

Women and Revolution



Journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League

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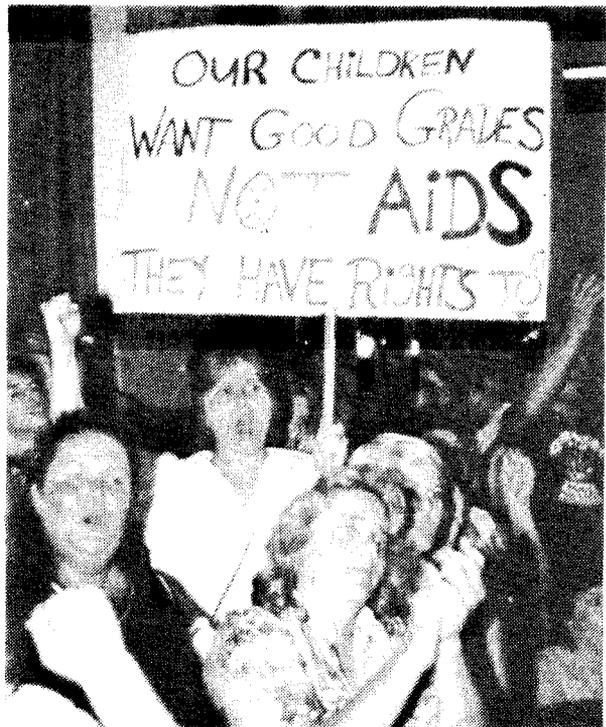
Anti-Sex Bigots Target Everybody

Reagan and AIDS



UPI

AIDS hysteria fuels Moral Majority bigotry. Left: racist demagogue Jerry Falwell in tête-à-tête with Reagan. Right: Queens, New York parents kept thousands of kids out of school to prevent lone AIDS child from attending.



Pozarik/Gamma-Liaison

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Miss AmeriKKKa?

Once again, it seems the Miss America racket is having trouble maintaining its squeaky clean, "wholesome" image. Just over a year ago pageant officials obscenely stripped the first black Miss America, Vanessa Williams, of her title when *Penthouse* ran some nude photos of the beauty queen together with a white woman. "Viva Vanessa!" we said at the time, noting that the vindictive attacks on her were anti-sex, anti-woman and anti-black. Pageant officials predictably played it safe with Miss America 1985, opting for a Moral Majorityite daughter of a Mormon minister from Utah, whose hobby is collecting bars of soap. And they no



**Miss Mississippi:
symbol of
Reagan's racist
America.**

doubt thought they had an equally "wholesome" successor in 1986. But in selecting Miss Mississippi as the way to avoid the Vanessa problem, they got more than they bargained for. The rhinestone tiara had barely been placed on the honey blonde head of Susan Akin when stories began to circulate about the implication of her father and grandfather in one of this country's most infamous racist murders: the 1964 Ku Klux Klan killings of the three civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney.

Susan Akin may well be no more and no less than her carefully-packaged image suggests: a life-size barbie doll who began her beauty contest career at the age of four and whose big confessions in life are that she puts stickum on her ass to keep her bathing suit from riding up and she used to wrap her thighs in Saran Wrap at night—apparently a masochistic weight-loss technique. For many, though, the recent revelations about her "diddy" and late grandfather bitterly recall the victims of Jim Crow racism. *Newsweek* (7 October 1985) reported that:

"Susan's father, Earl Akin, was accused of refusing to give information on the crime, but never indicted. Her late grandfather, Bernard Akin, was indicted for aiding the conspirators, but acquitted in 1967. During the trial, Bernard Akin was identified as a member of the Ku Klux Klan and owner of the mobile-home business used as a Klan rendezvous on the night of the murders."

We do not agree that the sins of the fathers should be visited upon the children, so we do not condemn Susan Akin for the crimes of her father and grandfather. It seems, though, that this Southern belle does have a few views of the world beyond the unlimited uses of Saran Wrap: after her coronation, "Miss Mississippi" stated she opposed "race-mixing": "I feel at this time intermixing could lead to more problems because we have a lot of marriage problems now—divorce. Intermixing cultures and things of that aspect could lead to divorces, which I don't like" (*New York Post*, 17 September 1985). Apparently, this is completely in keeping with all that Miss America is supposed to represent. These are, after all, the Reagan years of right-wing reaction, union-busting, racist terror and obscene Puritanism.

Akin's statements are not the abstract "I want to help mankind" views normally heard from a Miss America. Presumably her list of "cultures" that shouldn't mix includes Jews, Catholics, Hispanics, Asians, Italians, Indians and who knows what else (Poles? Czechs? Irish? How white is "white," anyhow?). But the poisonous core of Akin's remarks is directed against the still explosive issue of black-white relations: surely this daughter of the Deep South understands that even the mere rumor of a black man looking at a white woman has been enough to set loose the nightmarish lynch mobs to maim, murder and terrorize blacks throughout the South. The history of black struggle in this country has been centered on the fight for integration. Today American blacks identify with the black masses of South Africa so strongly precisely because they see in apartheid a magnified mirror image of their own oppression in racist America.

During the American civil rights movement of the '60s, simply trying to register blacks to vote met with violent resistance from Southern racists like the Klansmen who hung out around the Akins' mobile-home business. Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman

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Commission for Work Among Women**

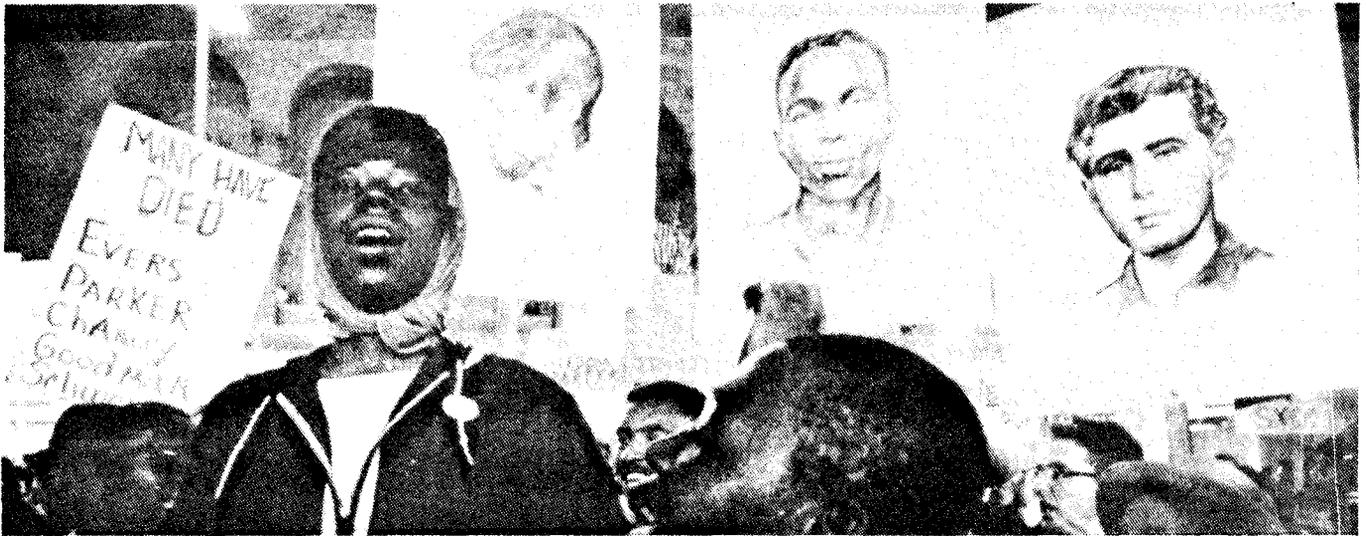
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Bob Adelman

Portraits of Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman, civil rights workers murdered by Mississippi KKK in 1964, raised by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic convention.

and James Chaney were participating in "Freedom Summer," the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project voter registration drive, when they were arrested on frame-up speeding charges in Philadelphia, Mississippi on June 21. Deputy sheriff Price of Neshoba County claimed he released the three youths at 10:00 p.m. that night; 44 days later, their bullet-riddled bodies were found in a nearby earthfill dam. The racists in blue and their brothers in white sheets made sure no murder charges were lodged. But largely because Schwerner and Goodman were white Northerners, the killings received nationwide attention. Five months later, 20 men, including the Neshoba County sheriff and his deputy, were charged with federal civil rights

violations—but only seven were eventually convicted.

The Miss America pageant prides itself on providing "young American womanhood" with a "wholesome role model." So, in the Reagan years it means that Vanessa Williams gets the boot while Susan Akin gets to keep her crown and scepter. Hardly surprising, and just another reflection of the moralist and racist rot of capitalist America. We certainly don't expect anything better from this hypocritical meat market; as we said in our article "Viva Vanessa!" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 360, 3 August 1984), the *Penthouse* interracial photos of Vanessa Williams did "a lot more for her and 'American womanhood' than anything that's happened in Atlantic City." ■



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Anti-Sex Bigots Target Everybody

Reagan and AIDS

AIDS—it's a terrible epidemic that so far has killed half of the poor victims that have contracted it. There have been over 14,700 cases of the disease in the United States; every six to ten months the number doubles. It's primarily young people who are dying: 90 percent of the victims are 49 or younger; almost half are in their '30s. Caused by a virus that destroys the body's immune system, almost all victims are dead within two years of diagnosis as their bodies are wracked by infections which they cannot fight. There's no cure and no treatment. But mushrooming far beyond the medical impact of AIDS is another, far more dangerous epidemic: fear and hysteria exploited by Reagan reaction as a springboard for sexual/social counterrevolution.

Gay men, who account for almost three-quarters of the victims, were the first targets. When incidents of AIDS were initially reported just over four years ago, Moral Majorityites rubbed their hands in glee: a disease that got gays, drug addicts and Haitians (since dropped from the high risk category)—all groups high on the White House's shit list. For Reagan, AIDS was better than the neutron bomb. White House aide Patrick Buchanan sounded the horn of sin and damnation: AIDS was "nature's retribution" on gays because "they have declared war upon nature." Now the cutting edge of reaction has moved to the schools where frenzied racist bigots collude to keep kids with AIDS out. With fear of a sexual Armageddon reported daily in the newspapers (the July 1985 cover of *Life* magazine read "Now No One Is Safe From AIDS," with a picture of a nice white family underneath), reaction-

aries have pounced upon AIDS as their banner in their war on sex, any kind of sex.

Behind the fear is the fact that modern medicine is still unable to deal with this tragic epidemic. Two years ago we ran an article on "AIDS and the 'Mortal Sin' Scam" (*Women and Revolution* No. 27, Winter 1983-84) which stated:

"It isn't surprising that such a paranoid, neurotic reaction to the victims of a truly terrible disease can be generated. In this deeply racist and homophobic society, AIDS hysteria compounds the already ingrained superstitions and prejudices encouraged by bourgeois society."

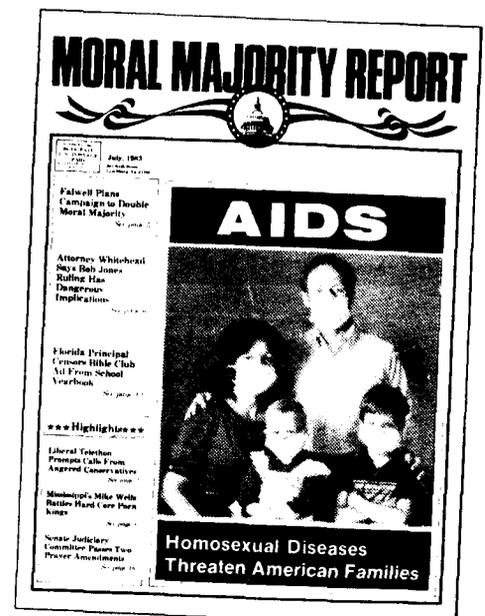
We do not have ready-made answers to the problem of disease and don't pretend to expertise where medical technology has so far failed. But as Marxists we seek to approach general social questions in a scientific and rational manner. And we fight for a society in which resources can be mobilized on the basis of social needs, not according to what the drug companies find profitable or what's left over after the trillion dollar war budget. To the Reagan reactionaries in the Moral Majority and others of that ilk, science and the principles of the Enlightenment are the devil's work. These inquisitors would like to roll back science, to breed fear, to engender the superstition and helpless terror of previous centuries when man felt himself entirely at the mercy of nature.

