

STACKS OVERSIZE

Reconstruct
the
Fourth
International!

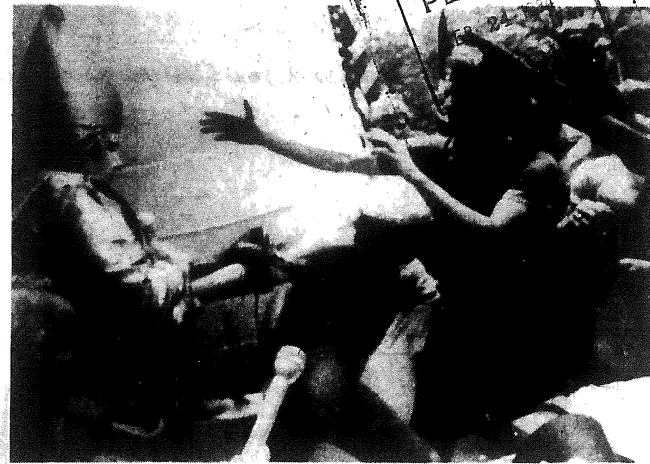
TORCH

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Smash the Nazis! Smash the Klan!



Angry demonstrators attack Ku Klux Klan rally in Columbus, Ohio, July 4.

Over the July 4 weekend, fascist groups around the country hit the streets peddling racial hatred, genocide and thuggery. But the fascists were repeatedly met with determined resistance and driven back.

On Saturday night, July 2, Buddy Cochran, a white, 30-year-old mechanic and Vietnam veteran, drove his car at 60 miles per hour into the speaker's platform at a Ku Klux Klan rally in Jimmy Carter's hometown of Plains, Georgia.

On July 4, a Klan rally on the steps of Ohio's state capitol in Columbus was attacked by more than 100 demonstrators, part of a coalition of 23 organizations protesting the rally. Chanting "Ku Klux Klan, Scum of the Land," they charged the Klan supporters. KKK "Imperial Wizard" Dale Reusch was jumped by fist-swinging militants. He was beaten, hurled to the ground, stripped of his hood, spat on, and hit by eggs. The police came to the Klan's rescue and arrested four anti-Klan demonstrators.

In Illinois, the Nazi Party cancelled a planned July 4 demonstration in the predominantly Jewish village of Skokie, after public outrage forced the authorities to ban it. The Workers' Defense Coalition (formerly the Chicago Anti-Nazi Coalition), had announced plans to physically stop the Nazis.

On the same date, 150 sup-

porters of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) marched on the Nazi headquarters in the Marquette Park area of Chicago. The demonstration set up a picket line outside the Nazi office. When the Nazis came out to attack the pickets, they were routed. Four Nazis and one cop were hospitalized.

These latest actions follow

other recent counterattacks against the fascist scum. Early last May, Jewish residents of a Bay Area community attacked and burned down a Nazi bookstore that had just opened. In the same month, the Klan cancelled a rally in the Far Rockaway area of New York City, when numerous community and left organizations, including

the RSL, planned a counter-demonstration. And last April 30, a Nazi march on Skokie was stopped by the cops when nearly 1,000 militant anti-fascists appeared, determined to stop the Nazis. The demonstration was built by Jewish residents of Skokie and the Chicago Anti-Nazi Coalition.

These counterattacks are

precisely what is needed at this time. The fascists are becoming bolder and are taking the offensive. For more than two years the Nazis in Chicago have terrorized and assaulted Blacks in Marquette Park and West Englewood. Now they are expanding their thuggery and racist abuse to Skokie, where 10

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NEW PROTESTS IN SOWETO



Once again, the Black youth of South Africa's Soweto Township have staged major protests against the white rulers of the apartheid state. June 16 and 17 marked the anniversary of the first Soweto uprising of one year ago. The students, supported by sections of the Black working class, paid tribute to 600 of their comrades who have fallen in the struggle since last year, with rallies, strikes and street fighting.

During these two days, two important new developments pointed to the advance of the revolutionary movement. Port Elizabeth, where South Africa's auto

industry is located, emerged as a key center of the struggle. This opened up an opportunity to mobilize the 40,000 Black workers who make up the labor force of this strategic part of the South African economy. Of equal importance, the Soweto Students' Representative Council (SSRC) demonstrated that it has strengthened its political leadership of Soweto's million-strong Black population.

June 16 in Soweto began with a "period of silence" in memory of dead militants, which lasted from daybreak

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Defend Gay Rights!

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Ten years ago this month, the city of Detroit became the site of urban warfare between the forces of the capitalist state and thousands of Black workers and youth. For four days, the city burned. Entire city blocks were reduced to rubble. Tanks rumbled down the streets, spraying residential areas with machine-gun fire.

Widespread looting took place. Thousands of Black youth took advantage of the breakdown of capitalist law and order to take things which they could never have afforded to buy from the businesses which exploit the Black community.

The capitalist state and the capitalist press labelled these four days a riot, attempting to paint the Detroit events as the senseless violence and rage of mindless mobs. Nothing is further from the truth. There were very definite reasons why thousands of Blacks took part in the uprising. The revolt was unorganized and the people participating unsure of exactly what to do. But most of the participants were well aware that they were revolting against the brutal poverty and oppression of the capitalist system. This understanding spawned the name which the Black community of Detroit gave to the '67 rebellion: "The Rehearsal."

The Detroit rebellion capped a summer of struggle where violent outbreaks in the Black ghettos swept across the northern United States. One hundred sixty-four cities were hit by uprisings in 1967.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The urban rebellions came at the peak of 11 years of civil rights struggle against the racism of U.S. society. The civil rights movement in the South reached a turning point in 1965 with the march on Selma, Alabama. The ruling class moved to head off the struggle into controllable channels by granting some legal rights to Blacks. With the passage of the Civil Rights Acts of '64 and '65,

DETROIT 1967:



REHEARSAL FOR REVOLUTION

By Jon Coleman

one whole wing of the movement was drawn off into voter registration and education projects. But in the cities, and especially in the North, it was clear to wide sections of Blacks that legal rights were not the main issue.

Concentrated in the strategic industrial centers of the North, urban Black workers knew that the main issue of the Black struggle was not formal legal rights. Blacks in the Northern ghettos had the right to eat in white restaurants. But this right did not give them the money to buy the food. The right to vote for different capitalist politicians had not ended unemployment, poor and overcrowded housing, rat- and dirt-infested schools, bill collectors, overpriced and rotten meat, garbage-strewn streets, or any other of the hundreds of daily oppressions which Blacks carry on their backs. It had not ended the "last hired, first fired" rule in industry. And it had done nothing to stop the daily brutality of the racist police who were assigned to ghetto areas with the task of humiliating and beating the residents into submission. There was no way that a "turn the other cheek" approach was going to be accepted in the slums of Harlem, Newark or Detroit.

In 1964, Harlem had exploded against these conditions. The 1965 Watts rebellion pitted the entire ghetto against the Los Angeles Police Department. In 1966, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) summarized the new militancy of the struggles in the cities with the slogan "Black Power!" In the fall of 1966, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale carried into practice Malcolm X's call for armed defense of the Black community with the founding of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense.

SUMMER OF STRUGGLE

By 1967, the whole focus of the Black freedom struggle had shifted to the cities and was taking on a revolutionary orientation. In January 1967, a small confrontation between the cops and ghetto residents occurred in Chicago and a more serious outbreak erupted in Omaha in March.

Then the summer came. In June, incidents of police brutality and harassment sparked disturbances in Tampa, Cincinnati and Atlanta. Smaller scale confrontations between

Black workers and youth and local cops occurred throughout June in Boston, Cambridge, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Prattville, Dayton, Lansing, Maywood, Middletown, Los Angeles, St. Petersburg and Clearwater.

In July, the uprisings swept across the country, numbering at least 103 during the month. In Newark, New Jersey, on Wednesday, July 12, a Black cab driver was arrested, beaten and dragged from the police car at the Fourth Precinct. In the course of the five-day uprising which followed, 23 persons died—21 of them Blacks. There were 725 injuries. Within three days the National Guard used 13,326 rounds of ammunition.

The stage was set for an incident which would take place just one week later in Detroit. That incident—a police raid on a ghetto nightclub—touched off the largest of all the urban rebellions.

"THE REHEARSAL"

In the early hours of the morning on Sunday, July 23, Detroit police raided an after-hours club on 12th Street, in the heart of Detroit's near-northwest side ghetto. As the last patrol cars were pulling away with the arrested around 5 a.m., crowds in the street began attacking the cops with bricks and bottles. The crowds grew and forced the cops to with-

draw. Store windows were smashed and their contents removed. By 8 a.m., as a police commando unit swept down the street, the crowd of some 3,000 people gave way to one side and then flowed back into the streets and continued to grow. A shoe store went up in flames.

By mid-morning 540 cops were in the six-block riot area. But they did not yet interfere with looters. As the police commissioner said: "If we had started shooting in there...not one of our policemen would have come out alive."

As firemen were sent in to protect the stores, they too came under attack from bricks and bottles. By 4:30 p.m. Sunday, firemen were forced out of a 100-block area around 12th Street. Around 9 p.m. Sunday, Governor George Romney flew over the area and reported: "It looked like the city had been bombed on the west side and there was an area, two and one-half miles by three and one-half miles, with major fires, with entire blocks in flames."

The first National Guard troops hit the streets at 7 p.m. Sunday. As the Guard was unable to control the growing uprising, the use of fire-power became indiscriminate. Massive machine-gun fire became the rule. Buildings were put under siege by the Guard at the first suspicion of sniping. A suspected building was sprayed by .50 caliber tracer bullets from a tank. As troopers stormed the building, they discovered it empty. A few days later, four-year-old Tanya Blanding was killed as a tank ripped apart her apartment with .50 caliber fire.

By Monday morning, Romney called the U.S. Attorney General for federal troops. By Monday night 4,000 people had been arrested. Massive house-to-house searches were carried out. Anyone found with a gun in their home was arrested as a suspect.

The Detroit police became mad dog killers. Arrested suspects were beaten to a pulp in what the cops call "alley courts." The worst atrocity took place when the police invaded the Algiers Motel on Woodward Avenue. Enraged at finding two white women in the company of Black men, the police forced these people and every other Black they could find on the premises to line up against a wall and strip. After terrorizing and assaulting their victims for some time, the police took three Black youths into motel bedrooms and executed them with pistol fire.

During the course of the revolt, more than 7,200 people were arrested. Forty-three were killed, all but 10 of these Black. \$32 million worth of insurance was paid out in property losses, which covered less than three-

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Detroit's 12th Street during 1967 rebellion.

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS RACIST SENIORITY PACT



Black construction workers protest racist hiring practices, New York City, 1974.

On May 31, the Supreme Court ruled against a group of Black and Latin workers who were attempting to win equal rights in job upgrading. The ruling, which in effect legalized racist seniority agreements, was a blow to the struggles of all oppressed workers for an end to job discrimination.

The specific case ruled on concerned employees of T.I.M.E. Freight, Inc. These workers had previously forced the company to promote them to over-the-road driving slots. The promotions were a victory against the racist employment policies of the company, which had always reserved the better paying over-the-road jobs for "whites only."

When the workers forced T.I.M.E. Freight to upgrade them, they were informed by the company and by their Teamsters local union that in taking the new jobs they had to give up all the seniority they had earned over the years. The company and the union, they were told, have a contract which provides for two separate seniority lists, one for over-the-road drivers, and the other for all lower-paying jobs. In terms of layoff rights,

job bidding and wage scales, these workers were to be treated as new hires, if they accepted the upgrade.

In 1968, the workers went to the federal government's Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC). The EEOC took the company and the union to court. It charged that the seniority agreement worked to continue the racial discrimination directed against these workers. The separate-list seniority system forced the workers to give up their seniority to get upgraded to jobs which had previously been barred to them because of the company's racist hiring practices. The case reached the Supreme Court this year.

In the May 31 decision, the Court ruled that T.I.M.E.'s separate seniority lists are legal under the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Court acknowledged that these workers had been denied access to over-the-road jobs for years. It also admitted that the effects of this particular seniority system were to continue to keep Black and Latin workers out of these jobs. But, the Court argued, since the separate seniority lists were created before the Civil Rights Act became law, it did

not matter that they worked to keep certain jobs reserved for whites. The Court declared that seniority rules could be challenged only if it were proven that the intent—not the effect—of the rules was to promote racial discrimination. Further, the Court decided that even if the workers could prove intentional discrimination to the satisfaction of the Court, retroactive seniority would be

granted only to 1965 (when the Act became law), and no further.

The effect of this ruling is to help keep Black and Latin workers permanently locked into the worst, lowest paying jobs. Even when these workers can prove that they have been the victims of systematic discrimination, they still can't take an upgrade without giving up years of hard-earned seniority rights. And without this seniority, these workers would be the first to be laid off. In this way, the Supreme Court has legalized employment practices which are little more than a racist treadmill.

The Court decision demonstrates that Black, Latin, women and other specially oppressed workers cannot afford to rely upon the government to aid them in their struggle for equality. The EEOC and the lower federal courts, by consistently finding in favor of workers at T.I.M.E., led the workers on a wild goose chase for nine years. With a few quick strokes of the pen, however, the Supreme Court showed that the trust these workers put in the government to secure justice for them was based on an illusion. What the government gave with one hand, it has taken away with the other.

EEOC'S REAL PURPOSE

When the government set up the EEOC, it had several purposes in mind. Part of its intent was to grant some concessions to the most exploited and oppressed sections of the working class in the face of a rising mass movement. Key to the ruling class' sudden interest in equal employment rights was trying to cool down and eventually crush mass struggles by oppressed workers through promises of reform. The government wanted to head off any possibility that workers would unite in a militant mass movement to demand full employment and control over hiring, promotions and working conditions.

The government made it clear that as far as it was concerned, employment conditions for oppressed workers could be raised only at the expense of destroying the job security of other workers—in this case, the better off white and male workers. In this way, the government exploited the injustices heaped on the victims of racial and sexual discrimination and used these as an excuse to attack trade union rights, to pit Black and Latin workers against white workers, (Continued on page 17)

Court, Congress Attack Women's Rights

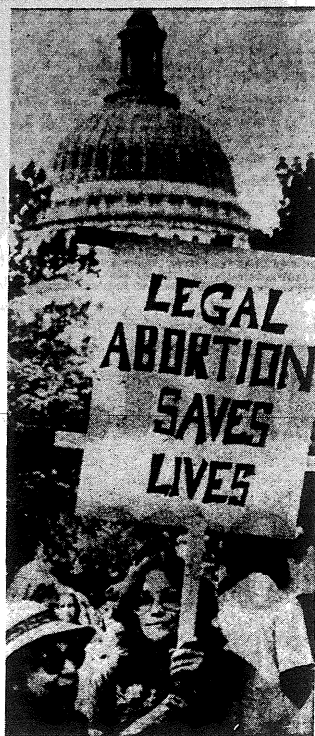
Free Abortion on Demand!

On June 20, the Supreme Court ruled that Medicaid funds could be denied to women for "elective" abortions (any abortions where a woman's life is not immediately threatened). The Court also ruled that public hospitals may refuse all abortions except those necessary to save the life of the mother.

Within days of these decisions, various state governments came up with bills that would deny abortions to women on welfare. Additionally, the U.S. Senate—citing this Supreme Court ruling as precedent—has passed a bill to ban the use of federal funds for virtually all abortions. A similar bill, passed by the House of Representatives earlier in June, is even stricter. It calls for a flat ban on all federally-financed abortions.

The denial of Medicaid, welfare and other federal funds for abortions strikes hardest at poor and working women. These are the women who most need the right to an abortion, but are least able to afford it. Many can't have children because of the lack of day-care facilities. Others risk getting fired when they become pregnant. Many families or single women simply can't afford to feed or clothe an additional child. By severely restricting abortion funding, the ruling class has in fact denied poor and working women the right to abortion. These women now face a choice between going to a back-alley butcher or having a child that they can't afford.

