

## Black Democrats, Reformists Cover Up Philly Racist Murder

# Remember MOVE Martyrs

Philadelphia, May 13 was the signature of the Reagan regime. Eleven black people were burned alive, including four children, when an army of cops cordoned off a house on Osage Avenue in West Philly and bombed it from the air, creating a holocaust that destroyed several blocks. It was mass murder against the black MOVE group—an atrocity carried out with none of the trappings of bourgeois

legality. It was calculated racist state terror orchestrated at the highest levels of the U.S. government, and implemented by the city's black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, who grotesquely continues to call his bomb an "entry device"! As Reagan's PATCO union-busting was intended to be a message of intimidation to all unionists, so the Philly holocaust was a warning to all black people, and not just black

people: don't get out of line, you could be next!

The MOVE commune, which has hurt nobody and wanted mainly just to be left alone, was the convenient target for a government "counterinsurgency"-style massacre. In the aftermath, the powers that be gambled on the combination of sheer terror and a black mayor to keep the lid on. Thus far it has worked; black Democrats

closed ranks with Goode and the reformist left has followed suit in the cover-up, turning their backs on MOVE in their agony.

Meanwhile the city's vendetta against MOVE continues. Now there are only *five* of the MOVE "family" left alive and out of jail. The city has threatened to bury the MOVE martyrs in a public grave, refusing to release

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## Smash Reagan's War Moves!

# Embattled Nicaragua

It's hard to beat Ronald Reagan when it comes to sheer imperialist arrogance. "You can say we're trying to oust the Sandinistas," he says, baldly proclaiming the United States' intent to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. Unless, he adds, they just give up the revolution and "say uncle." Supporters of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth League who recently visited the embattled Central American country report the Nicaraguan masses are responding with a defiant "screw you," scrawled on banners and chanted in demonstrations: "*¡que se rinda tu madre!*"—let your mother cry uncle (see "Nicaragua Eyewitness," page 4). And while Reagan has finally gotten Congress to renew aid to his CIA-backed counterrevolutionaries, as administration spokesmen now talk openly of plans to invade Nicaragua, the Sandinista army is whipping the "contra" mercenaries in battle after battle.

"The U.S. trade embargo against Sandinista Nicaragua is an *act of war*. An invasion may be the next step." So begins the SYL leaflet for its "Defend Nicaragua!" fundraising campaign initiated last month. Last week's news about Pentagon preparations to send in U.S. forces spells it out. According to a two-part article in the *New York Times* (4-5 June), the logistical buildup, communications networks and practice maneuvers by the American military in Central America are now "largely complete" and "adequate to carry out any likely emergency in the region." An invasion of Nicaragua, a highly placed U.S. intelligence official said, would be "like falling off a log." But the starry-eyed spooks may be singing a different tune once they've fallen off their log and begin sinking in the Central American swamp.

Democratic House Speaker O'Neill says bluntly, "I don't think the President of the United States will be happy until American troops are down there." You

don't need new "revelations" to reach that conclusion. Just look at what they've already done. Nicaragua's northern neighbor has been turned into the USS *Honduras*, a stationary weapons platform with eight airfields capable of handling C-130 cargo planes, fuel depots full to the brim, and ultra-sophisticated radar stations. Almost a dozen "exercises" in the last three years have familiarized the U.S. Army with every inch of the Honduran-Nicaraguan border areas. And now Green Berets are training the Costa Rican Civil Guard on a ranch that formerly belonged to Nicaraguan dictator Somoza, located less than ten miles from Nicaragua's southern border.

With Sandinista Nicaragua surrounded by hostile states, it won't be hard to manufacture a provocation to serve as justification for a U.S. invasion. Will it be a Gulf of Fonseca incident, or an alleged border violation by Sandinista troops such as claimed by Costa Rica last week? (Managua has proof that this was staged by ARDE contras, and the CIA's hired death squads are constantly attacking Nicaragua from their Costa Rican and Honduran sanctuaries—but that will of course be ignored when the war drums start rolling.) Already Washington's puppets are rehearsing their lines. A Costa Rican official told the *Times* that if the U.S. invaded, his government would issue a statement

"saying something like 'it is unfortunate that the Cuban and Soviet advisers were invited in, and that the Sandinistas provoked it.'" Meanwhile, the State Department is preparing to cut off diplomatic relations with Managua.

The deadly danger of U.S. invasion is very real. If this government was prepared to burn down whole city blocks in Philadelphia to "save" the neighborhood from "radicals," what won't they do to Managua? When Pentagon officers claim, "We could seal that place tighter than a drum," they're not kidding: certainly they will keep the press out. With the trade embargo they have secured the complicity of the

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WV Photo



El Viejo, Nicaragua, May 24: Sandinista army unit at demonstration honoring Germán Pomares, martyr of anti-Somoza insurrection.

# British Fascists Inflamm Mob, 38 Dead

## The Soccer Wars

LONDON—The bloody carnage of Brussels: 38 dead and 250 injured after British football thugs rampaged at the 29 May European Cup [soccer] final between Liverpool and the Milano Juventus. As grieving relatives of Italian victims flew in to collect their dead, Union Jacks were burned in the streets of Italian cities and some 50 cars with "GB" stickers were smashed up in Paris. A massive bomb was defused by police outside Marks and Spencer [a British department store] in Brussels. The European Football Association immediately banned English clubs from continental Europe for an "indefinite period"; then the International Football Association banned them from playing abroad anywhere, even in Scotland. These bans seeking to pin "collective guilt" on an entire nation serve only to fuel the chauvinist flames and must be opposed.

The fascists were in it up to their filthy necks. Fascist exploitation of the mindless thuggery which appears to be endemic to the "football industry" has become a commonplace in recent years. Recruiting leaflets for the National Front and British National Party and racist trash demanding "Kill the Niggers" were circulating freely before the match, and a banner of the Italian fascist Ordine Nuovo was also present. Two years ago fascists from across Europe converged on West Berlin in an attempt to turn a match with a visiting Turkish team into a pogromist blood-bath of immigrant Turkish workers.

Thatcher seized on the horror of Brussels as an occasion to repeat yet again her vile amalgam of football hooliganism, picket line "violence" and Irish Republicanism. Radio Moscow pointed to a more appropriate amalgam: "no matter how infamous is the tragedy that has taken place in Brussels, it stems directly from the violence applied against striking miners, partici-

pants in the CND [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament], against fighters for civil rights in Ulster, elevated to state policy."

It was the heroic miners whom Thatcher tried to crush in blood who pointed the road out of the disgusting chauvinist barbarism witnessed in Brussels. Instead of electrified fences to separate rival gangs competing in bloodthirsty patriotism, we saw French and English miners shoulder to shoulder singing the *Internationale*. During the strike a letter in the *Miner* (17 January) described a Christmas party in Maerdy Working Men's Club: "Santa turned out to be a member of a 10-person Italian delegation from Milan and Brescia who have raised more than £20,000 for the miners since the beginning of November." Indeed, in Italy now the ability of the fascists to exploit anti-English sentiment with crude "kill the British" rhetoric is significantly undercut by the memory pervasive among Italian workers that the striking miners, too, were British.

Had the miners defeated Thatcher and opened up an intensified working-class offensive against capitalist oppression and unemployment, it would have given the masses of despairing and lumpenized youth something *positive* to look to. But the Labour misleaders who in the aftermath of Brussels mutter about unemployment and underlying social causes were the very same gentlemen who stabbed the miners strike in the back while seeking to scapegoat foreign workers for domestic unemployment with their appeals for racist chauvinist import controls. And when in office themselves, the only thing they do to the unemployment figures is push them up.

Thatcher responded to Brussels by introducing a whole range of measures including yet stronger police powers, identity cards, and a ban on alcohol



Brussels, May 29: Crushed bodies of Italian soccer fans after eruption of bloody chauvinist frenzy.

Schroeder/Sipa



Der Spiegel

Fascist National Front ran amok in Brussels, adopts KKK's flag of slavery.

anywhere in the vicinity of football matches, and beating the drums for her reactionary "law and order" campaign. It will do nothing to quell the massive and aimless disaffection which festers in an epidemic of chronic unemployment, much less to stem the fascist gangs who are the openly terrorist vanguard of Thatcher's own viciously racist anti-communist strikebreaking drive for "Victorian values." But it will have the punitive effect of depriving tens of thousands of working people of one of their few pleasures in life.

Thatcher's crackdown on "football hooliganism" is part and parcel of the massive increase in open police repression consolidated during the miners strike. The gratuitous viciousness witnessed in the cop rampage at Stonehenge against harmless hippies who just wanted to listen to rock music and worship the sun is a sign of the times in Thatcher's sick, sick Britain. It's not hard to guess who will be at the receiving end of the police manhunt for the supposed culprits of Brussels and Liverpool—the largely unemployed and minority youth who rebelled against her in 1981.

