Miami, Sing Sing:
Oppressed People Rebel Against Capitalism's Racist Attacks

By PAUL BENJAMIN

For the second time in two and a half years, Black people in Miami have gone into the streets in spontaneous, militant protests against the murder of a Black man by racist police. Clashes between Black youths and police erupted in the Overtown district after 21-year-old Nevell Johnson Jr. was shot by Patrolman Luis Alvarez on December 28. Johnson died the next day. Alvarez claims he was trying to stop Johnson for suspected possession of a concealed handgun. Although witnesses differ over whether Johnson was carrying a gun, all agree he offered no resistance to Alvarez and was shot without provocation.

Alvarez and his partner had no business being in Overtown at all, as they were assigned to another patrol area. They left this area, in violation of police procedure, apparently for no other reason than to harass Black people. Alvarez has an extensive record of such harassment. Although he has been on the police force only about 18 months, he has been investigated about seven times following citizen complaints over his conduct, mainly from Black people. Nevertheless police officials called him a "very mature officer" and resorted to all kinds of stories to justify the shooting.

After first insisting that Alvarez fired in "self-defense," they are now claiming that his gun "accidentally discharged" while he was searching Johnson.

The shooting touched off a localized but very militant rebellion that lasted for three days. On the night of the 28th, hundreds of Black youths fought police in the streets around the video game arcade where the shooting took place. Sporadic fighting continued on the 29th, then escalated sharply that night after news of Johnson's death spread throughout the community.

It took massive numbers of police to suppress the revolt, although scattered fighting continued on the 30th. City officials cordoned off the Overtown area to prevent the rebellion from spreading to neighboring Black communities and to protect the lucrative Orange Bowl extravaganza that was getting underway in downtown Miami, only a few blocks away.

Meanwhile, hundreds of cops armed with clubs and shotguns marched through Overtown beating and tear-gassing everyone in sight, while helicopters flew overhead dropping additional teargas canisters. One young Black man, 17-year-old Alonso Singleton, was shot eight times—including five bullets in the back—and killed on Wednesday night, while at least two others were wounded by police gunfire.

Altogether, dozens of people were injured and over 40 jailed by police. The events in Overtown took place just two and a half years after the much larger Liberty City riots in Miami in May 1980, in which 18 people were killed in fighting that followed the acquittal of four white policemen who had beaten a Black man, Arthur McDuffie, to death. The Overtown (Continued on page 6)
Left groups lie about roles in DC anti-Klan protest

Dear Torch/La Antorcha:

I thought your readers might be interested in two of the more interesting reactions of left organizations to the November 27 anti-Klan, anti-police rebellion in Washington, D.C., that was reported in last month’s Torch.

The first is the reaction of the Progressive Labor Party, an ultra-Stalinist and extremely sectarian outfit. When I was at the Washington demonstration, I didn’t see more than a handful of PLers. But in their paper, Challenge (12/22/82), they say, “It is now clear that thousands of workers, students and soldiers are ready, willing and able to act under our leadership to oppose the Klan and Nazis.”

Second is the response of the increasingly pro-Stalinist and also extremely sectarian Spartacist League. In the December 31 issue of their paper, Workers Vanguard, they print parts of a revealing statement by SL leader James Robertson. The statement lists the five anti-fascist demonstrations that the SL has had anything to do with in the past three years (Detroit, November 1979; San Francisco, April 1980; Ann Arbor, March 1982; Chicago, June 1982; Washington, November 1982). Robertson states: “All of the above listed mass demonstrations dealt fascism a real blow.” This is really silly. It’s worth noting the facts: In Detroit there were no fascists around to deal any kind of blow to—the demonstration was a publicity stunt by the SL held several days after a fascist rally. In Ann Arbor, hundreds of militiants stopped a Nazi rally, while the SL stayed blocks away and trash music equipment owned by other left organizations. In Chicago, the Nazis were able to stage the longest uninterrupted public rally they have ever held in that city while, for its part, the SL tried to cool off the anti-Nazi crowd.

The situation in Washington is more interesting. The SL braggs that it consulted police authorities beforehand, and that “no violence against the police” resulted. They go on to say, “We know that anti-fascists to clash with the police is to protect and embolden the Klansmen and Nazis.” When I was in Washington, D.C., I certainly saw a lot of violence against the police. While the SL, like PI, tries to claim credit for the entire day’s events, at the same time they defy any part in the militant rebellion against police terror. I think the fact that many Black people, along with other residents of Washington, were willing to stop the Klan—no matter what the police will do to stop the Klan—was all but eliminated for large numbers of women in the U.S. The exception, as always, was women with the money and time to go to private clinics or expensive doctors. The others were forced to seek out the back alley abortionist—and the death rate began to climb once again.

The ultimate goal of most anti-abortion groups is to overturn the 1973 Supreme Court decision. Abortion foes in Congress have proposed an amendment to the Constitution which would ban all abortions. Since such an amendment is unlikely to pass in the near future, they are also supporting a bill which would define a fetus as a person from the moment of conception. This would guarantee “human rights” for the fetus, making abortion legal only to murder. The Supreme Court itself is considering the constitutionality of several local laws limiting access to abortion. If those laws are upheld by the court, we will be left with the legal right to abortion with little or no way to get one.

The 1973 victory was not a gift from a benevolent government. It was a victory won by an active and often militant women’s movement, supported by allies in other liberation movements of the ’60s and ’70s. It is that kind of militant alliance which must be reformed to recover the rights which we have lost and fight for the ultimate victory of control of our bodies and our lives.

We will not get that victory by begging our “representatives” to give us what we need. The capitalist system will continue to try to keep women chained to forced pregnancy and child-rearing. We must take the power into our own hands and begin to build a society where our rights and personal dignity will be protected. We must not wait until our opponents have defeated us. We must begin to build a movement which demands our rights and will not settle for less.

In the RSL we are working to build such a movement—Join us!

—Pat Nelson

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THANKS

Our 1982-83 fund drive has surpassed its goal. At press time, $11,606 has been collected, substantially over our goal of $10,000. And, while the drive officially ends January 15, late-arriving pledges are expected to raise the total final to over $13,000.

The fund drive’s success, plus economies in our operations, should make it possible for us to continue our work through the current year and even to gain a much-needed relief from month-to-month financial crisis.

Our fund appeal met with an unexpectedly generous response both from friends of the Torch/La Antorcha and from our own members and sympathizers, who generously give large amounts of money to the organization. Employment of friends and comrades dug deep into their pockets; those who are unemployed or in low-paying jobs gave far more than they could easily afford. And readers and subscribers of the Torch/La Antorcha responded especially generously, ensuring the drive’s success.

Our warmest thanks to all our friends for helping us to meet our goal.
Aftermath of Malvinas Defeat

Mass Protests Shake Argentine Junta

By ALBERT LARY

Argentina's six-year-old military regime is beginning to unravel. A series of strikes and demonstrations this past December have raised the long-simmering discontent among the Argentine people to new levels.

"The country is sailing toward the perilous coast of a constitutional crisis," warned one Argentine newspaper. To the New York Times, the unrest in Argentina signaled "a growing determination that the country will slide into anarchy." Other observers have noted that the mushrooming popular anger threatens to go beyond the control of the traditional opposition leaders.