Of the more than one million legal abortions now performed each year in the U.S., 300,000 are performed on women who rely on Medicaid or public hospitals for the procedure. Already it has been estimated that hundreds of these women will die and thousands more will be mangled in



the next year as they are forced to seek out illegal abortions.

Clearly, the right to abortion is being taken out of the hands of working and poor women, while it is preserved as a privilege of rich and middle class women. Gains won through years of struggle will be taken away from the masses of

women and left in the hands of a tiny few. This is the objective of the capitalist class.

Ever since the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, a massive right-wing movement against women's right to abortion has been gaining strength. The National Right to Life Committee has been organizing for years, not only in the voting booths but in the streets and through the media. Backing this committee are the huge resources and power of the ultra-reactionary Catholic Church hierarchy.

The U.S. ruling class as a whole also backs the anti-abortion movement. The Supreme Court made this clear. Justice Powell, in the recent ruling, said: "... states have a valid and important interest in encouraging childbirth." This is a very revealing statement. Powell—and the capitalist class he represents—know that to the extent women gain economic, social and sexual independence, to that extent they gain the freedom to run their own lives. The bourgeois family is a main pillar of private property and of capitalism. Powell is really saying that the bourgeoisie has a "legitimate interest" in perpetuating women's oppression.

The decisions of the Supreme Court cannot be allowed to stand. We must fight for free abortion on demand. Women must have the right to control their own bodies—the unrestricted right to decide for themselves whether or not to have a child. All limitations on this right—legal or financial—must be eliminated. The ruling class's "legitimate interest" in opposing this fight shows once again that the struggle to end the oppression of women is a struggle to overthrow the whole capitalist system. □

Opposition to National Contract Grows

Steel Locals Vote to Strike



Members of Steelworkers Local 1397 protest Abel-McBride sellout contract.

By a steelworker correspondent

The struggle in the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) over the sellout national agreement now centers on local negotiations. Thirty-seven USWA locals took strike votes in June and July. Thirty-three voted yes and asked the top USWA leaders for authorization to strike on August 1. This contrasts sharply with the 1974 contract round, when only two USWA locals took strike votes and both lost.

Early results show strong opposition to the Abel-McBride negotiated contract and keep open the possibility of a strike movement to reject

that agreement. In District 31 (Chicago-Gary), steelworkers at Locals 1010 (Inland) and 1033 (Republic) have voted to strike. At Local 1011 (Youngstown Sheet and Tube), the strike vote lost by a narrow margin, due in part to aggressive steel company campaigns against the local strikes. Officially, USWA President McBride has to give his approval before the locals can strike.

To be effective, local strikes must be coordinated on a company-wide and regional level. Coordinated strikes can seriously injure the companies, win real gains and open the door to a strike movement that

can force renegotiation of the national contract, and the tearing up of the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA)—the Abel-negotiated national no-strike pledge.

Coordinated strikes are possible, especially in Little Steel (the nine largest producers after U.S. Steel). Eight Youngstown Sheet and Tube local presidents collectively refused to sign the national contract, and at least six YST locals took strike votes. If these locals struck together, Youngstown would be shut down tight. Four Cleveland locals of Republic Steel are coordinating their bargaining and the Chicago Republic plant has authorized a strike. Inland Steel has only one mill and its 18,000 workers, members of Local 1010, voted for a strike. This one local could completely stop Inland's production, win real gains and show all steelworkers that the steel companies can be beaten.

The presidents of these locals will not strike unless the ranks force them to. The failure of the local bureaucrats to mobilize steelworkers for a fight is one of the reasons for the close strike votes in District 31.

Most of these local presidents are supporters of Ed Sadlowski, the unsuccessful reform candidate for USWA President. Sadlowski and his supporters have the strength to close down enough of Little Steel to force a renegotiation of the national contract. But the Sadlowski forces, despite occasional militant words,

will not fight the companies or USWA President McBride. At a Local 1010 rally, Sadlowski argued that a strike at Inland was unnecessary and that a big strike vote would be enough to scare the company into making concessions. Jim Balanoff, Sadlowski's sidekick and the new District 31 Director, echoed this lie.

Militants can take advantage of the current situation to win gains in this contract round and to build their strength for the future. The most pressing task is to organize to force a strike. Each local must elect a rank and file strike committee made up of steelworkers committed to a winning strike. The tasks of the strike committee are: 1) winning the more conservative workers to the pro-strike position; 2) exposing the local bureaucrats' desire to avoid a strike; 3) explaining the need to fight McBride's refusal to sanction effective, coordinated strikes; and 4) placing control over the strike preparations, tactics, coordination with other locals and the negotiations themselves in the hands of the rank and file.

Support from non-striking locals to striking locals can make an important difference in the outcome of strikes and can be a valuable lever for spreading the strike. Militants must put forward a strike program of serious demands on the major issues: more jobs; decent health and safety provisions; a fight against on-the-job discrimination and racist and sexist hiring and upgrading practices; and a wage increase to make up for the national sellout. A struggle over demands like these, with the potential of launching a national strike to re-open the contract and smash the ENA, can be a spark to the struggles of the entire labor movement. □

LABOR IN STRUGGLE



Wisconsin Public Workers Strike

The governor of Wisconsin has called out 2,300 National Guardsmen in an attempt to break a strike by public workers in that state. The Guardsmen are doing some scabbing, but the workers' picket lines remain strong. The 24,000-member Wisconsin State Employees Union, affiliated with AFSCME—the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees—began the strike on July 2. Not all of its members are out, but the week-old strike is still the biggest and most effective public workers' strike in Wisconsin history.

The state has offered a 14 percent wage increase over two years (7 percent a year). The union, whose members have been hit hard by inflation, is calling for a 26 percent wage hike. Latest reports indicate that the union tops have reduced their wage demands under pressure from the governor and the troops.

Sun Ship Murders Militant

On June 17, the Sun Ship Company of Chester, Pennsylvania, murdered Janet Sloan, a working class militant. Sloan, a member of the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), formerly the October League, was assigned to a dangerous welding job. Sloan fell to her death, and was not found by a clean-up crew until the end of the shift.

Sloan started working at Sun Ship last December, to fight for the politics of the CP(M-L) and to organize for safe conditions on the job. Her organizing efforts earned Sloan the hatred of the company foremen. She was harassed by the

company and then assigned dangerous jobs.

This is the second death of a worker at Sun Ship in less than a year. Many Sun Ship workers are now petitioning the union (Local 802 of the Boilermakers Union) to support workers who refuse unsafe jobs.

Over 100 people attended the memorial service for Sloan on June 19. Some wore black armbands that read "Indict Sun Ship for Murder."

We share the sorrow of these brothers and sisters. Despite our serious political differences with Sloan and the CP(M-L), we mourn the loss of this working class militant. To do justice to the memory of Janet Sloan, the working class and all oppressed people must fight to end the capitalist system.

Quebec Workers Seize Factory

On June 2, 1,100 workers at the Quebec Iron and Titanium plant near Sorel, Quebec, seized the factory. They are now running the plant, maintaining their regular shifts and making all decisions regarding production.

The workers forcibly removed all management and non-union people from the plant and then blocked all 20 plant entrances with 25- to 40-ton trucks. After occupying the plant, they demanded a full clean-up of all safety hazards, improved working conditions and a wage increase to compensate for the dangerous work.

Organized and unorganized workers throughout the area, as well as the workers' families, left organizations and community groups, have been building support for the workers in the plant with demonstrations and other activities. As of Torch press-time, the occupation is still underway.

Capitalism: Profits Before Lives

At both Sun Ship and the Quebec Iron and Titanium plant, the capitalists' mad drive for profits has meant death and crippling injuries for the workers. On July 7, an explosion at a coal mine in Virginia killed four miners and injured many more. On the same day, an autoworker in Detroit died of a heat stroke, due to the intense heat in the plant (see story on page 5). And again on the same day, a fire killed five prisoners and injured 71 others at the federal prison in Danbury, Connecticut. The examples go on and on.

What is the ruling class' response to all of this? The New York Post of July 7 reports that three top officials in the Carter Administration are urging the President to eliminate most federal safety regulations. These top-level advisers say that safety precautions and inspections "cost too much money." These bureaucrats are recommending slight increases in Workmen's Compensation benefits as a substitute for the safety regulations. The theory, it appears, is that workers will not mind losing an arm or a leg—or a life—as long as the payoff is higher.

The proposal shows what the ruling class has in store for working people. More and more, as capitalism decays, the capitalists will strip workers of the rights and gains they have won through struggle. Working conditions will deteriorate, cities will rot and life itself will grow worthless. If the ruling class has its way, the families of workers injured or killed on the job will soon stop receiving even the few dollars they now get. What more can show that the only hope for the future is the socialist revolution?

—BA and FH

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—BA and FH

35,000 Miners Out on Strike

Protest Health Fund Cuts

By Bob Anderson

JULY 8—With the elections over and Arnold Miller re-elected to another five-year term as president, miners in the United Mine Workers Union (UMW) are again fighting the coal bosses. On June 21, over 35,000 miners from all over the Appalachian coal fields began a wildcat strike against cuts in the UMW's Health and Retirement Fund. These cuts in miners' health benefits were announced by the trustees of the Fund immediately following the final tabulation of the election results.

The UMW Health Fund has three trustees: one from the coal companies, one from the union and one "neutral" representative. All voted for the cuts. Miller knew about the cuts before the election. But to avoid hurting his election prospects, he waited until he had won before announcing them.

For over 30 years, this money from the UMW Health Fund has paid for all the miners' medical expenses. Now, miners will have to pay 40 percent of their doctor bills and the first \$250 in hospital bills up to a total of \$500 per year. Many retired miners, forced to live on tiny pensions, will not be able to afford Black Lung treatments and other care because of these cuts. Many working miners will not be able to afford the necessary medical care for their families.

The coal companies pay money into the Fund based on the amount of coal produced and the man-hours worked. The mine owners charge that wildcat strikes (up 92 percent this year) have cost the Fund \$69.4 million since 1974. The truth is that the coal bosses, with the tacit agreement of the UMW bureaucrats, are using the wildcats as an excuse to cut back the Health Fund, and most importantly using this as a club to try to stop the wildcats.

Twice before when the Health Fund got low, the coal operators agreed to transfer money from re-

lated funds, which are in better financial shape, to cover expenses. They could have done the same this time, but instead want to force a showdown on the wildcat strikes. And now, the trustees are threatening even more drastic cutbacks if the wildcats continue. The coal companies figure that if they can defeat the miners now, the union will be seriously weakened when the nation-wide coal contract expires on December 6.

The companies planned the cuts carefully, announcing them right after the election and just before the miners' two-week vacation period. When the vacation ends on July 11, the coal bosses (and the bureaucrats as well) are hoping that the miners will have cooled off and that the strike will not resume.

Over the past several years, rank and file coal miners have been the most militant section of the U.S.

working class. Starting with the successful struggles to throw out the gangster UMW president, Tony Boyle, and to win Black Lung benefits, the miners—again and again during Miller's first term—have wildcatted over safety issues, for the right to strike and against court interference in their union.

When Miller was elected in 1972, he had the overwhelming support of the rank and file, but he soon lost it. From the start, Miller and other top bureaucrats, including Patterson and Patrick, opposed the wildcat strikes. They sided with the coal bosses for increased productivity. This led to a deep split between the miners on the one hand and the bureaucrats on the other.

Miller was a weak president during his first term and will be even weaker during his second: he has less support in the ranks of the union and the bureaucracy is more seriously divided than ever before. This situation—a weak president and divided bureaucracy—means rank and file

Auto Plants Shut by Heat Walkouts

By an autoworker correspondent

DETROIT, July 11—With temperatures outside climbing to 100 degrees and the plants like ovens, autoworkers across this city walked off their jobs last week. This was autoworkers' response to management's demand that production continue despite the 130 degree temperatures inside the plants.

On July 7, a 21-year-old worker at Ford's Dearborn foundry was found slumped over the wheel of his car—dead. He had complained of the heat that day, but had been forced to work his entire shift. A medical examination determined that his death was due to a heat stroke. This was the

most tragic and dramatic incident during the week of work under unbearable conditions.

The heat walkouts involved over 20,000 workers at GM, Ford and Chrysler. Chrysler's Dodge Main (Hamtramck), Jefferson Assembly (Detroit), and Dodge Truck (Warren) were all shut down. There were reports of walkouts at Chrysler's Lynch Road Assembly, Ford's Flatrock Foundry and at several GM plants. At several plants more than one shift walked out and some plants were closed for more than one day.

Last week's heat walkouts were the most widespread and militant since the summer of 1973. They showed that the demoralization which autoworkers have felt since the '74-'75 layoffs and last fall's sellout national contract is beginning to wear off. Last summer, by comparison, there were almost no walkouts. Last week's actions show that autoworkers are gaining confidence in their own strength and ability to act.

Management is threatening reprisals for the shutdowns. At Chrysler's Dodge Truck, there are rumors that the company plans to discharge 175 workers and discipline 500 to 1,000 more. Militants, including supporters of the Revolutionary Autoworkers Committee, are now organizing to make sure that any such management action is met with strike action. Autoworkers throughout Detroit must prepare for a city-wide strike if management uses the walkouts as an excuse to fire militants.

The walkouts are only a small start. But they can increase militancy, confidence and unity. They show that by sticking together autoworkers have the strength to fight back. This is an important lesson. Now is the time for militants to seek out other workers who want to fight harassment, speedup, overtime, racism, sexism and all the other abuses autoworkers face. Beginning with a defense of the leaders of the heat walkouts, militant autoworkers can use the coming period to organize and prepare for new struggles. □

miners will be in a stronger position for organizing to take over their union.

To move forward, the miners must organize to continue and spread the strike when they are scheduled to return to work on July 11. They should demand an immediate transfer of funds to ensure full health benefits for all miners. At the same time they must try to build the wildcats into a nation-wide coal strike to reopen the contract. The miners have to fight for contract provisions which will require the coal companies to maintain adequate funds for health coverage, which are not tied to the amount of coal produced. In this way the coal miners can ensure that the coal bosses can never again hold the miners' health benefits as hostage in an attempt to stop the wildcats.

If the miners can spread the wildcat nationally now, they can restore the health benefits and also deplete some of the coal the companies have stockpiled in anticipation of a December strike. This will put miners in a much stronger position to fight for a decent contract in December. To do this, miners must begin to build local rank and file strike committees, which can lead the current struggle, coordinate actions nation-wide and prepare for an all-out fight in December.

Militancy and rank and file organization, however, are not enough. The miners need to build a new leadership for their union. They do not need another reformer like Miller, who will side with the coal companies in trying to increase production and discipline the workforce. They need a revolutionary leadership that will mobilize the miners to fight the coal companies and the union bureaucrats, defend the right to strike, stop the killing productivity drives and enforce safe working conditions. And they need such a leadership to unite the miners with other sections of the working class in a struggle for the socialist revolution. □

Stearns Strikers Hold Rally

For over a year, 153 UMW miners in Stearns, Kentucky, have been involved in a bitter strike for union recognition and a rank and file safety committee with the power to close the mine when it is unsafe. The mine owners have brought in gun thugs, and every night these strikebreakers open fire on the miners' picket lines and union headquarters. The Stearns strikers and their supporters have fought back against these attacks. At least three of the strikebreakers have been wounded.

On July 8, the Stearns strikers organized a rally of over 300 workers to build support for their struggle. Top UMW bureaucrats appeared at the rally to give token verbal and financial support to the strikers. But the UMW tops have refused to take any serious action to win the strike. With the strike more than a year old and now a major test of strength between miners and the coal bosses, it is more urgent than ever that rank and file miners demand that the UMW make victory at Stearns one of the union's top priorities. A national coal strike demanding recognition for the Stearns miners could bring the mine owners to their knees and force them to meet the strikers' demands.