The ruling class pigs who wring their hands over "football shame" are hypocritical in the extreme. Writing in 1945, George Orwell commented:

"I am always amazed when I hear people saying that sport creates good will between nations, and that if only the common peoples of the world could meet one another at football or cricket, they would have no inclination to meet on the battlefield. Even if one didn't know from concrete examples (the 1936 Olympic games, for instance) that international sporting contests create orgies of hatred, one could deduce it from general principles."  
—"The Sporting Spirit"

Football [soccer] has been a particular focus of national frenzy. Perhaps the most (in)famous case was the 1969 "football war" between El Salvador and Honduras. Although it exploded over a hotly contested World Cup semifinals match, the nationalist hatred whipped up by the two governments was over markets and land hunger (Eddy Jiménez, *La guerra no fue de fútbol* [Havana, 1974]). The result: 2,000 killed and thousands more wounded.

Add to this Hitler's glorification of Nazism at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, and the 1932 "body line" cricket test

series (which nearly led to a breach of diplomatic relations between the "Mother Country" and its faithful dominion Australia). And what about the imperialist boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics and the hysterical anti-Soviet jingoism whipped up over last summer's games in Los Angeles? Thatcher's virulently chauvinist "Falklands factor" rhetoric, either passively accepted or openly endorsed by the Labour misleaders, goes a long way toward legitimizing the fascists who wrap themselves in the Union Jack.

Mass sports were created around the turn of the century as a lightning rod to drain off the energies of working-class youth into harmless pursuits. Karl Liebknecht, founding leader of the German Socialist Youth leagues, noted in 1911 that at the Kaiser's initiative "the tomfoolery of sport is being used among the young in order to produce a mood which will estrange them from the great proletarian struggle" (*Speeches of Karl Liebknecht* [1927]). At about the same time the Boy Scouts appeared, a gentrified middle-class version of the same phenomenon; also the YMCA and the Salvation Army, which the IWW "Wobblies" called the "Starvation Army." The equivalent for lower-class youth was sweaty jockstraps.

The cult and business of spectator sports were a new "opium of the people," to use Karl Marx's phrase, when religion wouldn't do it anymore. Religion fills a need for the oppressed, and for the spectators sports is one of the few opiates for a pretty miserable condition. Sport itself becomes deformed in myriad ways, from grotesque commercialisation to its use as a rallying point for deadly national chauvinism, such as the Brussels massacre.

Run-down post-empire Britain can only continue to breed more of the same crap: racism, chauvinism, barbarism. A couple of sizable trade-union/minority mobilisations to meet fascist provocations on the streets could nip the genocidal menace in the bud. But the only way to do away with the conditions which spawn such filth is to smash capitalism through workers revolution. We need a Leninist vanguard party to lead struggles such as the miners strike, which offered hope to millions, to put an end to capitalism in all its irrational barbarity once and for all. ■



TROTSKY

### Trotsky on the Trade Unions

*In 1940, as the world was being plunged into imperialist war and Roosevelt was moving to militarize labor in this country, Trotsky wrote of the role of trade unions:*

Monopoly capitalism is less and less willing to reconcile itself to the independence of trade unions. It demands of the reformist bureaucracy and the labor aristocracy, who pick up the crumbs from



LENIN

its banquet table, that they become transformed into its political police before the eyes of the working class.... Impossible are the independent or semi-independent reformist trade unions. Wholly possible are revolutionary trade unions which not only are not stockholders of imperialist policy but which set as their task the direct overthrow of the rule of capitalism. In the epoch of imperialist decay the trade unions can be really independent only to the extent that they are conscious of being, in action, the organs of proletarian revolution.

—Leon Trotsky, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (August 1940)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# SYL Fund Drive to Defend Nicaragua

## Donate Dollars! Down with Contras!

From "Fort Honduras" to the U.S. Army's Southcom HQ in Panama, American military forces are poised for an invasion of Nicaragua. The U.S. trade embargo is an act of war, and the next step, now openly discussed by the Reagan administration, is to send in the troops. The Spartacus Youth League has undertaken a fund drive to raise urgently needed dollars for Nicaragua's defense. As Yankee guns bear down on Sandinista Nicaragua, we appeal to readers of *Workers Vanguard*, to all opponents of imperialism, to give generously to the SYL campaign.

The bipartisan embargo is supposed to starve Nicaragua into submission. Under Washington's heel for the last century, virtually every machine in Nicaragua is American-made. No dollars means no spare parts, no medicine, no production. And economic collapse would prepare the way for invasion. Now Republican "hawks" and Democratic "doves" have joined hands, using Nicaraguan president Ortega's trip to Moscow as their pretext, to vote millions in "humanitarian" aid (including helicopters!) to the CIA's "contra" terrorists. We say: Smash U.S. war



Militia women celebrate May Day 1981 in Managua.

Daily World

moves against Nicaragua!

*This is no charity drive.* The Nicaraguan masses have been courageously fighting the escalating campaign of U.S.-sponsored terror ever since the 1979 revolution which overthrew the murderous tyrant Somoza. They vow to

fight to the last man, woman and child against a Yankee invasion. We here "in the belly of the beast" must do our part. At this critical juncture it is imperative to take a stand in defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution. A contribution to the Student Committee to Defend

Nicaragua is part of the necessary class battle against Reagan reaction at home, against the criminals who salute Hitler's SS at Bitburg and firebomb black babies in Philadelphia.

From the University of California's Berkeley campus to the Norfolk shipyards, students, young workers, blacks and Latinos who know that they will be the cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism have responded enthusiastically to this campaign. Many hundreds of individuals have dug deep into their pockets, throwing in lunch money and carfare, to aid their Nicaraguan brothers and sisters under fire. Auto workers, housewives, nuns working with Salvadoran refugees have chipped in \$20 or more apiece. To date the SYL has raised \$3,319 and we are redoubling our efforts to raise the hard cash that Nicaragua desperately needs now.

The SYL is assuming all administrative costs for the campaign. Every dollar you give will go to Nicaragua. Make your "anti-contra" bution now! Make checks payable to the Student Committee to Defend Nicaragua. Mail to: SYL, Box 3118, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10008. ■

## Embattled Nicaragua...

(continued from page 1)

Democrats, and may have pushed the Sandinistas past the turning point on the "Cuban road" to consolidation of a Soviet-aligned workers state—all in order to justify sending in U.S. forces to crush "Sandino-Communism." After the non-denial denials ("the President has no plans," etc.) will the next step be a naval blockade, as Democratic presidential candidate Mondale called for last fall?

But the Pentagon's plans are infused with wishful thinking. It would only take two weeks to gain control of 60 percent of the Nicaraguan population, estimates the director of operations at

overwhelm 700-plus middle-aged Cuban construction workers on that tiny Caribbean island, and the Americans are still there. And don't forget that today's contra cutthroats were yesterday's Somoza Guardsmen. They couldn't even hold off a few thousand Sandinistas then, much less overwhelm a professional army of 50,000 soldiers plus tens of thousands of armed militia men and women who are prepared to defend their revolution to the death. Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega defiantly answered reports from Washington of invasion preparations:

"It might be best that we have to face a direct intervention by American troops, so that after defeating the intervention, which we are definitely capable of doing, the revolutionary process can be consolidated."

—New York Times, 6 June

If anyone had doubts about the ability of the Sandinista army to cream

FDN ("Nicaraguan Democratic Force") contra group, inflicting 100 casualties. On March 22, elite "Irregular Warfare Battalions" (BLI) overran a contra regional command (some 600 troops) at the appropriately named site of La Explosión. And at the beginning of April, EPS soldiers killed over 200 mercenaries in a week-long battle less than 20 miles away from the FDN's main base of Las Vegas, just over the border in Honduras. According to Sandinista army officials, the contras have suffered 1,200 dead and wounded in the last two months.

Simultaneous with the army offensive, Nicaraguan authorities have been relocating rural families out of the war zone. Since the beginning of March more than 40,000 people have been removed, turning whole districts into "free fire zones." While the BLIs (there are now a dozen of these battalions, with 600 members each) are tracking the contras down in the hills, the EPS can now use its heavy guns without fear of civilian casualties. "What they do is just pick out a grid square on the map and saturate it with artillery fire," according to a military expert quoted by the *New York Times* (4 June). "Then they move on to the next grid square. It is an effective tactic." So effective, in fact, that it has sent the contras fleeing from their border camps into the interior of Honduras, whereupon Honduran officials announced that such "armed bands," which have been tolerated so long as they stayed out of sight and had the backing of Washington, would be disarmed.

Under pressure across the board, the contras attempted a publicity coup by striking at the Caribbean coast city of Bluefields on the morning of May 16. In this region, whose inhabitants speak English and native Indian languages rather than Spanish, there has been much discontent with the Sandinistas. But the ARDE contras were quickly overwhelmed by the local civil defense, people's militia and soldiers of the EPS, so quickly that the mercenaries had to abandon scores of dead on the battlefield as they fled for their lives. That day 71 contras were killed in three different battles in the area.

From Washington to Managua, everyone understands that the contras

are simply stalking horses for a U.S. invasion, and the Nicaraguan people didn't lose an entire generation—50,000 dead—to get rid of the butcher Somoza only to lie down for Reagan. The Nicaraguans' determined resistance will spark outbursts of protest throughout Latin America and in the United States as well, where the Vietnam syndrome is alive and well, despite the Reaganites' "New Patriotism" hoopla. A solid majority of the American people opposes U.S. intervention to overthrow the Sandinistas. And among the working class, memories of Vietnam are so vivid that there could be *labor strikes against the war* from the first day of an invasion of Central America.