AIDS: The New Leprosy

Hysterical fear of a disease which cannot be transmitted by casual contact has engendered deep, howling discrimination against AIDS victims. Gays are



Ignorance, Fear and Loathing: crucifix-waving fanatics in NYC (left); Moral Majority rag (right).



treated like the rats in the bubonic plague-ridden Middle Ages. AIDS victims are the new lepers—shunned, outcast, fired from their jobs, denied housing and health and life insurance, even thrown out of home by their own families. Funeral directors won't embalm their bodies. Many dentists refuse to treat them. Nurses leave patients helplessly lying in their own excrement and refuse to help them eat when they are unable to feed themselves. Lambda Legal Defense Fund of New York reports cases where dying patients were refused permission to have visitors in the hospital.

All over the country, people won't go into restaurants where they think the waiters might be gay. In Los Angeles, a gay health center received three bomb threats. Its director has been threatened with death, while a woman employee was attacked by a carload of thugs who threw acid on her, burning her face, shoulder and arm. One of the attackers screamed, "Die, you AIDS faggots!" (*Time*, 23 September 1985).

In New York the impossible occurred: the IRT had an empty seat at rush hour. On it was spray-painted: "Did an AIDS patient sit here last?" (*New York Times*, 30 August 1985). The city houses AIDS patients with no place else to go in "secret" locations because neighbors went into convulsions at each attempt to open a nursing home for them. In Queens one man raved, "They will be ambulatory! They will be walking our streets!" (*New York Times*, 30 August 1985). In Stamford, Connecticut, 14 jurors asked to be dismissed from a case because the defendant had AIDS. The poor bastard hasn't a chance of getting off—he'll be convicted for having the disease.

In Florida, the local jail refused to imprison a convicted prostitute with AIDS. So the judge ordered her fitted with an electronic collar that notifies the police whenever she leaves her home. The city of San Antonio, Texas sent letters to all AIDS victims that they would face felony charges for having sex. In Houston, AIDS was a major issue in the recent mayoral election. The challenger, Louie Welch, a former mayor of the city, was supported by the "Straight Slate" and blurted out over an open television mike that one way to combat AIDS was to "shoot the queers" (*New York Times*, 5 November 1985). He later claimed that not knowing the mike was on, he had spoken in a moment of "levity."

The state of Colorado has a "secret" list of those who tested positive in the AIDS antibody test. The test, developed last spring to screen out blood infected with the AIDS virus from blood banks, is now being used by a whole range of private and governmental organizations to pinpoint potential AIDS victims. But the test—which gives a high proportion of "false positive" readings—means only that a person has at some point been exposed to the AIDS virus. Such a person may not even be a carrier, and has an unknown chance of contracting the disease. Nevertheless, the cities of Houston, Miami and Newark have either already enacted, or are about to do so, ordinances requiring testing of all food handlers for AIDS or for "communicable diseases," although there is no evidence that AIDS can be spread through food. San Francisco, for one, is considering such testing for all school employ-

ees. An editorial in the 18 October 1985 *Journal of the American Medical Association* advocated tracing the sexual partners of all AIDS patients—a plan under way in San Francisco and Oregon and under consideration by several other states. As an ACLU lawyer commented, "Frankly, it sounds like an Orwellian nightmare: the government keeping a list of sexually active Americans" (*Washington Post*, 18 October 1985).

The Red Cross keeps a list of all those whose blood was rejected for whatever reason—and its current policy is not to notify those who are positive for AIDS unless this has been confirmed by another test. But the names go on a computerized list, notoriously unconfidential. It's blacklisting, and with some insurance companies already screening out potential AIDS victims from their rolls, the implications are sinister.

In San Francisco, four nurses filed a complaint with the state board of health that they were disciplined for wearing gloves and masks when treating AIDS patients.

Robert/Sipa



**AIDS victim
Rock
Hudson.**

Although gloves and masks are not necessary in treating AIDS patients, they won their complaint. The nurses' well-publicized campaign for this medically unjustified measure included accusations of patients screwing in the wards (an act for which doctors and nurses are notorious). No health care worker has ever contracted AIDS on the job, and only three—two in the U.S., one in Britain—have tested positive for the AIDS antibody after accidental cuts or needle sticks with infected blood. Yet, while SF hospitals are full to overflowing with AIDS victims, doctors and nurses disappear when they are admitted. Such anti-gay bigots—purveyors of Catholic moralism, not modern medicine—should find themselves a new profession. They're like the army officer who says, "I resign in case of war."

California Republican Representative William Dannemeyer, who ran for office on a fundamentalist platform "God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve," announced plans to introduce federal legislation to legalize the vilification of AIDS victims and the discrimination against homosexuals generally. He proposes to make it a criminal offense for high-risk individuals to donate blood, prohibit AIDS patients

from working in the health care profession, prohibit "discrimination" against health care workers who refuse to treat AIDS patients, withhold federal funds from any city that doesn't close down the bathhouses, and pressure school districts receiving federal funds to bar children with AIDS from attending school. Working with Dannemeyer as his special consultant on AIDS is one Paul Cameron, author of the pamphlet "Murder, Violence, Homosexuality," who was expelled in 1983 from the American Psychological Association on "findings of ethical violations" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 August 1985). Dannemeyer is a ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on health and the environment, which has jurisdiction over AIDS research and financing.

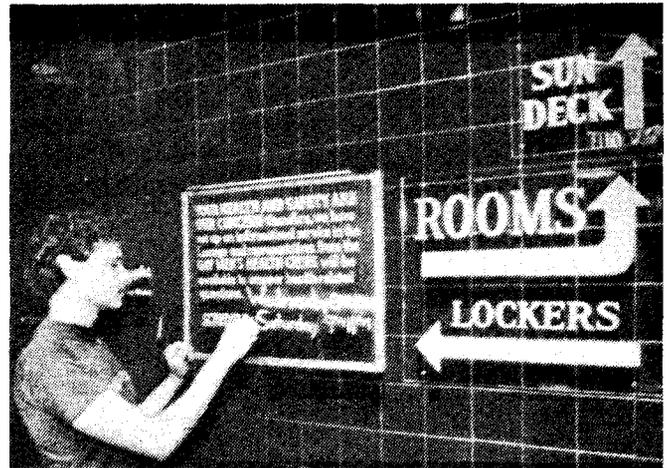
If there's any good news, it's thanks to Rock Hudson. The popular actor's courageous announcement that he had AIDS helped get the dread disease "out of the closet" and boosted publicity and funding efforts on behalf of AIDS victims. Now that Hudson is dead, it turns out that the FBI had maintained files on him for 20 years because of his homosexuality.

Reaction in the Schools: The Cutting Edge

Since 1981 there have been 204 (as of October 14) children under 13 in this country with diagnosed cases of AIDS, the majority tragically infected in the womb from the mothers' blood; most of them have died by the age of two. The howling social reaction on the AIDS question is currently focused on their attendance at school. Polls have shown that from one-third to one-half of people asked believed it possible to catch AIDS from kids that bite, scratch, share food and eating utensils, pee on toilet seats. Nobody has ever caught the virus in this manner. Yet all over the country—from Dade County, Florida to Carmel, California—children with AIDS have been barred from attending public school. In Queens, 11,000 boycotted classes on the first day of school, kept home by parents in protest over one second-grader said to have AIDS being allowed to attend school. A ranting crowd of 500 at one parents' meeting roared with approval when a school board member asked them to "join us in standing in the schoolhouse door" to bar AIDS victims. It's no accident that the official used the very words of George Wallace when he spearheaded racist reaction against integration of Alabama schools.

Parents threatened to blockade all the schools in the district, the city's largest. One parent said, "If the city can have Harvey Milk High School for gays, it can have a school for AIDS victims" (*Daily News*, 20 September 1985). The Queens school board voted to exclude from school not only children with AIDS, but children whose parents (or in one case a mother's boyfriend) have the disease. On October 9 the National Education Association came out for testing of students and teachers for exposure to AIDS when there was "reasonable cause" to suspect an infection. It's a scheme guaranteed to qualitatively escalate the witchhunting of homosexuals, particularly in light of the Moral Majority's campaign to hound gay teachers out of work.

This fear of AIDS children spreading contagion is ironically, grossly backwards. One can't get the disease



Estrin/Newsday

Gay activists seek to educate bathhouse users about AIDS.

by being in a room with AIDS victims; but *they can die* by being in a room with someone who's sick with something else—an AIDS kid's immune system can't fight off an infection. It's the AIDS child who's at risk from his loathsome fellow students, the children of the righteous. As Dr. Edward H. Reisner said in a letter to the *New York Times* (15 September 1985): "As every parent of school-age children knows, a classroom is a factory for every cold and contagious illness that a child may bring into it. We don't exclude infected children from school. But AIDS patients, for their own protection, should be kept out and educated at home just as other children with handicaps are now cared for." If children have AIDS, and if after examination their doctors don't object, they have the *right* to go to school. Kids with "pre-AIDS" (AIDS-Related Complex) whose doctors say okay *should* go to school.

This campaign to rid the schools of anyone and anything that deviates from the fundamentalist caricature of a human being distracts attention from the real problems of the schools. Why don't parents become hysterical over the fact that the government is slashing school funding? Why don't they scream and yell that the prisons that go by the name of schools don't teach kids anything? Or that sex education is virtually nonexistent—a little knowledge of biology right now would do everyone some good. If they're so worried about sanitation, why don't they insist that schools clean their bathrooms more often and stop sending the kids home with head lice?

Pentagon Purge

The most systematic witchhunt to date is being conducted in the U.S. armed forces. The Pentagon now intends to test not only all potential recruits, but all 2.1 million active military personnel. It has long been military policy to purge the armed forces of gays; the antibody test provides the Department of Defense with a prime vehicle. One gay sailor with AIDS, Brian Kinney, was thrown out of the Navy, without medical benefits, for homosexuality; his "defense lawyer" wouldn't even stay in the same room with him. Navy officials ruled that Kinney had enlisted fraudulently

since he was gay. In a cynical ploy staged to “reassure” those who fear coming forward, the Navy reversed its ruling and reinstated Kinney’s medical benefits four days before he died.

On October 28 the Pentagon reconfirmed its policy of automatically discharging anyone who acknowledges during the testing process homosexuality or drug use; a mere two days earlier a Department of Defense spokesman had announced that such acknowledgments would not be used to throw gays or drug users out. But the passion to purge won out over concern that a policy of automatic discharge would, to say the least, discourage openness about how the man or woman might have acquired antibody to the virus. At least those purged will receive honorable discharges, with full military benefits. But gays and drug users identified in other ways—such as pumping the names of sexual partners out of men reeling from the announcement that they may have contracted a fatal disease—may face dishonorable discharges, punitive action and full loss of benefits. Drug use or homosexuality can be grounds for court-martial, with fines or imprisonment.