Steelworkers Make Gains in Gary Coke Plant Fight

By a supporter of the Revolutionary Steelworkers Caucus

GARY, Indiana, July 7—Coke plant workers at U.S. Steel's Gary Works have just won a victory from the company. Topside workers on Batteries 2 and 3 won wage increases of 30 to 40 cents an hour.

These pay hikes were not part of the recent contract. U.S. Steel dished out the wage hikes to try to head off a growing struggle by coke plant workers against unsafe working conditions.

On May 4, Doug Shea, a damperman at Gary Works, was working on top of the batteries. All of a sudden, hot coal ignited, covering 40 percent of his body with second and third degree burns. Two days later, a welder, Daniel Riley, was murdered by these same batteries. He fell to his death after his clothes caught fire.

The Revolutionary Steelworkers Caucus, along with coke plant workers at Gary Works, answered these crimes with a campaign to shut down

the batteries. A petition, leaflets and a struggle in the local union built the campaign and focused workers' anger. When the company ordered two topside workers to ignore safety rules shortly after the accidents, they refused. This was another victory and a step towards the RSC's call for a mass refusal to do any work on the killer batteries. While mass refusals have not yet taken place, the campaign has forced U.S. Steel to back off and make concessions.

A year ago, U.S. Steel showed its contempt for coke plant workers by cutting the pay rates on the topside of Batteries 2 and 3 by 60 cents. This means that the new increases do not even win back all that the company took away. More than that, the batteries remain totally unsafe. They will kill again, unless they are shut down. But the lessons are clear: Struggle and organization can produce results. The fight to shut down the killer coke ovens will continue. □



Louisiana Prisoners Fight Brutality

Authorities at Angola State Penitentiary in Louisiana have stepped up their harassment of the prison population. On May 25, a demonstration by over 800 prisoners protested the rotten conditions at the huge complex. Prisoners refused lunch and slowed down their work details in anger over the situation. The administration responded with even greater repression.

"You better go see about your son before they kill him," an embittered mother warned. She was part of a militant gathering of over 50 people making plans for a July 24 demonstration against the increased brutality at Angola. Her son, a prisoner at Angola, had been dragged out of his cell in the middle of the night and beaten. Another mother said: "I pay taxes for them to beat my child?" And a third woman, whose son is in Angola, stated that guards were beating prisoners with "pieces of oak and baseball bats."

The Louisiana Coalition on Jails and Prisons (LCJP), a prisoner support group, has been organizing for the July 24 demonstration. The LCJP has charged Warden Ross Maggio Jr. with authorizing guards to brutally attack prisoners. Maggio has denied the charges and maintains that since he has been warden, conditions at Angola have improved "immensely."

Prisoners Murdered in Fires

On June 26, 34 prisoners and eight visitors at the Maury County Jail in Columbia, Tennessee, were killed in a fire. Most of the deaths were due to smoke, containing cyanide gas, from a burning padded cell. The guards at the jail claim they lost the keys to the cells, trapping many prisoners inside.

Shortly after this, on July 7, the federal prison at Danbury, Connecticut, caught fire. Five prisoners died and 71 more were injured. The prison administrators are trying to blame the fire on an arsonist. But prisoners have stated that the fire was caused by faulty electrical wiring. The prisoners also charge that when the fire began, the guards locked them in their cell-blocks.

What is clear from both fires is that the ruling class cares nothing about hazardous electrical wiring installed in prisons, or potentially deadly material used to pad cells. They only ensure that the prisons and jails will be escape-proof.

Further, the lives of prisoners mean nothing to the state. It would cost the state much more to hunt down escapees than to bury dead prisoners. In the two fires, there were plenty of deaths, and scores of injured. But the state made sure there were no escapes.

Court Rules Against Prisoner Unions

On June 23, the Supreme Court ruled that prison administrators can keep prisoners from organizing and joining prisoner unions. The Court also decided that the prisoner unions that now exist may be kept from operating in the defense of prisoners. The ruling concerned a suit filed by the North Carolina Prisoners' Labor Union Inc., which has been active in 40 state prisons and other facilities, representing 2,000 members.

According to the Court, prison administrators can take "reasonable steps" to maintain the order and security of the prisons. The Court argued that this includes preventing prisoner unions from operating, since these "are in an adversary relationship with the prison administrators."

Nazis Attack Prisoners at San Quentin

On July 12, at California's San Quentin prison, three prisoners were killed and five others injured in a series of attacks on Black prisoners by white racist thugs. The attacks began shortly after 8 a.m. when members of a motorcycle gang stabbed a Black prisoner. Within an hour a second Black man was stabbed. Shortly after this, a fist fight broke out and a white racist was injured.

In retaliation for the injury to the white racist, members of the American National Socialist Party (Nazis) attacked a group of Muslim prisoners at San Quentin. But the fascists were in for a good beating. After 10 minutes of fighting, two Nazis were dead and one injured. Two Black prisoners were also injured.

The attacks by racist thugs on Black prisoners are nothing new at San Quentin. George Jackson, a Black revolutionary prisoner who spent his life fighting the California prison system and the capitalist system that upholds it, repeatedly exposed the fact that racism was a deliberate policy of the California prison system. That policy has not changed, and there can be no doubt but that the keepers at San Quentin continue to aid groups like the Nazis in their filthy work. Guards probably supplied the white racists with their weapons, while the administration looked the other way.

Prisoners at San Quentin, and at all prisons, need to build organizations for their own self-defense. Racist thugs must be taken care of by the prisoners themselves. As this society becomes more and more unable to provide for people, the fascist forces—with the help of guards and wardens—will continue trying to organize the worst thugs in the prisons to prey on other prisoners. They will try to keep all militant prisoners from organizing to fight their real enemy—the capitalist system that put people in prison in the first place.

—FH and ME

Strike at Walla Walla Forces Warden's Removal

By Frank Hopkins

JULY 3—The strike by prisoners in the Intensive Security Unit (ISU) of the Washington State Penitentiary at Walla Walla is now in its 12th week. The strike, at first by the entire prison population, began on April 10, after days of mactings, beatings and other forms of administrative repression. Despite enormous harassment, the general population stayed out for 46 days—until May 25. The prisoners in the ISU decided to remain on strike until real changes in conditions are made in the unit. These prisoners are still on strike.

The strike halted briefly on June 8 when the administration promised to reclassify ISU prisoners back into the general prison population. But the keepers went back on their word and the prisoners resumed their strike.

The strike has won some important concessions. At the demand of the prisoners, Assistant Superintendent James Harvey (known as "Mad Dog Harvey") was moved out of the prison. The keepers have also stopped tampering with prisoners' mail. Most importantly, on June 28 the strikers won a major victory when Superintendent B.J. Rhay was removed. He was kicked upstairs to get him out of the prison. Harlan McNutt, the Director of the Department of Social and Health Services, claimed that he had been considering the "transfer" since January. But McNutt could not even outline to the media what Rhay's new duties would be. It is clear that Rhay's removal was really due to the strike. He was replaced because he could no longer control the prisoners.

The state sees that Rhay's terror tactics have backfired. They have failed to stop prisoners from fighting back. So the state is now prepared to shift tactics. This is clear from the state's removal of Rhay and its appointment of Douglas Vinzant as Walla Walla's new warden. Before his appointment, Vinzant was head of a state-created prison reform task force. Through this appointment, the state is signaling a retreat. In the coming period it will rely less on outright repression and more on liberal promises. In this way, the state hopes to defuse the situation.

The proof that this is what is in store is the fact that the state has not met the most important demands of the strike. The prisoners demand an end to racism, guard brutality, and the filthy and overcrowded living conditions. They demand better medical facilities. Most of all, they want to put an end to the administration's arbitrary use of the ISU. The state has made vague promises of reform, but it has not given in on any of these demands.

The ISU prisoners have not been taken in by the state's new tactics. They realize that a change of faces at the top is not enough and are continuing their struggle.

A statement by the Walla Walla Brothers, a group of prisoners active in the strike, explains the situation:

"We are unhappy with the outcome of the reclassification hearings, which we see as a whitewash. While the officials from Olympia released a number of prisoners from segregation, these were all people who should have been out long ago. Prisoners who are frequently in and out of the building were released, but those of us who never get out were not let out.

"As it turned out, at least for some of us long-termers, the committee

hearings were little more than a witch hunt for Walla Walla Brothers. Carl Harp, who has served over a year in segregation for putting up a poster urging fellow prisoners to file a law suit, was questioned over an hour about the nature of his politics.

"Doyle Turner, who has spent more than a year in the ISU, was likewise interrogated about his connection with the Walla Walla Brothers. Joe Green, with two and a half years in the building, received even harsher treatment. Ed Mead, who has never violated a prison rule, was not even given an opportunity to discuss the possibility of his release. Danny Atteberry, with two and a half years in segregation; C.W. Green with nearly two years; Bobby Clark, over a year; Mark LaRue, over a year; Arthur St. Peter, nearly two years; and many others remain in the hole.

"We have elected to resume the strike in the ISU until such time as concrete steps are taken towards meeting our immediate demands."

The administration's policy is a mixture of hypocritical promises and harassment. But it has not stopped the ISU prisoners from fighting for real changes at Walla Walla. To win this struggle, these prisoners need support. Letters of protest should be sent to: Governor Ray, Governor's Office, Legislative Building, Olympia, Washington 98504. Messages of solidarity should be sent to the Torch-La Antorcha. They will be sent to the brothers at Walla Walla. □

Defend George Jackson Brigade

On May 12, two Bellevue, Washington, branches of the Rainier National Bank were bombed. In a communique sent to the American Friends Service Committee, the George Jackson Brigade (GJB) claimed responsibility for the actions. The communique stated that the Rainier National Bank was chosen for its ties to the Seattle Times, a bourgeois daily newspaper that led a propaganda campaign against the prisoners' strike at Walla Walla.

On June 25, as a result of the Brigade's support for the Walla Walla strike, federal authorities announced plans to step up their manhunt for alleged George Jackson Brigade members. It was announced that the FBI agents are being added to the search for John Sherman and Rita Darlene Brown.

Despite our differences with the strategy of isolated and individual terrorism, we defend the George Jackson Brigade from ruling class repression. It is the government that has created the rotten conditions at Walla Walla in the first place. It is capitalism that has created a society which breeds oppression, poverty, "crime"—while those who fight against this kind of society are labelled the worst "criminals" by the ruling class. The criminal capitalist government has no right to come down on these fighters. All revolutionary organizations and individuals must defend the GJB.

Resident

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Residents Expose Cops Role

People's Tribunal Held in Humboldt Park

CHICAGO—On June 25, a Peo-
ple's Tribunal was organized in Chi-
cago's Puerto Rican community of
Humboldt Park, to present the facts
about the recent rebellion there. The
Tribunal exposed the lies in the capi-
talist media and put the cops and the
government on trial before the peo-
ple.

When the people of Humboldt
Park fought back against cop attacks
June 5-6, the cops and the media pre-
tended that the community was
responsible for these attacks. They
also claimed that rival Puerto Rican
gangs murdered Raphael Cruz and
Julio Osorio, the two youths killed by
the police.

But the residents of Humboldt
Park who witnessed or participated
in the rebellion have made the real
story clear. The Chicago Police
Department was forced to back down
on their gang fight story and admit
that the cops did the shooting. Even
then, the cops tried to claim that they
shot armed men. The people of the
community exposed this lie also. The
cops admitted that Osorio held only a
hairbrush.

At the People's Tribunal, witnesses
testified that large numbers of cops,
dressed in riot gear, were hanging
around the park long before the
incident began. Those who had been
peacefully picnicking in the park were
attacked without warning. Others,
who were not in the park, were beaten
on the streets. After shooting down
an unarmed Puerto Rican youth, the
cops took a Puerto Rican flag away



Chicago marchers protest cop murders of two Puerto Rican youths.

Torch Photo/Elaine Scott

from a group of people and burned it
in front of them. The community
fought back and forced the cops to
retreat.

All through the next day the cops
taunted and harassed the people of
the community. Then, at night, over
100 cops lined up for battle and began
throwing things at residents. The
people of the community fought back
again. The cops soon realized that
they were not going to win. They had
to retreat once more.

After this second retreat, the cops
were afraid to provoke any more
battles. The following Saturday there
was a protest march from Humboldt
Park to the Civic Center in Chicago's
downtown area. There were hardly
any cops to be seen on the entire five-
mile march.

Liberal politicians were frightened
by the rebellion and are now trying to
find ways to cool down the anger of
the people. A week after the rebellion,
a government commission came up
with a report on conditions in the
Humboldt Park area. They "dis-
covered" that Puerto Rican people
have one of the highest unemploy-
ment rates of any national group in
the U.S., that housing in the com-
munity is rotten, and that police bru-
tality is common. The city govern-
ment is now talking about meeting
with representatives of the com-
munity to deal with the community's
problems in a "responsible manner."

By "responsible manner" the city
government means that it wants to
come up with a formula for ending
the Puerto Rican community's fight-

WOMEN BEHIND BARS

WHO IS THE REAL CRIMINAL?

By Janet Carver

The FBI reports that from 1960 to
1972 the number of women arrested
for violent crimes went up 246.2 per-
cent, whereas the increase for men
was 81.7 percent. All talk aside, this
was the ruling class's plain answer to
the increased struggle of women
during the '60s.

Jail is where people end up who
cannot or will not "adjust" to their
economic, racial or sexual oppression.
The state uses all its "moral" pre-
tenses to try to destroy women who
fight back against the poverty,
hardship and worthlessness of their
lives under capitalism.

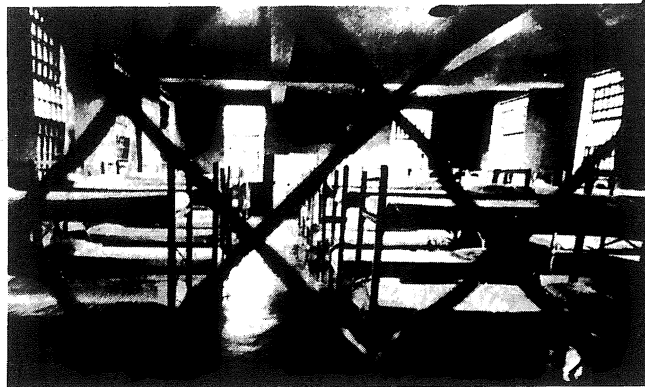
A woman waiting in a New York
City courtroom described the life and
the oppression:

"For me it was just like gettin' on
an assembly line, baby. It all started
when I was about fifteen years old. I
was living on my own and they
busted me for hanging around a bar.
Shit, it was nice there. I could hear
good music. The broads was good to
me. But the officers said I'd been
truant from school and I was
promiscuous or something like that.
They made me feel like a regular

whore—a sho 'nuff down-and-out
little nobody. That first time I got
busted, the cop made me blow him
and his partner on the way to the
station. I guess they would have
made me fuck 'em if there'd a been
more time. That really got me, that
really did me in... I'll never forget
'em. I was so scared I didn't know
what to do.

"The next thing I knowed, I was in
jail. And I been here mostly on and
off ever since. I been to court so many
times, I never could count 'em. Who
knows what the fuck goes on in
there? They got their own language
all hooked up—it might as well be
French to me. They got all their
people hooked up, too, including their
public defenders. I never be knowing
what they're saying."

After the abuse by the cops who
arrest a woman, she faces special
hardship with bail. In Washington,
D.C., the D.C. Citizens' Council for
Criminal Justice found that bail
agency officials believe women "pose
a higher risk of flight." A far greater
percentage of women than men are
required to post money bonds, and
many women are unable to meet



those money requirements. Because
so many women "offenders" are
jobless and don't usually live in one
place for long, they are considered
poorer risks for conditional release.