This call, for militant class struggle at home against imperialist aggression abroad, has been uniquely raised by the Spartacist League, from Indochina to Central America. We also point out that the U.S. army has an Achilles' heel—the high proportion of black and minority soldiers generally, who went into the military to escape poverty. They're not going to be eager to fight their brothers in Central America on behalf of a government that just bombed black Philadelphia any more than they were in Vietnam. The Nicaraguan Revolution can ignite struggles for workers revolution far beyond the tiny Central American country. But that requires authentic, internationalist communist leadership. The Trotskyists, fighting for a world party of socialist revolution, demand: Defend Nicaragua—Complete, Extend the Revolution! ■



Gentile/Picture Group

**Crush the contras: crack Sandinista army brigade ferried into action by Soviet-made helicopters.**

the U.S. Southern Command in Panama. "The U.S. would come in heavily for a month or so, mostly with air strikes against major facilities," said one American "political-military officer." "Then a new government would be put into place, and it would come with its own army." Sure, just like Grenada was supposed to be a walkover. But it took 20,000 U.S. troops (counting those on the ships and on land) a whole week to

the contras, they have now been dispelled. Daniel Ortega noted that in continuous combat with the CIA's private army over the last weeks "our fighters have been pushing mercenary forces toward their bases in Honduran and Costa Rican territory, naturally at gunpoint." He added, "There is no other way." The intensive fighting began in early March as Sandinista army (EPS) soldiers broke up an offensive of the

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# Defend, Complete, Extend the Revolution!

## Nicaragua Eyewitness

Sandinista leaders have proclaimed 1985 "the year to finish off the contras," and the war effort can be felt throughout the country. Comrades of the international Spartacist tendency who visited Nicaragua both before and after Ronald Reagan imposed a trade embargo May 1 report that Managua itself is quiet: aside from the numerous youths in fatigues (many of them on leave), the most noticeable evidence of the fighting is the large number of war casualties in wheelchairs and on crutches. At the headquarters of the CST (Sandinista Labor Federation) our comrades heard two soldiers discussing the recent fighting. They had been particularly impressed at the bravery of an all-women unit of an infantry reserve brigade which had taken an enemy position alone, in fighting near the Honduran border.

In Matagalpa and Jinotega, in the heart of the mountainous coffee country, everyone from 15 to 50 seems to be carrying a Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifle. Last December there were grisly contra atrocities against coffee pickers in the region. But overall the harvest was a success with 80 percent of the crop picked, much of it by volunteer labor from youth and government employees as well as at least 500 North American *brigadistas*. While one of our comrades was with a tour at a resettlement camp north of Jinotega, there were reports of a firefight with contras nearby. Along the road as the bus returned to town, local militias came out prepared to fight; they cheered with relief when they saw no one was harmed.

The fate of the militias is an index of the development of the revolution. Immediately after the triumph of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in July 1979, all non-FSLN militias were dissolved and guns collected from the population. At first, the Sandinista militias were organized both in workplaces and communities, though frequently the militia men and women trained without arms. The factory militias were largely dissolved, however, following militant union struggles in 1980-81 which led to the arrest of leftist labor and political leaders. In 1983 came a turn: the slogan of the fourth anniversary of the Sandinista triumph was "All Arms to the People." And following the U.S. invasion of Grenada that fall, guns were widely distributed to the locally based Sandinista People's Militias (MPS). This past February 26 a national gathering of the MPS was held in Managua with some 70,000 armed participants.

### "War Communism Without the Communism"

In Chile, Nixon prepared the road to the bloody 1973 Pinochet coup with a program of disruption to "make the economy scream." Certainly in Nicaragua, the U.S. imperialists have been doing their best to "destabilize" the economy. The sugar quota was canceled and sales of American wheat were cut off several years ago. Nicaraguan requests for loans from "multinational" development banks are routinely sidetracked or voted down in deference to Washington. And contra sabotage actions have cost the country an estimated \$1.1 billion—more than twice Nicaragua's annual export earnings. Up to 1983, the economy progressed steadily, even while the rest of the continent went into a downward spiral under the impact of the imperialist banks' credit cutoff. But eventually the combination of pressures from Wall Street and the White House took their toll, and in the last couple years there has been a



WV Photo  
**Managua, May 16: Contingent of mothers of fallen Nicaraguan soldiers at Sandinista demonstration vow to fight to the end against imperialist aggression.**

definite deterioration in the Nicaraguan masses' meager standard of living.

On February 8, Daniel Ortega announced a series of emergency measures described in the *Washington Post* (31 March) as "Sandinista Reaganomics." In order to combat the mushrooming black market, subsidies for 22 basic products were eliminated. The cost of beans, rice, milk, eggs, chickens, beef, sugar and cooking oil doubled overnight. Then in early April fuel prices were tripled, leading to a similar increase in the cost of all forms of transport. This austerity program has had a sharp impact on the living standards of the poor and working people. Although the minimum wage was increased 76 percent in March, the increase doesn't nearly match the inflation. In April, with the daily



WV Photo  
**Empty shelves in Managua supermarket, as U.S. embargo seeks to seal off Nicaragua.**

minimum wage at about 150 córdobas (roughly \$2), we found that a Pepsi cost 25 córdobas and a watery bean soup at a *comedor popular* (people's dining hall) was 60. This "IMF austerity without the IMF" necessarily discourages the Nicaraguan masses, who now talk of *their children* having a better life.

After 1979, for the first time the poor in Nicaragua could occasionally (once or twice a month) afford to eat meat. No more—our comrades reported nowhere seeing cuts of beef on sale for household consumption in the "popular" barrios. Life in the poor neighborhoods will also feel the government's freeze on *all* new investment for social service projects (lighting, housing, sewage). Meanwhile, the Sandinistas have angered the middle class by introducing three new taxes: a capital gains tax, a stiff 15 percent value added (sales) tax and a "presumed

earnings" (!) tax for the self-employed. And the scarcity of imported goods affects all classes, so the poor can't buy powdered milk and medicine and the middle class can't get toilet paper or designer jeans. The country is already in a war economy: 40 percent of the national budget goes for defense needs, and more than a third of the gross national product is taken up by the military according to *Envío* (March 1985), published by the Central American Historical Institute.

The impact of the austerity policies on the Nicaraguan masses was brought home by a visit to a working-class district of León, the country's second city. A popular insurrection took León a month before Somoza fell, and the town was ruled under communal "*poder popular*" (people's power) until Sandinista forces showed up and took control. Two young mothers proudly recalled how they took the National Guard bastion, how the people had danced in the streets with tambourines the night the Fortín fell. All in all, things are better today: they can walk all over town without fear, something they could never do under the arbitrary terror of the *Guardia*; they have real homes (one-room cinder-block houses constructed after a hurricane destroyed the barrio); and their children are going to school, learning to read and write. The poverty was still overwhelming, however: supper consisted of a few bits of fresh cheese and *pieces* of tortillas. They spoke of the shortages in government-sponsored stores, the difficulty in obtaining medicine, the general high cost of living. But they weren't complaining.

The response of the Sandinista leadership to the U.S. trade embargo has been to call for more "sacrifices and unity." Even a revolutionary workers and peasants government in Nicaragua would face economic retrenchment in the face of the Yankee economic and military aggression. But in order to maintain the FSLN's "mixed economy" scheme, the poor get sacrifices while the capitalists get subsidies. Part of the program of drastic consumer price increases was to increase the prices paid to the producer. And to "stimulate exports" the government is paying cattle ranchers and cotton growers for part of their production in *dollars*, supposedly to be used for buying spare parts, pesticides and the like. A whole system of "Certificates of Deposit in Dollars" has been set up for the private sector. Moreover, just days before Reagan

decreed the American trade embargo, Nicaragua paid \$5.4 million to the International Monetary Fund, making it one of the few Third World countries to finish paying off the imperialist bankers' bloodsucking cartel.

Another view of the austerity was gained by Spartacist comrades who visited the FANATEX factory on the outskirts of Managua, which with 1,500 workers is the largest textile plant in Nicaragua. In its May Day message, the FSLN leadership announced the suppression of "payment in kind" to various sectors of the Nicaraguan working class. At FANATEX, employees were sold 15 yards of cloth a month at the cost of production, which could then be resold at far higher market prices bringing in an additional \$150 a month—an amount equal to their money wages. According to the FSLN organ *Barricada* (17 May), "Payment in kind, which at one point was a just demand of the workers, ended up stimulating speculation and hoarding, lowered the level of production and was deforming the consciousness of the workers." Doubtless, this practice feeds into the black market, but it is a substantial part of the workers' earnings and a primitive protection against inflation which must be defended until it is replaced by a sliding scale of wages and hours.