Military personnel with active cases of AIDS will be discharged on grounds of medical disability or “for the convenience of the Government” (*New York Times*, 29 October 1985); those with antibody but no sign of illness may be reassigned to a new duty. By testing potential recruits the U.S. military hopes not only to purge the armed forces of gays, but also to avoid having to pay further medical bills for AIDS patients, which can run into hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Army is keeping a list of all recruits rejected for testing positive. Although officials say the list will be “confidential,” several health departments across the country have been offered names.

What Science Knows About AIDS

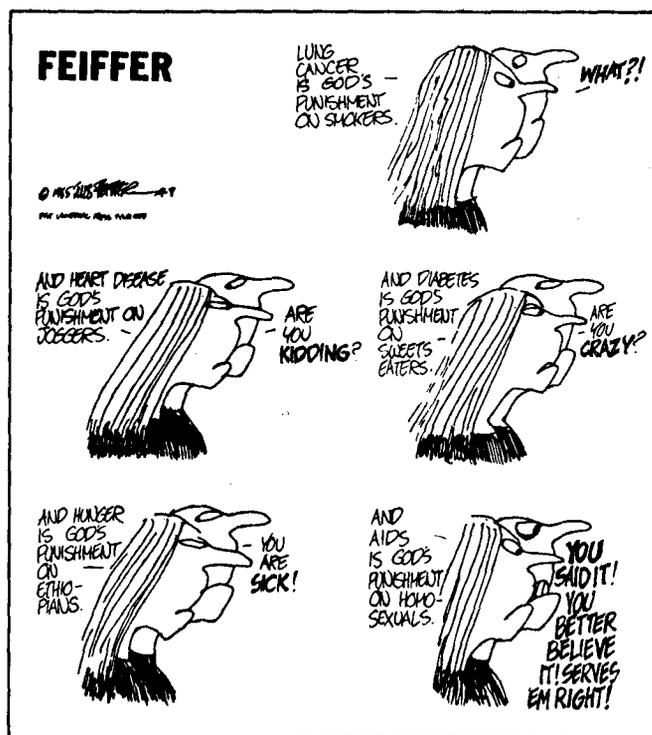
The AIDS virus (HTLV-III or LAV) is a retrovirus which mutates constantly, much like the influenza virus, but at a much faster rate. It kills by attacking the body’s immune system, specifically the T-cells, which are crucial in defending the body against disease. Victims thus die of a secondary, “opportunistic” infection, such as *pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia, or rare cancers such as Kaposi’s sarcoma. The Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control (CDC) narrowly define AIDS to include only those who have developed a secondary disease. There are, however, perhaps ten times that number who have a condition called AIDS-Related Complex (ARC) or “pre-AIDS.” Not all those infected with the virus get AIDS, but ARC can kill, too—some patients waste away; others die of brain damage evidently caused by the AIDS virus.

Nobody knows why some develop AIDS, some ARC, while others show no signs of illness at all. Some scientists think that an already weakened immune system—due to illness, malnutrition or some other factor—may precipitate contraction of AIDS once a person has been infected. If true, this would help explain why in Brazil and Belle Glade, Florida (the city with the highest per capita incidence of AIDS in the U.S.) AIDS is a disease of poverty, equally divided between men and women. In the United States 25

percent of the victims are black, which is twice the proportion of blacks in the population as a whole.

It’s pretty clear that AIDS is spread through direct contact with infected blood. It is believed that in order for a person to get it, he must first have a break in his skin allowing the virus to get into his bloodstream. That’s why intravenous drug users, hemophiliacs and people receiving blood transfusions are at high risk—though the U.S. supply of blood has recently been made qualitatively safer through testing to detect infected blood. In the case of gays, it is thought that semen, which carries the virus, transmits the disease during anal intercourse which can cause tears in the mucous membranes of the anal canal.

The evidence against casual transmission of AIDS is pretty good. In 12,000 documented cases, in families living with a patient for years—sharing bathrooms and eating utensils, with no special precautions—only sexual partners or infants born to infected mothers have shown any evidence of the disease. Just on an



empirical basis, if it were easy to catch, a lot more people would have it now. But it’s almost impossible for scientists to say that something will “never” happen. Yes, they have to say that there is a theoretical possibility that a person can contract AIDS through exposure to a victim’s tears or saliva. For example, if a child with AIDS cried, and somehow the tears got into a freshly bleeding cut in another child’s skin, or an AIDS victim bit another child, and if enough virus was present to cause an infection, it could “theoretically” happen. But the chances are extremely remote.

Of course, many people react with thoroughly understandable skepticism when told by government “experts” that something is safe. After all, that’s what they said about Three Mile Island and about the swine flu vaccine (the flu shot of several years ago) which

caused a spectacularly high number of "side effects" including paralysis. Distrust runs so high that some people have even speculated that the AIDS virus originated as part of a CIA experiment in biological warfare. The Cubans have accused the CIA and presented convincing evidence that the agency introduced a disease of pigs known as African swine fever to Cuba to kill Cuban pigs. Did swine fever mutate into AIDS and migrate to the U.S.? It is in fact not known how AIDS originated. It is much more probable that AIDS began in monkeys in Africa, where it mutated into a virus capable of infecting humans. Maybe it got into the U.S. through contaminated blood extorted under hideously unsanitary conditions from the impoverished, starving population of Haiti and imported here by New York profiteers.

A disease which appears to be AIDS has become epidemic in Central and Eastern Africa. Evidently the modes of transmission and people at high risk differ from what occurs in the U.S.; in Rwanda 40 percent of the victims are women, 22 percent are children, the

majority of whom acquired the disease in the womb, pointing to a much higher incidence of heterosexual transmission. The opportunistic infections suffered by AIDS victims in Africa appear, also, to be quite different. Although information on AIDS in Africa is by no means solid—medicine there for the most part is grossly underfunded and badly organized, and many African governments have refused to even admit that AIDS exists in their countries—the questions raised by African AIDS underscore all the more that there are some qualitative elements of this disease that modern medicine does not understand.

How Not to Control an Epidemic

The opprobrium directed at AIDS patients is a huge obstacle to a scientific study which could establish its epidemiology. Faced with such a stigma, is anybody—not least prostitutes, gays and drug addicts, already considered "criminals" under the laws of many states—going to volunteer for an AIDS antibody test? Basically the entire question of fighting this disease has been

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reduced to a political football in the rightists' program to instill fear crystallized in a religious, anti-sex witch-hunting mindset.

Some scientists are now issuing dire warnings that AIDS is about to "explode" into the heterosexual population. They warn that anyone with multiple sexual contacts is at risk. Men are counseled to beware of "drug-addict prostitutes." And the U.S. army is using scare stories that Berlin prostitutes (a Red plot?) are spreading AIDS to American GIs. While it certainly appears that AIDS is sexually transmitted and it is undoubtedly true that many contacts with other human beings of whatever kind increase chances of infection with disease (especially the common cold), we are suspicious of disaster predictions related to sex. There are contradictory facts. For example, New York Health Commissioner Sencer says that the percentage of heterosexuals with AIDS in the city hasn't changed in five years. Scientists have not so far isolated the AIDS antibody in vaginal secretions and admit that studies have shown that it is much easier for men to give the disease to women than the other way around. Moreover, anal sex doesn't have to be rough; perhaps there is something else going on as well. Otherwise one would expect to see prostitutes in the "high-risk" category—certainly they have multiple sex partners and engage in a lot of anal sex with partners not inclined to be especially gentle.

The solution posed by many politicians is to close the bathhouses. We adamantly oppose the gross bigotry and anti-sex Puritanism which motivates the government in this regard. But we have to say that right now the idea of going to a bathhouse does not come off as the biggest turn-on. In fact, business has declined by as much as 50 percent in some bathhouses since 1982, and many gay groups have worked to educate bathhouse users to the dangers involved, including the attempt to force bathhouse owners to comply with guidelines like the distribution of free condoms and educational literature.

But the bathhouses are easy targets. Closing them provides officials with a simple way to show their constituencies that they are "doing something" about AIDS by cracking down on sexual activities which are invariably portrayed by the media in the most lurid and sensational manner. New York governor Mario Cuomo recently scored one on New York City mayor Edward Koch when he pushed through a 60-day emergency state health regulation mandating closure of establishments where "high risk sex" occurs—with the power of enforcement bestowed on individual localities. After muttering that it was unenforceable and making jokes about ladders and periscopes, Koch moved to comply. On November 8 the newspapers announced the closing of the notorious Mine Shaft, complete with front page headlines that the club had been cheating the state and city out of taxes for years. The city's Consumer Affairs Department is to be New York's new sex cops. With sodomy laws still on the books, the sex cops can target all gays as criminals not only for what some might do at the Mine Shaft, but for private, consensual sex in their own homes.

AIDS is caused by a virus, not by sex, not by "sin," not



Manning/NY Times

On 30 October, 64 New York City cops staged a massive narcotics raid in midtown. Cops surrounded a public plaza, terrorizing dozens and arresting 21 people.

by pornography. As we stated two years ago, "While the fundamentalist, paranoid Puritan ethic encouraged by our rulers alleges otherwise, the fact is: sex does not equal disease, does not equal death. Any kind of sex. Aside from the fundamental question of saving lives, one damn good reason to get this frightening outbreak cleaned up is so people can enjoy sexual activity in safe, healthy conditions—including the baths and bars if that's their scene" (W&R No. 27, Winter 1983-84). The current anti-sex hysteria against AIDS patients and gays affects us all. We fight for full democratic rights for homosexuals and demand: Government out of the bedrooms!

Whether or not closing the baths will do anything to prevent the spread of AIDS (did Prohibition stop the sale of alcohol?), Cuomo and Koch have made themselves look good in the eyes of the hysterical bigots. But their vows of concern for public health are revealed as just so much hypocrisy by their conscious sentence of death by AIDS on New York's huge population of intravenous drug users, the vast majority black or Hispanic. Health Commissioner David Sencer proposed that the ban on over-the-counter sales of hypodermic needles be lifted to enable drug addicts to avoid sharing contaminated needles, a major source of transmitting AIDS. Yuppie Democrat/Liberal Carol Bellamy denounced this sensible idea as "one of the most hare-brained ideas I've heard from city government." Not wanting to appear "soft on AIDS," Koch nixed Sencer's proposal.

The mayor appealed to "experts" such as a special narcotics prosecutor who wrote that "drug addicts, in the frenzied and desperate minutes before injecting a needle into their veins, could care less about contamination." In fact, as pointed out by Allan Brandt, Harvard Medical School professor of the history of science and medicine, in Canada, where sanitary needles are widely available, the number of intravenous drug users with AIDS is quite low.

The state and city have adopted a conscious policy of discouraging drug users from taking the AIDS antibody

test, which, for all its faults, is the only way a concerned individual can find out if he has been exposed. State Health Commissioner David Axelrod sent a letter to doctors last March that he would "strongly recommend against its use as a diagnostic tool."

AIDS among drug users is growing at a much faster rate than among gays. Forty percent of new AIDS cases in New York are drug users, twice the 1981 rate. Largely because of the growth of AIDS among drug users, half of New York's victims are black or Hispanic; for women and children, the figures are 85 and 90 percent, respectively. Drug users' purported "indifference" to infection is manifestly revealed as a lie by the black market in repackaged needles sold as sterile which has grown up in the city. But the government's stance was well summed up by Bronx district attorney Mario Merola: "drug abuse must... not be made risk free" (*Village Voice*, 29 October 1985). The DA will see to that! The intersection of AIDS hysteria with the racist New York killer cops sets up a prosecutor's dream for a brutal



Der Spiegel

Dr. Semmelweis's discovery that simple hygiene by 19th century doctors could save women from deadly "childbed fever" helped ground medicine in scientific understanding of causes of disease.

crackdown on drug use and creates the potential for an explosion of race hate directed at minorities who are being blamed for the potential spread of AIDS to the heterosexual population.