Discrimination follows women
through the legal system. In many
states women get longer sentences
than men for the same crimes. Young
women are treated particularly harsh-
ly. U.S. Children's Bureau statistics
show that women juveniles serve
longer sentences on the average than
do males, even though the women are
sentenced for less serious matters.
This situation does not seem to arise
from any laws, but rather from the
informal practices of courts and
correction authorities. They are more
offended by females who misbehave
than by males, and they see it that
women serve longer sentences.

If young women run away from
home, disobey their parents, have a
child without marrying, or are "pro-
miscuous," they are branded as

back. As in the past, the mayor will
meet with the Latino hacks of the
Democratic Party machine. A few
high-level jobs within the party
city bureaucracy may be given to
these hacks. A "poverty program"-
type office may be set up in the com-
munity, to develop a pro-capitalist
layer in the population, which will
work hand in hand with the govern-
ment and the cops. But for the vast
majority of the people, conditions will
remain the same. The unemployment
and rotten housing will remain. And
the ruling class will still rely on police
terror to snuff out the fires of revolt.

So "responsible manner" means
that nothing will change. Eleven
years ago there was another rebellion
in this same neighborhood. At that
time too, the liberals studied condi-
tions and expressed their "concern."
Today, the problems of the com-
munity are worse than the first time the
liberals came on the scene.

The liberal capitalists will do
nothing to improve the living condi-
tions and to win social equality for
the Puerto Rican people. In order to
make real gains, the Puerto Rican
community of Humboldt Park must
continue the struggle they launched
on June 5. The community will have
to organize itself to defeat police
terror in the streets; to demand jobs,
good housing, and decent living con-
ditions for all. It will have to make
links with the rest of Chicago's
workers and oppressed to organize a
common struggle. Finally, the Hum-
boldt Park community (and all op-
pressed communities in the country)
must be joined by the entire working
class in a fight to smash this rotten
system. This is the only lasting way
to put an end to the racism, unem-
ployment, poverty and police terror
which are permanent features of capi-
talism. □

juvenile delinquents. Young men
engaged in the same conduct are
seldom even referred to juvenile
court. It's estimated that as many as
80 percent of juvenile women are
incarcerated for sexual reasons or
sex-related "offenses."

Women are never through "sex-
ually offending" the courts. Women
are commonly returned to prison on
parole violations for living with a
man they weren't married to, or
"associating" with the "wrong"
crowd, or getting pregnant when they
weren't legally married.

"REHABILITATION"

The whole concept of "rehabilita-
tion" of women in capitalist society
means forcing women to conform to
the "feminine role." For instance, the
stated goal of the federal penitentiary
in Alderson, West Virginia is "to
prepare the female federal offender to

(Continued on page 17)

A sharp debate over the Leninist approach to gay liberation dominated the Stonewall '77 Conference, held in Los Angeles on June 10-12. The conference was sponsored by the Red Flag Union (RFU), a former gay liberation collective.

At the conference, the majority of the Red Flag Union announced its intention to seek fusion with the middle class, anti-proletarian Spartacist League (SL). This is the unfortunate conclusion of an initially promising turn towards revolutionary Marxism taken by the group one year ago.

For the RFU leaders, the purpose of the conference was to boost the prestige of the SL within the radical gay milieu. But the outcome of the conference was quite different. A minority of the RFU, the Revolutionary Faction, publicly announced its existence at the start of the conference.

This faction correctly charged the RFU majority with betraying the struggle for gay liberation and abandoning revolutionary Marxism and the working class. The Revolutionary Faction, in a joint struggle with the representative of the Revolutionary Socialist League, revealed the real anti-Leninist positions of the Spartacist League and the Red Flag Union to most of the independent gay activists who attended the conference.

In speeches and at workshops at the conference, the Revolutionary Faction and the rSL argued that revolutionaries must clearly and forthrightly champion the liberation of gay people. This is a crucial part of the struggle to unite all oppressed people behind the working class in a struggle for the socialist revolution. In contrast, the SL and the RFU majority used the conference as a forum to argue that the fight for gay liberation is not important. This confrontation of views dominated the conference.

SL: NO SUCH THING AS GAY LIBERATION

What is the real SL position on gay liberation?

To begin with, the SL rejects the term gay liberation. When they refer to gay liberation, they put the term in quotation marks. They do not, however, put Black liberation or women's liberation in quotation marks. Singling out gay liberation for quotation marks implies that there is no such thing as, or no reason for, gay liberation. Although this matter of quotation marks may seem small, it begins to suggest the real position of the SL.

Consistent with this, the SL reduces the struggle for gay liberation to a narrow struggle against unequal treatment of gays, particularly discrimination and police harassment. They ignore the fact that gay people are oppressed by capitalism in countless ways, and that an all-sided struggle against gay oppression is necessary. The SL's conception of the gay struggle and the rejection of the term gay liberation suggests that the SL does not believe that gays can actually be liberated, or that the socialist revolution is the means of achieving this. The SL position places it squarely in the camp of the bourgeois liberals who see the struggle against oppression merely as a struggle for equal rights, i.e., equal rights under capitalism.

To disguise their liberalism, the SL denounces as New Leftists and anti-Leninists all those who view the gay liberation struggle as more than a struggle for equal rights. In particular, they charge all militant fighters against gay oppression with advocating "lifestyle politics." (The SL defines this as "treating homosexuality as a political act.") Moreover, according to the SL, an advocate of "lifestyle politics" is anyone who believes that "coming out" (gay people openly expressing their homosexuality) can play a role in fighting gay oppression. There are, of course, people who believe that coming out, by itself, will end gay oppression. But the SL charges anyone who recognizes the positive aspects of affirming one's sexuality with advocating "lifestyle politics." This reveals the true nature of the SL's position on

the struggle of gays against their oppression.

The SL's opposition to coming out reflects their liberal understanding of gay oppression. One aspect of the oppression of all oppressed groups is the tremendous pressure on the oppressed to accept what the bourgeoisie says of them. In this case, the bourgeoisie defines gays as abnormal, perverted and sick. This lie pervades the entire culture and the majority of people believe it. The result is to force millions of gay people to accept this view of themselves. Since gays can hide their homosexuality, there is tremendous pressure on them to keep it secret from family and friends, to stay "in the closet." The first step in

Debate at Stonewall '77 Conference

The Leninist Approach to Gay Liberation

By Chris Hudson and Ron Taber

the struggle of an oppressed group is to break with the bourgeoisie's lies about them, to affirm their identity and to realize that it is not they who are inferior, abnormal or sick. This can lead to recognizing that it is capitalism that is the cause of oppression, capitalism that is sick and rotten, and capitalism that must be overthrown.

For gays, coming out can represent an important step in this affirmation of themselves, a first step in fighting back against their oppression. Of course, to see coming out, by itself, as a solution to gay oppression is a middle class, non-Leninist approach. But to fail to see the positive side of coming out represents complete insensitivity to gay oppression and a capitulation to capitalism.

SL'S "PUBLIC CLOSET" RULE

The SL elevates their capitulation to liberalism to a principle in their "public closet" rule. This rule, first revealed by the Revolutionary Faction at the Stonewall Conference, prohibits any and all SL members from admitting their homosexuality in their political work. To justify this rule, the SL argues that 1) the rule protects SL members from victimization by anti-gay workers and by the capitalists; and 2) the rule makes it easier to organize the working class.

These arguments are evasions.

Any democratic-centralist organization has the right to decide when its members expose themselves to possible victimization. For example, a democratic-centralist organization may instruct its members working in a given factory, in a given period, not to reveal their political beliefs, if doing so will get these members fired. This is a tactical question, decided on a case by case basis. There is no sound basis for a blanket rule on how politically exposed revolutionaries should be in a given situation. The SL has no such general rule, although in the past they have often made it a principle to openly declare one's belief in communism, even where this has been stupid from a tactical point of view.

If the SL has no such rule for their membership in general, why do they have a general rule preventing their gay members from coming out in any and all political circumstances? Clearly, security precautions have nothing to do with the SL's blanket public closet rule. Clearly, there is something else at the root of this position.

The SL's second excuse for such a rule is that it makes organizing the workers easier. As SL supporters put it in discussions with the RFU before

gay prejudice in the working class.

There is no doubt that a blanket closet rule will make it easier for an opportunist organization to organize workers on an opportunist basis. But it won't make organizing a truly revolutionary movement easier. For example, will the closet rule make it easier to organize gay workers to fight for the socialist revolution? Clearly, no. Real revolutionaries, unlike the SL, want to awaken in gay workers a consciousness of the nature of their oppression and the need to overthrow capitalism to achieve liberation. A total opposition to coming out and a blanket closet rule will not do this. It is significant that the SL avoids mentioning whether their public closet rule makes organizing gay workers for socialism any easier.

CAPITULATION TO PREJUDICE

Will a blanket closet rule make it easier to organize straight workers to fight for the socialist revolution? Again, the answer is no. A militant fight against all bourgeois prejudices is an essential part of the struggle to build a revolutionary movement. Any rule which hinders in advance the fight against anti-gay prejudice will clearly make it harder to organize straight workers on a revolutionary basis.

There is further significance to the SL's blanket public closet rule. It says to the members of all oppressed groups that, if it could, the SL would avoid directly confronting the oppression of and prejudices toward them as well. A militant Black worker, for example, will probably recognize that an organization that capitulates to anti-gay prejudice will abandon Blacks when push comes to shove. And he or she will be right. Such a suspicion would only reflect the logic of the SL's total opposition to coming out, and the failure to fight anti-gay prejudice which the position represents.

What the rule says to gays is: "The best way to fight is to deny you exist and make as little issue out of your oppression as possible." And if they were consistent, or honest, the SL would extend this line of thinking to all oppressed people. However, women, Blacks, Latins, Asians, Native Americans and other oppressed people cannot go into the closet. Unlike gays, the SL cannot demand that these people hide their very identity. This fact, along with political cowardice, prevents the SL from openly advocating to all oppressed people the social, political and psychological suicide they propose to gays.

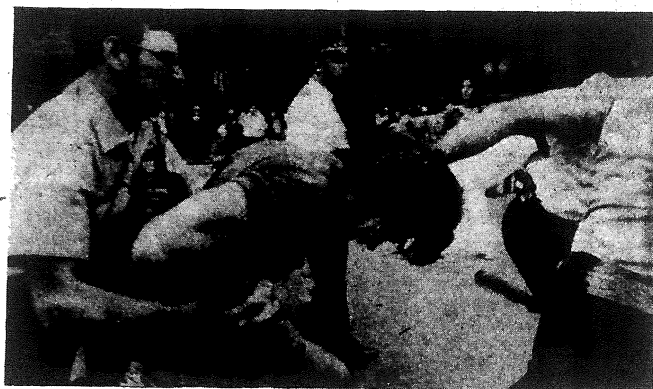
LESSONS OF LENINISM

The source of the SL's liberal and capitulatory position on gay liberation is their totally erroneous understanding of the importance of the struggles of oppressed groups in the socialist revolution.

As Lenin taught, and as the Russian Revolution showed, to seize state power and overthrow capitalism, the revolutionary workers must unite behind them the members of oppressed groups, proletarian and petty bourgeois. In Russia, for example, the Bolshevik Party, the vanguard of the working class, strove to unite under its leadership the poverty-stricken peasants and the masses of the oppressed nationalities. To win all oppressed masses to its banner, the Bolsheviks sought to prove that the revolutionary workers, not the bourgeoisie, will champion the interests of the oppressed and fight for their rights and needs. In regard to the oppressed nationalities, Lenin argued that the Bolsheviks had to champion the rights of all the

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Protester is hauled away by cops at Chicago anti-Anita Bryant rally.

4,000 Protest Against Anita Bryant in Chicago

CHICAGO—Over 4,000 people turned out to "greet" Anita Bryant when she appeared at a Flag Day rally on June 14. The huge crowd, which gathered across the street from the Medinah Temple where Bryant was to sing, forced half of the 2,000 persons who had bought tickets to stay home.

The June 14 demonstration was originally called by the Committee for Gay Rights (CGR), which includes the Revolutionary Socialist League, the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA—youth group of the Socialist Workers Party), the Chicago Gay Socialists, the Workers World Party and other organizations. At a CGR planning meeting on June 6, the RSL put forward a motion to set up a militant picket at the Medinah to aggressively discourage people from going in (without physically barring them). The RSL argued that it was important to wreck Anita Bryant's rally to keep her planned national anti-gay crusade from getting off the ground.

The RSL motion failed due to opposition by the YSA and the majority of the Gay Socialists. The Spartacist League (there as "observers") abstained. The CGR voted for a "peaceful, militant" picket.

The RSL also proposed that the demonstration include slogans supporting the recent struggle against the police in the Humboldt Park Puerto Rican community. This proposal, vital for building unity between gays and other oppressed groups, was also defeated.

At the June 6 meeting and afterwards, a much larger organization, the Gay-Lesbian Coalition of Metropolitan Chicago (called the Coalition), jumped into the act to water down the proposed action still further.

The Coalition is composed of about 60 member groups. Nearly half the Coalition consists of the owners of gay bars, baths and bookstores. The rest are representatives of small gay-owned businesses, gay religious and service groups, and liberal gay political groups. The Coalition is dominated by Chuck Renslow, a precinct captain in the Daley-Bilandic Democratic machine.

The Coalition claims to represent the entire gay community. In reality, it represents conservative, middle class, pro-Democratic Party interests.

Renslow came to the June 6 meeting to argue against having any demonstration against Anita Bryant. Defeated on this, and knowing that a mass anti-Bryant rally after the Dade County vote on June 7 could not be prevented, Renslow and his allies

moved to cut down on its militancy.

On June 8, the Coalition voted not to endorse the CGR demonstration, but to hold a rally at the same time and place, specifying that they would uphold "free speech"—in other words, prevent any militant action to discourage people from attending Bryant's rally.

The Coalition succeeded in getting CGR leaflets banned from the larger gay bars. They called for an assembly two blocks from the CGR demonstration, half an hour earlier. The evening of June 14, Coalition marshals were posted at every corner, directing the crowd to march anywhere but on the Medinah side of the street.

At this point, the entire CGR,

except for the RSL, caved in to the liberals and agreed to march across the street. Only the RSL and its supporters attempted to keep the crowd in front of the Medinah.

The police moved in to bust up this part of the rally. The cops arrested a number of RSL members, supporters and others who happened to get in their way, even though the RSL was urging nothing illegal. The cops simply walked over and arrested certain people who they thought were radicals or who had been calling for the march to stay in front of the Medinah. The cops beat several demonstrators with clubs while hauling them off to paddy wagons.

It was the actions of the Coalition leaders, and the fact that most CGR leaders caved in to them, that prevented the demonstration from being a total success. A mass demonstration directly in front of the Medinah would have shut down Anita Bryant completely. There were more than enough people present to accomplish this. This would have discouraged promoters all across the country from booking Bryant's anti-homosexual road show.

Following the June 14 rally, the RSL put forward five motions to the CGR. The first four passed unanimously: to condemn the police; to demand the charges against the arrested militants be dropped; to cooperate with defense efforts for those arrested; and to repudiate pro-police statements made by a CGR leader. The fifth, to affirm that the demonstration would have been more effective if held in front of the Medinah as originally intended, failed.

Anita Bryant will be stopped only by militant mass actions that make it impossible for her to spread her filth across the country. The RSL will

continue to fight inside the gay rights movement for a perspective of militant mass action and unity of all working class and oppressed people. The liberals' no-struggle strategy of proving gays' "respectability" to their oppressors must be driven out of the movement.

Letters of support and contributions to the defense of the arrested protesters should be sent to: Gay Rights Defense Committee, P.O. Box 8062, Chicago, Illinois 60680. □

FORUM CHICAGO "Revolutionary Strategy for the Gay Liberation Movement"

SPONSORED BY:
Revolutionary
Socialist
League

Sunday, August 7
3 p.m.

