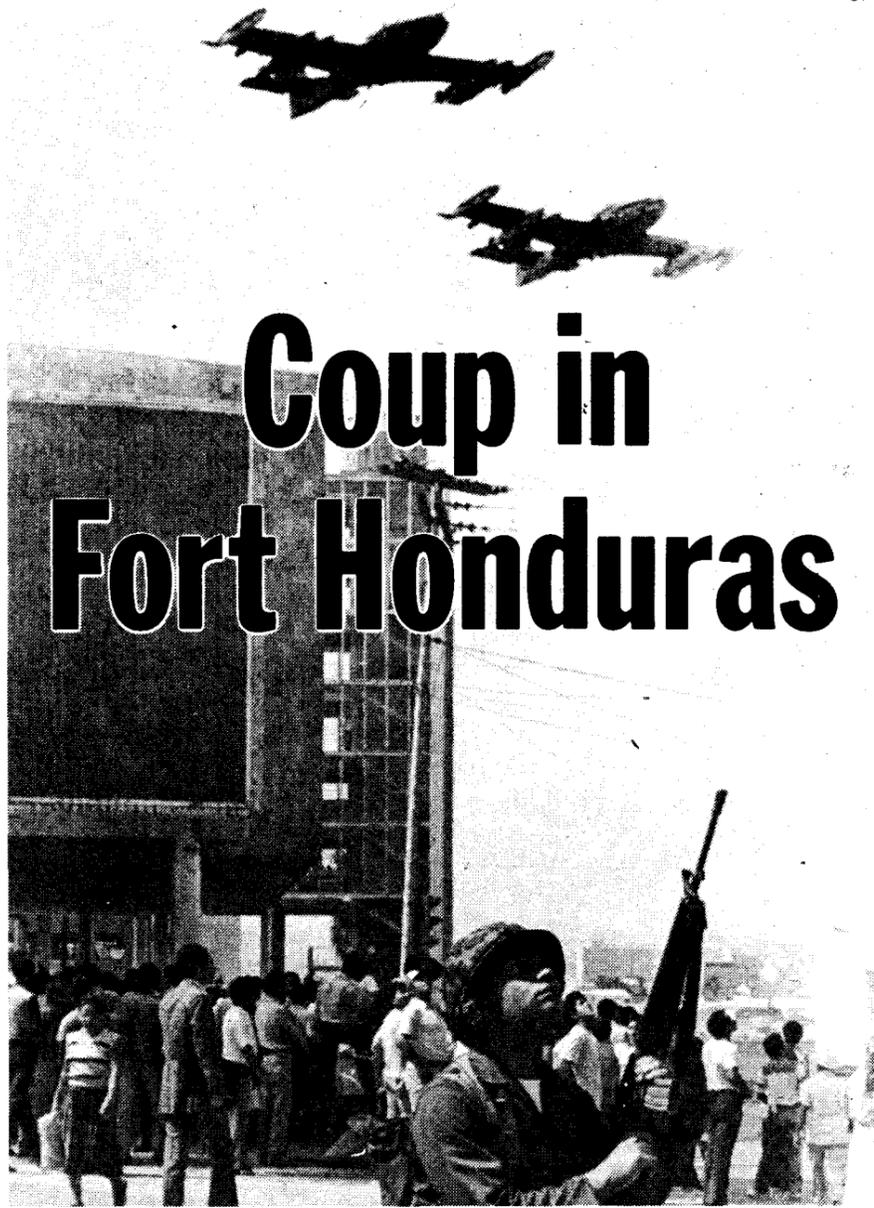
An exuberant youth

P.S. Don't forget that you can always stuff *WV* into *YSp* and sell them together. Thus in topical matters the latter can ride on the former's coattails.

"Free world" democracy is flourishing in... Honduras, that giant weapons platform for Yankee imperialism directed against Sandinista Nicaragua and Salvadoran leftist insurgents. According to a joke making the rounds in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa, the foreign minister is fed up with being sneered at as an American puppet. Asked why he doesn't resign, he replies, "Because the American ambassador won't let me." Well, on April Fools' Day Honduran strongman Gustavo Alvarez was "resigned" (a newly transitive verb in Spanish, similar to "disappeared") as armed forces commander. A U.S. official in the country said the coup "took an overwhelming number of Hondurans by surprise." Stopping off in Costa Rica on the way to exile in Miami (where else?), Alvarez was shocked at the turn of events: "I give orders to my subordinates. I do not take them," he snapped. But the State Department was nonplused, praising the "commitment and practice of civilian control of the military" in Honduras. You bet.

Another Central American joke asks why there has been no coup d'état in the United States so far. Answer: because there is no American ambassador there. Honduras certainly has a U.S. consul, one John Negrofonte, veteran of Vietnam and Cambodia, popularly known as "The Boss." Locally Alvarez was supposed to be *El Supremo*. *Newsweek* (8 November 1982) described their relationship: "They [Alvarez and Honduran president Córdova] discuss what should be done, and then Alvarez does what Negrofonte tells him to." In particular, the military chief was the key link between the U.S. and the Nicaraguan *contra* terrorists, former members of dictator Somoza's mercenary National Guard. Symbolically, Alvarez was dumped the night before he was to become a godfather at a christening.

Last fall Alvarez remarked, "I've always said that we are in business with the United States." In return for looking out for U.S. regional security interests, he went on, "All this implies a price." And that price is dollars, lots of them. Earlier a Honduran government news release had announced that if the Sandinistas were not removed from power in neighboring Nicaragua, Honduras would ask to become a U.S. colony ("commonwealth") like Puerto



Rico (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 29 October 1983). Reporting on the recent coup, *Le Monde* (6 April) headlined, "General Alvarez had become a thorn even for Washington." Perhaps the price was too high. Meanwhile, Honduran officers were beginning to worry about the rash of death squad kidnappings in the last couple years, reputedly engineered by Alvarez. For army factions chafing at his "authoritarian" rule, the last straw was the commander's plans to lengthen the time between promotions.

News reports of the coup said that it

came after Alvarez met with members of a "far right business group that he helped establish" (*New York Times*, 2 April). This was APROH, the Association for the Promotion of Honduras, linking top military officers with leading capitalists and founded under the auspices of anti-Communist "messiah" Sun Myung Moon's "Unification Church." Alvarez was also head of the local affiliate of Moon's Latin American political front, CAUSA, incurring the displeasure of the powerful Catholic church as a result. Was this an anti-

UPJ
Moonie coup? Certainly the fact that Alvarez was the graduate of the Argentine military academy while his successor, General Walter López, was trained at the U.S.' School of the Americas (known as the "school for coups") in the Panama Canal Zone, may have played a role as well.

For decades Honduras has been known as the banana republics' banana republic. The Caribbean coast is run as a private enclave of United Fruit and Standard Fruit companies, which own the railroads, the ports and a good many military officers and politicians as well. Governments came and went. The Cuban paper *Granma* (4 September 1983) reported that "Honduras has a history of 262 civil wars, 49 wars with neighboring countries, 13 political constitutions and 158 changes of government," making it the second most unstable country in Latin America after Bolivia. Now the fruit companies have been replaced by the U.S. military, which maintains more than 2,000 American troops operating a network of airstrips, radar stations and other facilities, channeling millions in economic and military aid. Any Honduran government today must be as slavishly subservient to the U.S. as its predecessors were to the dictates of *El Pulpo*, "The Octopus," as United Fruit was known in Central America.

So on April 4 the Honduran legislature was called together to vote on Alvarez' successor. The congress building was surrounded with troops in field uniform backed by armored personnel carriers fitted with machine guns. (Protection against subversives, of course.) In accordance with the traditions of the "parliamentary army" (meaning not civilian control but the principle that no general can give an order to another), the legislators were given a choice of three candidates. But to help them make up their minds, just as the vote was about to be held, two air force jets swooped low over the assembly. The congressmen got the message. Breaking into nervous laughter, they voted 78-to-0 for Air Force chief López. The formalities completed, López was declared "a team player" and a "good friend" by American diplomats in Tegucigalpa. And the U.S.-Honduran joint military exercises, Granadero I, continued as scheduled. ■

"Free Speech" for Hitler!?!?

Yet Another Harvard Obscenity

CAMBRIDGE—When the gentlemen who rule Harvard University start issuing proclamations about the sanctity of "free speech," something sinister is bound to be afoot. The administration has embarked on a campaign aimed at

stifling student rights to protest in the aftermath of War Secretary Caspar Weinberger's "warm" welcome from the student body here last November. Weinberger was greeted with hundreds of militant protesters who shouted "War Criminal!" "South Africa!" "El Salvador!" and "50,000 Dead!" when he appeared here to defend Reagan's war drive.

Since then, Harvard's been quite worked up; the crazed dean of students and nemesis of all student radicals, Archie Epps III, singled out two SYL students for their participation in the protest, threatening them with expulsion. Now the Faculty Council, along with student government, has gotten into the act. In "dealing with what they fear is a renewed wave of disrespect for free speech," some members of the Faculty Council have stated that the "University should be an oasis of free speech—where...even Adolf Hitler could speak freely in favor of anti-Semitism" (*Crimson*, 5 April). While appalling to any decent human being, this is not out of character from the school which produced, among other notables, one Ernst Hanfstaengl (class of '09)—a pal of Hitler's who adapted a Harvard fight song into the Nazi march

played by the brownshirts the day Hitler seized power in Germany.

This is "free speech," Harvard-style. But free speech has nothing to do with the issue under discussion at Harvard. Like Jeane Kirkpatrick—who also has been met with mass, militant student protest for her *deeds* as a certified war criminal—Weinberger is a mass murderer. There is a plethora of right-wing ideologues who can and do argue their views at Harvard. The only real democratic question posed is Harvard's threat to students' legitimate exercise of their rights to protest. The Faculty Council has recently discussed reviving the draconian Committee on Rights and Responsibilities (CRR). The object of effective student boycott since its inception, the CRR was formed as a witchhunting device against New Left antiwar activists in the aftermath of the 1969 student strike. We reprint below the SYL's response—which appeared in the *Crimson* on April 30—to Harvard's obscene "free speech" hoax.

30 April 1984

To the Editors of *The Crimson*:

"Behold, our butter stinketh!" was all it took for an undergraduate to be

expelled from Harvard for insubordination in 1776. Although the food may have improved in the last two hundred years, the men who rule Harvard have not. Declare "Weinberger stinketh..." or "Duarte reeketh..." with the pungent odor of burning flesh, and you may be tossed out of school. In the wake of the Weinberger protest the Faculty Council, Bok & Co. hope to enact a new gag rule and disciplinary code for political protesters.

The Orwellian Faculty Council's vision of the University as an "oasis of free speech" is one where Adolph Hitler can goose-step onto campus and "speak freely in favor of anti-Semitism" (*Crimson*, 5 April), while the victims and opponents of Nazi death camps and slaughter are tried for "political crimes" by a revived draconian Committee on Rights and Responsibilities (CRR). That Harvard brands students and others who protest genocide as "enemies of free speech" while guaranteeing "academic freedom" to the war criminals who commit genocide is an outrageous provocation. The sick sociopaths who run this place have outdone in their own words any spoof we've ever written about them. Any decent human being

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Young Spartacus

Young Spartacus (ISSN 0162-2692) is the newspaper of the Spartacus Youth League. The Spartacus Youth League, youth section of the Spartacist League, is a socialist youth organization which intervenes in social struggles armed with a working-class program, based on the politics of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

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Reagan...

(continued from page 1)

administration haughtily replied that in "free" America right-wing extremists could not be inhibited from exercising their right to "free expression." Meanwhile, of course, the liberal, *anti-Reagan* Federation for Progress has been denied a permit to demonstrate along Wilshire Boulevard the opening day of the games.