The latest round of struggle began December 4 in La Plata during a military ceremony in honor of Argentine soldiers who died in the Malvinas War. Three hundred war veterans interrupted the event by shouting insults at their officers and chanting anti-government slogans.

Two days later, a nationwide general strike of nine million workers shut down the country for 24 hours: It was Argentina's first successful general strike since a military junta seized power in a 1976 coup. The strike was supported by both wings of the large, but illegal, Confederación General de Trabajo (CGT-General Confederación of Labor), as well as other independent unions. Its official demands were limited to trade union issues: full rights in front of the government, wage increases, and government jobs for many strikers.

But many strikers raised broader political demands, including an end to the junta, restoration of democratic rule, and a response by the military to charges of human rights abuses.

Government reaction to the general strike was surprisingly mild. There were no moves to prevent it from going on, and government leaders even appeared on television with reports that the shut-down was 90 percent effective. The reason for this stance is that the junta, led by Army General Reynaldo Bignone, is itself divided into feuding factions and, under pressure of the new political alliances in the Argentine capital, is prepared to make limited concessions.

In addition, moderate union leaders privately agreed in advance to schedule marches during the strike to avoid confrontations with the police.

The December 6 general strike was followed on December 10 by a March of Resistance organized by families of the "disappeared." The demonstration brought 6,000 people into the center of the capital, Buenos Aires, to demand information about their missing relatives. An estimated 20,000 people have vanished throughout the past six years in Argentina. Most are thought to be victims of military and police agents. Prior to the 6,000-strong March of Resistance, a small group of mothers of the "disappeared" had been holding regular protest vigils in the Plaza de Mayo, in front of Government House, for more than a year. The recent upsurge has now transformed their symbolic protest into a major, mass movement.

Six days later, on December 16, a huge anti-government rally was organized by a coalition of four political parties. One hundred and eighty thousand people crowded into the Plaza de Mayo to demand an end to military rule. When a group of about 3,000 people charged the presidential palace, the police responded with tear-gas and clubs. One protester was killed by a plainclothes policeman; 80 others were wounded.

Roots of discontent

Much of the current anger erupting in Argentina is a result of the country's humiliating defeat in the Malvinas War. But that war itself was the junta's response to an already existing political crisis. The Argentine seizure of the Malvinas Islands in April was carefully timed by the military to undercut an earlier general strike called by the large, "left wing" Confederación General de Trabajo, which called for a "democratic front" to defend their national rights to the Malvinas, which were stolen by the British 150 years ago. But the generals had begun a war with Britain primarily to avoid class war at home. They were not prepared for the ferocity of the combined British and U.S. imperialist response. After two months of lies about impending victory, the Argentine forces abruptly surrendered in June. This defeat evoked bitter anger among the Argentine people.

However, the underlying cause of the political crisis in Argentina is the country's stagnant economy. Decades of industrial development, which once ranked Argentina on a par with Canada and Australia as a stable secondary economic power, have been rolled back. For example, Argentina's former debt is $40 billion, the world's largest. Government is forced to print ever larger currency denominations in an effort to keep up with the spiral of hyperinflation. The latest bill issued is a one-million peso note. On the black market, where Argentine pesos change for dollars at the rate of 60,000 to 1, it is worth less than $20.

Argentina's foreign debt is $40 billion, third largest in the world. Emergency loans of $2 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and $1 billion from private banks have postponed the nation's economic collapse temporarily. But the austerity measures demanded by the IMF as a condition for its loan will fall heaviest on Argentina's already rebellious working class. Real wages fell over 50 percent in 1982; interest rates are at 120 percent and further currency devaluations (which mean higher prices) are planned.

In addition to the poor state of the economy, one of the junta's biggest worries is the opening of a national discussion about the fate of Argentina's thousands of "disappeared." Between 1976 and 1979, the military regime, operating under a state-of-siege law, physically eliminated an entire generation of leftist militiamen and union activists, simply by making them "disappear," that is, by kidnapping and killing them. Sometimes whole families disappeared without a trace. Infant children who disappeared were reportedly sold to childless couples within the regime.

Where are the 'missing'?

Now, some of the facts from this terror-filled period are coming to light. In September several newspapers, sensing that the junta was losing its iron grip, began to print reports about secret military prisons. Several officers were named as suspected participants in political killings. After three weeks of growing boldness from the press, the junta cracked down, banning all discussion about the "disappeared," government corruption, and divisions within the government. But it was already too late. On the defensive, the junta announced that they were preparing for a "national referendum" on all "excesses" committed in the 1976-79 reign of terror. Meanwhile, it announced, those with evidence of crimes should simply go to court.

In late October, the issue burst out anew with the discovery of 88 unmarked graves containing 400 bodies in San Miguel, near the capital. All the bodies were buried between 1976 and 1979. One day later, the mayor of La Plata announced that his town cemetery contained 295 unidentifiable bodies buried during the same period. The door was now open. People who had remained silent for years suddenly remembered strange occurrences from years past. Within a few days, four more cemeteries, with over 1,000 more unidentified bodies, were unearthed.

The junta's response to these new revelations was fierce. Without commenting on the discoveries, the government ordered three magazines permanently closed. Journalists critical of the military received death threats. And one former diplomat offered evidence of military involvement in an earlier killing, his brother turned up dead, with torture marks and a broken skull.

The military is terrified that, if the whole truth comes out about the "disappeared," popular rage will not be limited to simply replacing their hated junta. The threat of criminal investigations, trials and even violent reprisals against the generals looms larger as the upsurge grows.

Not surprisingly, the U.S. State Department denies that there are any continuing human rights issues in Argentina. U.S. military aid is scheduled to be resumed as soon as Congress gives final approval. According to the U.S., Argentina is now a "democratic" regime because the generals have promised to hold elections late this year for a civilian government. But elections in 1984, under the current electoral code, are highly conditional. For example, the junta recently demanded that all five major political parties sign a "political accord" agreeing that, if elected, they would not take reprisals against military officers, and noted that, in any event, military corruption, the

(Continued on page 12)
STOP THE WITCH-HUNT!
NAMBLA,
Age of Consent,
and Human Sexuality

By IAN DANIELS

“This episode has thrown the spotlight on a sicko outfit called the North American Man-Boy Love Association, which actively promotes sex between men and young boys. We urge law enforcement authorities to kick over this rock and throw anyone guilty of any infraction behind bars. It is disgusting—unthinkable—that such perverted behavior can be tolerated in this nation.”


On December 3, 1982, police broke into a beach cottage in Wareham, Massachusetts, arresting three men and seizing quantities of files and magazines, some of them pornographic. It was the first shot in a new offensive by various federal, state and city authorities against the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA). The three men, one of them 17 years old, were held on solicitation charges relating to a 13-year-old and 16-year-old youth staying with them in the cottage. All three were former members of NAMBLA’s steering committee.

Two weeks later, on December 19, police raided three apartments in New York City, and FBI agents questioned nearly a dozen men. In one house they seized NAMBLA’s files and much of its literature. The police and FBI were attempting to link NAMBLA to the disappearance of six-year-old Etan Patz some three and a half years ago, and to the alleged kidnaping of a 13-year-old youth from New Jersey.