Haymarket Books
160 N. Halsted
Chicago



Mass Demonstrations Build Gay Rights Fight

On June 26, mass gay rights demonstrations were held across the country. As many as 200,000 people marched in San Francisco and 100,000 in New York. Thousands of people also marched in Chicago, Atlanta, Seattle and Los Angeles. This year's marches, in commemoration of the 1969 Stonewall rebellion, were larger and more militant than they have been in recent years.

The size and militancy of the demonstrations were a response to the nation-wide attacks on gays now underway. The Dade County, Florida, referendum spearheaded these attacks by legalizing discrimination against gays in jobs, housing and services. Anita Bryant and her Save Our Children, Inc., are touring the country to promote right-wing hysteria directed at gays and women. In

cities across the country, reactionary forces have taken their cues to go into action. The Chicago Tribune's anti-"child pornography" campaign is only one example.

The Revolutionary Socialist League was active in the Chicago and New York demonstrations. The RSL built revolutionary contingents in both demonstrations which attracted numerous gay rights militants. An RSL chant—"They Say Get Back; We Say Fight Back"—was taken up enthusiastically by many of the demonstrators in New York. The chant expressed the need to give the gay rights struggle a mass militant character.

RSL contingents also made clear the need to link the fight against gay oppression to the fight of all working and oppressed people. The chant—

"Gay, Straight, Black and White; Same Enemy, Same Fight"—expressed this idea.

In a leaflet distributed in New York, the RSL explained that gay liberation could be won only through socialist revolution. The leaflet said, in part: "Capitalism cannot afford to grant gay people their full rights. The right of people to determine their own sexuality is a threat to the bourgeois idea of 'family.' Under capitalism, the family serves to force women to provide the next generation of laborers free of charge—for the capitalists to exploit. Under capitalism, the family becomes a training ground where working and oppressed people learn to accept and obey authority. The family is supposed to teach morality, but it is the morality the ruling class uses to keep people down. Because capitalism needs the family, it must oppress gay people—their very existence threatens one of the most valuable tools—the ruling class has in its war against the great masses of people.

"For gay people and all oppressed people to be truly liberated, capitalism must be smashed. Working and oppressed people must set up a system that meets the needs of all in the society—a socialist system. Only when all people have the political power, economic ability and social equality to decide their own sexuality will gay people be liberated."

These ideas were expressed in shorthand by one of the most popular chants raised by the RSL's revolutionary contingents: "What's the Fight?—Gay Rights! What's the Solution?—Revolution!" □



Gay Liberation Day march, New York, June 26, 1977.

Torch Photo/Eugene V. Lee

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SOUTH AFRICA: BLACK WORKERS



Soweto students shout defiance at cops during June 16, 1977, memorial demonstration.

Build a Revolutionary Leninist Party!

The following article, the conclusion of a series on the developing South African revolution, is excerpted from a Resolution on South Africa adopted by the RSL Central Committee. The article discusses important aspects of the strategy and tactics for the South African revolution. It also takes up the question of building an anti-apartheid solidarity movement in the U.S.

Part 5 of a series

What are the strategic tasks of the South African revolution? The first and overriding task is the construction of a Leninist revolutionary party in South Africa. This party must be equipped with the theoretical and political weapons of Marxism, Leninism and Trotskyism—the theory of Permanent Revolution, the Transitional Program, democratic centralism, the Leninist tactics, etc.

In addition, it is crucial that this party clearly understand the threat of a state-capitalist revolution in South Africa and how to defeat the state-capitalist forces.

Given conditions in South Africa, such a party must be organized on a conspiratorial, i.e., underground basis. Organized this way, the party must take advantage of all legal or semi-legal opportunities that the mass struggle may open up during the revolution. However, any periods of legal or semi-legal functioning will be temporary until the proletariat establishes its dictatorship. Thus the party must at all times be prepared to go underground as rapidly as possible in case of setbacks in the struggle.

General Strike and Generalized Uprising

The general orientation of this party must be to prepare itself and the working class for an armed general strike. As conditions permit, such a general strike must pass over

into a generalized uprising, in which the armed workers will seize the factories, mines and other economic levers, establish soviets and other broad forms of democratic workers' rule, and seize state power.

In this respect, the model of the Russian Revolution will apply in South Africa. As in Russia, the first phase of the revolution may be a February-type uprising, which opens up a temporary period of relative political freedom, reform of apartheid, etc. However, again as in Russia, the revolutionary party must aim from the start at the complete destruction of apartheid and capitalism through a second insurrection and the establishment of the workers' dictatorship. This means that the revolutionary party must wage a determined ideological struggle against all strategies that elevate reformist and guerrilla tactics above the goal of a proletarian general strike-insurrection on the Russian model.

Defeating the Army

One of the key strategic problems facing South African revolutionaries is the question of the army. This is one of the ways in which the Russian "model" of a proletarian revolution does not apply in South Africa. In Russia, the rank and file of the army was made up of the oppressed masses—a small number of workers and a tremendous number of peasants. People were conscripted against their will for long terms and subjected to extraordinarily brutal discipline. During the war, the troops were under-fed, under-clothed and under-armed. The incompetence of the Tsarist officer corps combined with all this to turn the Russian soldiers into little more than cannon fodder. Large masses of troops were simply mowed down by the better-armed, better-trained and better-led German armies. These circumstances made it relatively easy for the Bolsheviks to demoralize the Tsarist army through political propaganda and agitation. By the eve of

the October Revolution, the Tsarist army was less than a shadow of what it had been. This removed it as a major obstacle to the seizure of power.

In South Africa, a different approach will be necessary. Unlike the police force (which is partly made up of Blacks), the South African army consists entirely of white troops, who are tied lock, stock and barrel to the apartheid dictatorship. As a result, it will not be possible to break down the morale and discipline of the army through revolutionary propaganda and agitation. Unlike the Russian case, where political struggle was the primary means of destroying the Tsarist army, in South Africa military means will come much more to the fore.

The key to success in this task is to recognize that the South African army faces a serious dilemma. Since it excludes Blacks, the army is relatively small in numbers. Its reserve forces, in the form of military-age males, are also small. Can the revolutionary forces find ways to spread these small numbers thin and render the army relatively ineffective? Or can they force the whites to recruit Blacks into the army, which will then be more vulnerable to political demoralization?

Guerrilla Struggle

The answer is yes. Protracted guerrilla struggle, carried out over vast stretches of the South African frontier, can force the South African army to over-extend itself and, over a period of time, become exhausted and demoralized. As the U.S. learned in Vietnam, modern weapons and techniques have a relatively limited use against guerrilla warfare. And whatever use they may have, they cannot be utilized without large numbers of troops to actually "search out and destroy" the guerrillas.

Protracted guerrilla struggle will force the South African army to make a choice. It can attempt to beat the guerrillas without recruiting Black soldiers. In this case, it opens itself to

dispersal, over-extension and exhaustion. This will not merely exhaust the army, but will also leave the cities relatively unguarded, as white soldiers are drawn out of the cities to fight the guerrillas. It will also weaken the economy as more and more whites, who are the skilled workers and supervisory personnel, are drafted into the army. In the long run, this is a dead end for the white South Africans.

But the regime's only other alternative is to recruit Black soldiers into the army—opening the door to the political demoralization of the army. This, too, is a dead end for the whites.

In either case, South African revolutionary strategy will require a policy of guerrilla struggles as part of the overall proletarian revolutionary struggle. Serious Trotskyists have nothing in common with those pedants who are opposed to guerrilla warfare "on principle," or who counterpose guerrilla warfare to a proletarian revolution. What is necessary is to work out in practice the correct relationship between urban struggle—such as strikes, demonstrations, general strikes and insurrections—and the rural guerrilla struggle. A whole phase of the Russian Revolution consisted of guerrilla warfare. This was after the October Revolution itself, in the Civil War in which many campaigns were of a guerrilla-partisan character. These operations were crucial in securing the workers' state. The fact that this type of struggle occurred after the seizure of power does not mean that it is an unacceptable form of proletarian struggle before the seizure of power. As the Civil War in Spain showed, under certain conditions partisan-type warfare will be an integral part of the revolutionary struggle for power at various stages.

There are two major factors which will create positive conditions for utilizing guerrilla struggle in the South African revolution. The first is that, unlike in the past, there may soon be thousands of miles of relatively safe

refuges for the guerrilla struggles. Namibia pick up soldiers will be surrounded or Black-held territory available, to one degree or another, the South African army for training, rest, supply routes, etc. liberation armies and opportunity for much of the territory itself denies them.

Obstacles to U.S. Intervention

The other position is that the U.S. and imperialist powers face obstacles to full-scale South African white intervention as issues in South Africa are obscured as easily as in Vietnam. No matter what imperialists label the "communist puppet," they hide the fact that the racist whites is fighting for privileges against Blacks, who have been oppressed for years. Imperialists do not rely in support of a thug and racist regime, and repudiates the demand that the U.S. claims to support.

Further, with the support (in their own liberation forces, etc.) to stake its entire bet on defending South Africa. While this is a gamble that there will be U.S. intervention, intervention much like Vietnam.

Finally, there is the U.S. public, already stagnating economy, experienced the war, not likely to put itself in an adventure in South Africa.



Soweto residents during recent protests. Cloud in background is tear gas.

WORKERS REVOLT

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liberation armies a level of protection
and opportunity for maneuver which
much of the territory of South Africa
itself denies them.

Obstacles to U.S. Intervention

The other positive factor is the fact
that the U.S. and other Western imper-
ialist powers face tremendous obsta-
cles to full-scale support to the
South African whites, let alone active
intervention as in Vietnam. The
issues in South Africa cannot be
obscured as easily as they were in
Vietnam. No matter how often the
imperialists label the liberation forces
"communist puppets," they cannot
hide the fact that the tiny minority of
racist whites is fighting to defend its
privileges against the majority of
Blacks, who have been exploited and
oppressed for years. The U.S. imper-
ialists do not relish going to the wall
in support of a thoroughly reaction-
ary and racist regime which so openly
repudiates the democratic principles
the U.S. claims to hold dear.

Further, with the Russians free to
support (in their own fashion) certain
liberation forces, the U.S. will hesi-
tate to stake its entire African empire
on defending South African apart-
heid. While this fact will not guar-
antee that there will be no direct
U.S. intervention, it does make such
intervention much less likely than in
Vietnam.

Finally, there is the fact that the
U.S. public, already faced with a
stagnating economy, and having just
experienced the war in Vietnam, is
not likely to put up with a similar
adventure in South Africa. The

struggle in South Africa will tap an
even more responsive chord among
Blacks and Latins in the U.S. than
did the war in Vietnam. The ruling
class will think twice before risking
the possibility of a Black-Latin
working class-based movement op-
posed to U.S. intervention in South
Africa.

This whole situation gives the
revolutionary forces considerable
maneuvering room to wage the kind
of guerrilla warfare that will be
crucial in overthrowing the racist
South African dictatorship.

In order for guerrilla struggle to
lead to the socialist revolution, the
guerrilla struggle must be subordi-
nate to the struggle of the urban
workers, and politically and organiza-
tionally subordinate to the revolu-
tionary workers' party. In Russia the
guerrilla-partisan phase of the strug-
gle occurred after the Bolshevik
seizure of power. This made it
relatively easy to subordinate the
guerrilla forces and the struggle itself
to the workers' leadership.

In South Africa, where the guer-
rilla struggle is a precondition for the
workers' seizure of power, this will be
much more difficult to achieve.

One of the biggest dangers to the
South African revolution is that the
guerrilla forces and struggle may be-
come independent of the proletariat.
In this circumstance they would be
led by middle class forces and could
be politically dependent on the
regimes which give them aid—the
Black nationalist regimes and Russia.

If the proletariat cannot exercise
its leadership because of the lack of a
strong revolutionary party, because
it cannot sustain an urban struggle,
or because it is defeated, the guerrilla
forces may become the mass base and
the political-military structure for a
state-capitalist revolution in South
Africa itself.

International Solidarity

International pressure can play a
crucial role in the South African
revolution. Its most important role is
to give the revolutionary forces
leverage and maneuverability which
they might not otherwise have.

One of the chief roles of such a
movement, particularly in the U.S., is
to hinder the U.S. and the other
imperialist powers from helping the
white South Africans. Revolution-
aries must build a movement which
can have a material impact on U.S.
policy in southern Africa—which can
prevent U.S. intervention, stop U.S.
aid to the racist regime, and expose
the U.S. attempts to maintain control
of southern Africa through neo-
colonial means.

As this suggests, exposing the
U.S. neo-colonial schemes is one of
the key tasks of a solidarity move-
ment in the U.S. The imperialists do
not want to go to the wire with
openly racist regimes in southern
Africa. They know this may result in
a drastic decline in U.S. influence in
Africa and throughout the world, and
they are trying to cut their losses. To
do this, they must appear to advocate
Black rights, while actually trying to
keep the changes as minimal as
possible.

In Rhodesia, the U.S. is prepared
to see the white regime go—as long
as the government that replaces it

does not drive out the whites and
nationalize all industry. The U.S., in
other words, would like to bring in a
regime like the neo-colonial govern-
ment in Zambia. On the other hand,
Ian Smith, the leader of the white
settlers, is desperately hoping he can
hold off the guerrilla forces long
enough to establish a pro-white
puppet government that would make
only the most minimal reforms in the
racist society. It appears to be only a
matter of time before the Smith
regime is defeated. By appearing to
fight for Black majority rule, the U.S.
hopes to keep its face clean, be in a
position to completely abandon
Smith when that is necessary, and
approach the national liberation lead-
ers to make a deal.

But South Africa is a trickier
question for the imperialists. The
U.S. imperialists sit on the horns of a
dilemma. If they leave apartheid
intact, they will either face a socialist
revolution or have the whole area
pass into the hands of the Russians.
But if they make too much of an
effort to modify apartheid, they will
alienate the South African whites. At
the same time they will raise the
hopes of the masses and set off major
struggles. This would also provoke a
socialist or state-capitalist revolu-
tion.

The U.S. imperialists' present solu-
tion appears to be to stall for time. To
buy time, they may abandon the
racist regimes in Rhodesia and
South-West Africa as sops to the
masses. In the meantime they will see
what kind of arrangement is neces-
sary and possible in South Africa

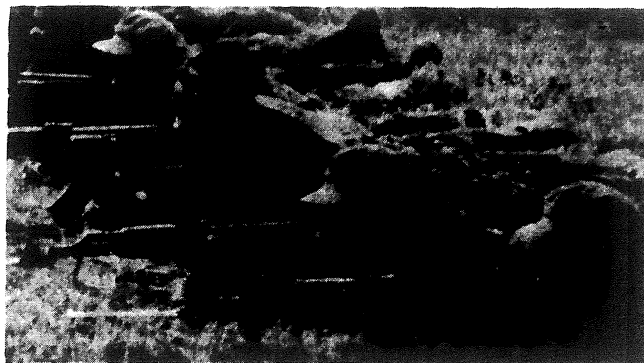
nothing more than some changes to
give Black people a formal majority
of votes and a Black government. It
makes no statement about full demo-
cratic rights, let alone the complete
elimination of apartheid or other
changes in the social structure.

In the second place, there is no
explicit statement of when "Black
Majority Rule" will be implemented.
It can be interpreted as meaning that
this long-term goal can only be
reached peacefully, gradually and
quietly, without threatening the
property and privileges of the whites.
In fact, this is the most that U.S.
imperialism means by it.

Expose U.S. Slogan

As part of supporting the struggle
in South Africa, a solidarity move-
ment in the United States must make
one of its central tasks the exposure
of the imperialists' "Black Majority
Rule" slogan. The movement must
carefully explain to the working class
what the U.S. is up to, and why the
slogan "Black Majority Rule" is a
death trap for the South African
workers. Further, this solidarity
movement must make clear that the
struggle for genuine national libera-
tion and Black rule in South Africa
will be won through a socialist revolu-
tion led by South Africa's Black
working class. A failure to come out
foursquarely for socialist revolution
in South Africa can only play into the
hands of the imperialists.