The Soviets know well that the threat from right-wing crazies in Reagan's America is no joke. In late February of this year a Bronx complex housing Soviet diplomatic personnel was bombed. In February 1982 the Washington office of the Soviet airline Aeroflot was bombed, and there have been numerous bomb threats against Soviet diplomatic personnel. In the aftermath of the U.S. Cold War anti-Communist KAL 007 provocation, crazed anti-Communist Korean demonstrators invaded the Soviet diplomatic compound in Glen Cove, Long Island, abetted by the local authorities in blatant violation of diplomatic immunity. Yet the U.S. refused to allow Soviet Olympic attaché Oleg Yermishkin, who was delegated by the USSR to inspect security for Soviet athletes, to enter the country! Yermishkin was rejected as a "KGB agent." So Reagan insisted that Soviet athletes be denied the protection of their own security forces. Is it any wonder that the *New York Times* Moscow correspondent, to his chagrin, could find nothing but support among Soviet citizens for the government's decision not to attend? Said a young woman at the Luzniki sports complex, "Who wants to be killed or humiliated?" (*New York Times*, 11 May).

Blue Thunder Terror in Los Angeles

The siege conditions under which Soviet athletes were to compete in Reagan's Olympics are already the norm for L.A.'s black and Latino population, subjected to the LAPD's and FBI's virtual declaration of martial law. The bourgeois authorities have already conducted a full-scale dress rehearsal for their Olympics terrorism, including sweeps through black neighborhoods to search for weapons and an incredible "anti-terrorist" raid at the L.A. airport, where two dozen cab drivers were rounded up as "illegal aliens." The homeless and other victims of capitalist decay are being swept from the streets. As Councilman Gilbert Lindsey put it, "We'll get the city cleaned up. My God, why would I want the Russian delegates coming here and saying, 'Hey, you've human beings dying on the streets in your district.'" Well, the Russians aren't coming, but there is no relief in sight for the city's poor.

Fifty police agencies beefed up by

Steven E. Sutton/Duomo



U.S. targeted Soviet athletes for harassment or worse. Russians said "nyet!"

16,000 private cops will occupy L.A. during the Olympics, with the U.S. armed forces in the wings, at the cost of over \$100 million. They will be armed with surveillance helicopters, silencer-equipped submachine guns, satellite communications and the latest in "counterterrorism" gear. Then there is the notorious LAPD. Woe be it to any black athlete out alone for an evening stretch—remember the murder of black college football star Ron Settles in an L.A. suburb.

While the Soviet security personnel have been denied entry, you can bet that the *Israeli* security police will be working closely with the LAPD/FBI, no doubt under the guise of preventing another Munich 1972, when a criminal "Black September" guerrilla kidnapping of Israeli athletes ended in a bloodbath. The FBI, Mossad and the security police of every murderous U.S.-backed regime the world over will enjoy each other's company while touring the skies of L.A. in Blue Thunder helicopters looking for "terrorists." As TASS noted, Reagan's "guarantees" of the safety of Soviet athletes in L.A. are about as good as his "public assurances that the U.S. Marines would remain in Beirut no longer than 30 days, and his administration's denial of any complicity in the mining of Nicaragua's ports."

Smash U.S. Butchers in Central America!

Reagan peppered his May 9 address on Central America with enough lies to make George Orwell's "Big Brother" blush. But Reagan is waging a war with bullets, not words, in Central America, the front line of U.S. imperialism's anti-Soviet war drive. The U.S. has turned Honduras into a U.S. military fort, and engaged in massive military "maneuvers" in the region recently, all meant to intimidate the Cuban deformed workers state, Sandinista Nicaragua and the Salvadoran leftists.

In El Salvador a civil war has raged for five years pitting leftist guerrillas against the Salvadoran government which has murdered over 40,000 work-

ers and peasants. In order to pass El Salvador off as a "free world democracy" the U.S. stage-managed the recent presidential "elections." In a runoff in early May the Salvadoran masses were given the "choice" of voting (if they could find their polling station) for either Roberto "Blowtorch" D'Aubuisson, a pathological torturer and death squad leader, or Napoleón Duarte, head of the 1979 junta which began the civil war and murdered 30,000 workers and peasants. The U.S.-certified "elections" name Duarte the winner, but D'Aubuisson claims fraud. That could signal a military/death squad coup against the Christian Democrat U.S. front man. Revelations that the CIA spent \$1.4 million to ensure Duarte's victory have left Reagan with egg on his face. The heroic Salvadoran rebels now dominate one third of the country while the government has to recruit its soldiers at gunpoint off the streets. However, the treacherous political leadership of the guerrillas, the FDR/FMLN, far from pressing to defeat the butcher government on the battlefield, seeks a "political solution" to the war. Such a sellout would necessarily keep the army intact and simply pave the way for future massacres. The leftist rebels must win the war!

According to Reagan, it is the Sandinista regime in neighboring Nicaragua which began the civil war in El

ultimate U.S. imperialist target:

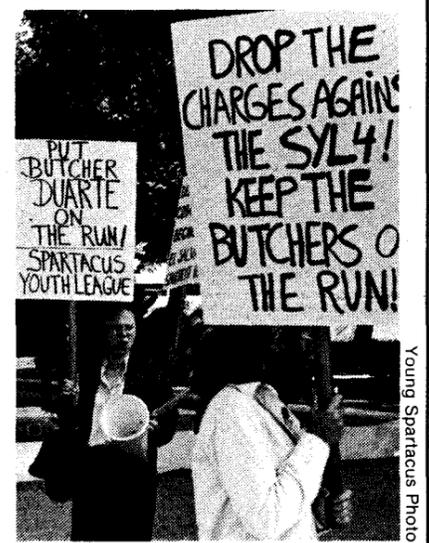
"In the last 15 years the growth of Soviet military power has meant a radical change in the nature of the world we live in.... They are presently challenging us with a different kind of weapon: subversion and the use of surrogate forces—Cubans, for example. We have seen it intensifying during the last 10 years as the Soviet Union and its surrogates moved to establish control over Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Afghanistan and recently closer to home in Nicaragua and now El Salvador... clearly, our world is shrinking."

Ever since the 1917 Russian Revolution ripped one-sixth of the world's surface out of the capitalist world market, international imperialism has fought to get it back. But the gains of the nationalized and planned economy established by the Russian working class can be seen in the fact that the Soviet Union, an 80 percent rural and industrially backward country in 1917, has built itself into an advanced industrial power which now has military and nuclear parity with the United States. Without the Soviet Union, imperialism would long ago have drowned the Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese anti-capitalist revolutions in blood.

But unfortunately the Soviets are *not* arming the Salvadoran rebels and *not* giving the Sandinistas advanced weaponry that they need to combat U.S. imperialism. The conservative Stalinist

"Drop the Charges Against SYL Four!"

LOS ANGELES, May 15—"Drop the charges against the SYL Four! Keep the butchers on the run!" Demonstrators here rallied at the West Los Angeles Municipal Court against the attempted railroading of four SYL members who led students in protesting the appearance of El Salvador's blood-drenched ambassador, Rivas-Gallont, last March on the UCLA campus. The four face up to 90 days in jail and/or a \$680 fine each. Another set of hearings is scheduled for May 29. During the militant protest against the Salvadoran "ambassador of death," SYLers were selectively singled out by the administration and hauled off by the cops. UCLA stands by its butchers—Keep them on the run!



Young Spartacus Photo

Salvador by "exporting" its revolution against the bloody U.S.-backed tyrant Somoza. The Reagan administration has spent millions arming Nicaraguan Somozaist *contras* who fight the Nicaraguan regime from bases in Honduras and Costa Rica. The arrogant Yankee imperialists are now reportedly threatening to withhold all support from the ostensibly "neutral" Costa Rican government if they do not openly back the *contras*. But the Sandinistas, who destroyed Somoza's bourgeois state in 1979 in a military victory, have successfully mobilized the revolutionary will of the Nicaraguan masses to defend the gains of the revolution. Even the *New York Times* in a May 11 editorial baited Reagan about the *contra* failures:

"Smuggled arms matter, but revolutions cannot be exported like butter and bacon. If they could, why have the American-backed 'contras' in Nicaragua failed to win control of a single town or province?"

Despite its massive popular support, the petty-bourgeois nationalist Sandinista leadership has refused to expropriate the bourgeoisie economically or politically, preferring a policy of "pluralism" and a "mixed" economy. This conciliation of domestic counterrevolutionaries could lead to eventual defeat at the hands of imperialism! Only the expropriation of the Nicaraguan capitalists and the extension of the revolution throughout Central America can prevent the return of *somocista* tyranny.

"Our World Is Shrinking"

Reagan's May 9 anti-Communist diatribe made it clear that Russia is the

bureaucracy which rules in the Kremlin has made it quite clear that as far as they are concerned Central America is the United States' backyard. Reflecting the contradictory character of Stalinism, the Cuban troops in Angola defend against apartheid South Africa the petty-bourgeois nationalist MPLA regime while in Ethiopia they protect a murderous regime of repression against the Somali and Eritrean people. As Trotskyists we unconditionally defend the Soviet Union against U.S. imperialism and fight for proletarian political revolution so that the USSR will again become a champion of world revolution as it was in Lenin and Trotsky's time.

Socialism or Barbarism

Reagan's anti-Communist raving on May 9 and the CIA's success in getting Duarte "elected" in El Salvador had the desired effect: the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives voted to authorize another \$129.4 million in military aid for Central America on May 10. But the vote was close: 212 to 208. While none of the Democrats want to be blamed for "losing" El Salvador, they know that Reagan's Central America war is not selling to the American public. "The American people don't want any more Cubans in Central America, but neither do they want any more Vietnams," said Congressman Stephen J. Solarz as he voted no (*New York Times*, 11 May).

Very true. The stinging defeat inflicted on U.S. imperialism by the heroic peasant army of Vietnam is still too fresh in the memory of the American

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Madison: SYL, Box 2074, Madison, WI 53701, or call (608) 251-4321

New York: SYL, Box 444, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, or call (212) 267-1025

Norfolk: SYL, c/o SL, P.O. Box 1972, Main P.O., Norfolk, VA 23501

Oakland: SYL, Box 273, Civic Center Station, Oakland, CA 94604, or call (415) 835-1535

Oberlin: SYL, Box 58, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH 44074, or call (216) 775-5839

San Francisco: SYL, Box 11685, San Francisco, CA 94101, or call (415) 863-6963

Washington, D.C.: SYL, P.O. Box 75073, Washington, D.C. 20013, or call (202) 636-3537

Trotskyist League of Canada

Toronto: Box 7198, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X6, or call (416) 593-4138

SYL Calls for Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftist Rebels!

Berkeley SAICA Calls the Cops!

We excerpt below a leaflet distributed by the SYL at UC Berkeley in response to the Students Against Intervention in Central America (SAICA, formerly SAINTES). On April 2 SAICA called the campus cops to enforce an anti-communist exclusion of the SYL from their accredited class "Contemporary Processes in Central America." SYLers had attended and intervened in the class from the beginning of the semester. However, SAICA tried to clamp down on our revolutionary Marxist politics, including through physical provocation, soon after the SYL protested against U.S. State Department representative Peter Sarros. Sarros was invited by SAICA to a March panel discussion as an "apology" to the government for last year's "Kirkpatrick treatment." Unable to defend providing a platform for a U.S. imperialist war criminal or their anti-revolutionary call for a Democratic Party-sponsored negotiated sellout in El Salvador, SAICA turned to the campus administration and cops to purge the reds from their lecture class.

About a year ago a group called SAINTES (Students Against Intervention in El Salvador) did a good thing. They shouted down Jeane Kirkpatrick. Now the same group has changed its name to SAICA to wipe out the "stain" of shouting down that murderous swine, and they invited the State Department rep as a way of "apologizing" for doing it! Working with the cops and administration to "get the reds out" is part of SAICA's effort to make this apology ever more sincere. What's different now from a year ago? A year ago SAINTES was plenty reformist, but at least enough of its members had some militant impulses that they shouted down Rea-

gan's Madame Chiang Kai-shek. At bottom what's different is that 1984 is election year and SAICA, like the rest of the reformists, is crawling to Walter Mondale (and Hart, Jackson and the other Democrat imperialists). Don't forget that Mondale was vice president of the administration that set up the Salvadoran junta in the first place.