A main piece of "evidence" used by the authorities to link NAMBLA to the Etan Patz case was a photograph allegedly found in the Wareham cottage that was supposed to resemble Patz. Immediately, the media began a series of hysterical articles on NAMBLA and the missing children, labeling NAMBLA a "dangerous international sex network that preys on children." Day by day, papers such as the Murdoch-owned New York Post began to "reveal" new information and "expose" NAMBLA in lurid National Enquirer style. A taxi driver stepped forward and claimed that he remembered picking up Patz with an older man some three years before.

In the face of these attacks, NAMBLA organized a press conference on December 28. It revealed that the photo was supposed to look like Patz was from a 1968 non-pornographic "Boys and Girls" produced by a publishing firm which had been raided by the police some years before. NAMBLA denied engaging in any criminal activities, most especially in involving children in kidnaping or production of so-called "kiddie porn." NAMBLA member David Thorstad also expressed NAMBLA’s sympathies with the parents of young Patz, and criticized the authorities for causing them added grief over a concocted story.

But the media campaign did not stop. Claiming "new" information, the New York papers began to accuse NAMBLA of links with the second case, the disappearance of the New Jersey youth, Charles Dyson. Significantly, between the December 19 FBI interrogations and New Year’s Eve, when Dyson turned up in a New York bus station, not a single new fact appeared in the papers. Yet the media hype reached fever pitch-especially after NAMBLA’s revelations about the photo that was linked with the NAMBLA/Patz frame-up. (When Dyson finally did turn up, the New York Post ran a shrieking headline, "GAY NIGHTMARE ENDS," while Dyson himself appeared to have put some weight and had no complaints.)

The New York Times also jumped into the fray. On January 4 in its "Science" section, the Times ran an article on the "disorder" of pedophilia (an adult’s desire to have sex with children), lambing the merits of Depo Provera in "curing" sex offenders. (Depo Provera is a highly dangerous cancer-causing chemical that was first used as a contraceptive on women; for more information on Depo Provera and its effects, see an article reprinted from Forward in the April 15-May 14, 1982 Torch/La Antorchita.) Nevertheless, despite its attempts to smear NAMBLA, the Times was forced to concede that "abduction of a child by a pedophile is very rare."

Defend NAMBLA!

Whether or not one agrees with the specific views of NAMBLA, we believe it is essential to defend the organization against criminal prosecutions and against the campaign of vilification and slander being carried out by the press. On the most basic level, such defense is called for because NAMBLA is innocent of the charges being raised against it.

NAMBLA is not an organization which advocates sexual relationships between men and boys. It is an organization that fights for the rights of those men and boys who are involved in or who would like to be involved in such relationships, and works to educate society that these relationships do not in the main conform to the stereotype in which "dirty old men" rape innocent young children.

According to NAMBLA spokesperson David Inga1as:

"NAMBLA is a public and legal organization. It was founded in December 1978 in response to the extreme oppression of boys and men involved in consensual and loving relationships. It supports the liberation of persons of all ages from sexual prejudice, exploitation, and oppression. NAMBLA is and has never been, involved in prostitution, the production or distribution of pornography, or the transportation of minors for illegal purposes. We support only consensual relationships, and condemn any involuntary coercion or in which consent is lacking."

Most importantly, for all the weeks of hype by the media, the raids by police and the FBI and the lurid stories about NAMBLA’s alleged activities, one fact remains clear: No one was able to come up with a shred of evidence linking NAMBLA to child kidnappings, “kiddie porn” rings or anything of the sort. Yet NAMBLA remains the target of reactionary, puritanical outrage on the part of the gutter press, and presumably will continue to face the threat of harassment by various government forces. The police, the FBI and the bourgeois media have united in a campaign against NAMBLA not because NAMBLA is involved in “crime,” but because of the views. NAMBLA must be supported in its fight against victimization by the capitalist state and the three men arrested in Wareham faced against legal persecution.

But the importance of defending NAMBLA goes beyond the narrow legal question of guilt or innocence. The witch-hunting campaign against NAMBLA is not taking place in a vacuum; it is very much a part of a broader ruling class offensive aimed at limiting the rights of all working and oppressed people. Sections of the capitalist class today, along with right-wing organizations such as the Moral Majority, are trying to re-establish a repressive political, social and moral climate in the country. Strict obedience, the reassertion of the role of the “traditional family” and a bowing down to “God, Flag and Country” are all essential aspects of the "new order" they would like to impose.

Who will be the victims if the ruling class is successful in establishing this kind of reactionary and repressive climate? Man/boy lovers certainly—but the list does not stop there. Lesbian and gay people will be driven back into the closet, with homosexuality again labeled the unholiest of sins. The right to abortion will be stripped away, and once again, a woman’s right to be anywhere, and especially to sexual or adult relationships, will be challenged.

But the capital class is not the only one that will be used to bolster brutal assaults or the population. NAMBLA must fight not only the current ruling class, but also all the fundamental problems for the future of the people but in fact young people’s lives, their freedom must be defended from the agencies of the state.

In our view, children—are sexual being born into a society of sexual prejudice—straight and gay. However, the morality of capitalist society is dangerous and individual, social and religious community is a society that is attempting to destroy young people’s sexual freedom.

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The campaign raises the question of the defense of the members of society from the oppressive forces key to the nature of the sexuality repressive bourgeois society, the rights of problems of child directly or indirectly, the questions about the so-called "Age of Consent" which ostensibly the majority of people but in fact young people’s lives, their freedom must be defended from the agencies of the state.

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A repressive climate surrounds the entire question of sex. Capitalism pressurizes society to deny young people their rights and needs of young people. The Age of Consent laws was ever be.

As long as capitalism, with its repressive morality and ethics based on "protection," will continue to distort the children's rights and needs of young people. The Age of Consent laws will never be.

Capitalism is ultimately the greatest child molester, abuser and rapist. It murders millions of children every year through famine and disease caused by economic chaos; it kidnaps thousands of youth to die in wars for profit; it taunts and bruises the lives of billions of children through hate and bigotry. It distorts and destroys human relationships, and declares differences of sexuality to be "sick" and "abnormal.

But, the Age of Consent laws can be a tool for the defense of young people. In our view, the campaign against NAMBLA should be broadened and improved, and the rights of the entire working class.

The campaign against NAMBLA also raises questions that go beyond that of defense of the organization and its members from state repression. Issues key to the nature of human sexuality and the sexually repressive nature of capitalism, the rights of young people and the problems of child abuse and rape are all directly or indirectly involved. In addition, the attacks on NAMBLA raise questions about the nature of the Age of Consent laws, which ostensibly exist to protect young people but in fact serve to legally deny young people's sexuality and restrict their freedom of choice and autonomy.

In our view, children—especially teenagers—are sexual beings. It is simply a fact that many people develop an active sexuality—straight or gay—at a young age. Furthermore, the sexual and social norms of capitalist society consider this dangerous and sinful. Through educational, social and legal institutions, society pressures young people to conform to norms which are not acceptable to young people, especially if that sexuality is homosexuality. Many a gay person can remember being aware of his or her sexuality at a young age, not knowing it was not acceptable, and the dangers of openness, the threats of discrimination, others telling them they were not acceptable.