Billions for AIDS Research!

In the absence of any cure, treatment or vaccine for AIDS, the CDC last August issued recommendations for "safe sex" procedures such as using condoms. Said Dr. James O. Mason, acting assistant secretary for health, "We could curtail the rate of transmission with behavioral changes alone" (*New York Times*, 1 October 1985). But what does that mean—chastity? A mere few months ago Mason met pleas for more funding for public education on AIDS with a sneer, "Do you really believe gay men can be changed through education?" (*New York Native*, 17-30 June 1985). Perhaps he would advocate the electroshock "treatment" of homosexuals favored by Mormon doctors—Mason was the Mormons' commissioner of health services before joining the government. Meanwhile a manual describ-

ing "safe sex" procedures, *Mother's Handy Sex Guide*, was denounced by a Los Angeles official as "plain, hard-core pornography" (*Time*, 23 September 1985).

Mason also admitted that the Reagan administration actively considered quarantining all AIDS victims. This is simple anti-gay bigotry and a sop to superstitious hysteria. In treating certain diseases, like bubonic plague (yes, every year a few Americans catch plague; it's rampant in rodent populations in the West), quarantine is a crucial public health measure. But not in the case of AIDS. The virus is not spread by AIDS patients, who are too sick to do much of anything, but by an estimated one to two million carriers *who don't know they have it*. Indeed, one of the more horrible aspects of this disease is that while they know they're dying AIDS victims feel a moral restriction to avoid harming others by participating in one of the few joys life has to offer, sexual intercourse.

It has been said that the only true way to be safe is total monogamy...but then again can one ever be totally sure of one's spouse? In the midst of the screaming school boycott, one mother put the point of fear of getting AIDS precisely: you know, if you think about it, schools are the least of the problem—forget about taking your kids to a McDonald's; playgrounds are the worst places; you may as well zip your kid up in a bubble and leave it there. In any case, it's a hell of a lot safer to hug an AIDS patient than to have an argument with a New York City cop.

One of the scariest things about AIDS is the formidable obstacles in the way of formulating a successful vaccine. Scientists are trying to discover a constant in the virus' protein coat which would enable them to make a vaccine effective against all the mutations. Retroviruses operate by inserting their genetic codes into the DNA of the host cell. Once it is there, it is impossible to get it out. Therefore once a person has caught full-blown AIDS, he can at present only be treated for the disease, but not cured.

In this sick capitalist society, where medical care is run for profit and twisted by fear and threats of everlasting hellfire, research on AIDS is grossly hampered. Drug companies say that developing drugs for treatment of AIDS is no priority—it's more profitable to make a new Valium. And a monumental legal battle is shaping up between French and American scientists for the royalty rights for the HTLV-III antibody test. Instead of this grotesque squabbling over glory and royalties, there should be international cooperation which would, among other things, send a research team to Africa *immediately*.

Recently French doctors announced that a drug, cyclosporine, appears to have some effectiveness against the virus' destruction of the immune system. Cyclosporine was originally used to *suppress* the immune system's rejection of new tissue in transplant patients, demonstrating that science should explore every possible angle in the search for a cure. Certainly the doctors' announcement was premature, being based on only a few days' treatment of two patients. Was it also motivated at least in part by greed to make money off the desperation of AIDS patients? In any case, any promising course of treatment for AIDS



Der Spiegel



Der Spiegel

Then and now: superstitious hysteria of medieval Europe devastated by bubonic plague epidemic; New York prison officials dressed for contact with AIDS prisoners.

should be immediately researched. Many AIDS victims are willing to try any treatment and have even been driven to smuggling across the border drugs still considered experimental in the U.S.

The U.S. government budget of \$221 million for research is grossly inadequate, and a lot of the money has come at the expense of other health programs like research on cancer and infectious diseases such as hepatitis. The previous federal budget allocation of \$126 million barely covers the cost of a couple of platforms for aiming telescopes at the sun on the space shuttle! Reagan's priorities are clear: Star Wars technology to reduce the Soviet Union to a pile of rubble is much more important to the imperialist warmongers than conquering a dread disease.

It's possible that the AIDS virus will elude modern medical technology at its current state. In the last decade the U.S. spent millions upon millions on artificial heart development and trying to find a cure for cancer without any notable results. In the 12th century, no matter how many ducats the king spent they weren't about to find a way to fly. The enormity of the challenge makes it all the more imperative that lavish resources be placed in the hands of an internationally coordinated research project on AIDS. In the meantime, society could do much to lighten the tragic plight of AIDS victims—at a minimum providing free health care so AIDS patients who are thrown off insurance policies, or don't have any to begin with, aren't dumped onto the streets to die.

Science Not Superstition

Fear and hysteria do nothing to stop disease. Judgments that victims of diseases like leprosy and syphilis "had it coming" did nothing to stop their spread. Throughout history mankind has been scourged by many horrible diseases; not until science began to roll back stark terror and superstition did man begin to conquer those diseases. Today supposedly enlightened 20th-century people are reacting to AIDS like Europeans did to the Black Death in the 14th

century. Believing plague was a punishment by god for sin, people flagellated themselves and conducted pogroms against the Jews. They also killed cats (believed to be witches' familiars), thus eliminating one of the only means they had to control the rat population which spread plague. But unlike the anti-AIDS bigots today, in 1665 the city of London at least understood that primary medical care during an outbreak of disease was important: readers of the fine historical novel *Forever Amber* will recall that nurses were dispatched by the government to care for the sick.

The principles of the Age of Enlightenment during the revolutionary years of capitalism in the 17th and 18th centuries began to lay the basis for the eradication of medieval superstition with scientific knowledge. Leeuwenhoek discovered the existence of bacteria; William Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood; Louis Pasteur established the germ theory of disease. Edward Jenner, one of the greatest benefactors of man in history, developed and popularized a safe vaccination against smallpox. (It's interesting to note that the same "land of the free, home of the brave" reactionaries who opposed the "commie plot" of fluoridated water also opposed compulsory vaccinations. In Minnesota, where smallpox vaccinations were not legally required until well into the 20th century, over 500 people died of smallpox in 1924-25.)

Capitalist society has so far moved to eradicate those diseases which pose the biggest threat to itself, the massive urban epidemics like plague, smallpox and cholera which interfered with daily social life so as to seriously disrupt profits. Many tropical or rural diseases are today actually on the increase. Cholera is epidemic now in Ethiopia and the Sudan; it can kill in a few hours—you shrivel like a prune as all the water in your body is evacuated as diarrhea. Leprosy is rampant all through the Third World, even though the medical knowledge to control and eventually stop it altogether exists. Very few new drugs for treatment of tropical disease have been developed in the last 15 years.

In contrast, it was very much in the interests of U.S.

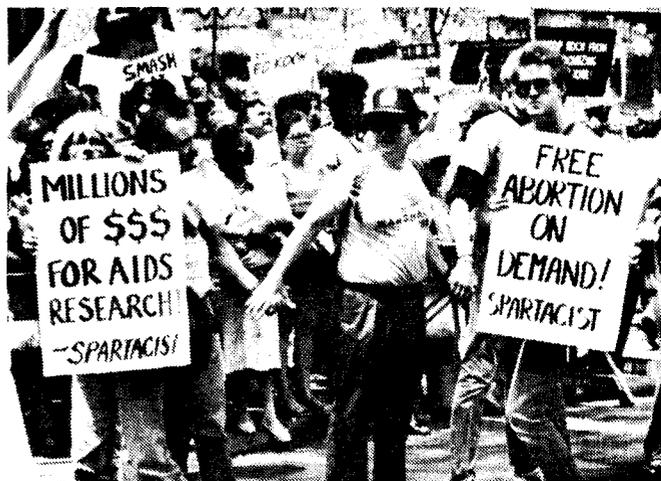
imperialism to conquer yellow fever. It was this dread disease which wiped out the army Napoleon sent to Haiti to suppress Toussaint L'Ouverture's black republic. In the late 19th century Washington found yellow fever a major impediment in its imperialist appetites to rule Central America and the Caribbean. Both the construction of the Panama Canal and the American victory in the Spanish-American War were threatened by outbreaks of yellow fever. Once the priority of eradicating the disease was set, army doctors led by Walter Reed very quickly determined the cause (an agent, later discovered to be a virus, transmitted by mosquitoes) and eradicated it within a few months.

Life and Death in Reagan's America

The American ruling class has got the witchhunting mindset of the 17th century, and they're looking for some witches to burn. If you're black, gay, a woman, young, old, Hispanic, working-class—watch out! They'll put you on the list. They want everyone to quake in fear of a hateful punishing god that visits plague upon the sinful. And they want everyone to fear the state in the same way. They've targeted the classroom, to raise a generation in slavish fear, obedient to "authority" and prone to step into line when Reagan unleashes nuclear Armageddon against the "Evil Empire," the USSR. They've tried to dump Darwin, teach belief in the virgin birth, and if you're not a virgin yourself they want to get you with the Squeal Rule which requires doctors, counselors, etc. to report to parents if teens request birth control.

For women Reagan's program is Hitler's "*Kinder, Kirche, Küche*" (children, church, kitchen). He's out to legalize abortion; all across the country "right to life" terrorists are firebombing abortion clinics. Already poor women can't use Medicaid funds to pay for abortions—Democrat Jimmy Carter, who commented, "There are many things in life that are not fair," saw to that. Hysteria over "child abuse" is forcing the closure of many childcare centers, driving women back into the home when they have nowhere to leave their children for care while they are working. And while Reagan weeps crocodile tears for the "unborn," infant mortality rates in the U.S., long considered a basic social indicator, have become a serious concern to health care professionals. A far higher proportion of newborn babies die in Harlem than in Cuba.

Lately the right-wing censors have declared war on something they call "secular humanism." In 1984 Congress passed a law denying federal funding to integrated "magnet" schools that teach secular humanism; they purposely did not define the term. To the religious fanatics it means anything they've put their mark of Cain on, from Marxism to sex education to evolution. The dictionary defines humanism as "any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values and dignity predominate." If thinking that a woman ought to be able to obtain an abortion without being mugged by terrorists is "secular humanism," then that's what Marxism is about. If fighting for everyone's right to conduct their sex lives as they damn well choose without being harassed or jailed by meddling snoopers is "secular humanism," then



W&R Photo
Spartacists at NYC Gay Pride Day, June 30, march past St. Patrick's Cathedral, the home of anti-homosexual bigot Cardinal O'Connor.

we're for it. If being revolted by a society where the sight of a pathetic bag lady trying to sleep on the subway gratings by someone's stretch limo is an everyday occurrence means you're a "secular humanist," then there should be more of them.

The rabid, profit-crazed American ruling class has a program of death and destruction: build prisons instead of schools, shut down the mental hospitals, dump the sick on the streets, turn off the heat in their places of refuge. Reagan continues to slash spending for welfare, Medicare, school lunch programs—all to build bigger bombs to kill with.

It seems like only we socialists stand for the principle that people ought to be able to live their lives decently, in peace. In 1917 the Bolsheviks led the Russian workers to victory under the slogan "Peace, Bread, Land!" in the midst of the bloody carnage of World War I. But even if socialist revolution had triumphed throughout the world, it could not then have prevented the devastating 1918-19 worldwide epidemic of influenza that killed 20 million—more than died in all of the war. Socialist revolution will put an end to Reagan's mad dreams of nuclear holocaust; the abolition of capitalism will enable man to build a society which uses its resources to produce for social need, like combatting disease and educating youth, rather than in pursuit of profit. As Isaac Deutscher noted in "On Socialist Man":

"May I remind you that Trotsky, for instance, speaks of three basic tragedies—hunger, sex and death—besetting man. Hunger is the enemy that Marxism and the modern labor movement have taken on. In doing so they have naturally been inclined to ignore or belittle man's other predicaments. But is it not true that hunger or, more broadly, social inequality and oppression, have hugely complicated and intensified for innumerable human beings the torments of sex and death as well?"