What is your strategy, SAICA? (1) You are opposed to the fight to destroy the system of imperialism. In other words, you oppose the struggle to smash the capitalist order by means of a proletarian revolution that establishes a workers government to build socialism. (2) You are for "pressuring" imperialism. Your big campaign last year was "to apply pressure on the Reagan administration to reduce its military support of the various right wing dictatorships" (our emphasis). This is to be accomplished through "legislative updates...letter-writing campaigns...encouraging the campus community to write or call the State Department and/or the local government embassies," etc. (3) You are for supporting a wing of imperialism: the Democratic Party, the capitalist party that has run most of the U.S. wars of this century. This party of George Wallace has the blood of millions on its hands. Its emblem is the donkey but its real symbols are the mushroom cloud over Hiroshima, the lynch rope of the Dixiecrats' KKK buddies, the electric torture devices it provided to every bloody dictatorship in Latin America, the policeman's club cracking the skull of a striking worker.

Counterrevolutionary wars come from the nature of imperialism. As Lenin demonstrated, imperialism is not "bad policies." It is the highest stage of capitalism. As long as capitalism survives, imperialist war is inevitable. This is a class society. The

government, whether administered by Democrats or Republicans, is a class government, a capitalist government. It necessarily defends the imperialist order, that is, the interest and class rule of the owners of the banks, factories, mines, etc. Imperialism cannot be reformed. It must be destroyed by socialist revolution, or it will destroy humanity. The only alternative to socialist revolution is barbarism: the barbarism of the death squads; the barbarism of fascism; and the final barbarism of thermonuclear holocaust unleashed by imperialism in its escalating drive to reconquer the Soviet Union for capitalism.

You of SAICA seek a benevolent imperialism. This is an impossible quest. By supporting a wing of imperialism you support a trap which results in the death of untold thousands and millions. By supporting the Democrats' "negotiated solution" you support the disarming of the workers and peasants, which will set them up for a massacre far greater than the 1932 Matanza, and the sellout of everything the guerrillas have given their blood for on the battlefield. Support to the Democrats is not a lesser evil. Only the political independence of the working class, the road of class struggle and the fight for workers revolution, is a real choice for the working people and those who would fight U.S. imperialism.

The Democratic Party is known throughout Latin America for its bloody crimes. Wilson, FDR et al. invaded Latin America over and over to install and maintain all the Somozas and Batistas and Trujillos. JFK's Alliance for Progress set up the death squads in El Salvador. His Organization of American States was dubbed the Yankee Ministry of Colonies by Che Guevara. The Democrat JFK invaded Cuba to try to smash the anti-

capitalist revolution in 1961, and threatened to blow up the world in the Missile Crisis of '62. The Democrat LBJ, who continued JFK's war against the Vietnamese Revolution, invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965 to crush the workers' upheaval in blood. Ask any Latin American leftist who has survived the chambers of the CIA-



Leftist guerrilla in El Salvador leafletting against the "elections by death." The U.S. warmakers fear guerrilla offensive in the autumn. We say: Go for it!

trained torturers what the Democrat-provided electrodes feel like.

The program of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, of world socialist revolution, certainly cannot be stopped by the pathetic and reactionary antics of Walter Mondale's envelope-stuffers. Fight for Socialism—Join the SYL!

Spartacus Youth League
12 April 1984

people. There is the potential for massive resistance in this country to military intervention in Central America. As revolutionaries we seek to mobilize the organized working class and its allies to prevent Yankee imperialism from unleashing the full horror of its war machine against the toiling masses of Central America. Boycott military cargo bound for El Salvador, Honduras and other rightist regimes in the region! For labor strikes against U.S. intervention in Central America! Such a mobilization on the home front against Washington's rape of Central America could be the beginning of the

end for U.S. imperialism.

Some solace remains for the U.S. in the 1984 Olympics. The absence of the Soviet and East European athletes will enable the Americans to endlessly rack up gold medals against hopelessly outmatched competition, conjuring up fond memories of last fall's invasion of tiny Grenada. The anti-Communist nuts of the Reagan administration may be too blind to see that an invasion of Central America will be no Grenada walkover. In their mad drive toward war against the Soviet Union, Reagan & Co. babble about "winnable" nuclear war, threatening to plunge the globe into nuclear holocaust. We had better get rid of this irrational, dying imperialist world order before it destroys all of us. ■

Harvard...

(continued from page 3)

shivers at the words "Auschwitz" and "Dachau," but not the men who rule Harvard. Apparently the extermination of millions of Jews, workers, communists, all non-Aryans is deemed an appropriate sacrificial offering on their perverse altar of "free speech."

To raise the issue of free speech in this context is a cruel hoax. The Harvard campus abounds with right-wing academics, "distinguished" apologists for death squad "democracies," the Pipes who argue for anti-Soviet nuclear war, the Mansfields who gripe "there's too many Jews...," the Klitgaards who argue "blacks should attend lesser institutions than Harvard." But student protest has been primarily aimed, not at

ideologues, but at those who strategize for and direct U.S. imperialist forces and their puppets in campaigns of mass murder. Jeane Kirkpatrick, Caspar Weinberger, Henry Kissinger, Jose Napoleon Duarte, etc., *ad nauseam* are war criminals, not academics! The U.S. ruling class (including the Harvard elite) is on a campaign to drape these butchers in academic robes and shove them down the throats of students in order to make mass murder "respectable," overcome the "Vietnam syndrome" and whip up anti-Soviet war hysteria.

The *New York Times* (8 April) reports that plans are being drawn up for the introduction of American combat forces in Latin America. There is bipartisan support to send a "message" via M16s "that Marxist elements influenced by Cuba and the Soviet Union be eliminated from Central America." The CIA's mining of Nicaraguan harbors, the transformation of Honduras into an American military base, and the U.S. game of "nuclear chicken," ramming Soviet subs, are no "exercises" but war provocations. And Harvard is doing its part for the anti-Soviet war drive by trying to crush students who mobilize against the architects of an anti-Communist blood-bath in Central America.

Harvard's idea of an "oasis of free speech" is a cesspool for the "Who's Who in Mass Murder." Not that this is particularly new, but we are a little surprised that they're being so blatant about it. It lacks the effete liberalism Harvard usually packages its filth in. After Hitler, dare we ask, what next? A Torquemada scholarship in Jewish Affairs?... a P.W. Botha fellowship in

Race Relations?... invite Charles Manson to lecture on the symbiosis of religion and murder?... grace the Business School with a bust of Robert Vesco?

The *Crimson* reports that a few souls on the Faculty Council were concerned about the image of the CRR (which has been boycotted by students since its inception as a Kangaroo Court to discipline student anti-war activists in the late '60s) as a "court for political crimes." They want to resolve the problem of the boycott by abolishing student representatives. By all means... if, in the name of "free speech" they want to intimidate students from speaking out, then all pretense to democratic rule must absolutely be done away with. We suggest they sink University Hall, creating an underground interrogation center, concealed by a pile of corpses where the building once stood. Dean Epps could really be let loose in the underground as the Queen Bee of a swarm of the little stingers, directing them in defecation flights and pelting recalcitrant students with "yellow rain" until they confess their guilt in "political crimes" against U.S. imperialism.

While Harvard works out the details of their tribute to the Third Reich, we will continue to mobilize students to take aside for Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists! Defend, Complete, Extend the Nicaraguan Revolution! For Unconditional Military Defense of the USSR and Cuba!... And, if Duarte does appear as scheduled on April 27, to KEEP THE BUTCHERS ON THE RUN!

Tom Crean, '86.
Spartacus Youth League

Spartacist League/ Spartacus Youth League Public Offices

Bay Area

Friday: 5:00-8:00 p.m.
Saturday: 3:00-6:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph 3rd Floor (near 17th Street)
Oakland, California
Phone: (415) 835-1535

Chicago

Tuesday: 5:30-9:00 p.m.
Saturday: 2:00-5:30 p.m.
523 S. Plymouth Court 3rd Floor
Chicago, Illinois
Phone: (312) 427-0003

New York City

Tuesday: 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Saturday: 12:00-4:00 p.m.
41 Warren St. (one block below Chambers St.
near Church St.) New York, N.Y.
Phone: (212) 267-1025

Trotskyist League of Canada

Toronto

Saturday: 1:00-5:00 p.m.
299 Queen St. W., Suite 502
Toronto, Ontario
Phone: (416) 593-4138

LONG LIVE THE FRE

Below we print an edited version of a presentation by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour. Entitled "From the Great French Revolution to the Paris Commune," comrade Seymour's talk was given at each of three Spartacist regional educational gatherings in April and May and began with an appropriate musical selection from *Marat/Sade*.

The educational conferences were held in New York City, the Bay Area and Chicago and took up the question of "Wars and Revolutions: Historical Materialism in Practice." In addition to that on the French Revolution, presentations were made on "World War I and the Russian Revolution" and on "Germany 1919-1933: Revolution and Counterrevolution." Preparations for the events placed particular emphasis on reading by and education for Spartacus Youth League comrades, not currently known for a deep understanding of Marxism. Keep your eye on future issues of *YSp* and *Workers Vanguard* for more material from the presentations and floor discussion at these meetings.

At the New York City gathering of about 160 comrades and friends from Boston, New York, Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, some controversy was spawned by an announcement on "The International Dictionary of Obscenities" (see box page 9). The West Coast conference, held at Berkeley, was highlighted by Ritchie Bradley's appearance, after five and a half hours in jail. Bradley—the man who tore down the Confederate flag from San Francisco's Civic Center—had that day placed on the same flagpole an historic Union flag (see article, back page). After a standing ovation from the participants at the conclusion of the second day's events, Bradley stated:

"Comrades, friends, thank you all for your wonderful support today. (After climbing a 40-foot pole three times you don't have much voice left.) Anyway, today was a very special day to all of us. Today was the day that we replaced the Confederate flag that flew over the Civic Center for the past three years in San Francisco. Yes, San Francisco is a Union town. We're not going to let any more Confederate flags fly in this city anymore and we're going to fight to bring down those Confederate flags that fly other places in the world."

Part One of Two

Try by an act of historic imagination to picture yourself in France almost 200 years ago. The date is September 20, 1792, and you are there. In Paris the Convention is about to open—the first government in history based on universal male suffrage. The king has just been overthrown. But the Parisian masses are not celebrating these events. They're frightened, and they are angry, because a Prussian army has just crossed the border, and the king of Prussia has threatened a terrible and unforgettable vengeance against revolutionary Paris for the crime of overthrowing the king. Many of the most militant Parisian revolutionaries are not even in Paris. They have volunteered to go to the border to meet the Prussian army.

The king of Prussia, his ally, the Austrian emperor, and their generals are supremely confident that they can sweep away this revolutionary rabble, march into Paris and restore the king. Half the old French officer corps has deserted—gone into emigration—and is, in fact, marching with the Prussians or Austrians. The Prussian army has won a series of easy victories and they think that the Parisian masses will flee in terror at the first sound of gunfire.

The two armies meet near a hill called Valmy about 70 miles northeast of Paris. The French outnumber the Prussians about three to two. And the despised Parisian revolutionaries stand up to the famed, disciplined, long-drilled Prussian regulars. The French artillery and artillery officers are better. At the end of the day a torrential rain storm breaks out. The Prussian army pulls back, its confidence shaken. They know there will be no easy walk to Paris.

With the Prussian army was a young German writer and poet, then not that well known, named Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. He sensed that something quite momentous had occurred that day. As the rain was coming down he stood on the on the battlefield and said: "This day and this place open a new era in the history of the world." We still live in that era. And the guns of Valmy continue to reverberate in *our* world.

Especially if you're born, raised and educated in the United States, you tend to take democratic government, elec-

tions, universal suffrage, individual liberties more or less for granted. To appreciate the French Revolution you must understand how *recently* kings ruled the peoples of this world by the grace of god. Germany, the most important country in Europe, was a monarchy until the end of World War I. And we're *not* talking about a figurehead but a king who wielded real power. Germany only became a bourgeois-democratic republic in the 1920s as a result of an aborted and suppressed proletarian revolution. What is true of Germany is true for most of the rest of Western Europe. That is, parliamentary democracy and universal suffrage only came to Western Europe well into this century, within the lifetimes of your parents and grandparents.