Today, South Africa is at the



Zimbabwean guerrillas.

itself. The South African regime may
be able to smash the mass movement,
and have little need to make changes
at all, at least for a long time.

If not, the U.S. may be able to
pressure the South African whites to
come up with a plan to reform apart-
heid by creating a Black middle class
which can "share power" with the
whites. Such a solution could only be
workable over many years of gradual
change. The U.S. would have to
slowly build up a Black middle class,
slowly loosen some of the restric-
tions of apartheid, while at the same
time bribing or in some cases
pressing the white workers into
giving up some of their privileges.

One of the advantages of this
scheme is that it would let the racists
and imperialists stop the process at
any point and return to a straight-
out repressive police state, if the
Black middle class is unwilling or
unable to keep the Black masses
under control.

Central to this entire neo-colonial
approach is the slogan of "Black
Majority Rule." This makes the U.S.
appear to be interested in democracy
and change in southern Africa, while
it actually commits the U.S. to very
little.

In the first place, the slogan is
ambiguous. It doesn't even say "one
person, one vote;" it may mean

center of the world revolutionary
struggle. Throughout all of southern
Africa a gigantic battle is building
between the major imperialist pow-
ers—the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.—and
the exploited masses of the region.
With its large and powerful working
class, South Africa stands at the
center of this struggle. There, more
than anywhere else in the world
today, conditions are ripe for a mass
revolutionary rising of the prole-
tariat. The struggle for national
liberation, against apartheid, for
voting rights—against the thousands
of aspects of racist oppression—com-
bined with the oppression and ex-
ploitation of millions of Black people
as workers, lays the basis for a mass
upheaval that will shake the world.

This makes the building of a
solidarity movement against apart-
heid a central task for revolutionaries
in the U.S. today. A solidarity
movement that can tie the hands of
the U.S. imperialists, even partially
or temporarily, can help provide
South African revolutionaries with
the time they need to construct a
revolutionary Leninist party capable
of leading the South African revolu-
tion to victory. The RSL is com-
mitted to building such a solidarity
movement and calls on other revolu-
tionaries and working class militants
to join this struggle. □



Protesters during recent protests. Cloud in background is tear gas.



British Workers Reject Wage Freeze

Four major British unions have rejected the Labor government's three-year-old wage freeze—the National Union of Mineworkers, the National Union of Blastfurnacemen, the 1.3 million-strong Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, and Britain's biggest union, the 1.9 million Transport and General Workers' Union. The membership of the Transport and General Workers' Union took its action over the objections of its leader, Jack Jones, probably the most powerful labor bureaucrat in Britain and an architect of the wage freeze.

British workers have lost a lot of ground during this wage freeze. Inflation has raced far ahead of wages. This break with Labor government policy by three big unions means that British workers have had enough. And this will probably kill the wage freeze.

The increasing fighting mood of the workers will force the capitalists to switch tactics—away from "persuasion," and back to a policy of head-on confrontation with the workers. If the wage freeze does collapse, the capitalists will withdraw their support from the Labor Party, and the present government will collapse.

The fighting mood of British workers is demonstrated by the 46-week Brunwick strike, in northwest London. Workers there, mostly Asians, have been fighting for union recognition. Lately, their picket line has come under daily police attacks. Trade union and leftist delegations have come from all over the country to defend the strike. On July 11, 4,000 cops attacked more than 20,000 trade unionists. Eighteen cops and 40 militants were hospitalized. Seventy other militants were arrested. The strike is shaping up into a national confrontation between Britain's workers and capitalists.

Spain Holds Elections

On June 15, the Spanish bourgeoisie held the first national parliamentary elections in Spain in more than 40 years. The elections were praised in the worldwide capitalist press as a mighty step forward for democracy, but in fact they were highly undemocratic and tightly controlled by Spain's new monarchy. The cities, where the workers live, were greatly under-represented proportionately, they got only one-quarter as many representatives as the conservative rural areas). Many left parties were declared illegal.

These elections were conceived and directed by the King's appointed prime minister, Adolfo Suárez. Suárez's party came out in first place, with 34 percent of the vote and nearly half the parliamentary seats.

The Spanish capitalist class is trying to give Spain a democratic image. When Franco died in 1975, he left behind a dictatorship which was more and more unable to rule Spain effectively. The workers were waging bigger and bigger battles against the capitalists (mass strikes, demonstrations, etc.). The Franco government consistently answered with naked repression, but this was becoming increasingly dangerous. The capitalists realized that they needed a system capable of making minor reforms and open to compromises. For the capitalists the trick was how to dismantle Franco's outdated machine without rigging a working class upsurge. The elections of June 15 show that—for the moment—the capitalists have successfully carried this out. Their reforms have received at least the passive support of the majority of workers.

The capitalists were helped by the reformist workers' parties, particularly the Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the Communist Party (PCE). Instead of exposing the capitalist maneuvers, these parties—which were organized by Suárez—praised the elections as a big step towards democracy. These parties are going to be useful allies to the capitalist class as it tries to stabilize its rule in the coming period.

Pakistan: Bhutto Government Overthrown

On July 5, Pakistan's army overthrew strongman Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Last March Bhutto fixed the national elections, which he and his party won by a 70-sided margin. This made him the target of a vast mobilization, involving large layers of Pakistan's masses. The army said it acted to avoid a civil war, and promised new elections in October. In one of its first actions, it outlawed all union activity.

The army was Bhutto's main support. The coming elections are not likely to dislodge it from the real seat of power in Pakistan.

Haitian Refugees Win Victory

Deportation orders against 280 Haitians have been cancelled by a Miami court. Because of mounting support for the refugees, the court has decided not to ship them back. The U.S. government routinely denies political refugee status to Haitian opponents of "Baby Doc" Duvalier. Duvalier—one of the oddest dictators in the Caribbean—is a U.S. puppet. Refugees who are sent back face imprisonment, torture and death. This court victory makes it easier for 2,000 Haitians seeking political refuge to remain in the U.S.

—TC

Soweto Protests...

(Continued from page 1)

until 9 a.m. Then began a general strike, organized by the SSRC. All shops and shebeens (beer halls) in the Black districts were closed at the orders of the SSRC. Every Black high school in Soweto went out on strike. In spite of high unemployment, between 130,000 and 160,000 of Johannesburg's Black workers risked threats of being fired from their jobs to join the general work stoppage.

Although the actions had been planned by the SSRC as peaceful protests, the white authorities reacted with harsh repression. On June 10, the police arrested Sechaba Montsitsi, the president of the SSRC, and 25 other youth leaders in an attempt to strip the movement of its leadership. On June 15, the day before the general strike began, police beat a 17-year-old student to death while "questioning" him. The police set up roadblocks, and patrolled the streets of Soweto with armored cars equipped with machine-guns. The chief of Johannesburg's riot police announced that his troops would shoot to kill.

The next day, during the strike, the police began firing tear gas into memorial meetings. As Blacks fought back, the police fired directly into the unarmed crowds. Nine Blacks were wounded, two fatally.

The fighting was the fiercest, how-



Cops frisk Black men at Soweto checkpoint.

Hunger Strikes Protest Repression in Chile

Last month on June 14, a hunger strike was launched at a UN mission in Santiago, Chile, by 28 relatives of "disappeared persons" (persons who have been kidnapped by Chile's secret police, but are listed as "missing"). The strike demanded that Pinochet (Chile's dictator) end the kidnapping of political opponents, and that he release information about those currently listed as "missing." The strike ended 10 days later.

The Santiago action sparked an international wave of hunger strikes and other actions, in Costa Rica, France, England, Mexico, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.S. Because of this impressive display of international solidarity, Pinochet was forced to retreat. He agreed to examine the cases of the strikers' missing relatives, and he agreed not to retaliate against the strikers themselves. While limited in scope, these concessions are a setback for Pinochet's policy, and a significant victory for Chile's oppressed masses. □

ever, near Port Elizabeth. More than 12 government buildings and shops were destroyed by angry Black demonstrators. The white police killed at least 11 people in two days of fighting, and wounded 33 others in the townships of Kabah and Kwanobuhle. As the fighting died down, the police rounded up more than 300 Black people on charges of rioting. They were quickly tried in special courts and sentenced to public whippings.

The Soweto Students' Representative Council has gained strength over the past year. It now has the authority to open and close schools and businesses inside Soweto. June 16 is the third time in a year that the SSRC has partially crippled economic activity in white Johannesburg by bringing out Black workers in strike actions. Earlier in June, the SSRC forced Soweto's Urban Bantu Council to disband through a combination of economic pressure and physical threats. This deprived the white government of its main Black puppet agency inside Soweto.

Yet, despite its power, the SSRC remains weak outside Soweto. It has rarely been able to organize national actions. Capetown, for example, appears to have been relatively quiet this month, in spite of the fact that some of the most bitter outbreaks have taken place there in the past.

Tied to this limitation on its strength is the SSRC's relative isolation from the Black South African working class. The students have shown their organizing ability, their boldness, and their willingness to die, if need be, in the struggle to overthrow apartheid. But without the direct participation of the working class in the leadership of the struggle, the youth are held back in how far they can go.

The strikes that have occurred in the past year have been crucial to the advance of the mass movement. But many more workers went to their jobs this time than was the case during last August's and September's general strikes. Further, the recent strikes appear to have been restricted to "stay at home" actions, rather than active mobilizations.

Strike committees made up of industrial workers must be formed to involve the workers as leaders and planners of the political actions, instead of leaving them to play the part of passive supporters which has tended to be the case up to now. The goal must be to build a Soweto Workers' Representative Council out of these industrial strike committees which can operate parallel to and in close cooperation with the SSRC. With representatives drawn from every factory and working class district, this type of council could use the political strikes as starting points for organizing a broader strike movement which takes up the economic demands of the workers. This would bring fresh sections of the Black working class into struggle against the white South African capitalists, reinforcing the political strikes.

The need for a revolutionary party of the Black working class in South Africa has never been more apparent. It is through this type of party that the most class conscious youth can be joined to the sections of the working class who agree with them on the necessity to prepare for revolution. Building a revolutionary party is the only way that the enormous power of the Black working class can be combined with the bold and determined action of the youth, forces for victory which so far have remained apart. □

Pol...

Wo...

By

In the last government repression of May 7, the activist, Star in a stairwell most likely police. He was his work ins Committee. formed to d ment repres ers' rebellion last year.

Over the well-known ment of th Michnik, a joining a d the murder In the v



Polish disside

murder, nine ciated with Committee v students and Radom, Cra arrested for over Pyjas' 22, 60 worker works outside arrested.

Behind the are two interous economic ment's fear o

The Polish under the we duction, eno huge and gro situation is serious in agr in an atten problems, the nounced sha eraging 16 pe to go up more the increases ers in the W taking to th clashes with ment spread f ened to repea class rebellio January, 197) successfully f and brought d ernment. To a government of down. The pri back within 2

Unable to investment cap workers pay government has l

Polish Government Increases Repression

Workers' Opposition Grows

By Tony Curzo

In the last few months, the Polish government has stepped up its repression of political dissidents. On May 7, the body of a young student activist, Stanislaw Pyjas, was found in a stairwell. Pyjas was murdered, most likely by the Polish secret police. He was murdered because of his work inside the Workers' Defense Committee. The Committee was formed to defend victims of government repression following the workers' rebellion which rocked Poland last year.

Over the weekend of May 14-15, a well-known student leader and opponent of the government, Adam Michnik, was arrested. His crime?—joining a demonstration protesting the murder of Pyjas.

In the weeks following Pyjas'

from Western banks. These loans have been spent in the West to buy consumer goods, food, and technology to raise productivity. Poland's national debt to Western banks reached a staggering \$10.4 billion in 1976, up from \$4.9 billion just two years before. The government now finds itself unable to repay the banks on schedule.

The government is caught in a vise. It has to increase prices to generate more capital for investment and economic expansion. But any attempt to increase prices in the future risks more workers' revolts. Moreover, today the workers have strong support among the students and other middle class layers of the population. If the Gierck government were to move against the workers now, it could provoke a massive explosion, if not a full-scale revolution.

All this is forcing the government to try to strengthen its hand. The arrest of the Ursus workers and the middle class dissidents can only be fully understood in this light. Through the Ursus arrests, the government is trying to cut off the head of the workers' movement; the 5,000 Ursus workers were among the vanguard in last June's rebellion. By arresting the students and the leaders of the middle class dissidents' movement, the regime wants to isolate the workers from Poland's other social layers. In particular, it is trying to prevent the development of an organized movement in the middle class that is sympathetic to the workers. At the same time, the government wants to prevent the creation of an opposition pole that might encourage the workers to struggle. By hitting hard at the middle class dissidents' movement, it hopes it can demonstrate its strength, thus demoralizing the workers and heading off further struggle.

The Polish government is following this policy to solve its problems because it is a capitalist government. This is true in spite of the government's "socialist" and "communist"



Warsaw working people line up for scarce groceries.

labels. Polish workers have no say in running society. They are outside all positions of power with no control over the economy, the factories, mines, mills or transportation. Like workers in the U.S., Polish workers have to sell their labor power for a wage in order to survive. The Polish capitalist class, organized through the ruling party and the state, exploits the workers—accumulating surplus value produced by the workers. This system, like that of the rest of Eastern Europe, Russia, China, Cuba and the other so-called communist countries, is state capitalism.

As the Polish government's repressive policies indicate, in no way does state capitalism end the oppression and exploitation of the working class. Nor does it eliminate the class struggle.

A state-capitalist system is highly centralized. The major means of production are in the hands of the state. Independent trade unions are not tolerated. There are no elections that aren't strictly controlled by the state. In this situation, workers have little maneuvering room and no legal means to fight to improve their conditions. Political repression in every sphere of life—totalitarianism—becomes an absolute necessity for the

ruling class. All dissent is smashed or driven underground. All remnants of democratic rights are suppressed. Because of this brutal suppression, it is more difficult in a state-capitalist country than in the West for the working class to struggle openly against the ruling class. But there is another side to this. When the class struggle does break out, it can quickly take on a sharp and decisive character. This is what the recent Polish workers' rebellions have shown.

It is the fear of workers' rebellions—which can quickly grow into revolutions—that is behind the widespread repression of dissidents in Poland and the other state-capitalist countries. The attack on the Polish dissidents is an attempt by the Polish ruling class to force the repressive lid back on and to keep the movement from growing.

Instead of solving the Polish bourgeoisie's problems, the current repression has only generated greater support for the workers and dissident leaders. Numerous demonstrations followed Pyjas' murder. Five thousand students attended the funeral in Cracow on May 15. At the end of the rally, the organization of a Student Solidarity Committee was announced. Beginning on May 24, 14 persons held a week-long hunger strike in a Warsaw church to demand the release of the workers arrested in last year's revolt. Five workers still remain in jail.

The hunger strikers were supported by the Catholic Church hierarchy. The Polish writers' union called on the government to release Jan-Jozef Lipski, a leader of the Workers' Defense Committee. Lipski was released on June 8. The fact that the Catholic Church and the Polish writers' union—two pillars of the government—are giving support to the dissidents indicates that the movement enjoys widespread popularity and support in the country.

Unfortunately, the dissident movement in Poland, as in Russia and the rest of Eastern Europe, is not a revolutionary movement. Though it includes honest and courageous fighters, it has failed to break with capitalism.

Two main currents have surfaced thus far. The smaller one, characterized by the right-wing emigre Independentist Alliance Program group (PPN), wants to turn Poland into a "Western style" bourgeois democracy. The second current, made up of well-known oppositionists like Kuron, Modzelewski and Michnik, is

(Continued on page 17)



Polish dissident Adam Michnik.

murder, nine dissident leaders associated with the Workers' Defense Committee were jailed. At least 30 students and intellectuals in Lodz, Radom, Cracow and Warsaw were arrested for taking part in protests over Pyjas' murder. And since May 22, 60 workers at the Ursus tractor works outside Warsaw have been arrested.