In mid-May the FANATEX workers stopped work for two days in defense of their wages paid in kind. The government responded with a barrage of propaganda about "privileged" textile workers, calling the leftist CAUS (Trade Union Action and Unity Federation) union, affiliated with the Communist Party (PCN), "provocateurs" for inciting the workers to "disrupt production." In 1980-81, the workers at this key factory struck several times, leading the Sandinistas to arrest over 100 CAUS/PCN activists and shut the plant for "reorganization" (see "FABRITEX: Strikebreaking Sandinista-Style," *WV* No. 331, 3 June 1983). Even though the government management did its best to weed out "troublemakers" in reopening the plant months later, it continued to be the most advanced contingent of the Nicaraguan proletariat. In 1983 out of a total of 700 workers then working at the factory, 100 had been mobilized in army reserve battalions to fight the contras. Over a third of the workers are women, who receive equal pay for equal work—a concrete gain of the revolution.

Visiting the plant both before and a couple of days after the strike, our comrades found plenty of evidence of socialist consciousness among the workers. Pictures of Lenin and Che Guevara were prominently placed among the scores of automatic looms. In the union hall writings of Lenin were plentiful, notably his "April Theses" in which the Bolshevik leader of the 1917 Russian October Revolution called for the working class to take power. We also found that despite the mobilization of FSLN cadres (CST general secretary, leaders of the Sandinista youth and women's organizations) to explain to the workers the "error" of their ways, even pro-government CST union officials supported the workers' demands. This time the government backed off, maintaining payment in kind until July and setting up a commission to study the question.

The Nicaraguan proletariat today does not have the consciousness of a revolutionary vanguard, and indeed, that is not the role assigned to it by the Sandinista leadership. In fact, the FSLN *comandantes* frequently refer to industrial workers as the "rear guard" of

the struggle, whose job is to just keep on working. A *Barricada* editor told us that the various mass organizations had asked the Sandinistas to call demonstrations against the trade embargo, but the party said no. The one organized protest was a mobilization in the barrios on May 16 by the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS). In Managua's Zone 8, representing the eastern working-class districts, we observed about 1,000 people marching with drums, masks and chants of "How do we defend the revolution? By constructing socialism! How do we construct socialism? By defending the revolution!" A sign carried by a delegation of "Mothers of Heroes and Martyrs" declared:

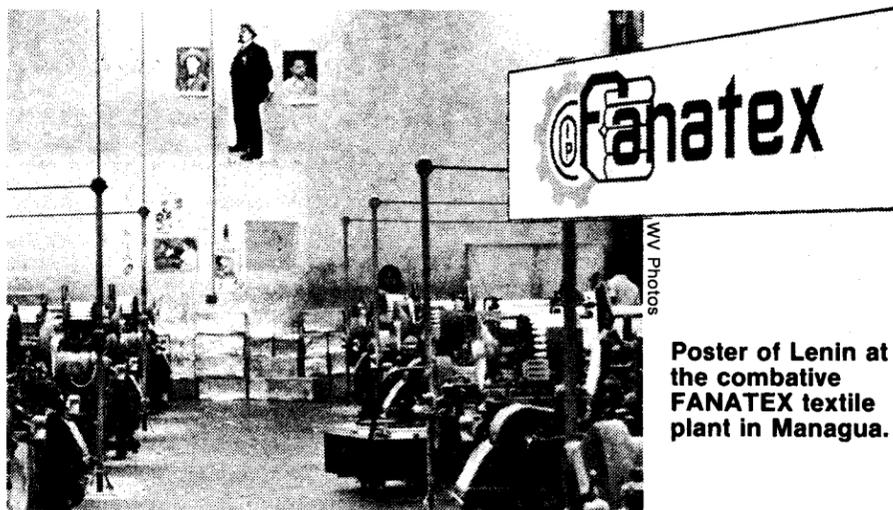
"Many have left, others will go. We remain who have to stay here, those of us who will never sell out or give up. If there is an invasion we will die with dignity like the General of Free Men, Augusto César Sandino. Free Fatherland or Death."

The workers and poor of Nicaragua have given ample proof of their will to fight, notably in the *three* national insurrections during 1978-79 which finally brought down the Somoza dictatorship. But they need to expropriate the capitalists and undertake a socialist reorganization of society. This can be done concretely in the economic crisis which is today sweeping Nicaragua. In explaining the need for the government's program of cutbacks, *Barricada Internacional* (4 April) inadvertently demonstrates the impossibility of a "pro-worker" policy under the capitalist "mixed economy":

"The national budget which included subsidies to keep down the costs of products and public services, grew disproportionately, leaving huge fiscal deficits each year that were financed by simply increasing the money supply....

"The bold investments in large-scale social, productive and infrastructure projects put an enormous quantity of money into circulation with no productive basis....

"The great amount of money in circulation caused an increased demand for goods, which, in turn, generated inflation by increasing pressure on prices of products in ever shorter supply.



Poster of Lenin at the combative FANATEX textile plant in Managua.

gua today:

"In point of fact, the whole question of control boils down to who controls whom, i.e., which class is in control and which is being controlled. In our country, in republican Russia, with the help of the 'authorised bodies' of supposedly revolutionary democracy, it is the landowners and capitalists who are still recognised to be, and still are, the controllers. The inevitable result is the capitalist robbery that arouses universal indignation among the people, and the economic chaos that is being artificially kept up by the capitalists. We must resolutely and irrevocably, not fearing to break with the old, not fearing boldly to build the new, pass to control over the landowners and capitalists by the workers and peasants. And this is what our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks fear worse than the plague."

Today in Nicaragua, the Sandinistas also fear any measures which infringe on capitalist property. Yet Reagan's onslaught may force their hand. The internal situation in Nicaragua is objectively closer to that of Soviet Russia in mid-1918, after the proletariat had seized state power and was facing a civil war launched by the defeated bourgeoisie and its tsarist White Guards. These "contras" of their day also were backed by the imperialists, who soon invaded in hopes of overthrowing the Soviet regime, and by the remaining capitalists. Thus the Bolsheviks as a measure of self-defense had to go beyond workers

Sandinistas to complete the social revolution or fall victim to bloody counterrevolution, as the contradictions of the Nicaraguan Revolution are brought to the flash point.

At one location in Nicaragua a Spartacist comrade ran into a soldier-construction worker and asked him about the U.S. trade embargo and changes since the revolution. The soldier replied: "Sandinismo is only a word. The bourgeoisie enriches itself while the proletariat gets poorer. We have made a revolution, but we have yet to make the revolution. Have you heard of the expression 'class struggle'?" Such militants represent the promise of a socialist future for the desperately impoverished and magnificently combative Nicaraguan masses.

### For Revolutionary War Throughout Central America!

At the February 26 national mobilization of the Sandinista People's Militias the favorite slogan was "Fascists, thieves, hitch up your pants—here comes the working class with all its battalions!" This slogan must be turned into reality, and that means recognizing that the heavy battalions of the proletariat are not in Nicaragua. The front line of defense of Nicaragua runs through San Salvador, where a combative workers movement is re-emerging after several years of clandestine existence; through Mexico, where a powerful, five-million-strong proletariat is groaning under IMF-dictated austerity; it includes the capitals and industrial centers of Latin America, where a Yankee invasion would be met with explosions of popular anger, and especially the class struggle of the American workers.

In the midst of last November's "MIG crisis," as American SR-71 "Black Bird" spy planes were daily causing sonic booms over Managua to sow panic in the population, Luis Carrión, vice minister of the interior and member of the Sandinistas' nine-man directorate, spoke to a meeting of FSLN cadres and asked the question on everyone's lips: "Is it possible for this little Nicaragua to defeat the attack, the war of Yankee imperialism?" His answer: yes, because "what is involved is a war between an imperial army, fighting for a completely unjust cause, far from its country, confronting an entire people.... The resistance and the tenacious, heroic and determined struggle of our people will make possible the mobilization of many forces in the world and within the United States itself. We are going to fight basically with our own forces, but we are not going to fight alone" (*Barricada*, 21 November 1984).

"Little Nicaragua" must not stand alone against the most powerful imperialist war machine in history. As long as they are forced to fight "basically with our own forces," it will be a grossly unequal contest in which the U.S. can win militarily if it is prepared to pay the price in terms of hundreds and thousands of American dead. It is not just the self-determination of a Central American people that is at stake; it is the fate of a revolution that could spark a conflagration throughout the continent, a revolution that tops U.S. imperialism's anti-Soviet hit list. The next target on Reagan's counterrevolutionary itiner-

ary is Havana, and then it's on to Moscow. That is why we have insisted, "Defense of Cuba/USSR begins in Central America." It is the duty of the Soviet leadership, and above all of the American working class, to defend the Nicaraguan Revolution to the hilt as a matter of proletarian internationalism and direct defense of the conquests of October.