And what of this country, the United States? Because it did not have a feudal past it began its existence as a bourgeois-democratic republic. But what a republic! The millions of black slaves were, of course, disenfranchised. So, in 1780, were poor whites. It took the Civil War—70 years after the French Revolution—to free the slaves and give them the right to vote. And then what

Snark International



Allegory of the revolutionary anthem "The Marseillaise," by the French artist Paul Gustave

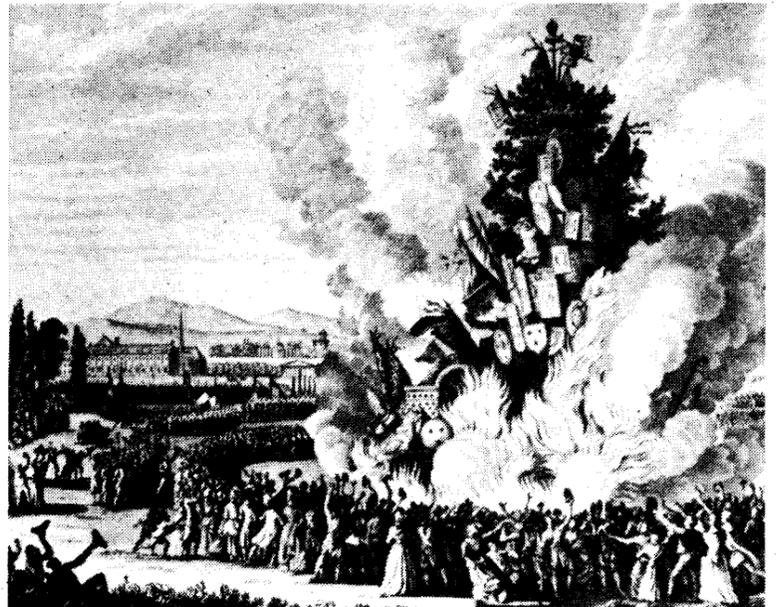
happened? There was a political counterrevolution in the South, which took the most elementary democratic rights away from black people. It was not until the civil rights movement of the late 1950s-early 1960s that blacks in the South got the vote. So in one very basic sense France in 1793 was *more democratic* than the United States in the 1950s.

However, the significance of the French Revolution goes far, far beyond its pioneering of bourgeois-democratic government. This is especially true of its most radical phase, the Jacobin regime of 1793-94. In 1793 the leading Jacobin Maximilien Robespierre revised the earlier 1789 Rights of Man in a socially radical direction. One of the new rights of man was to be the right to work, that society owed the poor and unemployed a livelihood. That right *cannot* be realized within capitalist society. Today, almost 200 years later, the so-called Socialist government of François Mitterrand, who promised full employment, is laying off the very workers who had most illusions in him. Fortunately, the French working class has a revolutionary tradition, and it's just possible

that Mitterrand may go the way of Louis XVI. So the social vision of Maximilien Robespierre 200 years ago began to transcend the limits of bourgeois society.

Take another aspect of the French Revolution. The French revolutionaries were ardent patriots. They were, after all, standing up to all the crowned heads of Europe. But they didn't see the revolution as just a revolution for France; they saw themselves remaking the world anew. Another of Robespierre's proposed rights of man was that any friend of liberty, any enemy of tyranny anywhere in the world would find a safe haven in revolutionary France and be granted automatic French citizenship. In fact, the Convention granted honorary French citizenship to the people it saw as the most prominent radicals and progressives around the world, among them George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Two foreign radicals, the Englishman Tom Paine and the German Anacharsis Cloots, were even elected to the Convention and duly took their seats. Can you imagine the U.S. Senate allowing foreigners to be members and to decide

Mansell Collection



Left: A bishop and a nobleman riding on the back of a peasant in caricature satirizing unequal taxation. Above: Masses burn tree bedecked with symbols of royalty, aristocracy and the papacy, 1792.

ENGLISH REVOLUTION!



Stave Doré.

the fate of the United States? It's inconceivable! Do you know that a naturalized American citizen cannot be president? But the German Cloats and the Italian Buonarroti played significant roles in the French Revolution.

Let's look at another side of the French Revolution—the woman question. The revolution did not enfranchise women, though some of the revolutionaries considered it. However, for the first time women were organized for revolutionary struggle not simply as individuals along with their husbands but as a distinct social group. This was the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women:

"Founded on 10 May 1793 this 'Society of Revolutionary Republican Women' thus began its existence as a kind of regiment of female 'storm-troopers' rather than a club of political feminists. The members ultimately affected a kind of uniform, including the red Phrygian bonnet of liberty, with tricolour cockade, and trousers; they carried arms, usually a pistol and a dagger, and they appear to have inspired right-wing and Girondin deputies quite literally with the fear of death."

—R.B. Rose, *The Enragés: Socialists of the French Revolution?* (1965)

These are the great great grandmothers of a women's section of a revolutionary workers party.

The French Revolution was like a door which opened for a moment and allowed one to peer into the far distant future. And not only the future of bourgeois society but even the beginnings of communist society. A few years after the Jacobins were overthrown an event occurred which at the time was not all that important, but whose historic significance is immeasurable. This was Babeuf's Conspiracy of Equals, the first attempt at a communist revolution. There is a direct organizational, not merely a general philosophical, link between the Babeuf Conspiracy and the Communist League of 1848 for which Marx wrote the *Communist Manifesto*. And Marxists have recognized this continuity. In Trotsky's "Manifesto" for the founding of the Communist International in 1919, he wrote:

"... we Communists, united in the Third International, consider ourselves the direct continuators of the heroic

endeavors and martyrdom of a long line of revolutionary generations from Babeuf—to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg."

Social Basis of the French Revolution

While Babeuf was a communist, his communism was not the communism of Marx, nor, given the nature of French society, could it be. When we consider the French Revolution, precisely because in some ways it seems so modern, we must remember that we're dealing with a *pre-industrial* society. In the 1780s the industrial revolution had just begun in Britain and had not yet extended to France.

We are talking about a society in which the overwhelming majority of the population were peasants. And, as we shall see, the peasants ultimately determined how far the revolution could go. The main economic activity by far was agriculture. For the typical Parisian artisan or shopkeeper 50 to 75 percent of their income was spent on food, so that changes in the price of food were literally a question of starvation or survival. When we speak of the bourgeoisie in the French Revolution, we're not talking about guys who own steel mills and textile factories, railroads and armaments plants. We're speaking of a bourgeoisie whose main source of wealth was land and whose main activity was producing, processing, distributing and financing agricultural products.

The industrial proletariat was minute and played little, if any, role in the revolution. The so-called Parisian *sans-culottes* (the lower classes wore loose trousers rather than tight leggings) consisted of artisans, who worked either at home or in very small work-

shops, shopkeepers, day laborers, the poor and unemployed. The *sans-culottes* were thus a very heterogeneous social group.

The reason I emphasize this is that there is a tendency among some left-wing writers on the French Revolution (Daniel Guérin, for example) to project

The Radio Times Hulton Picture Library



Gracchus Babeuf

or imply the possibility of a proletarian socialist revolution or at any rate of a government which controlled the economy in the interests of the lower classes. This was not possible. In our sympathy and identification with the revolutionary masses we must not forget Marx's great insight: the rights of man can never stand higher than the economic development and structure of society and the cultural level conditioned by this.

Lenin observed that to have a revolutionary situation it is not enough that the masses do not want to live in the old way. If a mere desire, even desperation, for radical change was enough,

Photographie Bulloz



Top: Contemporary print depicts departure of the heroines of Paris in hunger march on Versailles, 5 October 1789. Bottom: Parisian *sans-culottes*.

Latin America and India would have had revolutions decades ago. There must be a general political crisis which affects the *top* as well as the bottom of society. That is, the rulers must no longer be able to rule in the old way.

This is very clear in the case of the French Revolution. There was a saying

Photographie Bulloz



Maximilien Robespierre

at the time: the aristocracy started the revolution, the bourgeoisie carried it forward and the people finished the job. The aristocracy found that although they were politically on top of society, economically they were being undermined by the rising bourgeoisie. The hereditary nobility was prohibited by law and custom from engaging in the expanding sectors of the economy, namely, commerce and finance. Many nobles were heavily in debt to the bourgeoisie. Some tried to get out of their plight by marrying their daughters to the new men of wealth. But in general the aristocracy faced a widening gap between their political role as the elite and their real economic weight.

They reacted not by capitulating to the bourgeoisie but by hardening their monopoly of political power. The decades leading up to the French Revolution in 1789 were known as "the aristocratic reaction." In 1730 it was still possible for a wealthy bourgeois to become an officer in the army, a prince of the church, an official of a local government body. By 1780, fifty years later, this had become virtually impossible.

At the same time, the aristocracy desperately tried to increase its exploitation of the lower classes, centrally the peasantry. Old feudal obligations, which had long since fallen into disuse, were now revived. A whole new class of lawyers, called *feudistes*, sprang up. These lawyers went back to the old archives and dug up centuries-old laws, which everyone had forgotten, to increase the exploitation of the peasantry.

The situation facing the bourgeoisie was the opposite of that facing the aristocracy. Their growing wealth and growing social and cultural influence was running up against an increasingly reactionary and hardened aristocratic order. In particular, the bourgeoisie deeply resented the fact that the aristocracy and clergy were exempt from taxation. Moreover, the absolutist monarchy could within broad limits increase taxes. Thus the bourgeoisie's demand for a share in political power, for restrictions on monarchical absolutism, had a direct economic purpose and was not simply a desire for democratic participation for its own sake.

As for the lower classes, especially the peasantry, they were increasingly squeezed as the aristocracy and bour-

continued on page 8

French Revolution...

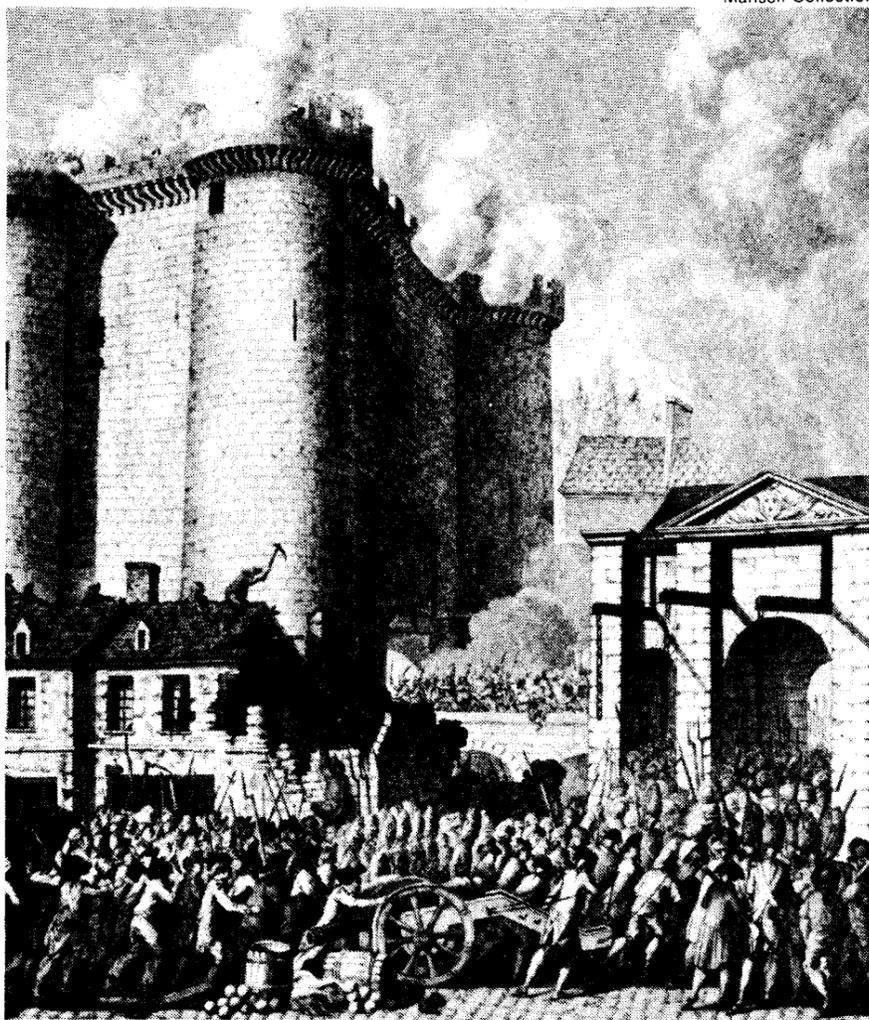
(continued from page 7)

geoisie sought to extract ever greater economic surplus in their struggle for social and political supremacy. Thus in the decades leading up to the revolution all the major social classes were increasingly dissatisfied with the status quo.