Behind the repression in Poland are two inter-related factors: a serious economic crisis, and the government's fear of the working class.

The Polish economy is collapsing under the weight of stagnating production, enormous shortages and a huge and growing foreign debt. The situation is and has been most serious in agriculture. Last summer, in an attempt to deal with its problems, the Polish government announced sharp price increases, averaging 16 percent, with food prices to go up more than 50 percent. When the increases were announced, workers in the Warsaw suburbs struck, taking to the streets in violent clashes with the police. The movement spread fast. The strikes threatened to repeat the full-scale working class rebellion of December, 1970-January, 1971, when Polish workers successfully fought similar increases and brought down the Gomulka government. To avoid a similar fate, the government of Edward Gierck backed down. The price increases were rolled back within 24 hours.

Unable to generate additional investment capital by making the workers pay more, the Polish government has had to borrow heavily

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EDITORIALS

Defend Gay Rights!

On June 8, voters in Dade County, Florida, repealed an ordinance which outlawed discrimination against homosexuals in employment, housing and public accommodation. The Dade County vote, the culmination of months of reactionary propaganda by Anita Bryant's "Save Our Children, Inc.," represents a setback for gay people and the working class as a whole.

That the Florida vote was a defeat for gays is obvious. Bryant's well-financed hate crusade is part of a general attack on homosexuals and gay rights across the country. But that the vote is a defeat for the entire working class and all oppressed people is, unfortunately, less clear and less well understood.

Anita Bryant's anti-gay campaign and the Dade County vote occur in a broader context. Right now, the ruling class is chipping away at working class gains and rights across a broad front—inflation, rising taxes, layoffs, poor medical care, rotten housing and rotting cities are all ways that the ruling class makes the working class pay for capitalism's ills. Today, the capitalists do not want a head-on confrontation with the entire working class. Their methods are more devious. They are striking first and hardest at the more vulnerable sections of the working class: women, gays, Blacks, Latins, undocumented workers, welfare recipients, etc. The ruling class hopes to slowly weaken the working class as

a whole, softening it up for larger attacks in the future.

One of the capitalists' favorite weapons is to weaken the working class by dividing it. In particular, the ruling class is trying to stir up strong sexual and racial prejudices. By pitting Black against white, male against female, U.S. born against foreign born, etc., the capitalists hope to prevent a unified response to their attacks. They know that a divided working class will be an easier target to attack in the future.

It is not an accident that gays are now a focus of this ruling class campaign. Gays are one of the most unpopular, misunderstood, feared, hated and oppressed groups in capitalist society. Most straight people are infected with reactionary nonsense about homosexuality and gay people. Even many highly class conscious individuals who reject racism and sexist attitudes regarding women accept the bourgeois lie that gays are "perverted," "abnormal," and "diseased."

This prejudice makes it relatively easy for reactionaries like Anita Bryant to build a strong base for a right-wing movement. Behind calls to defend "family," "morality," "religion" and the "American way of life," Bryant and her ruling class backers have mobilized a mass base for attacks on gays. But Bryant's movement—conservative, racist and sexist to the core—is also a base for assaults on all oppressed groups. For

this movement, today's attacks on gays are only the first stage of attacks on the entire working class.

It is not surprising that Anita Bryant—self-proclaimed champion of "God, Country and Family"—is also against abortions and the women's rights struggle in general, opposes labor unions and sells herself to the reactionary citrus growers as an advertisement for their product.

Bryant's crusade against homosexuals is a threat to the entire working class. Her planned nationwide campaign must be stopped. Fortunately, one result of the Dade County vote has been the revival of the gay liberation movement. In New York and San Francisco, immediately following the news of the Dade County defeat, thousands of people took to the streets in protest. At a speaking engagement in Chicago on June 14, Bryant was met by over 4,000 angry demonstrators. In Houston on June 16, over 10,000 people turned out to protest Bryant's appearance. And on June 26, to mark Gay Pride Week, hundreds of thousands marched in cities across the country, including well over 50,000 in both San Francisco and New York City.

Revolutionaries must actively intervene to build this struggle. There are three central tasks. First, we must fight for militant tactics inside the gay rights movement. Militant mass mobilizations, including confrontations with the Anita Bryant reactionaries, must win out over the

approach of the conservative, pro-Democratic Party forces. Second, the oppression of gays must be linked to that of other oppressed groups—women, Blacks, Latins, etc. The aim must be to build a united movement which clearly understands the nature of capitalist oppression and the ruling class's divide and rule strategy. Finally, revolutionaries must make clear that true gay liberation—the smashing of capitalism's reactionary and oppressive sexual yoke—can only be won through socialist revolution. Revolutionaries must take this message into every gay rights coalition and demonstration.

The defense of gays and gay rights is the defense of the entire working class. This fact must be carefully explained to the working class as a whole. A call to take up the struggle for gay rights must be taken into the trade unions. And most importantly, the message that gays are not "sick" and their oppression must be fought, must be hammered away at, time and again, given the strong anti-gay prejudice which exists. If straight workers stand by and allow the attacks on their gay brothers and sisters to go unanswered and unopposed, they are only setting themselves up for bigger attacks in the future.

**Defend Gay Rights!
Build a Militant Movement!
Fight All Capitalist Oppression!
Gay Liberation Through
Socialist Revolution!**

Supreme Court's Right-Wing Rulings

The Supreme Court is systematically wiping out the legal gains which the masses of oppressed people won in the struggles of the 1960s. The democratic rights of Blacks, women, gays, Latins and labor are being undermined and destroyed outright in a string of reactionary court decisions. A look at just a few of the most recent rulings makes the growing trend clear.

•On April 20 of this year, the Supreme Court ruled that schools are free to deal out physical punishments to students.

•On May 16, it upheld a Missouri law that allows cops to shoot to kill any person running to avoid arrest, if that person is a felony suspect.

•In late May, the Supreme Court ruled that states may deny unemployment benefits to striking workers and to workers laid off because of a strike in a related industry—even if these workers are not part of the strike. This is designed to pit employed workers against striking workers, and to undermine the ability of all workers to strike.

•On May 31, the Court approved company policies which take away years of accumulated seniority from workers who gain access to jobs they had been denied through years of racial and sexual discrimination.

•On June 20, it backed the Carter Administration's ruling that state governments must deny benefits to children under ADC if the father is unemployed because of a strike or

other "misconduct."

•On the same day, it ruled that public hospitals need not perform abortions, and that states need not pay for them under Medicaid, unless the life of the mother is in danger.

•These recent decisions follow on the heels of last year's reactionary ruling which reinstated the death penalty. The Supreme Court struck down the death penalty in 1972. At that time it admitted that capital punishment in the U.S. is used largely against Blacks, other minorities, dissidents and the working class. Yet on July 2 of last year, the Court reversed itself and gave the go-ahead to resume executions.

These Supreme Court rulings are a significant danger to the working class. They are a signal to the reactionary state legislatures, Congress and the Administration that they can step up the attacks on youth, the oppressed and the working class in general, with the Court's blessings. And the rulings themselves chip away, little by little, at workers' rights won through years of struggle. These rights—like the right to strike—are precisely those that workers will need to defend themselves from future capitalist attacks.

When the masses organize movements to fight for their democratic rights, the capitalists grant concessions to keep these movements within the boundaries of capitalism. The capitalists do this because they want the oppressed to believe that capital-

ism can "overcome its faults." The ruling class wants people to believe that capitalism can become more democratic over time.

With the decline of these movements, the Court has shifted its tactics. Now, rather than granting concessions to co-opt militant movements and to try to prevent them from becoming revolutionary, the Court is striking out hard at the gains these movements won.

The Supreme Court rulings show why the working class has to organize a movement to fight back. As long as the working class remains disorganized, the capitalist government will use this period to strength-

en its hand. It will step up the attacks on workers' rights and living standards. It will press to take away from the workers the tools they will need to fight back against the increasing attacks that lie ahead. And it will try to weaken the entire working class by attacking the most oppressed first and hardest—Blacks and Latins, women and gays, undocumented and unemployed workers, etc. If allowed to continue unchallenged, the capitalists will launch a full-scale offensive, driving workers' living standards back to depression-like conditions. The working class must act now and defeat this offensive before it grows any stronger. □

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Prison Struggle

Dear Torch-L

On April 20 the struggle began to control unit at sparked by our food. Guards into the food tray of cake.

But as always drop from the a longer or s Prisoners in much like pr units of all o prisons. We a for over 23 h week, and fo weekends and in the cells is bad. We are r educational o in the general in our cells by through a slo

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Dear Torch-L

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Abortion w Many stat enacted crim abortions.

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Right on, v taking her ow hands, making carrying it o allows us so l lives, it is impo being taken, v struggle of all own lives. M.L.

Detroit

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Prisoner Writes on Struggle at Somers Prison

Dear Torch-La Antorcha:

On April 26 another phase of the struggle began here in F-Block, the control unit at Somers Prison. It was sparked by guards tampering with our food. Guards were seen spitting into the food and breathing over a tray of cake. That was the spark.

But as always, protests do not just drop from the sky; they build up over a longer or shorter period of time. Prisoners in F-Block are "treated" much like prisoners in the control units of all other state and federal prisons. We are locked in our cages for over 23 hours a day during the week, and for the full 24 hours on weekends and holidays. The lighting in the cells is poor and ventilation is bad. We are not permitted to attend educational or vocational classes held in the general population. We are fed in our cells by guards pushing a tray through a slot in the cell door. The

little bit of time we are allowed out of our cells for exercise is regularly taken away by low-grade guards on whim. Prisoners have gone months at a time without being permitted outside in the fresh air.

All of us in F-Block, and indeed, in all other control units throughout the country, have been labelled dangerous prisoners. But dangerous to whom? Many, if not most, of us, are in control units because we have struggled for improvements in the conditions of life for prisoners. We protested the conditions in the general population and fought for a grievance committee. For that we were beaten with clubs and pick-axe handles and herded to the control unit, where many of us remain to this day. As a result of the last series of protests the repression has become greater. Now the prison managers are trying to move out all "protective custody" prisoners so they can repress the rest of us even more. It is clear to all observers that the tendency of the prison managers is to increase repression until they succeed in crushing the last spark of resistance. "Rehabilitation" to the prison managers is the creation of mindless, spiritless conformists who will permit themselves to be shit on without resisting. Freedom gained in such a way is no freedom at all. We cannot gain our freedom by bowing, hat-in-

hand, to the puppet prison managers. We must win our freedom through struggle. That is the only way.

The latest Torch was delivered today. We are following the struggles of the Walla Walla Brothers with much interest. We send them revolutionary greetings from another of the hell-holes of the capitalist overlords.

Mostly you use the word "prisoners" in the Torch. Other times you use the term "inmates." This is deserving of comradely criticism. We are not inmates. Calling a prisoner an inmate is like calling a Jew a kike, or a Black person a nigger, or an Italian a wop, or a Chinese a chink, or a Vietnamese a gook. The word inmates is part of the system's language used by the oppressors and exploiters. They call the receiving unit "quarantine." They call the prison a "Correctional Institution." They call guards "Correctional Officers." They have the prisons padded with all sorts of "Treatment Officers" whose job is to "treat" the inferior "inmates." The very word inmates says that there is something wrong with the person, that they are flawed or sick. Well, we are not sick or flawed. We are not inferior. This is not to excuse any crimes that we may have committed, but it is necessary to understand that we are natural products of a capitalist society in decay. And in the prisons, thanks to literature like the Torch and other papers, and through the teachings of such strong comrades like George Jackson, and in daily struggle, we are learning who we are and why we are in prison. In the enormous effort to communicate to others, to tell them of the reality of our experience in the capitalist prisons, we must not use the language of the oppressor. We must find words that more accurately define the reality within which we

struggle.

May I suggest that you sisters and brothers consider the above and perhaps make it a policy of the Torch to reject the language of the oppressor in this regard?

I would like to get in correspondence about the direction the prisoners' movement is taking, particularly the organization of prisoners and outside support. The Torch has been very good in putting the organization of prisoners forward. It is becoming more and more obvious and necessary that we must organize if we are to have any power to effect changes in the prison or out. Much talk, nationally, is around the formation of Prisoners Unions. I would like to explore this with you, if you like.

Revolutionary greetings to all of you. Stay strong.

Unity in struggle,
C.A., Connecticut State Prison
Somers, Connecticut

Editor's note: Brother C.A. is correct to point out that the word "inmate" is part of the official "correctional" jargon. As of this issue, we have discontinued its use. We thank Brother C.A. for his criticism.

USWA Local Takes Stand Against Apartheid Imports

Dear Torch-La Antorcha:

In your coverage of SCAA activities, you have emphasized the need to build support in the working class for the Black South African struggle.

An example of how this fight can be waged can be seen at Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co. in East Chicago, Indiana. Local 1011 of USWA has included as one of its local contract demands the following proposal:

"Youngstown Sheet and Tube (YST) not use or purchase products produced under non-union conditions in Southern Africa."

A further demand called for a monitoring system to ensure compliance by the steel company. Two years ago Local 1011 discovered that YST was using these products, although the amounts were not known.

The reasons given for this demand were that members' jobs were "threatened by the use of 'slave labor coke'" and that this was a move "in solidarity with the demand of Black African workers for union representation and majority rule." I have serious disagreements with these reasons since they represent the same protectionist and liberal demands that the Torch had correctly attacked in the past as road blocks to the victory of the Black workers' revolution in South Africa. However, the method is correct if it is used seriously and with revolutionary content. If steelworkers had been organized and many locals had included a demand of this sort, motivated by revolutionary solidarity with our Black brothers and sisters, instead of liberalism, it could have had a serious impact on the involvement of the steel companies in southern Africa.

Yours in struggle,
A Chicago reader

Woman Fights for Right to Abortion On-Demand

Dear Torch-La Antorcha:

Recently, Wendy Chasalow had an abortion over the objections of her boyfriend. Most readers will say, so what—this happens every day. But John Rothenberger had the nerve to take Chasalow to court to try to force her to have the baby. The New Jersey court said that Rothenberger had this "right" and issued a restraining order on Chasalow. Chasalow moved quickly and was on her way to New York before the court order arrived.

The issue of whether or not a woman has the right to determine her own life has been the subject of numerous court battles.

Abortion was legalized in 1970. Many state governments then enacted criminal laws prohibiting abortions.

In 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the state laws.

The states responded by enacting "consent laws," which required parental consent for women under 18 and the husband's consent for married women to have an abortion.

In July 1976, the Supreme Court again stepped in and struck down the consent laws, stating that "the constitutional right to privacy encompassed the right of a woman to decide whether or not to bear a child."

Right on, Wendy Chasalow, for taking her own life into her own hands, making her own decision and carrying it out. When capitalism allows us so little control over our lives, it is important to see this action being taken, which strengthens the struggle of all women to control their own lives.

M.L.
Detroit

Woman Describes Beatings at Ohio Prison

Dear Torch-La Antorcha:

I am writing this letter on the conditions at the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville, Ohio. I am and have been held in an area that is known as Administrative Isolation (AI). I have been in AI since July 6, 1976. I was put into AI because a matron had threatened me and told me that if I thought I was big enough to make her shut up then try it, so I did.

The AI area has six cells, one shower and a bullpen. We are allowed to shower twice a week and come out of our cells twice a week to exercise for one hour apiece and if the weather is good, we may exercise outside in an enclosed area. Otherwise we are not allowed out of our cells.

There is a massive amount of brutality here, inflicted on the women who stand up for themselves by the guards.

On January 20, 1977, a fire was ignited back here and I, along with Shirley Keller, was taken out of our cells and placed in different cells while our cells were stripped. I was made to strip while the male guards were walking up and down the range.

The guards maced and attacked

Shirley Keller and ripped her clothes off and handcuffed her. They pushed her down on her hands and held her and watched while the nurse checked her vaginal and anal area, while she was on her menstrual. Then they put her in her cell.