Perhaps Daniel Ortega was trying to say something of the sort to Gorbachev during his recent trip to Moscow. He reportedly got a guarantee of continued oil deliveries, crucial because Nicaragua has been cut off even by its Contadora "friend" Mexico under the pressure of U.S. blackmail. But the Kremlin communiqué pointedly limited Soviet assistance to "economic development, and also political and diplomatic support"—that is, *not military support*—for Nicaragua's "efforts to uphold its sovereignty." Likewise, at the time of Reagan's Grenada invasion, Fidel Castro claimed in his 26 October 1983 press conference that Cuba "lack[s] the air and naval means to send direct assistance" to his Sandinista *compañeros* in the event of a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua. Such statements at bottom reflect the narrow nationalist consciousness of Stalinist bureaucrats who seek above all else "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. They do not see that failure to come to the aid of a revolution in Uncle Sam's "backyard" only *emboldens* the Yankee beast.

Ortega can't have been surprised by Moscow's reaction, for the Sandinistas wear the same nationalist blinders (though it's their revolution that's at risk). Most importantly, they have given the Salvadoran leftist insurgents the cold shoulder for several years now, ever since Washington began screaming about the Sandinistas "exporting revolution," and started its "contra" mercenary army and its threatening military exercises next door in Honduras. Peruvian liberal author Mario Vargas Llosa in a recent article in the *New York Times Magazine* (28 April) quotes Daniel Ortega saying to him in an interview that:

"We're willing to stop the movement of military aid, or any other kind of aid, through Nicaragua to El Salvador, and we're willing to accept international verification. In return, we're asking for only one thing: that they don't attack us...."

And last week Nicaraguan defense minister Humberto Ortega remarked: "The United States can coexist perfectly well with a revolution like ours" (*New York Times*, 7 June).

In talking with Sandinista officials our comrades regularly brought up the question of El Salvador and the need for a joint struggle against the common enemy—U.S. imperialism and its local puppets. And just as regularly they were given the standard FSLN response, as we heard from an editor at *Barricada*: "The best way for Nicaragua to help Salvadoran leftists is to defend Nicaragua from the Yankees. Anything else *continued on page 14*



Big Pine "maneuvers," February 1983: U.S. has turned Honduras into giant staging area for invasion.

"Consequently, a large 'black market' developed.... Another pressure was the growing proportion of the working class who could not afford the increased prices with their salaries and so were turning to this type of commerce as a source of income."

In his "Transitional Program" written in 1938 as the founding document of the Fourth International, Leon Trotsky, basing himself on the experience of the October Revolution, raised a series of demands to mobilize the working class for socialist revolution. Among these demands were calls for the formation of factory committees and workers militias, for workers control and the expropriation of the capitalists. Such demands come straight out of Lenin's revolutionary struggle in 1917. On the eve of October, as famine and devastation due to the imperialist war threatened the Russian people, Lenin wrote his pamphlet "The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It." Its message is fully applicable to Nicaragua

control and *expropriate the bourgeoisie*. This gave rise to "war communism" in which everything was indeed subordinated to the task of winning the civil war, and the workers willingly made enormous sacrifices to defend their revolution.

But as we approach Year Six of the Nicaraguan Revolution, 60 percent of the economy is still in the capitalists' hands and the workers are called upon to give up their miserable 15 yards of cloth in order to fill the bosses' bank accounts with Certificates of Deposits in Dollars. Under the blows of U.S. imperialism the Sandinistas' emergency measures amount to trying to erect "war communism" without the communism. The petty-bourgeois FSLN *comandantes* are still trying to walk the tightrope precariously balancing between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, internationally and at home. But by imposing a U.S. trade embargo, Ronald Reagan has cut the rope, forcing the

### Spartacist Forum

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

# MOVE...

(continued from page 1)

them to their kin. A lien has been placed against the MOVE house on Osage Avenue. Louise James, owner of the home, who lost her son in the massacre, is to be barred from returning to her neighborhood "by seizing her property through condemnation, if necessary" (*New York Times*, 8 June). In an interview with *WV* on May 30, Louise James said: "The mayor bombed my house, murdered, burned to death eleven members of my family, and is now charging me to demolish the remains... You know, he can rebuild those 61 homes, but he can't reconstruct my son... There's no architects out here that can manufacture or draw up a blueprint for my babies."

Ramona Africa, the only surviving adult from the inferno, is in prison hospital with bail set at \$3.2 million. MOVE members, who have been denied visitation rights, fear for her life. MOVE members jailed since 1978 are now under "special custody" and close observation. *Free Ramona Africa and all the MOVE prisoners!*

The whole thing stinks of CO-INTELPRO, the FBI program under which Panthers and other black radicals were framed up or assassinated outright. Two days before the bombing, FBI agents met with Philly police chief Gregore Sambor. Now, among those chosen by Goode to constitute a "commission of inquiry" is one Neil J. Welch, a former FBI agent who headed the Philadelphia FBI from 1975 to 1978, then headed the New York office. The job of this "inquiry" will be to formally give the stamp of approval to police-state terror against the government's chosen victims.

The Osage Avenue holocaust was a coordinated state murder plot, an unspeakable crime which should have been met with massive, militant labor-centered protest by all those who defend basic democratic rights, not to mention simple human decency. In this viciously racist country, it is an acid test for all who claim to champion the cause of black liberation. That test has been failed, and spectacularly, by all the assorted reformists who, masquerading as socialists, seek to cuddle up to the black Democrats, like Goode and Jesse Jackson. For Jackson, the Philly inferno presents a chance to push a little "black capitalism": in a press conference he called on the mayor "to ensure that black contractors get a share of the work of rebuilding the 61 homes destroyed in the fire" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 5 June).

## Making the Victims into the Criminals

MOVE is, first of all, a black group, and one which has been the target of a

vicious barrage of racist propaganda painting them simultaneously as a "radical political" organization and as wild-eyed violent crazies, a sort of all-black analogue of the "Symbionese Liberation Army." In fact the eclectic MOVE group reflects a long American tradition of attempted non-cooperation with the state on moral/religious/political grounds, a tradition expressed in all kinds of examples, from the occasional Quaker pacifist who refuses to fight in a war to the right-wing nutcase tax resister. MOVE members see themselves as a family, a supportive social unit which seeks to withdraw in despair from the modern evils around them. The Soviet Union's *Pravda* nicely captured the intersection in MOVE of the utopian-commune tradition and the race question:

"That religious sect was sharply critical of the 'boons' of industrial capitalism and preached man's return to nature. The outcasts of American society, most of them blacks, as often is the case in the United States, were looking for an escape from their real problems in an unreal world."

—quoted in *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 21 May

But most of America's professed defenders of black people want to paint MOVE in very different terms. For the U.S. Communist Party, which is supposed to follow the Moscow line, MOVE is an "anti-social cult group" and "cultists who obviously had become a menace to the community, but whose 'crimes' certainly did not warrant such extreme barbaric measures" (*Daily World*, 24 May). What the CP wants, obviously, are more moderate barbaric measures. Why aren't the American Stalinists toeing the Moscow line? It's simple—the centerpiece of the CP's politics is open support to "black elected officials" and the Democratic Party generally; in other words, they're more responsive to their man in Philly, Mayor Wilson Goode, than to their friends in the Kremlin. So the CP echoes Jesse Jackson's call for a Congressional inquiry (read: whitewash) and has demanded the resignation of everyone responsible for the Osage Avenue holocaust, except the black mayor.

So MOVE—which doesn't believe in killing animals, including roaches and rodents, or washing with soap—was "unpopular with the neighbors." But can anyone really believe that it was the neighbors' complaints that were the cause when 600 Philly cops mounted a massive murderous assault on MOVE in 1978? When MOVE defended their home and a cop got killed, the vindictive state slammed nine MOVE members in jail; they are still there. MOVE wasn't cowed; they continued agitating that their jailed comrades should be freed, including broadcasting from loudspeakers at night.

In the present climate of the Reagan gang's drive toward "strong-state"

## Philly Inferno: Solidarize with MOVE, Victims of Racist Murder!

### SL Press Release

30 May 1985

The Spartacist League will not attend today's demonstration in Philadelphia, nominally called to protest the 13 May genocide in and firebombing of black West Philadelphia. Our intent and desire to participate in such an action was in order to solidarize with and defend the victims of Reagan/Meese/Sambor/Goode's racist murder: the MOVE organization. MOVE has communicated to us that, for utterly justifiable reasons, it will not attend today's event. And therefore, we will not.

Eleven MOVE members were massacred without even the fig leaf of "legality" by the Philadelphia cops. Even as they mourn their dead,

including four dead babies, MOVE can expect no different treatment on the streets of Philadelphia today. We have independent verification of the malice of this state at the highest levels. The Spartacist League General Counsel yesterday contacted the U.S. Justice Department to inform them of our possible presence at today's demonstration and to warn them that they would be held accountable for any violence against the protest. We made clear that we wanted no trouble. We were answered with a bitter and surly retort.