Philosophy and the French Revolution

This forms the real class conflict underlying the revolution. However, that's only one part—albeit the most important part—of the story. Writing in the 1840s and reflecting on the French Revolution Marx observed that a class which is struggling for political mastery must present its own interests as the general interests of society, must appeal to universal principles. This is not a matter of deliberate trickery or deceit but rather of false consciousness. Both the revolutionaries and reactionaries viewed the French Revolution not as a conflict of class interests but as a clash of universal principles. The English reactionary Edmund Burke blamed the French Revolution on the subversive writings of a handful of scribblers. The greatest philosopher of the age, the German Georg Wilhelm Hegel, wrote that the French Revolution was "caused by philosophy." Hegel was wrong. The French Revolution was caused by the conflict between a rising bourgeois society and an entrenched feudal order. At the same time, without the philosophy of the Enlightenment the French Revolution could not have occurred as it did. For the revolutionary bourgeoisie would not have been able to mobilize the masses and in a sense would not have been able to mobilize themselves either.

Thus to understand the French Revolution one has to understand the ideas and ideals of the revolutionaries who made it. This was centrally the doctrine of natural or inalienable rights as expressed, for example, in the American Declaration of Independence: that all men are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and that governments are instituted in order to secure these rights. Of course, the notion of some natural, primitive society in which men were free and equal was a myth—though not entirely a myth. The natural rights philosophers were in part



14 July 1789: Storming of the Bastille, dungeon used to imprison opponents of the government. Revolutionary commune of Paris burned it to the ground.

influenced by the explorations of early European imperialism, which encountered pre-class societies.

One of the great writers of the French Renaissance, the liberal nobleman Montaigne, in an essay called "Cannibals," tells of a Brazilian cannibal who was captured and taken to France in the era of Cardinal Richelieu. He's obviously a man of superior intelligence and learns some French. After he's been there a year or so, he's asked, "What do you think of France?" He replies:

"There are many wonderful and fabulous things I never would have dreamed of, but there's one thing I don't understand. I see all these fat people, people dripping with fat. And then I see beggars, their bones coming out of their skin. How come the skinny people don't kill and eat the fat people?"

A primitive communist looks at French monarchical society.

The towering intellectual influence on the French Revolution and on the European left in general before Marx was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Both Robespierre and Babeuf revered Rousseau and believed themselves to be carrying his philosophy and principles into the real world of politics. Rousseau was the son of an impoverished Swiss watchmaker, and this past shaped his social vision. For Rousseau, individual liberty, political democracy and a rough social equality were inseparable. His ideal society was one in which everybody owned their own piece of land or small workshop, and is therefore economically independent. There were to be no extremes of wealth and poverty. Only on this basis could Rousseau conceive of genuine individual liberty and democratic government.

Rousseau did not regard property as a natural right, as something good in itself. Rather he considered property a social convention which, if regulated, could lead to a good society. Thus one could be both a Rousseauian and a communist if one concluded that the convention of property was incompatible with natural rights. This step was taken by Babeuf. In his trial Babeuf argued that to condemn him for advocating communism was to condemn all of the enlightened philosophy of the age. And in a sense he was right.

The First Phase, 1789-91: An Unworkable Compromise

The immediate cause of the revolutionary situation was the fiscal crisis of the absolutist state. Louis XVI ran out of money and out of credit, a condition many of us in this room are all too familiar with. Unfortunately, we can't solve this problem by raising taxes. As it turned out, neither could Louis XVI. For their own selfish and opposite reasons both the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie opposed the monarchy's move to raise taxes: the aristocrats refused to give up their exemption, the bourgeoisie resisted a tax increase unless the aristocracy and clergy shouldered some of the burden.

The combined opposition of the two dominant classes forced the king to summon the Estates General for the first time in 180 years. This was the old three-tier feudal parliament. The First Estate was the aristocracy, the Second was the clergy and the Third Estate was every-

body else, that is, the mass of society. The calling of the Estates General was seen at large not simply as a means to resolve the fiscal crisis but as the regeneration of French society. It evoked enormous expectations on the part of the people.

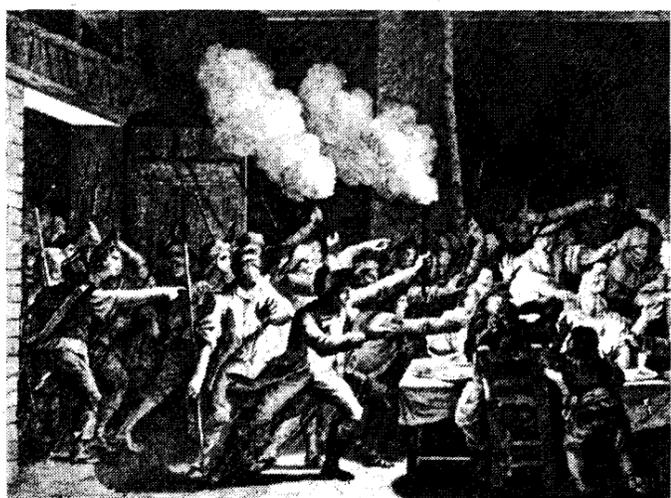
Sensing the people behind them, the bourgeoisie demanded the abolition of the three-tier voting system, in effect giving power to the Third Estate. At first the king conceded this, but then moved to suppress the National Assembly as it was then called. In response the bourgeois leaders organized a popular insurrection in Paris, symbolized by the storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789. Most of the French army went over to the side of the Third Estate. The king was left only with foreign mercenaries to guard him, namely the Swiss Guards. In the countryside the peasants swept up by the so-called Great Fear—fear of an aristocratic plot—burned down the castles of the local nobility and with them the ancient property deeds. Armed peasant bands controlled many localities. The popular revolt of July 1789 fatally damaged the state power of the absolutist monarchy and opened the first phase of the revolution.

This phase can be characterized as an unworkable compromise between the forces of bourgeois democracy and the old feudal order. It is appropriate that the principal leaders of the revolution in this period were, on the one hand, a liberal aristocrat, the Marquis de Lafayette—the same guy who fought in the American War of Independence—and on the other a conservative bourgeois, Adrien Du Port, a wealthy wine and shipping magnate. However, within three years both Lafayette and Du Port would follow the diehard royalists into exile, because the compromise broke down.

The compromise involved both an economic and a political component. Shortly after the fall of the Bastille and the Great Fear the National Assembly passed a law supposedly—and I emphasize supposedly—abolishing feudalism in the countryside. This law was something like those contest announcements you get in the mail which say, "Congratulations Mr. John Jameson, you have just won \$1 million." Your eyes light up, you rip open the envelope and you read in small print, "...if your lucky number is drawn next December. In the meantime you can get a five-year subscription to *Time* magazine at half price." The August 1789 law decreed that the peasants no longer have to pay feudal obligations if they give the landlords 20 to 25 times the amount of the annual obligations. This was far beyond the capacity of all but the wealthiest peasants.

So the peasantry decided to pay attention to the big print—"Feudalism is abolished"—and ignore the small print about redemptions. As a result there was a low-level civil war in the French countryside, which tended to further break up the state apparatus. Reactionary government officials tried to collect the feudal obligations from the peasants as they always had. The more liberal or radical officials sided with the peasants so that the state apparatus broke into warring factions. Meanwhile, the aristocrats were not getting any income, so they said, "This revolution is a crock of..." and went into emigration, expecting to return with the foreign royalist armies.

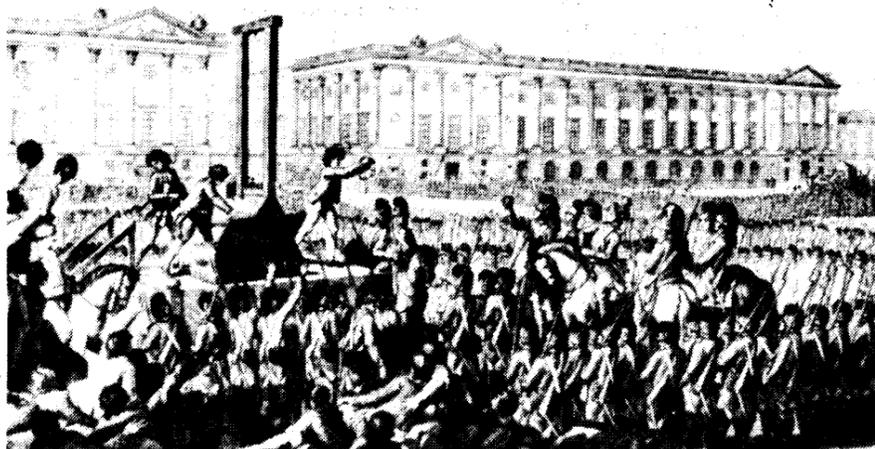
At the same time, the political compromise also didn't work. This was to be a constitutional monarchy—the king would have real veto power—based on limited suffrage. Out of an adult male population of seven million almost half—and poorest half—had no vote at all under the 1791 constitution, and only 50,000 people directly elected the members of the National Assembly. Yet even this very undemocratic version of bourgeois democracy was rejected by the mass of the aristocracy, including the figure standing at its head, namely



Mansell Collection

Left: King Louis XVI is apprehended in Varennes, September 1791. Below: And executed in the Place de la Révolution, 21 January 1793.

Photographie Bulloz



the king. Publicly, Louis XVI seemed to go along, because he had no power. He would say: "Vive la révolution—the best thing that happened to France since they invented champagne." Privately, he was corresponding with all the crowned heads of Europe, telling them: "You've got to come in here and kill all these revolutionary bastards and restore me to real power."

In September 1791 the king made a run for it. Disguising himself as a coachman, he took off and almost crossed the border into Germany. In the town of Varennes he was recognized by the young son of a radical postmaster. The postmaster stopped the coach, called the local National Guard, and the king was led back to Paris in ignominy as a prisoner of the revolution. Everyone knew that if the king had made it across the border, it would have unleashed a foreign royalist invasion.

There's an interesting postscript. This ordinary village postmaster who stopped the king's coach, Jean-Baptiste Drouet, instantly became a national hero, sort of the Paul Revere of the French Revolution. What's interesting about Drouet is that he really was a revolutionary hero. A few years later he involved himself in Babeuf's Conspiracy of Equals and was arrested along with the other leaders. But the conservative bourgeois regime was afraid to try this revolutionary hero—almost a national institution—for advocating communism, so it arranged for him to escape.

Radicalization of the Revolution

The flight of the king opened a new and more radical phase of the revolution. There had been a lot of popular illusions about the king. People thought that his wife was an Austrian witch, his advisers were a bunch of shits, but that Louis was basically a decent guy who really cared for his people. After his abortive flight the revolutionaries went through his private correspondence and discovered that he was inciting the crowned heads of Europe to intervene militarily and massacre the French people. After that Louis was in big

trouble. Republicanism, which had been a minority current, rapidly became the dominant current.