"In fighting against social inequality and oppression we fight also for the mitigation of those blows that nature inflicts on us...."

"Yes, socialist man will still be pursued by sex and death; but we are convinced that he will be better equipped than we are to cope even with these." ■

(Article adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 389, 18 October 1985)

Assault on Sex...

(continued from page 24)

abortions under Medicaid by passing a bill banning the District of Columbia from using *local* funds as well.

In opposing all-out Moral Majority reaction, some sections of the ruling class have their own interest in mind, of course; they may agree on the need to regiment the population generally, but shrink from living in the U.S. equivalent of Khomeini's Iran and would like to read a dirty book now and again, while making sure *their* wives, mistresses and daughters have some choice as to abortion. More broadly, however, there is the problem that if abortion rights and birth control information are outlawed, what will the state and city governments do about the spiraling teenage birth rate, especially in the black ghettos? "Private charity" and the Catholic church can't deal with these thousands of "unwed mothers," and this racist ruling class certainly does not want to encourage more *black* babies.

One bizarre "solution" was just passed as law by the state of Wisconsin. Known as "grandparent liability," this new law states that parents will be financially responsible if their children under 18 have babies. TV reports, emphasizing the high black birth rate in Milwaukee, made clear the racial angle. While the new law includes provisions for allowing girls to have abortions without parental consent and repeals restrictions on advertising and sale of contraceptives, its core is an utterly savage expression of this state's willingness to simply force an entire generation of the poor,

helpless and black population to fend for themselves, to raise their children in desperation without the slightest attempt to provide aid. Meanwhile, in the jails of Alameda County, California, pregnant women, overwhelmingly prostitutes or drug addicts, victims of this society, have been forced to withdraw from drugs "cold turkey," suffering horrible convulsions and miscarriages—one aborting woman was carried to an emergency room in handcuffs and leg irons.

The Reagan administration has made clear its attitude toward blacks' "right to life." Reagan wept crocodile tears over the remains of some 16,500 abortions, fetuses given a "memorial service" in Los Angeles last August. In Philadelphia last May, his lackeys in the FBI helped murder members of MOVE and firebomb a whole black neighborhood, burning alive at least eleven people including five black children—their charred remains were toys for the ghoulish pathologists to dissect!

To call the cruel and obscene practices of this state barbaric is an understatement. We are for not only the lifting of the filthy bans on sexual pleasure enforced by this deeply paranoid, Puritanical society, but for the proposition that every child born has the right to "life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness" and every advantage an advanced industrial society can provide its new generations. The deep social/sexual counterrevolution being forced on the U.S. today can only be defeated by the revolutionary program for workers power, socialist revolution, raised in the recent Spartacist election campaign in New York City. We reprint below a statement in defense of abortion rights issued during that campaign by the Spartacist candidates.

"Right to Life" Bigots Target Baird Clinic Spartacist Candidates Say: Defend Abortion Rights!

The following press release was issued September 16 by the Spartacist Party Campaign Committee.

On Saturday, September 14 "right to life" bigots targeted the Bill Baird abortion clinic in Hempstead, Long Island, intimidating women patients inside with ghoulish effigies and cries of "Murder, Inc." and "butchered babies." Ominously, Nassau County D.A. Dennis Dillon was leading the protest, even as Baird was reporting death threats and calls that "this building will be firebombed before the day is out." The Spartacist candidates today denounced this outrage, saying: "Abortion is supposed to be legal in this country. D.A. Dillon's presence on the picket line offers open solidarity of the state with the anti-abortion terrorists."

Marjorie Stamberg, candidate for mayor, said: "From D.A. Dillon to the NYPD 'off duty' cop who attacked and arrested a woman outside a Brooklyn abortion clinic last March, this official state terror against working people and minorities must be stopped! In scores of firebombings and hundreds of other attacks on abortion clinics, it is pure chance that no one has yet been killed. But death is written all over the 'right to

life' campaign of terror, as vicious reactionaries seek to drive working-class and poor women back to the rusty coat hangers in the back alleys."

Ed Kartsen, candidate for Manhattan borough president, noted, "The anti-abortion terrorists have felt the wind in their sails and the nod of approval from the White House. It is no accident that the fanatics who seek to roll back women's rights are the same vicious racists who would drive blacks back to slavery, like Ku Klux Klansman John Burt, convicted bomber of the Pensacola, Florida abortion clinic."

These are no hollow threats against Bill Baird, pioneering advocate of abortion rights. Six years ago, Baird's clinic was firebombed with 50 women inside. Yet D.A. Dillon let off the murderous arsonist with a ludicrous seven months in a mental hospital! Baird's clinic in Hempstead was the first in the country. It was in large part due to his militant efforts that the right to abortion became a national issue in the 1970s. Baird has been shot at, beat up, spat on, arrested and jailed eight times by his count.

Stamberg pointed out: "Of course, it's never the wives, daughters and mistresses of the rich men who rule this country who suffer—they've always been able to get their abortions, whether legal or not, in plush privacy with every consideration. No, poor, young teenagers and working-class women are most hurt by this violent reactionary offensive. Free safe abortion on demand is a desperately needed fundamental right." ■

Spartacists in NYC Elections

“A Bright Red Campaign”

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*
No. 391, 15 November 1985

So here we are, the Spartacists, a principled early communist party of the Lenin-Trotsky persuasion, with a few hundred members, which just ran an election campaign in Reagan's America, in Koch's New York. We told it like it is; some people liked what we had to say, we had a good time saying it, and what it's all about is building the party of workers revolution: socialism is what we want, and communism is how to get it.

The Spartacist Party was campaigning deep into the second term of the most right-wing administration since Herbert Hoover—and at least he was isolationist. If you add up everything negative from Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge and Hoover—racism, blow up the world, hate the working class, glorify the rich—in Reagan's America, we've got it all, and in a virulent superpower that's on its way down.

We were already gearing up for the campaign a year ago, as the wave of police terror, the housing strangulation, the uproar over the Bernhard Goetz case reflected a city on the razor's edge. Unlike the reformists, who spend half their time collecting signatures to “put an independent on the ballot,” we were ready with our brochure “New York City: For the Working People!” when the petitioning period officially opened July 9. So we hit the streets with our revolutionary propaganda from the get-go.

The early Communist International insisted that revolutionary election campaigns must take up strikes, demonstrations, all the burning issues of the day. And



Workers Vanguard

“Save Moloise! Hang Botha! Bury Apartheid!” demanded protesters at Spartacist demonstration at South African consulate October 17, eve of ANC militant Benjamin Moloise's hanging by apartheid butchers.



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Spartacists recalled victims of racist cop terror, demanding “Gross the Ghoul Has Got to Go!” on October 3. NYC chief medical examiner Dr. Elliot Gross is “Koch's Dr. Mengele,” hiding evidence of cop murder, said mayoral candidate Stamberg.

that's what we sought to do with our October 3 protest against “New York's own” cover-up coroner, Dr. Elliot Gross; an emergency demonstration October 17 to try to save South African black militant Benjamin Moloise from the apartheid hangman; our support for hotel strikers back in June and the Columbia campus workers in October.

The bourgeoisie did everything possible to keep the lid on. The city actually hired new workers for the first time in years, and on the advice of his media advisers, Koch kept his lip zipped. The state called off its Gross hearings, and Mayor Gibson “banned the Klan” from rallying in nearby Newark. But should the KKK lynchers and cross burners insist on committing suicide in heavily black Newark, we are ready to assist them.

We took the campaign wherever working people were struggling, from a memorial for Eleanor Bumpurs in the South Bronx to tent cities on the Lower East Side and squatters taking over abandoned housing in East New York. While soapboxing outside Woolworth's at 125th Street we had heated polemics with pro-Farrakhan anti-Semitic nationalists, recalling Communist run-ins with the Garveyites in Harlem during the Depression. We stood with labor, leafletting from the garment center and the 207th Street transit repair shop to the NMU hiring hall and CWA union meetings.

And people who met us found that we are a party that isn't afraid to take hard positions, from hailing Cuban

Solidarity with MOVE Martyrs

The May 13 police firebombing of the back-to-nature MOVE commune in black Philadelphia was racist murder, the deadly signature of the Reagan years. On July 11 at a New York Spartacist forum, Ed Kartsen and former Philadelphia MOVE members LaVerne Sims (speaking) and Louise James, whose son was murdered, denounced the racist massacre. "Eleven MOVE members were murdered by Mayor Wilson Goode's hit men, paid assassins, exterminators of babies" on that infamous day, said LaVerne Sims. They "went to their death because they took a firm stand against this court system and said, 'We want our political brothers and sisters released from prison.' They are innocent.... And MOVE had every god-given right to defend this position. Because the man don't give you your right in defense, not when it's not in his interests.... The MOVE sisters and brothers in jail left their children behind, and they will never see their children again. Mayor Wilson Goode, police commissioner



Workers Vanguard

Gregore Sambor, fire commissioner William Richmond and managing director Leo Brooks saw to that."

The bloody traces of Sambor and Goode lead directly to Reagan and Meese. SL central committee member Kartsen noted it was no accident Reagan bombed black Philly right after returning from saluting Nazi SS graves at Bitburg: "The MOVE members must be avenged! We have to move forward to a mass labor/minority party that can lead the working class to seize power in order to end racist terrorism once and for all."

troops in Angola to denouncing both the racist pig Koch and sinister demagogue Louis Farrakhan. We campaigned for defense of homosexuals against the AIDS hysteria. We provided a platform for the victims of racist cop terror: LaVerne Sims and Louise James, relatives of MOVE members slaughtered in the hideous government bombing of that Philadelphia black commune, Eleanor Bumpurs' daughter Mary and Edmund Perry's mother Veronica spoke out powerfully at Spartacist forums.

There was effective censorship of leftist parties by the



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125th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard: Soapboxing in Harlem during Spartacist campaign.

major media. An arrogant *New York Times* (3 November 1985) editorial endorsing Koch complained about an election in which "minor party candidates litter the ground." A mayoral "debate" held in the *Times* offices excluded four of the eight parties from participation. Independent TV Channel 11 interviewed all the mayoral candidates, but the network stations blacked us out. We got some coverage from the smaller black weeklies, and radio appearances on the leading black station WLIB and Pacifica affiliate WBAI, one-minute "equal time" spots on WCBS and a statement on WEVD.

At an election eve candidates night at the Schomburg black history center in Harlem, Spartacist candidate for NYC mayor Marjorie Stamberg told the audience that our program in a nutshell is to "defend black rights, defend the unions, and defend the Soviet Union." Reformists like the Socialist Workers Party want to debate with the Ku Klux Klan. The Communist Party, running on the popular-front "People Before Profits" ticket, looks to the capitalist state to "ban the Klan" and thinks civilian review boards can "control" and "democratize" the police. The Spartacists organize labor/black mobilizations to *smash* the racist terrorists.

Based on the fragmentary unofficial returns available, the votes for the leftist parties were uniformly infinitesimal, hardly going beyond their close supporters. This reflected one of the lowest election turnouts on record—38 percent of the registered voters. In New York City, where 86 percent of the voters are registered Democrats, the "real" race is the primary, and even then Koch had it sewed up. David Dinkins, the black flunkey they ran for Manhattan borough president, was

such a shameless running dog for Koch that blacks in particular stayed away from the polls.