No indication has been given by the organizers of today's protest—the "Philadelphia Committee for Humanity and Justice"—that MOVE will be defended or given the respect their martyrdom demands. We have no interest in lending our forces and good name to a gathering which has effectively cut off the participation of the MOVE victims.

bonapartist terrorism, insults to authority tend to be met with mind-boggling overkill. So right-wing survivalists start getting incinerated in their bunkers; so in the Brinks robbery dragnet hundreds of cops with massive heavy artillery surround a farmhouse in rural Mississippi to arrest Cynthia Boston (who was 1,000 miles away from the "crime"). The Reagan gang has revved up a massive machinery of state terrorism—to fight "terrorists," of course, and if there aren't any they'll invent some. The motors of the "Blue Thunder" attack helicopter are purring and the cops' bosses are itching to try out all their counterinsurgency hardware on real people. So for the "crime" of sanitary violations and unpaid utility bills, a bomb is dropped on MOVE; when they try to surrender, women and children are driven back into the inferno by a hail of bullets. The cops fire 10,000 rounds; deliberately, the raging flames are not fought until eleven people are incinerated, their corpses burned beyond recognition, and 61 houses are destroyed.

As we said, MOVE is a black group and though they aren't centrally political the fact that they are black makes them a target of a highly political state war which is both an ideological crusade and a campaign of physical extermination. The state's war needs to make the government's most annoying perceived opponents into non-people to whom anything can be done. Then something horrifying is done to them, as an unmistakable message of intimidation to all the oppressed. And racism is integral to the message. Take the 1979 Greensboro, North Carolina massacre when five leftist demonstrators at a rally against the Klan were assassinated in broad daylight in an operation involving the KKK, the Nazis, the cops and feds. Black people all over the country understood the intended message that black lives are cheap, and foremost among those at risk are any "uppity" blacks who resist racist oppression (as well as "reds," the "extremists" who defend black rights). They are intended to understand the same message from the Philly holocaust.

### SWP & Co. Squirm for Mayor Goode

When the shock wears off in Philadelphia, massive anger against the mayor could sweep the black population. Some of the reformists who think they're clever, like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), want to make an apology on behalf of Goode, since he isn't going to make one. So the SWP, the Consumer Party and their similars came together in a liberal/reformist lash-up, the "Citizens' Committee for Justice and

Humanity," announcing a demonstration in Philadelphia for May 30. By keeping MOVE out of it they were doing the government's work, trying to head off a real protest against this grotesque racist atrocity.

The Citizens' Committee hesitated to openly spit on the MOVE martyrs. At the same time, participation by MOVE in the protest would transform a crocodile-tears event into a display of solidarity with those placed beyond the pale by the racist media barrage—and by MOVE's own forthright condemnations of Mayor Goode. At a planning meeting of the Citizens' Committee held two days before the demonstration, this



Meyers/NY Times

### Guilty of Murder: Mayor Goode, Police Chief Sambor.

cabal debated how to deal with the MOVE "problem."

The reformists want to separate themselves, for the record, from the Osage Avenue massacre. But of course they really do not want to get anywhere near the firing line of the state's vendetta against MOVE. We revolutionists want to serve notice, as massively as we can, that MOVE is not isolated non-persons—"an injury to one is an injury to all!" But the reformists want to straddle the line between MOVE and the murderers of MOVE. So they set their operation up, consciously, as the spokesmen for pro-Goode types shocked by "excessive" force, for the "respectable" blacks whose houses got burned down. They effectively excluded MOVE from being a part of the demonstration by subjecting them to a degrading debate at the planning meeting over whether MOVE was too far out (or too hostile to the mayor?) to speak. MOVE was looking for a way to

## MOVE Victims: "We Are Not Suicidal"

### "Indict Mayor Goode for Murder!"

On May 30 *Workers Vanguard* interviewed Louise James, whose son and brother were among the eleven blacks grotesquely murdered in the Philly inferno; she and her sister LaVerne courageously defied the state's targeting of surviving MOVE supporters.

"LaVerne and I want to make it publicly known that we are under surveillance, that you are not to believe for one minute that LaVerne is desirous of blowing her brains out, that Louise has some kind of suicidal tendencies as far as hanging herself. Our loss is certainly heavy on us. We've lost a brother and I've lost a

son and we certainly are heavy with the burden of that grief. However, we are not suicidal. So if our bodies are found anywhere, don't you even let anybody to tell you that, well, Louise capitulated to her grief, LaVerne was so devastated that she couldn't deal with it any longer. We are out here to do what we have to do. And we're not looking for investigation, we are looking for indictments! You know, what the man did is known all over the nation. What we're saying is, when are the indictments gonna come? Indict that man [Philadelphia mayor Wilson Goode] for murder—and everybody who conspired with him to murder."

demonstrate their outrage and grief, so three MOVE members had found time between funerals to attend the planning meeting—where pig “leftists” toyed with the idea of telling the survivors what they could and couldn’t talk about at the rally, if they were permitted to talk at all!

A press release from the Citizens’ Committee boasts that “Three of our founders were negotiators between MOVE and the City on May 13th.” Do you think they don’t know that the “negotiations” were a cynical hoax serving to keep MOVE cooled down while the awesome machinery was being assembled for a one-sided war game with real bullets and bombs? In a similar vein is the Citizens’ Committee’s seven-point program, distributed as their leaflet at the march, which scandalously *does not mention the word “MOVE”!*

We of the Spartacist League meanwhile were actively looking for a way to demonstrate our solidarity with the victims of racist massacre by the state. First, having got word of a demo in Philly May 18 announced by Progressive Labor, we had offered to build and participate in it, but PL characteristically told us to go to hell and had a little demo entirely of their own. (Now PL’s *Challenge* is self-critical of how puny and insignificant their sectarian rally was.)

Then we heard that the May 30 demo was being planned. MOVE said they were going, and so we started to go all out. But what we heard about the planning meeting, from a couple of friends who were there and from MOVE, was worrisome in the extreme. The behavior at the planning meeting—“insensitivity” does not begin to describe it—and the stories we were hearing about the cops’ behavior around the city in the aftermath of the inferno suggested no reason for confidence in what the gutless reformists would do if the cops came looking for more MOVE blood on Thursday.

We told MOVE we were committed to turning out 100 Spartacists to stand with them; we tried to bring in other organized forces on short notice (the Malcolm Shabazz mosque in Harlem indicated interest, if MOVE would be there). We served notice on the Justice Department and cops that they would be held responsible for any violence. Witnesses are also a deterrent so we phoned the major bourgeois papers—who heard from us about the demo, not from its purported organizers—and foreign press representatives.

But MOVE decided not to go, and we have every sympathy with their reasons. So we stood down, with a bitter press release: if MOVE’s not going, we’re not going (see page 6).

The reformists, having evaded the problematic MOVE presence, held their demo, which was about 75 people for most of the time. The bourgeois press did turn up and was pointedly inquisitive about the obvious question: why isn’t MOVE here? The SWP et al. were just incoherent with rage when we appeared and gave out our press release. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* (31 May) reported accurately that:

“The rally attracted a number of groups who earlier in the week had quarreled over the format and over whether MOVE itself should be represented. The Spartacist League, for one, put out a news release from New York City announcing that it would not attend because there was no indication that ‘MOVE will be defended or given the respect their martyrdom demands.’”

An acutely embarrassed SWPer on the spot, who soon ran away altogether from the argument, tried to take refuge in the claim that the SWP had voted against barring a speaker from MOVE. But you’ll wait in vain for an article in the SWP’s *Militant* on this; the reformists have a common front, and the line that MOVE should be gagged, though it failed (barely) to be formally adopted, had carried the day: on Thursday, MOVE wasn’t there. Somebody who was there, “Shafik Abu-Tahir, who introduced speakers, said organizers



WV Photo

**Philadelphia City Hall, May 30: Reformist hypocrites refuse to defend MOVE, obscenely parade mock coffins of their dead.**

“wanted it to be made very clear to the city administration and the City of Philadelphia that we are not marching today in support of MOVE... not even implied ties to the MOVE organization” (*Philadelphia Daily News*, 31 May).

The reformist hypocrites even had the unbelievable effrontery, in their sanitized, effectively anti-MOVE demo, to carry eleven cardboard coffins symbolizing the martyrs. And in the reformists’ papers (*Militant*, *Workers World*, *Guardian*, etc.) you can find interviews with MOVE members—see, we’ll let them speak, except when it counts. These people are pimping off MOVE’s agony in a slimy effort to save Goode’s ass.

The various articles appearing in the reformist press since the Philadelphia inferno are careful to stay miles away from the calculated affront they delivered to the MOVE martyrs and bereaved survivors through the Citizens’ Committee, but make all the arguments intended to justify this policy obliquely. The 31 May *Militant*’s paean of praise to the Citizens’ Committee says of a May 21 meeting:

“There was little criticism of Mayor Wilson Goode at the meeting, despite his obvious role in the assault. This reflects a common view among most of the city’s Blacks that Goode, as the city’s first mayor who is Black, should not be the focus of criticism.”

Subsequent *Militant* articles display no shame at the way the SWP has politely refrained from criticizing the mayor within the so-called “mass movements.” A *Militant* report (7 June) on a meeting of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists says Goode was “met with polite applause” and it was left to a Democrat to attack the bombing; by its own account, the SWP did nothing. In the next issue (14 June), the SWP is ecstatic about the Third National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights; after the chair called for a moment of silence for the MOVE dead, Goode took the floor to make a snivelling statement which the SWP printed without comment.