This repressive sexual atmosphere is not limited to gay people, or for that matter, to young people. Capitalist society has long taken a dim view of sex. Outside of sex, sex is seen as evil, and even within the confines of marriage it is viewed negatively if not specifically directed toward procreation (having children). In general, capitalist society represses and represses sexuality, instilling in people a fear of a sexual and social morality under the guise of "protecting" children.

In arguing that the Age of Consent laws are a reactionary restriction on the right of young people to determine their own sexuality, we are not suggesting that there are not problems with society concerning child abuse or that children need no legal protection against such abuse. Quite the contrary, we believe that child abuse is a serious and growing problem today. Nor, we should emphasize, are we arguing that all relationships involving man/boy love are healthy; undoubtedly there are more than a few sexual relationships involving men and boys—"O.K."—the issue is whether that sex is truly consensual or a matter of rape or abuse. Specific laws against rape and child abuse can and should be strengthened and incorporated into the legal system that deny young people their rights and subject them to a state-imposed "morality."
Prisoners take over Sing cellblock

Less than two weeks after the Overtown uprising, still another revolt broke out among mainly Black and Latin prisoners at the Ossining Correctional Facility in New York, better known as Sing Sing.

Sing Sing is a decaying, century-old prison that accommodates transient prisoners, those waiting for cells to open up elsewhere in the state's overcrowded prison system. Although these prisoners are supposed to spend only a short time at Ossining, many are there for as long as eight months before being transferred.

Prisoners at Ossining are denied even the minimal rights available to those at other institutions. For instance, they are not allowed to participate in remedial education programs, and have only limited access to arts and crafts or other recreational facilities. In addition, they cannot receive packages from friends or relatives and have only minimal mail and visiting privileges.

The Ossining rebellion was touched off when a guard refused to allow prisoners from cell block B to watch television on the night of January 8. This led to protests which quickly escalated into a full-scale rebellion. The approximately 500 men in cell block B, using broomsticks as weapons, seized control of the cell block area and took 18 guards as hostages. After gaining control of the cell block they drew up a list of 10 demands which were relayed to prison authorities by telephone. These included rather modest reforms such as the right to receive packages, broader mail and visitation rights and increased recreational facilities.

They requested that prison guards obey prison regulations, in particular those dealing with recreation hours. Significantly, they asked for a "seniority system" in which those transient prisoners who had been at Ossining for the longest time would be the first to be transferred. And they demanded amnesty for all those involved in the protest.

Throughout the rebellion, the prisoners negotiated openly and honestly with prison authorities. At the same time, recognizing that the authorities would make all sorts of phony promises to break the rebellion, they used a variety of tactics to overcome the deadlock.

During rebellion, prisoners demanded access to reporters to counter lies from prison authorities.

Martin Luther King Jr.
January 15, 1929—April 4, 1968

January 15 is the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. King was born in 1929 and was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

Despite petitions signed by millions; despite demonstrations in Washington, D.C., numbering tens of thousands on January 15, 1981, and a second, smaller demonstration last year; and despite the endorsement of dozens of prominent individuals, including nearly every Black elected official in the country, Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday is still not a national holiday.

The demand to make King's birthday a holiday is not a radical one. It is not a demand for jobs and decent housing for all, for an end to police brutality or freedom for freedom—basic rights and needs that capitalism can't grant. It is simply a request to be treated with dignity and as equals. And since 1981, it will be more than a request. It will be a demand, made each year, to remember and honor the memory of the greatest leader of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, for his contributions to the cause of Black liberation.

There are certainly many criticisms revolutionaries can make of Martin Luther King's politics and philosophy. He made a moral principle of nonviolence. He worked closely with the liberal wing of the civil rights movement, even while he realized that the Black struggle would be led by the Black poor, the working class.

But none of this has anything to do with why the U.S. ruling class won't make Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a national holiday. And the same Democratic Party congressmen who won't vote for honoring Martin Luther King Jr. gather each year to lavish Thomas Jefferson/Andrew Jackson Day dinners to honor the two slave masters who founded their party.

Africa, Asia and Latin America. But, of course, none of this is new. The U.S. ruling class won't make King's birthday a national holiday because they are afraid of him.

Today Martin Luther King Jr. comes to symbolize the fight against racial oppression. He has come to symbolize Black pride. He has come to symbolize the struggle for jobs, justice and freedom for Black people and, in fact, for all oppressed people. It is this struggle which we commemorate on January 15—a struggle the ruling class would prefer us all to forget.
cellblock, the prisoners put up banners saying “We Don’t Want Another Attica”—referring to the massacre of 43 prisoners and guards that ended the 1971 prisoners’ rebellion in upstate New York. They wanted reporters on the scene to know—and publicize—their desire for a peaceful settlement of their protest. They also insisted, from the beginning, that they should be heard by reporters so that the public would know how reasonable their demands were.

This latter demand was rejected by New York Governor Mario Cuomo and Corrections Commissioner Thomas Coughlin. Cuomo told Coughlin that publicizing the prisoners’ demands “would damage us in France” and “excite inmates all over...”

On January 10, however, in order to end the rebellion, Cuomo appeared to agree to allow a television crew into the cellblock. But when prisoners discovered that the “television crew” consisted of undercover cops, they postponed the release of any hostages. At this point, the threat of another Attica drew closer as over 250 security officers were secretly moved into the prison.

The prisoners themselves broke the deadlock over access to the media by broadcasting their demands to reporters over captured bullhorns. In fact, throughout the rebellion reporters noted that the only accurate information they received over the progress of negotiations or conditions in cellblock B came from the prisoners.

The maneuvers of Cuomo and Coughlin were revealed most clearly in earlier negotiations over amnesty for the prisoners. In talks on January 9, Cuomo told the prisoners he would agree to consider amnesty. Once the prisoners got this promise, they agreed to release the hostages and end the rebellion. In reality, however, Cuomo had told Coughlin and other prison officials that he would refuse amnesty once the hostages were released. Unfortunately for Cuomo, a Republican state senator from Long Island, Ralph Marino, blew the whistle on Cuomo’s doublecross that night when he announced to reporters that state authorities were not going to grant amnesty.

After the prisoners heard Marino’s statement on the 11 p.m. news, they began shouting angrily, “The deal’s off, the deal’s off.” In order to gain the release of the hostages, prison authorities finally had to sign a statement agreeing to the prisoners’ demands, including one promising “no form of retaliation whatsoever” against those who participated in the rebellion. This opened the way for the release of the hostages later on January 10.

After the hostages were free, Cuomo and Coughlin quickly broke their promises of “no retaliation.” On January 11, Cuomo stated that he would refuse amnesty for the prisoners, while Coughlin told reporters that some prisoners would be prosecuted for supposed felonies committed during the revolt, including rioting, assault and, possibly, kidnapping.

**U.S. society as racist as ever**

The uprisings in Overtown, in Washington and at Attica all stem from a single cause—the racism and anti-working class oppression that is built into U.S. capitalist society. Despite a mass struggles of the 1960s and the many promises made by the capitalists in the wake of those struggles, U.S. society in 1983 is as racist as ever. The gains Black and Latin people actually won in those years are rapidly disappearing under the weight of the economic crisis and the attacks of the Reagan administration and the capitalist class as a whole.

In Miami, for example, after the 1980 rebellion, the capitalists talked endlessly about the need to do something about the poverty and unemployment that had provoked it. But, two and a half years later, conditions there are even worse.