But as soon as the elections were over, Koch & Co. were back slamming their killer cops and killer cutbacks down New Yorkers' throats. On November 7, 5,000 armed "off duty" cops surrounded Brooklyn district attorney Liz Holtzman's office, calling her a "persecutor of cops, not a prosecutor of criminals," and screaming for her resignation. It was a repeat of the sinister cop mobilization outside the Bronx courthouse last February, a bonapartist threat which successfully intimidated the city into letting cop triggerman Stephen Sullivan off the hook for the wanton killing of Eleanor Bumpurs.

And the next day a suit filed by the Legal Aid Society revealed the city is snatching *hundreds* of children of homeless parents and placing them in foster care. In a truly sadistic Catch-22, after the kids are nabbed, the parents are then knocked off eligibility lists for family housing on the grounds they are simply "homeless individuals"! So grotesque and intense are New York's social contradictions that even New York Senator Daniel Moynihan picked up the "two cities" theme,

warning that seething misery amidst glittering wealth would lead to social explosion.

At an election night party at Small's Paradise in Harlem, Spartacist Party candidates Marjorie Stamberg and Ed Kartsen summed it up. "This campaign has been a significant step forward for the Spartacist League," said Kartsen. "We've called for a workers party. We've posed the right of working people to defend themselves. We have been recognized for our opposition to cop terror, for mobilizing the communities, the working class, the homeless. We represent the future. And you comrades have put those slogans on the streets."

"We ran in this campaign to build the party that can lead the socialist revolution," said Stamberg. While the reformists were talking about the Board of Estimate, "we were talking about soviets. And when they were talking about tax abatements, we were talking about organizing for the workers to take power." Noting that it was two days before the November 7 anniversary of the Russian October Revolution, Stamberg concluded: "So let's drink a toast and go forward with the struggle, comrades." ■

New York City: For the Working People!

We reprint below the text of the Spartacist Party platform in the election campaign for Marjorie Stamberg for NYC mayor and Ed Kartsen for Manhattan borough president. Almost 140,000 brochures in English and Spanish were distributed on the streets of New York.

New York City is on the razor's edge. Reagan tells New York to drop dead, while Koch's racist cops terrorize the city with their wanton killings. In Philadelphia, they bomb black babies to evict the back-to-nature MOVE commune. In the Bronx, the cops evict by shotgun—like black grandmother Eleanor Bumpurs, blown away for falling behind in her rent. And Donald Trump the Condo King makes millions.

But America needs its financial and political capital, and New York can't run without black transit workers, Hispanic hotel workers, hospital workers—the whole powerful integrated city union movement. From this election platform we raise our revolutionary program: not only in New York but throughout the nation, the situation cries out for a **workers party** to defend the

interests of labor, the poor, minorities and the hard pressed middle classes against Reagan, Koch, and the capitalist class they represent. We need a labor and minority-led fight for a **workers government** which will seize all major industry without compensation and institute a planned socialist economy. **New York City: For the working people! Vote Spartacist! Marjorie**



Workers Vanguard

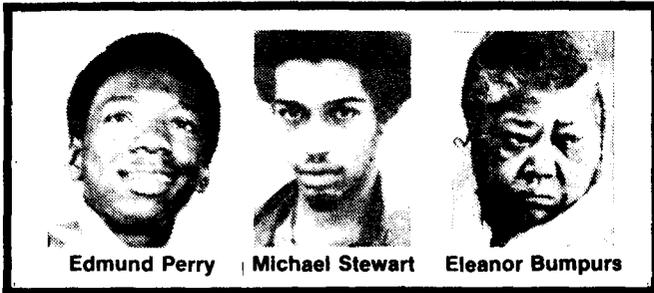
Mass labor/black action to stop the race-terrorists: "We Stopped the Klan!" demonstrators chant in Washington, 27 November 1982.

Kick Out Koch! Dump Trump! Stop Racist Cop Terror!

Stamberg for Mayor! Ed Kartsen for Manhattan Borough President!



Avenge victims of the racist cops—Edmund Perry, Michael Stewart, Eleanor Bumpurs! From the Queens stun gun “torture precinct” to Harlem to posh Park Avenue, nobody is safe from Koch’s killer cops. It’s a system: D.A. Morgenthau and the ghoulish coroner cover up for the cops. In 1982 black transit worker Willie Turks was beaten to death by a racist lynch mob in Gravesend—but brother Turks might be alive today if



The Perry Family, NY Times, NY Daily News

Killed by the racist cops: We will not forget!

he had a piece. On the subway Queens meets Harlem: the intensification of the social contradictions between the squeezed middle classes and increasingly desperate oppressed minorities is what produces a Bernhard Goetz.

Capitalism breeds crime and everyone knows the cops won’t protect them. While liberals prattle about gun control, racist forces like Rupert Murdoch’s *New York Post* seize upon the vulnerability and defenselessness of the population to whip up an atmosphere of “law and order” vigilantism. **Everyone has the right to defend himself! Gun control kills blacks! Mobilize labor and minorities to stop racist attacks! For integrated armed workers defense guards, drawn from responsible union men and women!**



An army of homeless huddle in the streets while countless thousands eke out a miserable existence in the welfare hotels. Meanwhile, they’re trying to gentrify Harlem and turn the *barrio* into the “Yupper East Side.” **Restore and extend rent control! Homeless should seize Trump City! Expropriate the real estate robber barons!** That city councilman had a good idea when he called for Soviet aid to the South Bronx. **Make NYC a place where working people can live! Vote for the candidates who say no to the slumlords and big-time rent-gougers—support Marjorie and Ed!**



Koch glories in union-busting. He orders city sanitation workers to cross hotel strikers’ picket lines. He stood on the Brooklyn Bridge in 1980 whipping up hatred against the transit strikers and greeting joggers led by his Yuppie opponent Carol Bellamy. Labor misleader Gotbaum literally plays ball with Big MAC banker boss Rohatyn while city workers get shafted. We

need a new union leadership to unleash labor’s power through the class-struggle methods that built the unions. **Take back the givebacks! Smash the no-strike Taylor Law! Defend picket lines! Labor’s gotta play hardball to win!**



This city was built by immigrant labor. We say everybody who’s here has a right to stay. **No deportations—Full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers! For the independence of Puerto Rico! Political asylum for refugees from death squad terror from Haiti to San Salvador!**

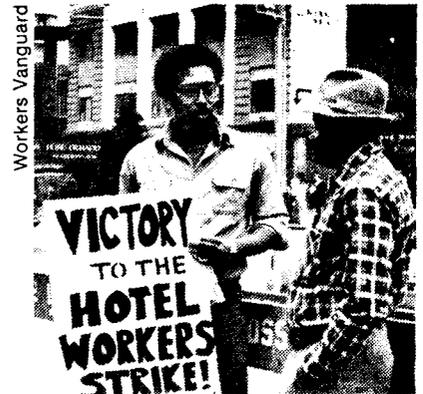


Time to finish the Civil War—Black liberation through socialist revolution! We need schools and jobs, but Koch builds prisons. Capitalism has no jobs for ghetto youth, so there’s no profit in teaching our kids to read. A whole generation is being tossed on the scrap heap: black youth unemployment in this city is over 50 percent and the high school dropout rate for minorities is over 70 percent. They’re closing hospitals in Harlem while infant mortality rates in the ghettos are approaching “third world” levels. **Free quality education for all—defend busing and extend it to the suburbs! Open admission to college with living stipend! Free 24-hour quality day care! Free subways! Triple welfare! For the socialist reindustrialization of America!**



The Moral Majority bigots are trying to run our lives, from school prayer to outlawing anything that’s fun. NYC’s reactionary archbishop John O’Connor loved the Vietnam War, now declares war on abortion clinics

Defend Picket Lines! Labor’s Gotta Play Hardball! Ed Kartsen with hotel strikers, June 1985.



and homosexual rights. Take a stand against these meddling snoops—vote Spartacist! **We say: government out of the bedrooms! Down with all porn/sex/drug laws!** People should be able to watch, read or do anything consensual they want! **Free abortion on demand—free quality health care! Full democratic rights for homosexuals!** Millions for AIDS research! For the separation of church and state!



America’s cities have Democratic mayors to keep the lid on while Reagan reaction squeezes. In New York we have racist labor-hating mayor Koch. In Philadelphia the black mayor approves the firebombing of his own



Workers Vanguard

Young Spartacus

Smash apartheid slavery! American workers, students in solidarity with South African struggle.

city, while cynical apologists for the Jesse Jackson/Mondale "Rainbow Coalition" excuse the massacre of eleven black people. The Philly holocaust had the signature of the Reagan regime. The government terrorists bomb black America to send a bloody message to all who dare step out of line—watch your ass, you could be next! **Down with the Democrats and Republicans, partner parties of the capitalist ruling class—build a fighting workers party!**

• • • • •

When Reagan laid wreaths at SS graves in Bitburg, he was trying to bury the Soviet Union's victory against Nazi Germany and prepare nuclear war against Russia. **Remember the Holocaust! Defend the Soviet Union, birthplace of the first workers revolution!** For workers democracy, for revolutionary internationalism—return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky!

• • • • •

While Reagan tries to seal off and starve out the Nicaraguan Revolution, U.S. troops are poised to invade. The Democrats coo like doves, vote like hawks for aid to CIA/contra killers and Reagan's invasion plans. The obstacle to U.S. imperialist intervention is the "Vietnam syndrome," the population's continuing reluctance to sacrifice for more losing military adventures. **Labor must fight imperialist war with class war—for political strikes! Defend, complete, extend the Nicaraguan Revolution—Defense of Cuba, USSR begins in Central America! Vietnam was a victory!**

• • • • •

Koch "divests" city funds from South Africa while his cops are shooting down blacks at home. No "divestment" illusions in bloodsucking imperialists—for international labor solidarity! **Hot cargo military goods—smash apartheid slavery!** Workers revolution must rip the wealth the workers have created from the capitalist rulers who own the mines and factories. **A vote for Spartacist is a vote for the program of workers power—from South Africa to the U.S.!** ■

Vote Spartacist!

MARJORIE STAMBERG FOR MAYOR

Workers Vanguard

Marjorie Stamberg was the Spartacist Party candidate for New York state assembly in 1978, calling for a union-led fight against the cutbacks and takeaways during the bank-engineered "fiscal crisis." The campaign fought for united action against racist cop brutality, and against the vicious ethnic vigilantism which had erupted in Crown Heights after the cop killing of a prominent black community leader. During the 1960s, Stamberg was an activist in SDS, the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movement, and a staff writer for the New Left *Guardian*. A leader of Oakland Women's Liberation, Marjorie spent nine years as a telephone worker, active in the Militant Action Caucus of CWA. A member of the editorial board of the Spartacist League's newspaper, *Workers Vanguard*, she is active in the Spartacus Youth League campaign to raise desperately needed dollars to defend Nicaragua against the U.S. imperialist siege, and is recently back from Managua, where she attended the sixth anniversary celebration of the victory over Somoza.



ED KARTSEN FOR MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

Workers Vanguard

Edward Kartsen, a signal maintainer in the New York subways until recently, was the oppositional candidate for Transport Workers Union Local 100 president in 1983. Ed and the Committee for a Fighting TWU campaigned for the union to act in solidarity with key strikes, like PATCO in 1981. When black TWUer Willie Turks was beaten to death by a racist mob as he was leaving his job in the Coney Island shop, Kartsen said the union's 33,000 members should demonstrate on flat-bed trucks in the Gravesend, Brooklyn area in a forceful display of labor's power to stop racist terror. In 1982, Kartsen chaired the Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the Klan in Washington on November 27, when the Spartacist League and black unionists led the thousands who militantly faced down the KKK, dealing a stinging political defeat to Reagan and the cops in the streets of the nation's capital.