Meanwhile, *Workers World*/All-People’s Congress and the *Guardian* make a big deal out of the powerlessness of Goode. *Workers World* guru Sam Marcy assures his readers that “Mayor Goode was merely informed of the planned assault and was not a participant in the plans” (*Workers World*, 30 May); the *Guardian* (29 May) similarly assures us that “Neither Fire Commissioner William Richmond nor the mayor knew the contents of the explosive, nor did they seriously consider the possibility of fire.” Yes, Sam, Goode was just a front man; that’s his job. As a MOVE spokesman told us: “The man is a lackey. He’s got the mentality of a sharecropper’s son.... What he’s saying is, I’m a shovel, and I don’t care whether you use me to dig up your front yard or dig up your back yard... a tool.” It’s a division of labor: in every major city in this country, Democratic mayors keep the lid on the working masses, particularly the minorities, while blaming it all on the “anti-people policies of

the White House.” Many of these politicians are black: Goode can get away with stuff that finished his predecessor, the notorious racist Rizzo. And the reformists enjoy the role they play in pimping for the black Democrats and keeping the black masses tied to suicidal illusions in them.

**Solidarity with MOVE, Victims of Racist Murder!**

The Osage Avenue holocaust was no aberration. There’s a reason why eleven MOVE members are dead in Philly, a reason why a black grandmother in the Bronx was shotgunned dead because she got behind in her rent. It’s called regimentation through fear. In protest of the inferno, the historically combat-

ive, heavily black labor movement of Philadelphia should have shut the city down tight in a protest strike. But that requires a leadership willing to wage class struggle, including breaking hard with the likes of Wilson Goode.

As for us, we are still on the lookout for a way to massively express outrage at the mass murder perpetrated by Reagan and all his front men. This is what is required of us as the small nucleus of the mass working-class vanguard party which must serve as the tribune of all those oppressed by capitalism.

Our duty to combat the state vendetta against MOVE is part of our unremitting campaign against the government’s targeting of troublesome opponents as “terrorists.” We wage this campaign in every way we can, from the courts to the streets. One way has been our successful legal challenges to the state’s targeting of us as “terrorists,” most recently in a suit securing from the FBI a change in their formal set-up “definition” of us as conspiratorial criminals. And in 1982 we initiated and led the united-front Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the Klan in Washington on November 27, when over 5,000 overwhelmingly black demonstrators, backed by the organized power of labor, mainly the black unions of course, rendered the federal government incapable of forcing down the throats of black Washington a racist murder provocation in the form of a KKK parade. The reformists were miles away at a “non-confrontationist” diversion, when Spartacists and black unionists led the militant black youth and stopped the fascists in the streets. State terrorism and its fascist shock troops can be fought—and must be! ■

**City Bombed Their Home, Murdered Their Babies... Now Bills Victims**



**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**

DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS  
Municipal Services Building, Philadelphia, Pa. 19102

JAMES STANLEY WHITE  
Commissioner

HENRY G. HERLING  
Deputy Commissioner

RAYMOND M. TATE  
Deputy Commissioner

May 23, 1985

Louise James

Philadelphia, Penna. 19104

Re: 6221 Osage Avenue

Dear Ms. James:

The Department of Licenses and Inspections has determined that your property at 6221 Osage Avenue is imminently dangerous within the meaning of Chapter 4-110.1.3 of the Philadelphia Building Code.

You are hereby notified that the Department of Licenses and Inspections will demolish the remaining portions of your property.

A lien will be placed against your property for the costs of demolition.

Sincerely,

*James Stanley White*  
JAMES STANLEY WHITE  
Commissioner

JSW:jj

**In an act comparable to Hitler presenting a gas bill to the families of Jewish concentration camp victims, Philadelphia mayor Wilson Goode is charging MOVE supporter Louise James for the demolition of her house, which his cops bombed and deliberately burned to the ground May 13. While simultaneously paying \$2,500 each in hush money to other Osage Avenue residents whose homes were incinerated in this racist atrocity, the city of Philadelphia is on a vendetta to isolate and destroy the handful of MOVE members and supporters not already dead or in jail. After burning alive her brother, her son and nine others, Goode had the letter, reproduced above, sent to James. Later the city announced she wouldn’t be allowed to ever return to the site of the house she has owned for 27 years.**

# U.S. Keep Your Bloody Hands Off Trincomalee!

# Down with State Terror Against Tamils in Sri Lanka!

On the island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) the Tamil minority is struggling not just for national rights but for survival. Ever since the government-instigated mass pogroms of July 1983 the Tamil people throughout the island have faced escalated bloody repression at the hands of J.R. Jayewardene's Sinhala-chauvinist regime. In mid-May of this year, a new spate of killings erupted which threatens to unleash communal bloodletting of devastating scope and savagery.

In the Tamil north of the island (Jaffna Peninsula), several years of brutal military rule by the mainly Sinhalese army of occupation, aimed at crushing the young Tamil separatist guerrillas (popularly called "Tigers"), has only fueled the sentiments for an independent Tamil state of "Eelam." In the face of daily atrocities by the army and police, on May 14 Tamil guerrillas apparently struck back in kind. At Anuradhapura, former capital of the ancient Sinhalese civilization and a revered center of pilgrimage for the Buddhist Sinhalese (the Tamils are mainly Hindus), gunmen in army uniforms reportedly opened fire indiscriminately on crowds at a bus station and holy site, killing scores of men, women and children. The government-controlled press (and the foreign capi-



Rajan Devadas



[London] Guardian

J.R. ("Yankee Dickie") Jayewardene with U.S. imperialist chief Reagan in 1984 (left). Tamil victims of army rampage in Jaffna, July 1983 (above).

including 48 passengers on a ferry murdered by "unknown" assailants who arrived on Sri Lankan naval patrol boats. Now Jayewardene, openly boasting of his dictatorial powers, announces "martial-law courts" and plans to arm local communities:

"The President, who has four more years in office, already has considerable powers of detention under a two-year-old state of emergency, which was extended today.

Lankan working class, Sinhalese and Tamil, and the multi-national working class of Ceylon's giant neighbor, India, be mobilized to defend the Tamil people by revolutionary struggle against the reactionary capitalist oppressors.

Ceylon politics since 1948 has followed a course of increasing communal polarization through "salami tactics," driving toward the ethnically/religiously "pure" nation. Independence in 1948 took care of the Europeans. Virtually the first act of the United National Party (UNP) regime that came in at independence was to render "stateless" the so-called "Indian Tamils," brought to the island in large numbers to be plantation laborers by the British after 1850. Then sliced off was the "Burgher" community (descendants of intermarriages with the Portuguese, Dutch and British colonists), fully half of whom have emigrated. The condition of the Lankan army today, ill-disciplined thugs rampaging against the populace in the north, has a lot to do with the squeezing out of the Burghers, who were important as senior officers under the British. Later, high-ranking Catholics in the army became suspect and were ousted. The retrograde narrowing of the concept of the nation to exclude the "Ceylon Tamils" has proceeded through the formal enshrinement of the Buddhist religion, the "Sinhala Only" language measures aimed in large measure against Tamils in the civil service and professions, the increasingly brutal military occupation of Jaffna, the July 1983 pogroms in the south intended to destroy Tamil businesses in the rest of the island and to induce massive forced population transfer of Tamils to the north. Now it seems to be the turn of the Muslims as well to find themselves placed outside "the people."

The idea of the ethnically pure nation is supremely irrational racist nonsense. The Indian subcontinent has been a crossroads of peoples for thousands of years. Notwithstanding the myths that are pushed in Lanka and abroad about the "Aryan" Sinhalese and the "darker-skinned" Tamils, the fact is that the Sinhalese and Tamils can't tell each

other apart except for tiny details of their dress and of course their different languages.

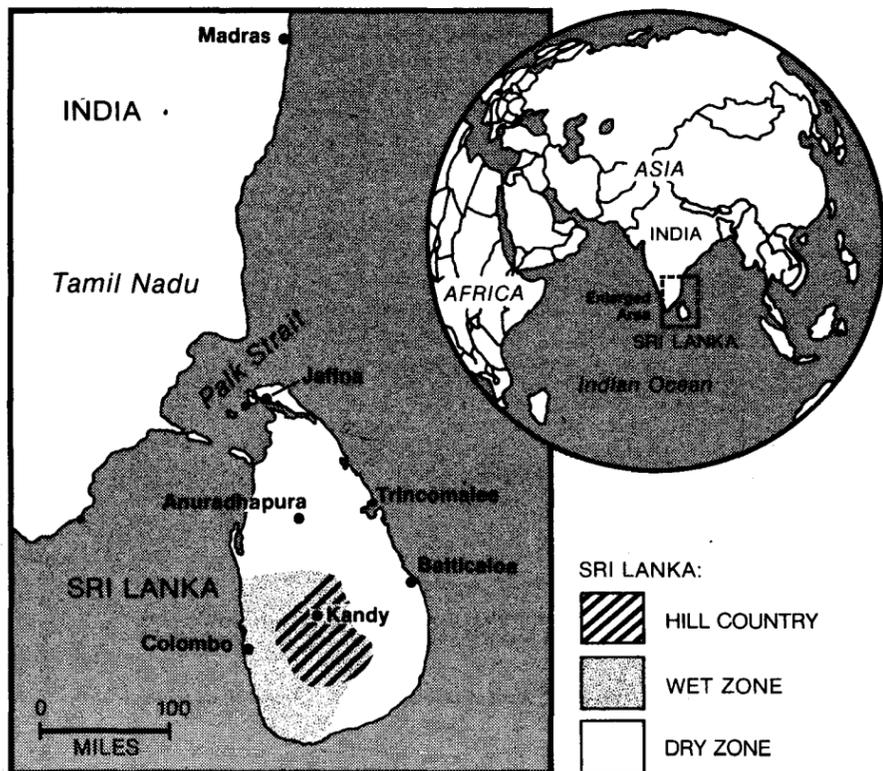
## "Splitting the Country", by Anti-Tamil Terror