And in Attica, though Cuomo told reporters he would have carried out the reforms demanded by the prisoners without their actions, there can be little doubt that nothing would have been done about the conditions in the prison unless the prisoners themselves raised hell. Corrections Commissioner Coughlin actually told reporters, “This system has changed dramatically since Attica; the racism, the abuse in the system doesn’t exist anymore.” Yet when prisoners at Attica carried out a reasonable and disciplined protest to win reforms that everyone claims to support, they were labelled “emotionally disturbed, manic-depressive, schizos and psychotics” (all of which sounds much more “scientific” than the old-fashioned, straight-out racist epithets) and then were betrayed.

The capitalists, who are declaring war against Blacks and Latinos, and in fact all working class and oppressed people, can expect to face war in return. This is the real lesson of the recent rebellions in Miami, in Washington, and at Attica. These uprisings represent an initial and spontaneous—but unquestionably political—response by working class and oppressed people to the attacks coming down on them. As the capitalist crisis deepens, and as ever-larger numbers of people become open targets for the racists in white sheets, in corporate boardrooms and in Washington, D.C., we can expect to see larger and even more violent uprisings in the future. □

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**Free Darnell Summers & Gail Simmons!**

Darnell Summers, a Black revolutionary who is being framed on murder charges in Detroit, is scheduled to go to trial on February 8. As we reported previously in the Torch (Vol. 9, No. 9), the case centers on the killing of a police officer, Robert Gonser, in Inkster, Michigan, in 1968. The shooting stemmed from a struggle over the Malcolm X Community Center in Inkster, which police had been harassing. Four hours before Gonser was killed, a 14-year-old Black youth, Jimmy Matthews, had been shot by police. Nobody was ever punished for Matthews’ murder.

Summers was charged with the Gonser murder because of his role as a leader in the Malcolm X Center, and not because the police had any evidence against him. When his case was brought to trial in 1969, the charges were dropped “without prejudice” (meaning they could be brought up again at a later date) when the state’s main witness, Milford Scott, admitted he had lied about Summers’ guilt under heavy pressure from police.

The main reason the charges were reinstated 14 years later is that Summers’ revolutionary activities continued in West Germany. He played with a political jazz band, Afrodisia, and did anti-war organizing among American GIs with the revolutionary newspaper FightBack. The Coalition to Free Darnell Summers has received a government document, a U.S. Army “information paper,” drawn up by army lawyers on the Judge Advocate General’s staff for the U.S. Command Berlin in 1975, outlining its strategy to counter anti-war organizing among GIs in Germany. After outlining measures to harass the GI Counseling Center, the document recommends the “expulsion of key individuals in extreme cases.” To avoid the appearance of political repression, the document advises: “If deemed necessary, action should be pursued through the most indirect channel possible... Caution must be taken not to trigger a negative and perhaps embarrassing press reaction.”

The extradition of Darnell Summers from Germany to face trumped-up murder charges going back to 1968 is motivated by this government desire to “expel” an anti-war organizer from Germany “through the most indirect channel possible.” There is certainly no new evidence to justify trying him again. The government is relying on the only evidence that is Scott is now in prison on another charge, and is eligible for parole next year, so he is apparently willing to say whatever the police want him to say.

The extradition of Summers from Germany last year was based on testimony from Gail Simmons, who was his lover in 1968. Her testimony was obtained by charging her with the same murder and jailing her until she agreed to sign a statement implicating Summers. When Summers was brought back to the U.S., however, Simmons publicly repudiated her signed statement. Since she is no longer cooperating with the police, Gail Simmons is now standing trial for the same murder.

Simmons is clearly innocent; among other things, police testimony states that the murderer was committed from a car with four men in it. And she has been put through hell because of her refusal to testify against Summers. She was jailed for several months, and was told that she would be made to suffer even if she was eventually found innocent. Being a welfare mother, she was unable to afford bail. Under intense pressure, she agreed to sign a statement implicating Summers in the murder, but then recanted. Since then, she was told at her pre-trial hearing that charges against her would be dropped if she again agreed to testify against Summers. The prosecution has insisted on trying her before Summers’ case comes up, apparently hoping that under the pressure of a murder trial she will change her mind and play the prosecution’s game. Her trial had been set for last November, but was delayed when she admitted herself to a hospital after attempting suicide.

Darnell Summers’ trial is one more example of the lengths the capitalist government will go to in trying to stifle revolutionary organizers. Both Summers and Simmons need your support.

Letters of protest can be sent to: Judge Joseph B. Sullivan, 1901 City-County Building, Detroit, MI 48226. Information on further activities of the coalition can be obtained by calling the Detroit branch of the RSL.

—Paul Carson

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Mutiny in Salvadoran army

On January 6 a major crisis erupted within the Salvadoran regime when Lieutenant Colonel Sigifredo Ochoa Pérez, commander of Cabañas Province, began a six-day mutiny against his superiors in the army and the government. Ochoa declared himself “in rebellion” against the defense minister, Gen. José Guillermo García, after Garcia ordered Ochoa transferred to a diplomatic post in Uruguay. Labelling García a “dictator” who was trying to force him into exile to further his own political ambitions, Ochoa refused to give up his command until García was dismissed from office. Several key officers, including the commanders of the air force and two infantry battalions, supported him.

Eventually, a committee of top-ranking military leaders worked out a compromise in which Ochoa will resign, but not face any disciplinary action for his mutiny, while García will stay on at least temporarily as defense minister.

Ochoa’s mutiny is only the latest move in the power struggle that is taking place within the Salvadoran government. One faction, led by García, supports U.S. imperialism’s strategy for defeating the leftist rebellion led by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front. This faction would like to win popular support by promoting limited land reform and cutting down “human rights” abuses, while trying to split the rebel camp by opening negotiations with its moderate wing. This strategy is opposed by the ultra-right faction, led by Roberto D’Aubuisson, president of the constituent assembly elected last March. The right-wingers basically want an all-out, no-holds-barred war against the guerrillas.

In recent months, García has used his control over the distribution of U.S. military and economic aid to build up his political base. He has also begun to purge D’Aubuisson’s supporters from key posts in the army and government. But García went too far in attacking Ochoa, whose ability is respected by both his fellow officers and by U.S. advisers in El Salvador. In particular, the rightists have been able to discredit García by claiming he is promoting incompetent officers who are his allies while dismissing more effective commanders.

Workers, peasants battle Mexico’s ruling PRI

A wave of protests led by opposition parties of both the right and the left has resulted in the seizure of police stations in cities throughout Mexico. In some cases, violent clashes have broken out between the protesters and members of the governing party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, and the police. Five people have been reported killed, and 32 wounded. Most of the injuries occurred in late December in Ciudad Hidalgo near the Guatemalan border, and in Ciudad Fernández in the west.

The protesting political parties range from the Partido Acción Nacional and the Partido Demócrata Mexicano on the right to the Partido Socialista Unificado de Mexico on the left. All charge that electoral fraud by the PRI government is preventing their local candidates from taking office.