Interview with Australian Dr. Bertram Wainer

Courageous Fighter for Women's Right to Abortion

Reprinted from *Australasian Spartacist*
August/September 1985

We print below an interview with Dr. Bertram Wainer, a long-time courageous fighter for women's right to abortion in Australia. Born in the working-class slum district of Gorbals in Glasgow, Scotland, Wainer is a kind of William Wallace [the heroic leader of the Scots in the 13th century, who drove the invading armies of the English king from Scotland] in the struggle for women's rights. During his campaigns against backyard abortion and the police corruption which accompanies it, and against the reactionary so-called "Right To Life" bigots, his life has been threatened many times. The availability of relatively cheap, safe abortions in most major Australian cities today, despite the continuing existence of legislation which makes abortion a crime, is in large part a tribute to Wainer's militant struggles.

Wainer flew to Queensland, Australia following the May 20 Gestapo-style raids on Fertility Control Clinics in Townsville and Greenslopes, Brisbane. On the heels of Bjelke-Petersen's union-busting operation against SEQEB [South East Queensland Electricity Board] strikers and the state labour movement, Petersen's then-Attorney General Harper unleashed the notorious Queensland police against abortion clinics. [The Queensland National Party government fired 1,000 striking SEQEB workers in an anti-labor offensive similar to Reagan's smashing of the U.S. air traffic controllers' union PATCO.] These cops who had been using choke holds against unionists on picket lines must have taken a perverse pleasure in terrorising the clinics. They stormed buildings where patients were being treated looking for "evidence"—even sending frogmen into nearby sewers to search for aborted fetuses! Then in a massive invasion of privacy, they seized over 19,000 personal medical files. Doctors Bayliss and Grundmann, who run the clinics, were arrested and charged with conspiracy to use force to procure an abortion. This act of state terror caused an outcry across the nation.

Subsequently the Queensland Full Court ordered the return of all medical files. The charges against Bayliss and Grundmann were dropped following a Full Court ruling that the warrants used to enter the clinics were illegal. But already great damage had been done. Women had been cruelly abused; the private sexual and medical histories of thousands had been open to scrutiny by cops and government officials. This campaign of terror should have been met with a



Australasian Spartacist

Bertram Wainer in his Melbourne office.

mobilisation of the labour movement to stop it and ensure it never happens again. As a minimal measure massive financial compensation must be paid to Bayliss and Grundmann and to the women, who deserve restitution.

The reactionary campaign against abortion is not limited to the "deep north." In Tasmania recently a woman who had been raped was prevented from having an abortion by the courts. In the Labor-run states abortion clinics are constantly harassed—from Perth to the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne to the clinics in Sydney. For the last four years the Preterm clinic in Surry Hills, Sydney—at times the target of paint, bricks and reactionary invasions—has been daily "picketed" by either the "Right To Life" reactionaries or weirdos like the sinister "Brothers of the Mother of God." Preterm has taken these scum to court on several occasions and is owed \$7,000 in court costs, but this has not deterred the presence of their anti-woman gauntlets. A contingent of class-conscious union militants committed to the protection of women's right to abortion could quickly put the "fear of god" into these godfearing anti-abortion terrorists.

Abortion is one of the most important civil, political and cultural rights for women. It is an index of women's oppression under capitalism that even in the most

advanced "Western democracies" the right of women to safe abortion is at best limited and reversible. All the more so today, when all manner of social reaction flourishes in a political climate conditioned by Cold War anti-Sovietism. The reactionary zealots feel the wind in their sails. The anti-homosexual "AIDS scare" has literally meant death and beatings at the hands of murderous bigots on the streets in Darlinghurst, Sydney's gay mecca. With their spiritual leader Reagan in the White House, "Right To Life" anti-abortion terrorists have been bombing abortion clinics around the U.S. over the last year with impunity. In Canada, Dr. Henry Morgentaler, a survivor of Hitler's concentration camps and now a prominent and courageous fighter for abortion rights, has been harassed, jailed and subjected to a violent, anti-Semitic witchhunt. In capitalist Europe, particularly Italy and Spain where the hand of the Vatican rules heavy, abortion rights are under increasing attack.

We honour Bertram Wainer's courage and determination in his nearly 20-year-long struggle against Australia's oppressive abortion legislation and salute his service to women. Our call for free, safe abortion on demand coupled with free quality health care for all, and the repeal of all anti-abortion laws—in defence of the fundamental rights of women now targeted by bourgeois reaction—is integrally linked to our fight for a revolutionary labour movement which will champion the struggle of all the oppressed against their common enemy, the capitalist class and its increasingly repressive state apparatus.

* * * * *

ASp: You have a long history of fighting Australia's reactionary abortion laws and police corruption and your life has been on the line many times through this past struggle. Could you perhaps tell us briefly about your background and what led you to take up the fight for the right of women to have abortions?

Wainer: I don't think I had any particular involvement with women having abortions other than the generalised commitment to working-class people not being disadvantaged, whether it be because of their sex or the poverty of their childhood and inadequate opportunities to get education. Abortion as an issue for me—I wasn't looking for it. Here was an issue: where people, because of their class origins—that is, they were poor people—and because there's something special about women being oppressed by laws which were designed to keep the poor down and to advantage the rich. So there was nothing in me which said this is a great feminist cause and these are my sisters, and I'll be involved with it. That didn't happen like that at all. I just saw it, as it were, a little bit at a time. This woman can't get an abortion, that woman can, and that is wrong. And instead of planning a strategy, a sweeping attack, I thought, well, I'll do this, and everything happened little by little and bit by bit.

So the best that can be said of me is, yes, I cared about people and here was an issue where I could finally do something. I had always, wherever I could have, done things, because I am related to poor people. I mean I was clearly of the working class, and I guess if it had

been a question of the unemployed or the old-aged or the infirm I would have done something. I think I was doing things that time but none of them were as potentially explosive as the abortion issue. I didn't recognise it for what it was—it was just something. I'd already had fights with public hospitals because they wouldn't introduce the elderly and I had fights with the army when I was in the army because they wouldn't let me treat dependents. In other words, I was from Glasgow and we are great fighters and I'd been fighting, but as I became politicised by the abortion issue I began to see almost the emergence of a new class, a class I hadn't been aware of. I don't think it's good to separate women as is happening with feminism, but I became aware of feminist politics as a result of the first couple of years of the abortion issue. And the more I saw of abortion the more I realised how vital it was that women should be freed of the burden of having to reproduce when they didn't want to and the more I related to feminist politics.

ASp: When the Greenslopes and Townsville clinics in Queensland were raided you flew in to keep the clinics open?

Wainer: What actually happened was on the Monday when they were raided both doctors [Bayliss and Grundmann]—both have worked with me in the past—rang me for help and I had to interpret the situation as it appeared at that moment. And it seemed to me right then on the Monday when the raids occurred, that what had been done—and I thought it was a Queensland cabinet act—was that both clinics had been closed and the women had nowhere to go for abortions. The

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net effect of that would be that the doctors would be afraid to operate, the women who had the money would still be able to fly south to Sydney, the women who didn't would have to continue with the pregnancy. And so my immediate action was to ring both the doctors and say, look, I'll fly up and I'll keep Greenslopes open, because I was already registered in Queensland. So I flew up to Queensland and stayed in the clinic in Greenslopes offering it an abortion service. But the women didn't come. I think that will have to be spelled out.

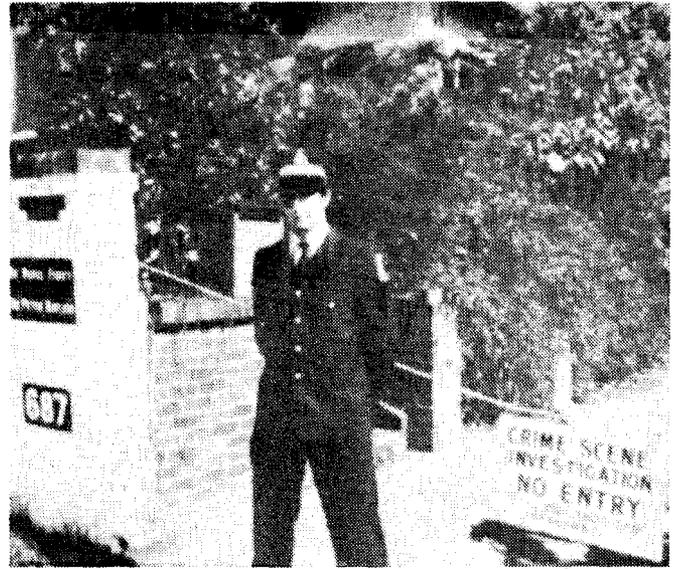
Now, I'm a foundation member of Children by Choice, which is an organisation we can talk about later on if you like. I went to Children by Choice and we decided on certain actions, and one of them was that Children by Choice would filter out the women. We clearly had a duty to the women in Queensland who were coming to Children by Choice, to say, listen, you can go to Tweed Heads for an abortion, you can go to Sydney and have an abortion, or you can go to Greenslopes and see Bert Wainer and have an abortion. But if you go and see Bert Wainer and have an abortion at Greenslopes he's going to tell the police. And I was over at Children by Choice as well and some of the women said yes, in which case I would sit down with them and say, look, I'm happy to do the abortion, it costs nothing, but we're not going to be driven back into a clandestine situation here. I'll do your abortion and once you're well I'm going along to the police and I'm going to have a press conference. I will not release your name but I'll say I did an abortion. Because it's necessary to keep pressure on Queensland cabinet.

ASp: As we understand it, the Attorney General, Mr. Harper, announced that 47,000 files had been confiscated from the clinics, and then one week later he said that only 21,000 had been confiscated and that 18,063 were retained because they related to abortion. There seems to be a discrepancy in the figures, and it remains that the women whose names are on the files are open to persecution. Do you know more about that?

Wainer: Well, I think the figures are wrong but almost everything Harper does is wrong and I think he had the wrong conception. He really ought to be back selling real estate. The issue of how many histories were seized is in dispute. The doctors say somewhere in the order of 19,000, and I think Harper just stuttered out 47,000 because I think he's a bit of a puppet and he'd been told 47,000. But whatever is the true number—it doesn't matter whether it's ten, a hundred, a thousand. The reality is that the private sexual lives of a number of women have been seized under the powers of the Commonwealth Crimes Act which is dated 1914, and in relation to an offence against an act which was written in 1861. The Queensland Criminal Court has rewritten it, but it is extracted from a 19th century act. And I don't believe that the police should ever have the right to seize medical records, and particularly not these records which relate to sexual life and the reproductive life of women. But we need more laws, or fewer laws, one or the other. We need laws to protect histories if they're seized or we need laws to prevent histories being seized.

ASp: The charges against Doctors Bayliss and Grundmann have since been dropped, I believe.

Wainer: Sure, they've been totally dropped. It's interesting that the Director of Public Prosecutions, Des Sturgess, who when he was a lawyer gave a speech to the Law Institute in Queensland and he said, "Conspiracy charges are an abomination and ought never to be allowed to be laid, except with the OK of a court, a Supreme Court judge." Now, one of the first actions as Director of Public Prosecutions is to lay conspiracy charges. You have to ask, why did he lay conspiracy charges? Now, four weeks before these raids the minister for police, Mr. Glasson, had said, "I have been advised by the Crown Law Department that it is virtually



The Courier Mail

Police close down Greenslopes clinic after May 20 anti-abortion raid.

impossible to successfully prosecute a doctor for performing an abortion in Queensland." Having said that, Glasson shot off overseas to Finland. In his absence Harper and Sturgess pulled off this raid and I have private sources—and I believe them—that the police didn't want to be in this, that they personally didn't have a great deal of heart in the raid. But Glasson had already said you can't successfully prosecute a doctor for abortion, but what can you successfully prosecute anyone for? Conspiracy! There is—one of the law lords of England has said conspiracy is an engine of government. And if you look at conspiracy charges in England and Australia they're used for political purposes, e.g. the Ananda Marga. So the doctors were charged with conspiracy although there was an endless amount of evidence they'd done abortions. They weren't denying it.