I was told that I would have to be checked by the nurse, so I told them that I would walk and I would not touch them first. Well, when they came into the bullpen to get me a guard went to hit me so I tagged him first. All the guards then jumped in and handcuffed me and pushed me down on my hands and held me and watched while I was being checked by the nurse. I was also on my period.

After that I was placed in a stripped cell and was made to sleep on the steel 20 days without a mattress. We couldn't come out of our cells for anything. We were given toothbrushes with the handles cut off.

Please print this in your paper so that people can read about how we are treated.

In struggle,
C.F.
Ohio Reformatory for Women
Marysville, Ohio

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Detroit 1967...

(Continued from page 2)
quarters of the total damage. Roughly 18,000 police and troops were needed to put the rebellion down.

After the rebellion, the ruling class began immediately to organize its forces to regain control of the country. In the months following the summer rebellions, the bourgeoisie took steps to strengthen its support



Martyr of 1967 rebellion.

among the businessmen and middle class layers in the Black communities across the country. The first step was to funnel money into the hands of this layer through small business

loans, affirmative action and poverty programs. The second step was to create a Black political leadership in the Democratic Party and the labor movement under the thumb of the establishment. "Trustworthy" Blacks were allowed to hold offices in cities across the country.

Once the ruling class had bought the support of the Black middle class and petty bourgeoisie, it began a campaign to destroy the revolutionary wing of the Black movement. The FBI and local police attacked all militant Black organizations. Thousands of militant and revolutionary Black leaders across the country were harassed, jailed or killed by the pigs.

The whole strategy paid off for the ruling class. By the early 1970s the Black movement had been split up and bought off. The revolutionary wing of the movement had been crushed. Now, 10 years after the rebellions, the cities across the country are the same as or worse than in 1967: skyrocketing unemployment, especially among Black youth, lack of housing, recreation and educational facilities, and brutal police repression.

LESSONS OF STRUGGLE

The urban rebellions of the '60s, particularly the Newark and Detroit rebellions, demonstrated the potential power of the working class. Even though the rebellions were almost exclusively limited to Black people, and even though the rebels were largely unorganized, they managed to threaten the capitalists' control of major urban centers. If the working class were united and organized, the power shown by the rebellions of the '60s would be magnified a million times.

Gay Liberation...

(Continued from page 8)
oppressed nationalities, including the small ones, up to and including the right to secede from Russia and establish an independent nation. Only in this way could the revolutionary proletariat prove that they would not maintain the oppression of non-Russian nationalities. And only in this way could the proletariat win these people, through struggle, to support the workers' government.

By winning the support of the oppressed masses, the revolutionary party does more than just eliminate divisions in the working class. It also taps the tremendous hatred of oppression that exists among the most oppressed sectors of the population. The elemental fury of the Russian peasants and the violent hatred of the oppressed nationalities had for Tsarist Russia were crucial in tearing to pieces first Tsarism and then the Provisional Government in 1917.

To overthrow capitalism and establish socialism, revolutionaries must understand these lessons. The revolutionary party must champion the liberation of all oppressed groups. This is necessary not only to win the confidence of the oppressed and unite them behind the party, but also to evoke the revolutionary passions that now lie dormant in the oppressed people. Revolutionaries strive to fan these flames and unite them in a tremendous conflagration that will burn capitalism to the ground.

The method of the SL is a repudiation of this entire approach. To the SL, specially oppressed groups are an "obstacle" to united class struggle.

The other side of the question—the possibility of awakening the passions of the oppressed and directing it against capitalism—does not exist for them. In the case of gays, at least, the SL is consistent. Since the oppression of gays is an obstacle to united class struggle, the SL wishes to eliminate this obstacle. But as their public closet rule shows, the SL wants to eliminate the obstacle by eliminating gays and their struggle from public view. This is the first step to eliminating the gay struggle altogether.

Today, in response to the Dade County referendum, the gay liberation movement is reviving. At present, its leadership is middle class, its politics are liberal and its tactics are moderate. What should the response of revolutionaries be?

Should they dismiss the struggle as secondary, slander it as "lifestyle" and tell the oppressed that they should hide, return to the closet in the interest of not antagonizing straight workers? Or should they encourage their struggle, fight for a revolutionary line and for maximum unity among all oppressed groups? Should they limit the struggle to one of equal rights, scoff at the struggle for gay liberation and leave the leadership in the hands of the liberals? Or should they fight against all aspects of gay oppression, explain that only socialism can bring about gay liberation, and fight for revolutionary leadership? We think the issue is clear. No doubt the SL will call this "capitulation." □

Unfortunately, white workers were not prepared to join the Black rebels in the inner cities. Conservative and racist in their majority, the white workers hated and feared the Black struggle, and by and large supported the ruling class in their efforts to crush it. This hostility of the white workers divided the working class and left the Black workers fighting the capitalists by themselves. Given this disunity within the working class, it was impossible for Black people to win.

In the '60s, U.S. capitalism was nearing the end of a long period of relative prosperity. This relative prosperity, which left the basic conditions of the Black masses little better than before, was the basis for the conservatism of the white workers.

Today, this prosperity has long

gone. The post-war boom has given way to stagnation, which is deepening into a world economic crisis. The return to crisis conditions will lay the material basis for a radicalization of white workers, for an overcoming of their racial prejudices and for a united class struggle against the capitalists. This unity can be the basis of a revolutionary struggle against U.S. and international capitalism.

The struggle which burst into flames in 1967 must be rebuilt on a united class-wide basis. Ten years of capitalist exploitation and misery have passed since the flames of rebellion were smothered. But the memory and lessons of 1967 remain to prove that the masses of oppressed people are fully capable of revolutionary struggle and sacrifice in the cause of ending all oppression. □

Smash the Nazis...

(Continued from page 1)

percent of the residents are survivors of World War II Nazi concentration camps. The Klan is stepping up its public recruitment drives nationwide. According to the B'nai B'rith, Klan membership has quadrupled since 1970, going from roughly 2,500 to between 8,000 and 10,000.

This increase in Klan and Nazi activity is the result of a society in crisis. Capitalism is increasingly unable to satisfy people's basic needs for jobs, decent housing, a good education, etc. In this situation capitalism more and more tries to make workers of different races and nationalities fight it out for the crumbs from the capitalist table. The Nazis and the Klan are aware that as the economic situation gets worse, they stand a better chance of winning demoralized layers of society to their racist and fascist program. This is why they have been steadily stepping up their activities in recent years.

Today, the ruling class pretends that it only "tolerates," or sometimes even "opposes," the fascists. But as times get worse, the capitalists will turn to the fascists more and more as the shock troops for major assaults on the democratic rights of Blacks, Latins, Jews, gays and the working class as a whole. The ruling class will also increasingly encourage the fascists to attack the labor movement head-on. This is why the capitalists allow the Nazis and the Klan to exist today, and why these thugs will get more and more support and encouragement in the future.

The working class cannot expect the capitalist cops and courts to stop the fascists. To smash the fascist threat, the working class must organize its own forces. The fascists must

not be allowed to roam the streets at will. They must be smashed today, before they can expand their influence and organize their forces. The actions of the July 4 weekend, and the other actions of recent months, are a good beginning. They must be expanded and organized into a nationwide anti-fascist movement.

To succeed in the fight against the fascists, it is important to build strong unity among militant anti-fascist forces. This is particularly urgent today, since the power of the organized trade unions has not yet been won to the fight. We must work to bring the unions into the anti-fascist struggle.

But even without organized trade union support, victory can be won today through unity. The fascist forces are still weak, only just beginning to grow. A united campaign by all left organizations could stop the Nazis and the Klan before they get moving. The RSL urges all genuinely anti-fascist organizations to join forces in such a united front struggle based on a program of smashing the fascists wherever they appear, and organizing to bring the labor movement into the fight.

A start toward such a united front effort has been made in Chicago with the formation of the Workers' Defense Coalition. The Coalition has 14 affiliated organizations, including the RSL and the Solidarity Committee Against Apartheid. This is the coalition behind the anti-Nazi mobilizations in Skokie. The RSL urges all left, trade union and anti-fascist organizations, as well as individual militants in the Chicago area, to join this Coalition and make it the pattern for similar united fronts across the country. □

RSL Fund Drive Nears \$15,000 Goal

The RSL drive to raise \$15,000 is now scheduled to end August 1. The closing date of the drive has been moved back two weeks to allow readers of the *Torch-La Antorcha* a final opportunity to make a contribution. A letter appealing for funds has just been sent to all *Torch-La Antorcha* subscribers.

As of July 1, \$13,552, or 90 percent of the final goal, had been raised. As generous response by all *Torch-La Antorcha* readers is now needed to make the drive a success.

The RSL is in particular need of money at this time to expand the work of the Solidarity Committee Against Apartheid. After the outbreak of massive rebellions in South Africa last year, the RSL launched chapters of SCAA in Detroit, Chicago and New York. SCAA chapters have built pickets and demonstrations, shown the film *Last Grave at Dimbaza*, and organized in the communities, factories and unions.

The need to oppose U.S. intervention in southern Africa and to build solidarity with the struggle to smash apartheid will grow in the coming year. It is crucial that we have the resources to expand this important area of our work.

Make checks payable to the *Torch-La Antorcha* or RSL. Send to: P.O. Box 562, New York, NY 10036.

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Women Prisoners . . .

(Continued from page 7)

successfully meet feminine role expectations." Women prisoners often work as housemaids or cooks for the families of prison superintendents. It is an accepted custom that household servants come along with prison administrative positions—to cook, clean, wash and iron for the administrators.

Just as slave mothers were separated from their children, the majority of women in prison today are cut off from their children. Eighty percent of imprisoned women are mothers. No jails or prisons have child care facilities. Nearly 40 percent of prison mothers permanently lose custody of their daughters and sons.

The violence towards women as mothers is often complete and final. Marilyn Isabel, an ex-convict from the Dwight Correctional Institute in Illinois, comments:

"There's one universal problem: to organize around and that's all these strange hysterectomy (sterilization through removal of the uterus) problems that come up, always on Third World women. People who never have complained about any kind of vaginal infection or having any abnormality as far as their periods are concerned, suddenly the doctor says you have to get a hysterectomy. It happens often. And the frightening thing is that it usually happens on young people."

Where women do not have their own institutions—for example, in county jails—they generally fare still worse than in women's prisons. County jails generally offer women

no exercise yards, no day rooms, no dining halls and no vocational programs. "School" courses for the women often end with the eighth grade. Women inmates in county jails are idle 75 percent to 100 percent of the time.

WOMEN PRISONERS FIGHT BACK

Organization and struggle by women challenges the whole image of women which the capitalists push to help keep their society stable. For this reason the organized struggles of women prisoners rarely get publicity.

At the Federal Reformatory for Women at Alderson, following the deaths of prisoners at Attica, the women held a memorial service for their slain brothers. Following the service and a march around the prison grounds, about 130 Black, Latin and white women occupied the old garment factory on the prison grounds and drew up 42 demands to present to the administration. Representatives from various "cottages" sat in on the sessions. After the first day, some 500 women out of the 600 prison population stopped work and school for four days to support the demands.

In December 1970, prisoners at the old Women's House of Detention in New York refused to be locked in their cells as a protest against the conditions they were living in. They were sprayed with water hoses and forcibly locked in their cells for nearly two weeks as punishment for protesting.

In fact, resistance in women's

prisons is a regular occurrence. Cutting in to crush resistance before it really gets going is important to prison officials. One woman prisoner described the situation:

"There were about 10 or 15 of us who'd been in a whole bunch of months and there were a lot of very tight relationships forming. We started hassling them about food and hassling them about the medical staff and not having a dentist and writing the warden every day. And then when those relationships became more than just a basis to have arguments among ourselves, then they broke up every tight relationship. They kept switching people all over the place to try to keep us apart and kept us in double locks. Once they saw those relationships could form a basis for unity, then they really came down on them."

As everyday conditions of life continue to fall apart for millions of oppressed women in this country, the oppression will breed more struggle. The capitalists will be faced with war against their need for "womanhood" to play a conservatizing role in the working class. The arrest and imprisonment of "unadjusted" women will grow.

Seniority Pact . . .

(Continued from page 3)

and to pit women workers against men workers. The ruling class, with the full cooperation of the reactionary trade union bureaucracy, recognized that a careful strategy could prevent growing mass struggles from taking a revolutionary direction, and at the same time pit different segments of the working class against each other.

Now that the mass struggles of the '60s have temporarily ebbed, the government no longer needs to keep up the appearance of siding with the specially oppressed workers. The ruling class is now trampling the interests of the specially oppressed and taking away the few concessions which had been granted.

The Supreme Court's action in legalizing racist seniority systems must be opposed. The gains which Black, Latin and women workers have won through direct mass struggle or through the courts and the EEOC must be defended from the new government attacks represented by this Court ruling. The workers at T.I.M.E. should be immediately advanced into the over-the-road jobs and guaranteed full seniority in these new jobs. Plant- or company-wide seniority must be counterposed to separate seniority lists which are used to perpetuate discrimination.

At the same time, it is a serious mistake for workers to take the unions to court and allow the government to have control over job upgrading. Seniority is one of the bedrocks of the unions. If the task of reforming the unions is handed over to the capital-

ist government, the government will try to destroy seniority completely and force a return to the so-called "merit" system. The bosses would like nothing better than to have full power to decide at their whim who gets promoted and who gets laid off. This would give management a weapon to strip all workers of whatever protection and dignity they presently have on the job. The most oppressed workers, along with militants fighting for workers' rights, would be hardest hit by a return to this kind of system. Whatever the problems and injustices of the seniority system, to eliminate it and give the bosses the right to promote and fire workers at their whim would be far worse.

The struggle to end discrimination and upgrade working conditions for specially oppressed workers must be waged first and foremost by organizing within the working class and trade union movement. Any reliance on the capitalists, in particular on the false promises of the liberals, will always lead in the end to defeat. As the movements of the '60s showed, reforms are won through struggle. Oppressed groups, and the working class in general, will be granted concessions only as a result of their fighting strength. The key to this strength is uniting all sections of the working class in a common fight. Militants and revolutionaries must begin now to organize and link these fights to halt the capitalist offensive and defend and extend the gains won through past struggles. □

Polish Repression . . .

(Continued from page 13)

struggling to reform state capitalism into a less repressive, but still state-capitalist, system. Both currents have tremendous illusions in capitalism—one in the Western variety; the other, in the Eastern. For this reason, the two currents are really the same in essential respects. Both advocate a liberal strategy, working for reforms within state capitalism. For example, nearly all the oppositionists look with favor on Dubcek's 1968 liberalization in Czechoslovakia, a reform effort which was put down with Russian tanks.

Neither current is for the revolutionary overthrow of state capitalism by the working class. Most of these dissidents openly reject Marxism and make their opposition to proletarian revolution explicit. The Workers' Defense Committee, for example, issued a statement demanding the release of all persons arrested. It stated: "It is necessary... to maintain social peace and to prevent the development of events no one can foresee and no one can control." What the Committee is really saying is that it wants reforms to prevent bigger social upheavals—and the threat of revolution.

The workers in Poland, in the other Eastern European countries and throughout the world must vigorously defend the jailed dissidents from their bourgeois states. At the same time, it is important to understand that regardless of how brave, even militant, the middle class dissidents may be, their strategies are politically bankrupt. It is important for the workers of Poland and the

other state-capitalist countries to recognize that following the leadership of the middle class can only lead to defeat. The only road forward is to overthrow state capitalism and build a socialist society—a society actually run and controlled by the working class.

Today, the key task in Russia and Eastern Europe is to build Leninist vanguard parties. This will not be easy, given the totalitarian nature of these societies. These parties will have to operate under conditions of illegality; tightly organized, disciplined and highly professional. They will have to build their strength through underground work, preparing to organize and lead the workers' struggles whenever they break out into the open. A revolutionary working class leadership represents the only alternative to continued capitalist exploitation—no matter what its label. □

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