PNP defended capitalism

In the first place, the book makes it plain that the PNP basically defended capitalism and did not stand for fundamental change. On page 43, for example, the book states that even in looking back at their own unsuccessful struggle, the PNP was able to note that in any future PNP government the public sector does not mean socialism or even workers’ control of that sector. The experience of workers at the Jamaica Omnibus Service, State Trading Corporation, National Commercial Bank, hotels and other companies taken over by the PNP government can testify to that fact. As if in recognition of these points, Manley makes the following very telling admission—“In retrospect it does not seem that our programme was all that radical. Many of the schemes that we tried to introduce already exist in most of Europe.” (Page 95) In plain words all that Manley was attempting were the capitalist reforms that have been carried out in certain parts of Europe, notably the Scandinavian countries.

The ‘Third Path,’ myth or reality?

Very early in the book Manley writes that the PNP were to spend their years as a government exploring a so-called “Third Path,” that is, an approach different from the Puerto Rican and Cuban models of development. As we explained above, this “Third Path” had nothing to do with the ending of capitalism. Manley’s book also reminds us that at critical times the PNP government abandoned the “Third Path” and instead relied on the IMF (which the book equalled with the Puerto Rican model). Thus even before the December 1976 general elections the PNP government had begun negotiations with the IMF and subsequently signed an agreement in early 1977 having failed to find any alternative. About this, Manley writes: “Looking back, I believe it to be clear that we had no choice at that time.”

No choice, that is, except to the subject the workers and oppressed Jamaican masses to skyrocketing prices, mounting layoffs, capitalist factory closures and other terrible pressures, while the capitalists and imperialists were allowed every opportunity to make fantastic profits (20 percent, in fact). The same process was repeated in 1978. This time the situation was even more painful. Instead of any alternative, Manley writes that he had to call his book “one of the most popular packages ever imposed on any client government by the IMF.”

After six years in power not even the PNP left wing had any alternative. As the book explains: “By now [1978] there was a general, if reluctant, agreement in the party that the time being we did not have any choice.”

PNP liberalism

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Report from YSA Convention

SWP Leaders Head Toward Stalinism

By DARRYL CLARK

The Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) held its 22nd national convention in Chicago, December 30 to January 2. Over 800 people, members of the YSA and SWP as well as invited guests, attended.

The convention revealed a great deal about the current political direction of the YSA and SWP. Two points emerged most clearly: 1) SWP leaders believe in the formula of Trotskyism, the theory of Permanent Revolution; and 2) the leaders of the SWP are setting the stage for a break with the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec), the international Trotskyist organization to which the SWP is presently affiliated.

In his speech, titled “Their Trotsky and Ours: Revolutionaries Continually Today,” Barnes concluded the leadership of the new world revolution today. He claimed that the Trotskyists and the SWP leadership have the responsibility of re-examining our theoretical traditions. We have met the challenge. We are learning from the comrades. We are reaching out to them. Barnes then added, “We are not Trotskyists, we are communists.”

That SWP leadership’s new course involves downplaying or even abandoning some of the original Trotskyist ideas of Permanent Revolution. This has been suggested in other parts of Barnes’ speech. He quoted and praised Schafik Jorge Handal, the leader of the SWP organization with such divisions cannot survive time. Barnes’ speech was met with a round of applause. That SWP leadership is not drop-
The History of Haiti—Black People Struggling to Be Free

Conclusion: Prospects for Revolution

In an article written in 1915, V.I. Lenin, then the leader of the Bolshevik Party and later the leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, outlined the essential conditions for a successful revolution in the following terms:

"To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: (1) it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; where there is... a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a struggle through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth... (2) when the suffering and wretchedness of the masses have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses..."

Among the three conditions cited by Lenin, only one, the third, does not yet apply in Haiti today. But there are definite signs that "a considerable increase in the activity of the masses" may not be far off. Despite conditions of extreme repression, workers in Port-Au-Prince have struck repeatedly. This past autumn, for example, workers struck at the Rawlings Sporting Goods Company. To suppress the strike Baby Doc called out the army, which shot 12 strikers. As well, there has been a noticeable increase in political activity among the Haitian emigre community, including, on January 2, 1983, the staging of the largest Haitian demonstration ever held in the U.S. Is this a harbinger of the emergence of a new revolutionary current among the Haitian people? If Haiti's past guides its future, then the prospects for the Haitian people are not good. From Toussaint and Dessalines to Duvalier, the pattern of Haitian history has been one of the masses providing the source of strength for a leader who comes to power promising freedom—and who afterwards betrays his followers. But Haiti's future need not be determined by its past. Changes in Haitian society and, in fact, in the world as a whole, have created new conditions that make it more possible than ever before for the people of Haiti to truly win their own freedom.

The first of these changes is the growth of the Haitian working class. Since the end of slavery, the overwhelming majority of the people of Haiti have been peasants, barely scratching out a living in the impoverished countryside. Peasant life has an enormous adverse impact on the physical and mental health of the Haitian people. The political power is concentrated and unstable. Desire for a new, more efficient political organization has resulted in the creation of political parties. The Haitian people have felt for the Duvaliers, could lead to revolution. What will be the outcome of a mass campaign of the Haitian people? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: (1) it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; where there is... a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a struggle through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth... (2) when the suffering and wretchedness of the masses have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses..."

During the upheaval in political and economic conditions of the country, the masses of Haitians have been driven from the land and many of the Haitians there, as well as the thousands more in Haiti, are idle. The Haitian economy is a shambles and a serious crisis of its two-and-a-half decades of corrupt and repressive rule. The Haitian economy is a shambles and the ruling and middle classes are divided into warring factions and cliques.

The poor state of the Haitian economy is directly linked to today's deepening world economic crisis, a crisis that is taking its greatest toll on Caribbean and other so-called Third World nations. The world prices of sugar and coffee, Haiti's chief agricultural exports, have plunged dramatically. The demand for Haitian-produced bauxite (aluminum ore) and the small consumer products (stuffed toys, electronic components, etc.) that make up much of Haiti's manufacturing has been sharply reduced by the world recession. For the same reason, Haiti's tourist trade has dwindled to a small fraction of what it once was. The resulting deterioration of the Haitian economy has forced the cancellation of plans for expanded industrial development in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince and for an even more extensive agricultural reconstruction program. In short, "Jean-Claudianism"—the attempt to make Haiti the "Taiwan of the Caribbean"—has failed.

Needless to say, Haiti's economic crisis has hurt Haitian peasants and workers the most. Over the last five years, for example, the number of Haitians living below the official United Nations poverty line has increased by more than a million and now may total more than 4.5 million of an estimated population of six million. Thousan...
During the upheavals of 1946 and 1957, politics in the cities similarly decided the outcome of the class struggle. The masses of Haitian people—isolated in the countryside and unable to play a direct role in the events, supported the Black, urban workers and middle classes which organized under the banner of Black Nationalism. Once in power, however, this elite, like those before it, turned on their mass base, took back support and betrayed the Haitian people.