ASp: Just one more question on Queensland. I believe that vasectomies are illegal.

Wainer: Well, they've been illegal as long as... No one pays any attention to it. In 1971 after I went bankrupt, after the Kaye Inquiry, I went to Queensland and established a practice in Caloundra. It was amusing. I applied for a job running the Caloundra Hospital which

had 14 beds. It was advertising the job and I'd previously run a big army hospital in Brisbane. The minister for police said he can't have that job, publicly, because he's criticised the Queensland police. The minister for health said it's nothing to do with the minister for police, he can't say that. And they had an emergency cabinet meeting, would you believe, as I was driving to Queensland, and they came out of this emergency cabinet meeting and said, well, the health minister said, I was right, it's nothing to do with the minister for police, I will say who will get the job and Dr. Wainer won't get it. So I thought, stuff them, I don't need the job.

So I went to Caloundra and opened up general practice. And I did five vasectomies every Saturday morning there. And many doctors were doing them, but we regularly received little things saying vasectomies are illegal. And then once we received this interesting doctrine. It said it may occasionally be legal to sterilise a woman for a number of purposes, it is never ever legal to sterilise a man. Now all that's sort of interesting. You know, the politicians who make these laws are generally elderly and there is such confusion about fertility and virility. And this reflected the concern that if I sterilise another man in some way *their* fertility and virility is diminished, the politicians. Yes, it's illegal but it's openly flaunted. It's a bit like prostitution laws. As you know, certain Cabinet ministers have had

vasectomies. I believe the whole issue is now finished. John Cain [Victorian Labor Premier] will not change the laws here. He won't even reply to a letter from me.

ASp: There have been fairly widespread attacks both in the U.S. and Canada against abortion clinics, and I believe you've read about Dr. Morgentaler in *Women and Revolution*.

Wainer: I know him.

ASp: Has his case been supported internationally?

Wainer: Of course not. I'm a member of the National Abortion Federation [NAF] which is an American organisation where people with political or technological or feminist feelings about abortion get together. It's a lobby group, and I go there when I can afford it, to their meetings. Now, I raised Henry's case in their meeting last year and suggested that we raise money because he had legal fees in the order of \$100,000. I was with him last year in Canada and he was selling his house to meet the legal fees. A lot of abortionists, male abortionists, aren't the chauvinist mercenary pigs women make them out to be. This clinic doesn't make me a fortune and Henry Morgentaler and I have both gone broke on the issue. And I asked NAF to support it financially. I think he got \$300, which won't mean anything. No, he hasn't been internationally supported because there is no one to support him. Who is there to support him? He's supported by his own conscience and he's a fascinating human being. He was in a concentration camp in Germany during the Second World War. He's done 18 months in jail because of his commitment. I don't know. We don't have the money to meet that sort of legal expense. And NAF gave him humanist of the year or something. I mean that gets you a little plaque but it doesn't really compensate you for losing your home, and doing time in jail. But I think he thinks the issue is worthwhile. And insofar as he doesn't come from a wealthy family, he's not a great consumer and he has a little house out in the hills—I guess he's very happy because he's doing what he thinks is right. And he's a great guy.

ASp: In your experience have there been more attacks on abortion clinics in Australia?

Wainer: We've had a number of attacks. We've played them down. We had a little episode in the mid-seventies where a car parked out there was burned down and about a fortnight later one of our windows was broken and a petrol bomb thrown in, and I didn't pick it up. I don't know what was wrong with me, I was probably pre-menstrual or something. The bell didn't ring. A fortnight later someone actually did break in and threw a sort of molotov cocktail into one of our theatres. Now they made a terrible mistake because they closed the theatre door as they went out and that contained the fire. The one theatre was completely incinerated but it ran out of oxygen. Since then I have increased my security. If you look behind you will see that we have bars on our windows, the glass is unbreakable glass, the place is computer security. I have always lived, since the days of '69 and police corruption and organised crime, in such a fashion that no one could really kidnap me as they did to the doctor in the United States. I live well out of the city. I have

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Trotskyist League of Canada	Trotskyist League Box 7198, Station A Toronto, Ontario Canada M5W 1X8
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guard dogs.

I doubt if we have the crazies in this country that they have in the States. I've been to "Right To Life" demonstrations in the States and I've been to a "Right To Life" demo here and there was a total difference. These people can be fanatic and frenetic but they lack the sinister overtone of menace that you find in the United States. There's something intimidating about a "Right To Life" demo in the States. The anti-choice people—and I don't think you ever ought to give them nice names like "Right To Life" or "pro-life," I mean that sounds wonderful—they're really an anti-women lobby. In Sydney they play them with kid gloves, you know, and they try and play within the law.

When I finally blew up this one morning—they invaded my clinic—I called the cops and the cops came here and said, well, we can't do anything. At this stage we had crying women everywhere, the "Right To Life" were chained to my operating theatre tables and refused to move. And I said to the cop, well, OK, just get out of my way. And I rang the Commissioner of Police and I said, do you want another bloody Royal Commission, you get a divvy wagon down here in a hurry or else, you know, you won't know what's hit you. Then I went back into my operating theatre and I said, listen, you've got fucking three minutes to get out of this place or you'll all be gassed, and I turned on the anaesthetic gas. And the copper said, you can't do that. And I said, look, we know just where you stand, you said you've no authority in here, now get gassed or get out. So he got out. And the "Right To Life" at this stage started undoing their chains. They weren't going to be gassed. And as they ran out of the theatre I and a few of the other doctors started hitting them, hard. And then I turned the fire extinguishers on them and then I threw them down the back stairs and turned the hoses on them. I was beside myself with rage. I mean a real Glaswegian Gorbals rage, you see. And the TV arrived and filmed all this. There had been buckets of water flowing on them and they said, why are you doing that, doctor, and I said, I always wash the filth off my steps at this time of day. And then there was a great screaming of divvy wagons—the cops got the message, and the "Right To Life" were being arrested. And this father

who's always fasting—you know that father, some priest is always fasting down in the city—he goes up to a cop and says, I want to charge Dr. Wainer with assault, look what he's done to me, he's broken my nose. And this was the only cop in Victoria I expected this approach from, because the policeman looked at his nose and then said in a broad Glaswegian accent, "Get in there, you're lucky it wasn't me or you'd have a broken jaw as well." So we had them arrested and charged.

And I went up when the trial was on and they came up. Of course they had the best of lawyers, a QC [Queen's Council]—a Catholic QC, Catholic juniors, Catholic this. And they said, look, Dr. Wainer, it's a trivial charge, why pursue it, they'll apologise. I said, it isn't trivial, you know. It's conspiracy to trespass, going back to what I said about conspiracy charges earlier. The QC then realised I knew my law because they had conspired, and conspiracy carries seven years. So he then went back and said, look, Wainer's after you and he's got the law here and I suggest you apologise. He came back and said, look, they promise to apologise, they'll never do it again, will you not pursue the charges? Now, I had very little hope of justice in a magistrates court so I said, all right, I'll take their apologies. And he said, well, I gave it to you and I said, no, that's not good enough, I want each one of them out of there in front of the cameras. And they apologised.

Now since that day I've had no overt violence. We've had the odd person who comes and paints graffiti on the fence at night, we've had no pickets. But if we get it back—look, if they strike at me I'll strike at them, and I know where they are. And I think every abortion clinic has to take that attitude. I'm not suggesting for one moment that I would break the law, but if the law is broken by other people and the law doesn't defend me then I may have to take steps to defend my women, because they're not in a position to be hassled. They come in here, they're already weighed down with the worries of the world, they're pregnant, and all the problems. They don't want fanatics. But it depends on how nationally we cope with this new threat.

ASP: Thank you. ■

Reagan's Assault on Sex

Reactionaries holding state power, from the White House to City Hall, have launched an all-sided attack against sex. Besides the anti-homosexual hysteria over AIDS, the focal point of this reaction has centered on women's fundamental right to abortion. Two new laws are before the Supreme Court: both Pennsylvania and Illinois passed laws which, among other things, require a doctor to try to save the life of the aborted fetus. Attorney General Edwin Meese has directed the Justice Department to file a legal brief with the Supreme Court, urging it to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 ruling which gave women the constitutional right to abortion, while over 30 abortion clinics have been firebombed by right-wing terrorists in the past five years.

The deep collusion of the Reagan administration with the murderous "Right to Life" firebombers was evident at last January's 50,000-strong march of anti-abortion fanatics on the Supreme Court. Incredibly, the court police were ordered to turn in their guns and nightsticks before the march began—the first time ever court police were disarmed at a protest at the Supreme Court. "A higher source" dictated the move, citing "fear of an accident" or "another Kent State" (*Baltimore Sun*, 27 January 1985). Reagan doesn't want any of his right-wing friends hurt; more ominously, stripping the Supreme Court justices of police protection was a pointed threat by the would-be bonapartists in the White House that the high court had better heed orders from the "Supreme Commander" or else.

The far right wants to impose its views on the entire globe. North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms recently held hostage the State Department's nomination of loyal imperialist servant Winston Lord as ambassador to China, threatening a filibuster unless he got a commitment from the administration that no foreign aid funds would go even indirectly to any family planning programs in China—and he won. The White House will issue a statement of opposition to China's population control program, while Reagan has already withheld \$10 million from the UN family planning fund earmarked for China.

Domestically, the Reagan administration seeks to use its Department of Health and Human Services as a vehicle for the Moral Majority's program against sex. The 1981 Adolescent Family Life Program (read "chastity law") funded 71 projects urging teenagers to practice sexual abstinence—when the U.S. is the only advanced industrial country where teen pregnancy is actually on the rise. Reagan's attitude toward birth control is epitomized in the recent appointment as head of the federal family planning agency of one Gary E. Crum, a member of the American Life Lobby, which opposes the very existence of a federal family planning agency. Says American Life Lobby president Judie A. Brown, "I don't feel it has served any useful purpose except to create a lot of promiscuity" (*New York Times*,

13 July 1985).

The Reaganite Moral Majority attempt to impose its straitjacket vision of "one man on one woman for life" in monogamous marriage has led to endless cruelties. The Justice Department this summer delayed a \$625,000 grant to the nation's largest coalition of shelters for battered women because right-wing Congressmen objected that the shelters were "liberal, anti-family



Kagen/NY Times

"I feel like an old lady already," said Chicago teenager with two children. This state denies most oppressed access to contraception and abortion rights, then abandons them to raise children in desperate poverty.

activism," "pro-lesbian, pro-abortion" and put "the woman paramount in a selfish way" (*New York Times*, 17 July 1985)!

Bourgeois Hypocrisy and Terror Against Blacks

There have been a few—very few—holdouts for human decency against this tidal wave of reaction, for example the refusal of a California school board to accept "creationist" textbooks, and the backlash against the Jordan, Minnesota prosecutor who launched a vicious witchhunt against an entire town on hysterical "child sexual abuse" charges. A few brave souls on late night TV's David Letterman show even dared satirize the Congressional attack on "pornographic" records. But certainly the Democratic Party has done nothing to stop this frontal attack on sex, on women, on abortion rights. In August the Democratic-controlled House followed up Jimmy Carter's reactionary Hyde amendment banning federal funds for

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