At the same time, the beginnings of preparation for war against royalist Europe created another and even more important source of radicalization. The war preparations were financed by highly inflationary means, so that the price of food and other necessities for the urban lower classes and poor peasants began to take off. From this time on the popular demand for a price maximum in food would play an increasing and at times decisive role in the revolution.

These two factors—the growing hatred for the monarchy and the desire for some kind of economic controls—culminated in the second uprising of the Parisian *sans-culottes*, the *journée* of August 10, 1792. In a way it was a second revolution. The armed people marched on the king's palace and overwhelmed the Swiss Guards. The king, frightened out of his wits, took refuge with the bourgeois representatives in the National Assembly. But when the bourgeois politicians realized that Paris belonged to the armed *sans-culottes*, they stripped the king of his power and agreed to a new government based on universal male suffrage.

This new government, the Convention, was divided between two factions which are known to history as the Girondins, who were originally the majority, and the Jacobins or Montagnards, who were originally the minority. It's important to understand that the difference between the Girondins and Jacobins was *not* a difference in social class, although it may have appeared so. Unless you understand that, what happened subsequently will make no sense whatsoever. What occurred was a *political* division between two sections of the bourgeoisie. Both groups had until fairly recently been members of a common faction. The social composition of both was similar. Both were led mainly by lawyers. The leading Jacobins would not lower themselves to have dinner with a common Parisian day



Jacobin meeting.

laborer or journeyman artisan, although they were more than willing to call them into the streets.

The sharp division between the Girondins and Jacobins represented the different ways in which the French bourgeoisie responded to the pressures upon them. The conflict centered on two major issues. One, what to do about the forces of feudal reaction which were threatening mainly in the form of foreign royalist intervention. The Girondins advocated what today would be termed "a negotiated solution," in which there would necessarily be concessions within France to the aristocracy and the clergy. At the same time, they *opposed* all economic controls which would alleviate the suffering of the lower classes. The Jacobins, after some initial differences, were prepared to fight the foreign royalist forces to the end and to make economic concessions to the Parisian *sans-culottes*. Stripped down to essentials, the difference amounted to this: the Girondins were that section of the rising French bourgeoisie willing to conciliate the forces of feudal reaction while exploiting to the hilt the classes below them. The Jacobins were that wing of

the bourgeoisie prepared to make concessions—*temporary* concessions—to the lower classes in order to defeat the forces of feudal reaction. In other words, it was the difference between a reformist and a revolutionary section of the bourgeoisie.

One of the sharpest and clearest differences occurred over the fate of the king. The Girondins did not want to put Louis XVI on trial, and afterward did not want to execute him, because they knew that regicide would make compromise with the other crowned heads of Europe absolutely impossible. The Jacobins wanted to try and execute the king not only because his actual crimes justified this, but also because they wanted to draw the line in blood against royalist Europe. The day before the execution of the king in January 1793 a leading Jacobin, Philippe-François Lebas, declared:

"We are fully committed now. The paths have been cut off behind us and we have no choice but to go forward whether we like it or not. Now as never before we can truly say that we shall live as free men or die."

—quoted in Albert Soboul, *The French Revolution 1787-1799* (1974)

The conflict between the Girondins and Jacobins was decided by the third uprising of the Parisian *sans-culottes* in May-June 1793. The armed masses invaded the Convention and demanded that the leading Girondins be arrested. They also demanded the institution of a price maximum on necessities. In this way the Jacobins came to power. The *sans-culottes* uprising of May-June 1793 is an event of exceptional importance for us Marxists, because here we see the germ of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In 1789 the Parisian masses rose up to defend some kind of bourgeois democracy. In 1792 they rose up again to extend bourgeois democracy—a republic based upon universal male suffrage. But now they rose up in their own interests and restricted bourgeois democracy. This opened the Jacobin dictatorship of the Year II.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Educating the Youth

"The Dirty Dictionary"

Among the many books, pamphlets and periodicals to be found in our literature display at the New York educational was a small book of interest to any serious communist: *The International Dictionary of Obscenities: A Guide to Dirty Words and Indecent Expressions in Spanish, Italian, French, German and Russian*, published by Scythian Books. One comrade, fluent in Spanish, noted that the Dirty Dictionary was not receiving the attention it deserved, and during the announcement period, he quoted one sample of the dictionary's entries, challenging all who wished to know what it meant to buy the book. (Unfortunately, due to the hypocritical bourgeois obscenity laws and the importance of our second-class mailing permit, we cannot print what it was that the comrade said.)

During the discussion period, a debate ensued on the relevance of dirty words to politics and making a revolution, which served as a case in point of the importance of education (understood in the broadest possible sense) to building an international working-class party. An SL/SYL supporter challenged our sponsorship of the Dirty Dictionary as a waste of party resources and "an absurdity." "Is this a political party or is it not?" he moralized. "This isn't a fraternity, it's not a sorority. The point is to educate the membership."

Ensuing discussion indicated that one youth comrade at least did not understand the Dirty Dictionary's purpose, as she berated our supporter for being worried about irrelevant issues like obscenities instead of building the party. That these two issues, far from being counterposed, are linked in the most intimate way was taken up by comrade Tanner in her remarks.

"I hope comrades have seen the latest issue of *Women and Revolution*, which includes as an editorial note comments by comrade Robertson at the recent national conference about why we seek to have a *Women and Revolution* more as a social and anthropological journal. And indeed we have done that.... There was an excellent article on this back page called 'Something About Incest.' Now sex hits everyone where they live. As Deutscher said, quoting Trotsky I believe, there are three problems facing mankind: hunger, sex and death, and socialism only solves the first.

"Now I want to use unfortunately our comrade as an example of a philistine youth. A lot of what she said was excellent, but her response [on the Dirty Dictionary] was, who cares? It doesn't affect our ability to make a revolution. Well, comrade, it does. One can argue as well that Trotsky's reading of French novels had nothing

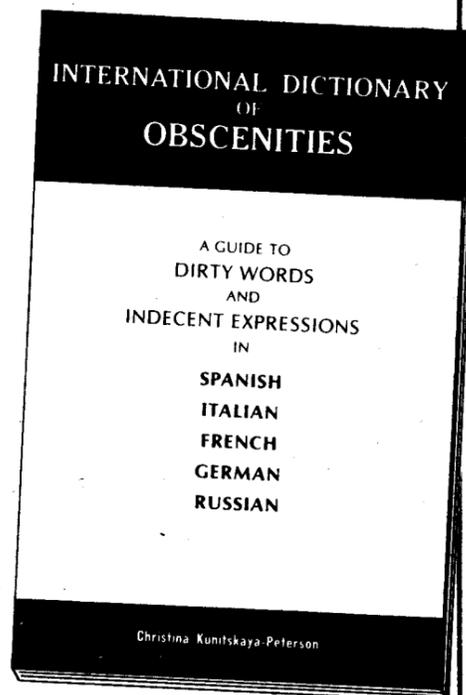
at all to do with his understanding of the proletariat internationally. Sex and scatology tell you a lot about a culture and how it evolves.... It is also essential if you seek to do international work, which a number of our comrades do....

"You will be a narrow philistine, comrades of the youth, if you seek to narrow yourselves to what is 'political.'

"How can you attempt to read Shakespeare without an understanding of precisely these kinds of words from his day, without a scatological dictionary? You can't.

"To conclude...if I can find this word in here. It's in German. It's 'bügeln,' which in German means to screw. It also means 'iron' or 'press.' I think that tells you a lot about German culture."

Additional penetrating remarks on this point were made by comrade Jorge, who mentioned as an example a *Workers Vanguard* headline from the 1980 U.S. presidential elections: "Reagan, Carter: Oh Shit!" "We are in the process of building an internationalist party, which believes in being able to talk...across national borders. And most nationalities and ethnic groups happen to talk in their own swear words.... Forward to an international of comrades that can understand the sentiment and the power of the proletariat shouting, '¡Viva La Revolución Carajo!'"*



Indispensable tool for comrades undertaking international work.

*A footnote in conclusion: The above quoted Spanish slogan can be roughly translated as "Long Live the Revolution, Goddamn It!" except that in Spanish its connotation is sexual and much more emphatic. Interested parties may also appreciate the information imparted by a comrade highly familiar with German: "bügeln" is indeed extremely male chauvinist in connotation. But a browse through the Dirty Dictionary reveals other German words for screwing which translate as "to nail," "to bump" and "to slide around."

"We Tore Down the Flag of Slavery" ...

(continued from page 12)

American slavery as "a slavery all the more cruel and hideous because it gradually built itself on a caste of race and color, thus breaking the common bonds of human fellowship and weaving artificial barriers of birth and appearance."

The mayor's arrogant act of calculated political racism is not unrelated to Feinstein's own political ambitions and the advent of the Democratic Party convention in San Francisco. To prove that she is boss, Feinstein has unleashed the SFPD against everybody from demonstrators against U.S. policy in Central America to the city's gay community. So, too, there was an anti-red smear campaign emanating from pro-Feinstein quarters following the flag defeat. No sooner had we removed the Confederate flag than the SF *Chronicle* ran an article smearing us with the false accusation that the Spartacists intended to violently disrupt the upcoming Democratic convention. We responded in a letter demanding retraction of this libel:

"The only possible connection between our ripping down the despicable Confederate flag and the upcoming convention is that some Dixiecrat delegates and Democratic Party KKK grand dragon Tom Metzger will be upset that that pro-slave banner does not fly in San Francisco. Good!... For our part, we think the Democratic Party convention will be a monumental bore. We have no interest in seeking to lobby or pressure this party of racism and imperialist war."

Bradley now faces three separate sets of petty criminal charges for his widely hailed feats. We welcome and in fact demand an immediate trial! For it will be Feinstein—not Bradley—on trial for her criminal and insulting defense of the Confederate flag and even more for her removal of the flag of Fort Sumter. The case raises historical questions of great social struggles still very much alive in American political and social life. The head of the Veterans Affairs Council, Mr. Wallace Levine, has recommended that the Confederate flag be replaced with the "California Hundred" flag, the banner of the first 100 California volunteers who paid their own way back East to fight for the Union. Feeling the heat, the mayor has agreed. The Fort Sumter flag was donated to the city by the Spartacists—a suitable place for its display is side by side with the California Hundred flag in the Civic Center.

The "battle of the flags" is not simply over historical symbols but represents a bloody conflict of social systems. The issues involved go to the core of this country's historically interlocked class and race questions and, for this reason, interest has been widespread within and beyond the Bay Area. As stated in our "proclamation": "Just last year at the University of Mississippi—Ole Miss—heroic black students waged a successful fight to ban official use of the Confederate flag. The students faced down a backlash of Ku Klux Klan death threats,

daily harassment and a march of 2,000 white racists..." As readers of *Young Spartacus* will recall, our last issue contained an interview with the leader of the Ole Miss protests, Lydia Spragin. In her letter to the *Chronicle*, dated April 23, Lydia Spragin writes: "Those men involved with getting you to first recognize the injustice associated with the Confederate flag should not be jailed. For their fight was one of principle, a fight for the institution of the full democratic creed in both actions and deeds. They should be lauded for their courage not punished for their beliefs."

We also received sympathetic coverage in a recent issue of the *Boston Globe* (see box below). This is especially gratifying, since if the racist anti-busing mobs which terrorized black schoolchildren during the 1975-76 fight over school integration in Boston were not led by the Dixie flag, they might as well have been. Since the defeat of busing as a minimal tool for integration on the streets of Boston, that city had come to symbolize triumphant racist reaction. But, in October of 1982, a clique of hooded Ku Klux Klansmen were surrounded by an angry jeering crowd of 1,500, including a contingent from the SL/SYL, at City Hall Plaza and run off the Boston streets. News of that anti-Klan action in Boston was to serve as an inspiration to the black workers and youth of Washington, D.C. a month later when 5,000 answered the call of the SL/SYL-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization and stopped cold a threatened KKK march in the nation's capital. The black population of Boston knows well that even "up North"—in what was the center for radical Abolitionism—the Civil War has yet to be finished.