Today, though the majority of Haitians are still peasants, there is in Haiti a small but growing working class. Over 60,000 workers are employed in the assembly plants of Port-au-Prince. Although these workers are thousands more working in the construction and shipbuilding industries and in such places as the state printing office. Although very poor, these workers have certain political advantages the peasants lack. In contrast to the people in the countryside, the workers are concentrated in the cities, the centers of political life, where they have the opportunity to learn about Haitian politics. While not as well-educated, they have a higher rate of literacy than the peasants. Most important, rather than being dispersed and atomized by their living and working conditions, they tend to be concentrated in relatively small areas and are further united by their workplaces. For these and other reasons, the Haitian workers, like workers everywhere, have significantly greater social power than the peasants, along with the opportunity to become far more politically conscious. Moreover, despite the many differences between the workers and peasants, there is one thing they share: common enemies. The same capitalists, the same banks, the same police and army that oppress and exploit the peasants oppress and exploit the workers. The Haitian workers have the ability, in other words, to unite the overwhelming majority of the Haitian people in a revolutionary struggle against a relatively small ruling class.

The second development that makes it possible for the Haitian people to avoid the tragedies of the past is that today the workers and peasants throughout the Caribbean/ Central American region are in revolt against U.S. imperialism and its local stooges. During the 1975 upheavals in Haiti, for example, the Haitian people fought an anti-imperialist dictatorship: the Batista in Cuba, Batista to the west and the Dominican Republic (Trujillo) to Haiti— as well as against the U.S. itself to the north. Indeed, the Haitians actually seized power for themselves, or in any case threatened U.S. interests, Haiti would probably have been invaded, as was the Dominican Republic in 1965.

Today, the U.S. is on the defensive throughout the region. Pro-U.S. dictators have been overthrown in Cuba, Grenada and Nicaragua and replaced by revolutionaries. While not yet socialist, they are nonetheless hostile to U.S. imperialism.

The Dominican Republic is ruled by a party that calls itself socialist, and facing economic crisis at home, may not be in a strong position to invade Haiti.

In short, today, unlike in the past, if the Haitian people rise up against the ruling classes and U.S. imperialism, they will not be isolated. They will be part of a broad anti-imperialist struggle which the U.S. will find difficult, if not impossible to suppress.

What strategy for Haitian revolution?

These and other developments make the liberation of the Haitian people far more possible today than in the past. In view of this, the liberation can only be achieved through a socialist revolution. By socialist revolution we mean an armed uprising of the Haitian workers, peasants and other oppressed people to overthrow the corrupt Duvalier regime—the police and army—and to create a socialist state. This approach is not new; it is the strategy successfully followed by the Haitian workers, led by the working class, could kick out the imperialists, the landlords and the local capitalists and take over the factories and the land. They could run the economy and the entire country through a ten-year-old Haitian chops sugar cane at a Gulf and Western plantation in the Dominican Republic.

A 10-year-old Haitian girl.

either take place all at once or not at all. Rather, it means that the workers and peasants should not seek to limit the struggle to a so-called “first stage,” or “bourgeois, democratic revolution” whose purpose would be to clear the way for the further development of capitalism and, as the theory goes, pave the way for a future “second stage,” a socialist revolution in which the workers and peasants themselves would take power.

The problem with such a “two-stage” approach is that the workers and peasants never get to the “second stage.” If the workers and peasants leave their struggles and place into power a supposedly progressive sector of the capitalist class or middle class, these forces, once in power, will turn on the workers and peasants in order to consolidate their own rule. In other words, there simply are no consistently “progressive” bourgeois or petty bourgeois classes—in Haiti or anywhere else.

This is not mere speculation on our part. As we discussed in the previous article in this series, it was under the control of one or another of these conditions the Haitian people in a revolutionary struggle should not stop until the workers, peasants and the Haitian people, led by one or another of their own revolutionaries, could kick out the imperialists and, facing-economic crisis at home, may not be in a strong position to invade the other side of the island. Moreover, there are now several hundred thousand Haitians who live in the Dominican Republic. A successful fight for freedom in Haiti requires that a revolutionary party be built that can challenge the anti-Duvalier, but pro-capitalist, leaders and organize the workers and peasants for socialist revolution. Because the fight for freedom requires international revolution, such a revolutionary party must be built on an international scale as well.

By a revolutionary party we do not mean a group of middle class professionals and technocrats who speak in “Marxist” phrases and seek to assume power “in the workers’ and peasants’ interests.” Such parties, which hold up Russia and Cuba as the model for “socialism,” are in fact one of the main reasons a genuine revolutionary party cannot be built.

Revolutionary party needed

This strategy, the strategy of Permanent Revolution, is not an iron law of history. Organization is prerequisite for a successful workers’ revolution. If the ruling classes fail to take decisive leadership of the struggle, middle class groupings of one stripe or another can end up leading the anti-Duvalier struggle. A successful fight for freedom in Haiti requires that a revolutionary party be built that can challenge the anti-Duvalier, but pro-capitalist, leaders and organize the workers and peasants for socialist revolution. Because the fight for freedom requires international revolution, such a revolutionary party must be built on an international scale as well.

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We indicate the following aptonyms: (1) when it is the ruling classes without any chance; (2) a crisis in the policy of imperialism, leading to a fissure and discontent and oppressed classes burst when the suffering and oppressed classes have had enough; (3) the death of the above-mentioned increase in the masses.

In the history of Haiti, revolutionary developments have been imminent. During the second development mentioned above, workers in Haiti have been strikingly active. For example, workers at the Sporting Goods factory in the Dominican Republic, seemingly a minor act, has been control of the factory. But today, the Haitian people's participation in the international struggle is far more important. A number of the Haitians who were forced to leave Haiti and established their own emigre communities in the Dominican Republic, the People's Republic of China, the People's Republic of the Congo, and other countries, have become active in the international struggle.

What kind of freedom after violent, often-violent, struggle? Their gains at the new elite they have won to power sold the to the imperialists.
Argentina...

Malvinas War, or the foreign debt. All the parties rejected this demand.

Opposition in disarray

But, like the fractured and failing junta, Argentina's opposition parties are weak and divided. The largest party, controlled by the Peronistas, contains a dozen factions with views ranging from Marxism to fascism. Its leader, former president Isabel Perón, the widow of three-time president Juan Perón, whose earlier populist dictatorship was modeled after that of the Italian fascist Mussolini.

Isabel Perón lives in exile in Spain and no one seriously expects how to resist the Peronistas, except perhaps as a figurehead. But the Peronistas have no popular leaders to take her place. One group of army officers has proposed an alliance with right-wing Peronistas to isolate the left and main-

tain a military presence in the future civilian government. Still others are urging a right-wing coup to throw out Bignone, cancel the elections, and crush the growing popular movement. The December protests have created a new sense of national unity against the government, its repression, and the economic crisis. But neither the opposition parties nor the unions have any ideas or leaders capable of focusing the discontent. In fact, the military and the main party leaders share a very similar political program. A civilian government led by any of the parties, including the Peronistas, would not function much differently than the present military regime.

It is this political vacuum which has both inspired the spontaneous mass upsurge and frightened capitalistic political observers. Young Argentineos who have never voted before are eligible to vote if the military goes ahead with elections this year. Very few are registered in any party and no one is sure what their views are, except to note that thousands of them took part in last month's strikes and demonstrations.

"The military is not the only one to blame," complained Deolindo Bittel, acting head of the Peronistas, in an interview with the New York Times. "The most grave problem is precisely that the people don't believe in anything anymore." But unlike Bittel, who sought to strike a quiet deal with the murderous military, many Argentines believe in something deeply political to risk their lives for in the streets. If the present political parties fail to offer a solution to Argentina's crisis, as seems likely, the mass movement grows to keep them, and the military, out of the way.