Today we Marxists claim the tradition of the radical abolitionists who fought to smash black slavery. To do so required a bloody civil war and the tasks of that revolutionary struggle remain unfinished. The promise of black equality after the formal emancipation was betrayed, as Radical Reconstruction in the South was crushed by Klan terror in the deal with the Northern capitalist rulers, who withdrew the Union army. Emancipated from chattel slavery only to be stripped of political rights and economically subjugated, black Americans remain today a specially oppressed race-color caste. It will require a third American revolution, based on the multiracial working class, to put an end to the racist oppression and exploitation endemic to this system once and for all. Because only a revolutionary solution can guarantee the full liberation of black people, it is only the revolutionaries who fight effectively for black rights.

As Harvard student Carla Williams writes in her opinion piece for the *Harvard Crimson*, "As far as political symbolism goes, the actions of Ritchie Bradley make a strong example for Sparts to point to and prove that they are not just Marxist political rhetoric." The flag of slavery flies no more in San Francisco because the SL/SYL and Labor Black League put into action our commitment to finish the Civil War. Join us! ■

Spartacist Forum

We Tore Down the Flag of Slavery and the KKK! Finish the Civil War!



For more information: (415) 863-6963

Speakers:

Richard Bradley

Spartacist League, Founding member Labor Black League for Social Defense.

Diana Coleman

Former Spartacist candidate, SF Board of Supervisors

Saturday, June 2 7:30 p.m.
S.E.I.U. Hall
240 Golden Gate Avenue

San Francisco

Boston Sunday Globe

—13 May 1984

Civil War Brewing Over Confederate Flag in San Francisco

By Peggy Hernandez
Contributing Reporter

SAN FRANCISCO—There's a bare flagpole amidst 17 adorned ones here in front of City Hall. The bare pole used to display the Confederate flag.

One Sunday last month, Richard Bradley shinned up the 50-foot flagpole, cut the Confederate flag down and set it ablaze. The next day, San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein ordered another Confederate flag raised and, that same day, Bradley hoisted himself back up the pole and ripped it down.

Both times, Bradley, 34, was arrested and charged with misdemeanor violations. On April 29, clad in a Union uniform, Bradley returned to the scene of his earlier crimes and unfurled a pro-Union flag while 50 people cheered him on. The flag was taken down and Bradley was again arrested.

Flag many find intolerable

In a city with a reputation for tolerance, a flag many residents find intolerable has created a controversy.

Supervisor Doris Ward, who is black, calls the Confederate flag a symbol of "treason, of rebels, of slavery and a symbol of the Ku Klux Klan... that offends a number of people, including blacks."

Bradley, who is also black, shares Ward's point of view. "Blacks have been terrorized by the KKK carrying the flag for years and years," he said. "For a mayor to allow the flag is outrageous and insulting."

Ward adds that the flag issue "isn't a brouhaha over nothing" because it "says a lot about what San Francisco stands for and the kinds of images and principles that it wishes to enunciate."

The Confederate flag was unfurled in 1965 as part of a display of historic US flags. Al Nelson, a spokesman for the Spartacist League, a Socialist labor group of which Bradley is a member, said the flag originally hung beneath a Union flag to indicate the Confederates had lost the Civil War.

In 1980, the threadbare flags were replaced with new ones and the Confederate flag was displayed on its own, Nelson said.

The following year, Bradley advocated the flag's removal while running for a supervisor seat on the Spartacist platform. Bradley lost his race and the Confederate flag contin-

ued to fly.

Bradley argues that, because he made the flag an issue in his campaign, the supervisors were aware of its existence. Ward, however, says she "never really noticed it" until Bradley began tearing it down.

Bradley, a San Francisco resident, was born in North Carolina, 76 miles north of Charleston Harbor where the Civil War began. He finds fault with Feinstein's early argument that the Confederate flag should be displayed because of its historic value.

"A part of whose history?" Bradley retorts. "Do blacks want to be reminded of slavery? I doubt the mayor would fly a Nazi flag, also a historic flag, considering she's Jewish."

Committed to tearing the flag down, Bradley was at first at a loss as to how to accomplish the feat. After reading books on mountain climbing, Bradley settled on using a harness and practiced its use at home.

Flag gift to San Francisco

The flag Bradley unfurled during his third trip up the pole was a replica of the 33-star Fort Sumter banner, the flag captured by the Confederates at Charleston Harbor. The flag, made at a cost of \$150, was a gift to San Francisco from the Spartacist League.

Feinstein had the flag removed, but decided against sending up the Confederate flag yet another time. In an April 27 letter to the Board of Supervisors, she assented to Supervisor Ward's wish that the flag remain down, said Maurita Gallen, a spokeswoman for the mayor.

The flag that will likely occupy the empty pole is the California One Hundred banner that commemorates the first 100 men from the state to join the fight against the Confederacy. Gallen would only say that the flag will go up "soon."

In the meantime, Bradley is scheduled to appear in court on May 29. He faces two charges of vandalism and one of disturbing the peace. The District Attorney was willing to waive the charges if Bradley would do 25 hours of community service.

Bradley declined the DA's offer. "I definitely already did my community service," he said.

Reprinted courtesy the Boston Globe

On the Move?

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YSp 118

Young Spartacus is pleased to reprint an article from the Harvard Crimson (5 May) by Carla D. Williams, a Harvard undergraduate who is not affiliated with our organization. Carla makes an interesting evaluation of the SYL in light of our successful anti-racist struggles, most recently the removal of the Confederate flag from San Francisco's Civic Center.

Many comrades can agree with Carla's criticism of our writing. Indeed, time-wary phrases and militant sloganeering are no substitute for thought-

ful and politically compelling articles. However, some of Carla's objections are to our partisanship, i.e., our eschewal of bourgeois "objectivity" (which in the capitalist press usually means lying). Thus, we don't think "scum" is at all too strong a word to describe white-hooded Klansmen. Such language reflects our class bias, our dedication to the liberation of the Klan's intended victims. As Carla notes, we are not an organization that simply banters with rhetoric, but a party of serious and dedicated Trotskyist fighters. It is precisely through

actions, like the removal of the Confederate flag and the 5,000-strong Spartacist-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization that stopped the Klan in Washington, D.C. that we win people away from the Democrats and fake-left misleaders to a class-struggle program and the fight for a socialist future.

One small clarification for our readers: Progressive Labor Party, though cravenly opportunist, is not—as might be inferred—a bourgeois party; it is merely an increasingly nutty and irrelevant Stalinist grouplet.

SPARTACISTS

A Viable Alternative?

—5 May 1984

The Harvard Crimson

I am not a Spart. Nor am I now or have I ever been a member of the Communist Party.

If I were to repeat the first statement two more times, that would undoubtedly convince all readers that I am lying. There is something about three times denial that strikes a chord in Americans. The same odd chord is struck with the thought of Communism, which is why I hastened to add the second statement.

Some members of the Spartacus Youth League tend to be avowed Communists. I am an American and a registered Democrat, so this is an unsettling fact. They also tend to write with a lot of exclamation points and use inflammatory phrases. I am an aspiring journalist, so this style of writing seems distasteful. Talking with one as he tried to sell me *Young Spartacus*, for example, I had to point out that the phrase "white-hooded Ku Klux Klan scum" was too strong a tone to take; it was also redundant.

But such criticisms inevitably fall on deaf ears. They are not trying to take an objective tone, the Sparts will tell you. They are about the formulation of revolutionary politics. One paragraph from "Young Spartacus" summarizes their political philosophy:

As Marxists, we fight for revolutionary integrationism, for the working-class strategy of uniting the labor movement with the oppressed against their common enemies—the racist, capitalist system and its agencies—in order to put an end to the capitalist order and all its filthy inequities once and for all. Critical to this is the construction of a revolutionary vanguard party with a key component of Black leadership....

The Sparts have been seen and hated on campus, most recently when Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger '38 spoke (or rather, had trouble speaking) at Sanders Theater. Two members of the Spartacus Youth League subsequently came before the Administrative Board for violating freedom of speech rights. If found heckling again, the two may be suspended from Harvard College.

Just a week ago, a *Crimson* article implied that the Sparts were attempting to disrupt the student protest for Harvard Divestment from South Africa. Having attended the rally and not noticed the Sparts' so-called disruption, it became even more clear how many people don't like the Sparts.

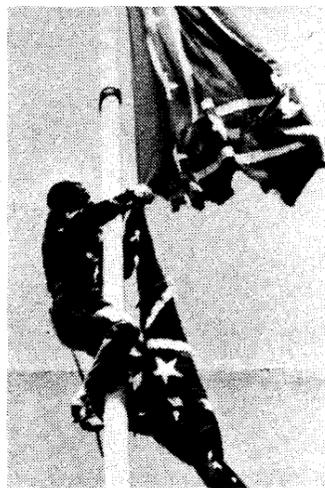
But last month in San Francisco, the Sparts gained national attention and support when one member of the Spartacus League, Ritchie Bradley, climbed the flag pole and tore a Confederate Flag down from above the San Francisco Civic Center, and threw it to the ground, where a crowd of 100 burned it. Bradley was wearing the uniform of the Union Army and climbed a pole that was more than 40 feet high, while demonstrators reportedly chanted: "The flag of slavery flies no more. Time to finish the Civil War."

Bradley was then arrested, charged with vandalism and released on his own recognizance.

One wonders first why a Confederate flag would be flying in San Francisco, then why someone didn't tear it down before. The Confederate flag, long carried by Ku Klux Klan members on lynching, bombing and terrorist attacks against Blacks and progressive whites has been a symbol of incitement to racist violence since the Civil War.

The flag, according to the Oakland Tribune, was one of 18 historical banners donated to the city of San Francisco by the Bechtel Power Corp. To mark the 119th anniversary of the surrender of the Confederacy at Appomattox the Spartacus League decided to burn down the flag.

Bradley climbed the flagpole in San Francisco again later last month—to replace the Confederate flag with the historic 33-star Fort Sumter garrison flag, donated to the city to celebrate the removal of the flag. Mayor Dianne Feinstein ordered that flag removed. Later, under recommendation of Wallace Levine, head of the Veterans Affairs Council, the Mayor agreed to fly the "California Hundred" flag, in honor of the first 100 California Volunteers who paid their way east to fight against slaveowners.



SO WHAT is all this flagwaving about? As far as political symbolism

goes, the actions of Ritchie Bradley makes a strong example for Sparts to point to and prove that they are not just Marxist political rhetoric. The incident in San Francisco will join ranks with the Spartacists' rally in Washington November of 1982 to stop the Klan from marching, and the fight on the University of Mississippi campus to ban the Confederate flag there.

The flag incident will help the Spartacus League in their attempt to represent a political alternative. They do not support Republicans or Democrats or the Progressive Labor Party or any other practitioner of "bourgeois politics". The difference between the Sparts and other political organizations is that while others work for reform within the existing political framework, the Sparts wish to overthrow that existing system.

No wonder then that they are hated. Who would want to overthrow this fine American system? Can you imagine life without capitalism? Without social, political and economic inequality? Without greed, opportunism, or racism? Would we all be speaking Russian after such a revolution? Is there any hope that American society will change?

One history professor recently noted in a lecture that minority groups historically excluded from the system have typically fought to become included. The recent increase in Black voter registration is one noticeable example. At the same time, in striving to gain greater participatory rights for themselves, these groups have expanded the base of the very system they were once excluded from.

The mainstream options available to Americans today—to become a Repub-

lican or Democrat—seem particularly limiting in light of the slim pickings remaining after presidential primaries. The distinction between both parties blurs when one considers that Democrats—the so-called party of the have-nots—have historically led this country into war; wars fought by the same "have-nots" the Democrats claim to serve.

Communism may not be the answer. But the existence of the Spartacus League and its derivatives magnifies the realization that the spectrum of conceivable political options should be expanded.

The Sparts are optimistic ideologues who believe that American society will experience revolutionary change, much more significant than the Civil War. The anti-Spart mentality that accompanies their existence on campus shows that American society is not ready for any form of revolution.

Yet they remain undaunted, in their own obnoxious, agitational, annoying way preparing for revolution:

We stand in the revolutionary tradition of the anti-slavery fighters John Brown and Frederick Douglass. To complete the finished democratic tasks of the Civil War, we look to the multi-racial American working class. In this period of imperialist decay, there is no longer a radical or "progressive" wing of the capitalist ruling class; the whole system stands squarely counterposed to Black freedom. Forward to the Third American Revolution, a proletarian revolution by a Trotskyist vanguard party with a strong black leadership component. Finish the Civil War—for Black Liberation in a workers' America!!!

I added the last four exclamation points, because the language seemed to call for it. —Carla D. Williams

Lauren and Ray Won't Go to Jail!

OAKLAND—The racist anti-labor frame-up of Lauren Mozee and Ray Palmiero has been defeated. For eight months a mass defense campaign on behalf of the two victimized phone workers had exposed the racist conspiracy by the Alameda County District Attorney and Pacific Telephone to railroad Lauren and Ray. Mobilizing broad support, especially from the Bay Area labor movement, the defense campaign succeeded in blowing to pieces the government's trumped-up "case." On April 6, presiding judge David A. Hunter threw out the felony charges against Lauren; two weeks previously the felonies against Ray were dropped for "insufficient evidence." Reducing the charges against Lauren to misdemeanors, to which she pled "no contest" and was sentenced to eight weekends of "community service," the judge ruled: "I just don't think that it rises to a felony." The D.A.'s office clearly had no case from the outset.

Mozee and Palmiero were singled out by Ma Bell and the D.A. for reasons of calculated political racism. During last summer's national phone strike, Lauren was struck in the face and called a "black nigger bitch" by one Michelle Rose Hansen—a racist scab manager crossing the picket line. Lauren defended herself, and Ray, her companion and fellow unionist, came to her assistance. For this elementary act of self-defense and

for doing their duty on the picket line, the two unionists were fired from their jobs, denied unemployment compensation and threatened with *seven and a half years each* on stiff felony assault and battery charges. An interracial couple, Ray and Lauren are both members of the Militant Action Caucus, a class-struggle opposition group in the Communications Workers of America. And Lauren was a former ten-year member of the Oakland Black Panther Party. In a particularly vicious attempt to portray her as a dangerous criminal, a years-old mug shot of Lauren was flashed on Bay Area TV. "This all stems back to when I was in the Panthers," Lauren stated. "They decided, well, they couldn't get me then, so they'd try to get me now." Indeed, the Alameda D.A.'s office was at the center of the government's dirty campaign during the 1960s which aimed at the virtual annihilation of the Panthers.

Against this outrageous racist anti-labor frame-up, the successful defense campaign initiated by the Phone Strikers Defense Committee (PSDC) sought to mobilize militant, mass action based on the organized labor movement. If Palmiero and Mozee were sent to jail, it would be an attack on every unionist who walks a picket line, every black person resisting a racist attack. On October 29, 1983, over 400 Bay Area militants including many unionists,

Blacks, Latinos and socialists held a march and rally in downtown Oakland, demanding "Freedom and Jobs Back for Lauren and Ray!" Faced with the impressive labor and black support for this action, the D.A.'s office made its first concession and dropped the "great bodily injury" clause which shaved three years off Ray and Lauren's potential sentence. At one court appearance after the other, Ray and Lauren's supporters packed the courtroom; on March 1 some 100 supporters demonstrated at the courthouse demanding an end to the frame-up.

Key to the victory was the strategy of a mass, class-struggle defense campaign which placed no reliance on the bosses' courts to provide justice for the working class and oppressed. In all, over 200 labor leaders and two dozen local unions endorsed the case, with many making financial contributions. From as far away as Australia, statements of support rolled in. Also endorsing the defense effort were prominent individuals and political figures, including Congressman Ron Dellums, Muhammad Ali, Stokely Carmichael, Angela Davis, and Dorothy Healey and Manning Marable, vice-chairs of the Democratic Socialists of America.

The defense campaign for Lauren and Ray was made a national priority for the Spartacist common movement and the Partisan Defense Committee. Regular

readers of *Young Spartacus* will be familiar with this hard-fought case which has been regularly covered in our press. We are happy to announce this victory—a victory not only for Ray and Lauren and their co-workers, but for the entire working class against racist, union-busting reaction. Victories like this cost *money*, dear readers, and we urge you to generously donate to: Phone Strikers Defense Committee, P.O. Box 24152, Oakland, CA 94623. ■

Workers Vanguard Photo



NYC Jazz Benefit at Harlem's Small's Paradise April 29, featuring Houston Person and Etta Jones, raised funds for Partisan Defense Committee cases, including the successful defense effort for Ray and Lauren.

Young Spartacus

Workers Vanguard Photos



Richard Bradley scales 50-foot pole to remove the Confederate flag of slavery and the KKK in San Francisco's Civic Center. Down below, supporters of the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League and Labor Black League for Social Defense celebrate the victory and burn the torn remnants of the Dixie flag.

SAN FRANCISCO—"The Confederate flag flies no more! Time to finish the Civil War!" Commemorating the 119th anniversary of the April 1865 surrender of the Confederacy at Appomattox, Spartacist League member Richard Bradley scaled the 50-foot flagpole in the Civic Center here on April 15 to cut down the flag of slavery which had flown in this city for too many years. The torn remnants were burned below by demonstrators from the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth League and Labor Black League for Social Defense who cheered the downing of the flag and sang "John Brown's Body." The proclamation distributed read in part:

"The Confederate flag is the banner of racist terror. It is the flag of the slaveowner's whip and the Ku Klux Klan's years of lynching, burning, shooting and bombing. From the night patrols which went after the Negro freedman as Black Reconstruction was being destroyed, to the lynchings of blacks in the 1920s, to the bombings and brutal murders of the '60s civil rights movements, to the hideous resurgence of racist violence in the present Cold War climate, the Confederate flag is an incitement to racist violence....

"The 'issue' of the Confederate flag was decided by blood and iron in the Civil War. Over 350,000 Union troops died to bring down the accursed Confederate flag. Over 200,000 black soldiers entered the fight and turned the tide against the South. Nearly 20 percent of these black soldiers gave their lives in desperate battle for their freedom."

Bradley, former Spartacist candidate for SF Board of Supervisors, was arrested after his descent and, still clad in the uniform of a Union soldier, taken to the police station along with Peter Woolston, General Executive Board

member of ILWU Local 6. Both were charged with "vandalism." The next day, San Francisco's Democratic mayor "Dixie Dianne" Feinstein ordered another Confederate flag hoisted up the flagpole. But we had vowed that the flag of slavery "will not fly" and Bradley again tore it down only hours after Feinstein put it up. Again he was arrested—by 13 white cops—and held for seven hours. The flag was down however, and this time it *stayed* down.

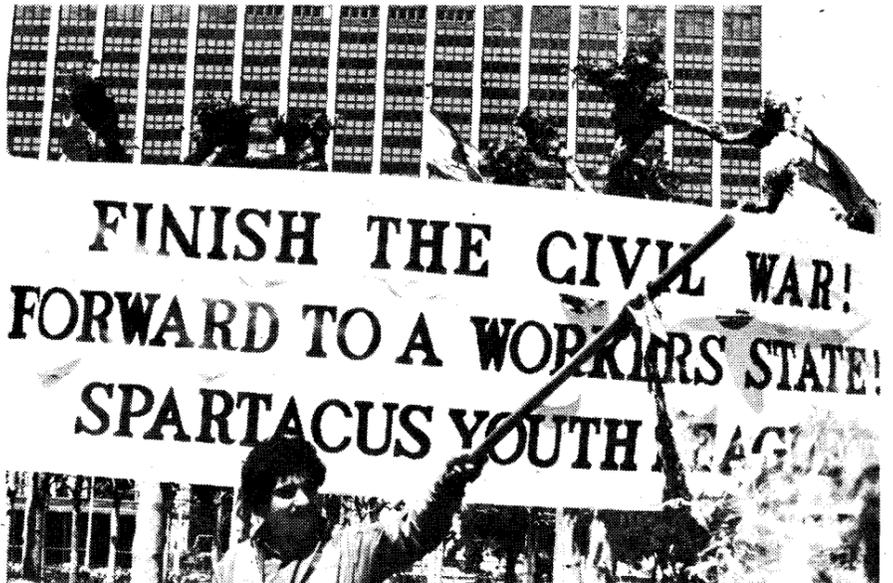
Throughout the Bay Area, popular sentiment was overwhelmingly for the action—TV, radio and the press covered "the battle of the flags," telegrams and phone calls poured into the mayor's office in support of Bradley and he could hardly walk into a bar or restaurant without having a drink or a meal bought for him. Across the Bay in Berkeley, the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity at the University of California hastily decided to remove their Confederate flag. Black supervisor Doris M. Ward requested that the flag stay down because it "was carried as the banner of slavery, and is still used today to represent movements such as the Ku Klux Klan."

On April 18, the *San Francisco Examiner* headlined "Dixie Flag Won't Rise Again, Feinstein Decides." The next day, the *Oakland Tribune* editorialized:

"In this instance, the 'malicious mischief' of the Spartacist League members has served to raise a question in the public mind: why was a Confederate flag flying in front of San Francisco City Hall anyway?...

"Including the Confederate banner in a display meant to show off the richness of American history is offensive to

**"We Tore Down
the Flag of Slavery!"**



many San Francisco citizens. It is an unnecessary provocation."

At the SL press conference called to celebrate the victory, a reporter asked, "If people have to know this history to understand it, where should they go to see a flag like that so they know it's wrong?" Our spokesman, Al Nelson, responded:

"I'll tell you where they can go. They can go to their television sets and watch the filming of the shootings that took place in Greensboro in 1979. They may have had some zoom shots to pick up on the Confederate flags on the baseball caps of the guys pumping 12-gauge shotgun shells into those kids on the ground."

Comrade Nelson's reference to the Greensboro massacre—wherein a caravan of Klan/Nazi hitmen murdered in broad daylight, in front of television cameras, five leftists, civil rights organizers and unionists—speaks to a significant coincidence in the timing of the San Francisco action. On the same day that Bradley, who was born and raised in North Carolina, first tore down the Dixie flag, the KKK/Nazi scum were once again acquitted by an all-white jury in North Carolina. In addition to commemorating the military defeat of the slave system and simply making the city of San Francisco more livable for decent people, our action was a blow against the racist terrorists whose banner remains the Confederate flag, whose song is Dixie and who still stalk this country a century after the "Emancipation Proclamation."

As for history, Feinstein might as well fly the swastika—it has as much relevance to California as the Confeder-

ate flag. California entered the Union as a free state in 1850. Thousands of Californians volunteered to fight against the Confederacy; mass pro-Union demonstrations were held in San Francisco (which is how Union Square got its name). In honor of this proud anti-slavery tradition, Bradley climbed the flagpole for a third time on April 29 to put up an exact replica of the historic 33-star Fort Sumter garrison flag which, as the SL press release issued on May Day explained, has an "honorable and heroic past":

"The surrender of Fort Sumter on April 14, 1861, after two days of fierce bombardment by Confederate forces marked the beginning of the Civil War. The besieged defenders retreated with honor taking the garrison flag with them. Four years later to the day, after the Confederacy had surrendered, by special order of President Abraham Lincoln, the very same flag was re-raised with great ceremony at Fort Sumter and every rebel battery that had fired on it was ordered to fire a 100-gun salute in its honor."

Feinstein immediately ordered this historic Union flag removed. Not only had she been quite content to let the flag of slavery fly for years, but had fought, unsuccessfully, to keep it flying. "Jefferson Davis" Feinstein has made quite a spectacle of herself: while communists defend the historic gains of the Union over the slavocracy, she has come out as the champion of that most barbaric, brutal and racist social system. In his biography of the radical democrat and fierce fighter for black freedom, *John Brown*, W.E.B. Du Bois described

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Hail Ritchie Bradley—Curse "Dixie Dianne" Feinstein!