A Testament of Failed Liberal Capitalism...

(Continued from page 8)

liberal approach to politics and the class struggle. This is because he believes in and sees no possible alternative to capitalism. Unlike class struggle Manley would like to achieve some form of national unity at the expense of class consciousness. And to bring about this unity he would have to make the impossible and bring all classes together and so avoid or minimize confrontation. This basic approach is summed up in the following passages: "We knew that change in politics is like motion in physics, breeding its own opposite reaction and sought to ensure that the reaction would be rational. We worked to secure that it would be a measured response to our real actions and intentions rather than a hysterical reaction to imaginary dangers. Time was to show how great that reaction would be and how out of proportion to the actual degree of threat."(Page 71)

Further, "If plural democracy is to work it must rest upon two acts of self restraint, first on the part of those who hold power and secondly on the part of those who seek it."

(Continued on page 9)

YSA Convention...

(Continued from page 9)

the early 1970s, the SWP—based itself on Trotsky's opposition to the Popular Front line in Spain, France and China—criticized Allende's class-collaborationist policies.

Much of this criticism was correct. Allende consistently worked to conciliate the Chilean bourgeoisie. In particular, despite warnings of a probable military coup, he trusted in the "non-political" tradition of the Chilean armed forces and told workers not to arm themselves in self-defense. Yet in September 1973 the army, led by Augusto Pinochet, overthrew Allende, murdering him and thousands of workers, and established a semi-fascist junta that has brutally oppressed the Chilean people for nearly 10 years.

During these events, however, Fidel Castro, the supposed proponent of guerrilla-based armed struggle as the road to socialism, defended Allende's policies, and urged the Chilean workers not to "go too far," that is, not to carry out a socialist revolution. (Continued)
WHAT WE STAND FOR
Program in Brief of the Revolutionary Socialist League

1. The REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST LEAGUE is an organization dedicated to the fight for freedom for all the world's people—freedom from poverty and hunger; freedom from racism and all forms of national, sexual, age and class-related oppression; from privileged rulers and wars—freedom from capitalism.

We believe that this fight is more necessary than ever. Today, the world capitalist system is sliding deeper and deeper into a massive economic, political and social crisis. This crisis is bringing conditions as bad as or worse than the Great Depression of the 1930s. In all countries, the ruling classes are responding to the crisis by bludgeoning down the living standards of the masses of people and tightening our rights. Unemployment and wage-cutting, cutbacks in social services and a belching up of the repressive apparatus—the police, military, prisons, etc.—are all part of the capitalist attack. As in the 1930s, the crisis is paving the way for the rise of fascist groups eager to impose their genocidal solution on humanity.

Internationally, the crisis will cause the battles among the different blocs of national capitalists to flare into full-scale wars, as each seeks to defend and increase its power, markets, investment outlets and control of social wealth over the others. Twice already this century the capitalists have fought devastating world wars, in which millions of people died. Now, with the development of huge nuclear arsenals capable of blowing up the planet hundreds of times over, human civilization itself hangs by a thread. Thus the continued existence of the capitalist system is pushing us closer every day to renewed world war and possibly total destruction.

2. We in the RSL believe there is an alternative to all this. That alternative lies in the workers, small farmers, peasants, unemployed, national and other oppressed minorities, youth, women, lesbians and gay men—society, uniting together to overthrow our common enemy, the capitalist system, and establish SOCIALISM.

This will require a REVOLUTION in which the masses of people fight to seize control of the governments, banks, means of transportation and communication, factories, fields and mines. A revolution also means to smash the capitalists' state apparatus: their police and armed forces, their courts and prisons, their political bodies (legislatures, congresses, parliaments, etc.) and mammoth bureaucracies, and other institutions of capitalist class rule.

While such revolutions are most likely to develop on a national basis, we believe that to be successful they must become worldwide in scope. Capitalism is an international capitalist system with its state apparatus and internationalized industry. While the workers and their allies dominate the world capitalist system, the control of the state apparatus and internationalized industry, while the workers themselves have no control of the factories, workplaces, the economy, the government or anything else, the real revolutionary class controls the state apparatus and internationalized industry, while the workers are in the position of being wage slaves, chained to a giant capitalist machine.

In these countries—as in all the countries of the world—REVOLUTION is the only way to establish real socialism and win freedom for all working and oppressed people.

At a time when the struggle between the world's two main imperialist powers, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., is being portrayed wrongly as one between capitalists, democracies and totalitarianism, the RSL believes it is more important than ever to take a clear stand in opposition to capitalism in all its forms and for a revolutionary, libertarian vision of socialism.

3. In the coming period, as the capitalist crisis intensifies, we expect mass movements and mass struggles—both of the right and the left—will break out with increasing frequency around the world. The question is: Will these movements in countries around the world, in the 1980s, be the basis for a new world revolution? If so, will they free oppressed people from their suffering? Or will this new struggle lead to an even greater struggle, with the world capitalist system itself hanging by a thread? Whatever the outcome, the new world revolution will be a revolutionary socialist revolution.

4. We believe that the light of socialism is more important than ever. Today, the world is in the midst of a massive economic, political and social crisis. This crisis is bringing conditions as bad as or worse than the Great Depression of the 1930s. In all countries, the ruling classes are responding to the crisis by bludgeoning down the living standards of the masses of people and tightening our rights. Unemployment and wage-cutting, cutbacks in social services and a belching up of the repressive apparatus—the police, military, prisons, etc.—are all part of the capitalist attack. As in the 1930s, the crisis is paving the way for the rise of fascist groups eager to impose their genocidal solution on humanity.

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The existence of revolutionary working class parties does not guarantee victory. But without them, the more-organized and powerful enemies of socialism will win. The RSL considers the construction of a revolutionary party in the U.S. and around the world to be our main strategic task. In so doing, we reject any and all elitist notions that have come to be associated with such parties. That the party stands separate from and above the working class; that the party may use any method, no matter how base or dishonest, to gain leadership of the masses in struggle; that its goal is to form a one-party state within a supposedly socialist society. Our goal is a society where human beings can consciously shape their own existence: we see a revolutionary party simply as the vehicle through which this can be made possible.

The RSL identifies itself in the tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, particularly the pioneering theoretical work of Marx and Engels; the conception of the party, the stress on the importance of international liberation struggles and the anti-statist shown in The State and Revolution of Lenin; and the fight against Stalinism of Trotsky. But we also identify with the best of anarchism, particularly its libertarian spirit. And we hold in no less regard those leaders throughout history who have fought against various forms of exploitation and oppression: from Spartacus to Harriet Tubman, from Emiliano Zapata to Malcolm X.

We believe it is crucial for the left to rid itself of the state-capitalist baggage on which it has relied for far too long. To do so requires a careful evaluation of the theoretical underpinnings of the left, from Marx to the Russian Revolution to the current day. Only in this way can the best of our heritage—the fight against oppression and for revolutionary socialism—be preserved and the worst of it—an infatuation with technocratic planning and strong states—be discarded.

Revolutionaries must be the vanguard in the fight for common decency and true freedom. It is to that fight the RSL is committed, body and soul. Join us!