The anti-Tamil pogroms of July 1983, orchestrated by the United National Party government, were a watershed, surpassing the previous outbursts of communalist terror in 1958, 1977 and 1981. The wave of anti-Tamil terror in Colombo (the capital city) and the south was spearheaded by well-organized elements like the government's "trade-union" goons (JSS). The bloodthirsty mobs who burned Tamil homes and businesses (and some Indian-owned factories) and incinerated and hacked to death the fleeing men, women and children were often escorted to their targets by men with voters lists.

The pogroms, aimed at eliminating the important Tamil merchant and business layer, were a decisive step in destroying the economic interpenetration of the island's peoples. Thousands were killed and upwards of 100,000 Tamils were forced to flee as refugees to the north or to India. Another new development was the terrorizing of the overwhelmingly Tamil workforce of the hill country plantations, where the superexploitation of the mainly "stateless" Tamil laborers provides most of Sri Lanka's foreign-exchange revenues; now as many as 200,000 have fled, creating a labor shortage. While seeking to place the burden of "splitting the country" on the Tamil separatist sentiment which has grown strong in response to national oppression and army occupation in Jaffna, Jayewardene's UNP regime and its communalist allies have themselves split the country, ripping the peoples apart and driving to force the Tamils into a "bantustan" in the impoverished Jaffna Peninsula (and perhaps a small enclave around Batticaloa in the southeast). The indiscriminate terror and atrocities are designed to seal this situation.

In early May alone, reported army and Sinhalese communalist atrocities included: 15 civilians killed in Karainagar

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WV Graphic

alist press, which sees strongman Jayewardene, locally nicknamed "Yankee Dickie," as a potentially important ally in the "free world") attributes the Anuradhapura massacre to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). A joint statement issued in Madras May 17 by the LTTE and three other guerrilla groups categorically denied involvement in this crime and condemned it; the fifth main group, in a separate statement, did the same.

In the days that followed, Sinhalese communalist gangs and the armed forces slaughtered defenseless Tamils,

"He described his authority today as 'practically a dictatorship'."  
—New York Times, 25 May

The plight of the oppressed Tamil masses confronted with government-spearheaded communalist onslaughts is desperate. It will only be aggravated by the Tamil guerrillas going over to indefensible "retaliatory" anti-Sinhalese communalism. Class-conscious elements of the Tamil liberation fighters must themselves mount a ruthless campaign against the perpetrators of revolting communalist crimes. Only with an internationalist perspective can the

# For the Federated Workers Republics of Eelam and Lanka!

# Hail Lankan Women Garment Strikers!



On strike—workers on the picket line at Apparel Exports in Ratmalana. Doubly oppressed women who labor under virtual slave-labor conditions in the starvation-wage textile factories have been a vanguard of militant struggle against union-busting.

All Ceylon Commercial & Industrial Workers' Union

In February of 1984, a hard-fought strike began at the Polytex garment factory in Sri Lanka. The strikers were young women, who worked for less than \$1 a day under virtual slave-labor conditions in the "Greater Colombo Economic Commission Area" which was set up by the rightist, pro-U.S. Jayewardene regime as a low-wage, non-union haven for foreign corporations. The women workers were confronted with arbitrary dismissals and vicious union-busting. The strike was won after six bitter months. Supporters of the Spartacist tendency in Lanka solidarized with the just struggle of the Polytex militants by campaigning for support and funds at Colombo University, while Spartacist supporters overseas also collected money for the strikers.

In the summer, women workers at Magnum Garments in Ratmalana also struck; in their support the Spartacist tendency again undertook to raise funds. On February 10 of this year, over 100 militants from Magnum attended a meeting where 13,000 rupees (U.S. \$520) donated by trade unionists in Australia was presented to the Magnum workers by a spokesman of the Spartacist tendency. His speech is reprinted here (from *Australasian Spartacist* supplement, 3 April 1985). The meeting was also addressed by representatives of the Spartacist League/Lanka, union General Secretary S. Siriwardene and the branch Assistant Secretary, herself a Magnum worker.

In his contribution, union General Secretary Siriwardene, a supporter of the Lanka Samasamaja Party, sought to defend the record of the LSSP, in particular N.M. Perera who served as minister of finance in Mrs. Bandaranaike's coalition governments. When Siriwardene tried to claim that N.M. Perera had never taken any measures against workers, an SL/L supporter in the audience reminded him of N.M.'s attacks on workers' pensions. Siriwardene also sought to blame the LSSP's electoral rout in 1977 on the "backward" workers. In fact the working class deserted the LSSP in droves, not least in its old bastions like Ratmalana, because of its popular-front betrayals.

Now we have received an urgent appeal on behalf of striking women textile workers at Apparel Exports in Ratmalana, which we are pleased to publish, as well as the photograph of the Apparel strikers on the picket line. The Partisan Defense Committee (PDC), the class-struggle defense organization founded by the SL, is collecting money to be transmitted to the union. We urge *WV* readers, who have responded generously to the past campaigns undertaken by the PDC, most recently in support of the British miners' strike, to again express their internationalist solidarity by making this cause their own. Make checks payable to/mail to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. Earmark contributions: "Ratmalana textile strikers."

## Appeal from Lanka Union

All Ceylon Commercial & Industrial Workers' Union

Colombo,  
Sri Lanka  
13th March 1985

The Editor,  
"Workers Vanguard"  
New York, NY  
U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

We are pleased to inform you about a further strike our Union has launched in another Garment Manufacturing factory at the Industrial Town in Ratmalana in our country.

The strike commenced on 3.1.85 and still continues. About 500 female workers went out on strike demanding that their present salary be brought up to Rs.30/- [\$1.20] per day, permanency of employment, a Festival loan of Rs.300/- and an unpaid bonus of December 1984.

The two months' old strike is being fought very strongly by the workers, facing all odds placed before them. The factory is owned by four Partners headed by a tough employer by the name of R.N. Choksy. The manufactured items of this Factory are sent to all

parts of the world under the name of Apparel Exports. We understand that USA and West Germany are two important markets to which the items manufactured by these hard-working girls are sent. Apparel Exports is an Associate Company of Hently Garments under the same ownership.

Although many attempts have been made by the Commissioner of Labour to bring this Employer for a discussion on the matters at issue, the Employer has evaded attending such conferences on flimsy excuses. Although a directive was served on the Employer by the Commissioner of Labour to attend a conference, the representatives who came refused to sit with the Union and the workers for a discussion. As a result the strike drags on. In the meantime, the Employer has served notices of vacation of posts [firing] on all the strikers with a view to throttling the strike and getting the workers back. However, the 600 girls stood strongly against these notices and promptly replied stating that they have not vacated their posts and reminded the Employer that they are on strike.

The Employer tried to canvass the weak persons amongst the strikers and

*continued on page 12*

## Spartacist Speaks to Lanka Garment Workers

### "Women Workers Must Be in the Vanguard"

It is a very great honour for me to speak to you today. I would like to explain why this is so, and why the international Spartacist tendency thinks your struggles are very important.

I'm sorry that we could not bring to you this money we have collected when you were still on strike, when you most needed it. I'm sure, however, you will find a good use for it. I have been told that the Magnum management is refusing to pay you bonuses. Perhaps this money can be used to help in these new fights. The Apparel Garment workers are on strike, perhaps it could be used to support their struggle.

The money was collected by our Australian comrades. According to the standards of living in Australia this 13,000 rupees is not a large amount, but it is a gesture of how important they think your struggles are. The capitalists in Australia try to encourage white racist attitudes. But Australia is part of Asia. Our comrades in Australia know that they must build links with the workers of Asia if they wish to get rid of Australian imperialism.

As internationalists we believe that we must support all the true struggles of the workers and oppressed everywhere in the world. We do not say that because a strike is not in our country we will not support it. We do not say that because a strike is not led by our party we will ignore it. Today our American, German and French comrades have been working very hard to support the British miners' strike.

The miners have been on strike for ten months. Now it is one of the coldest winters for 30 years. President J.R.'s

[Jayewardene] friend, Mrs. Thatcher is using police violence, scabs, the law courts and starvation to try and beat the miners. The trade-union bureaucrats and the top leaders of the Labour Party have tried to sabotage the strike and have refused to bring out the other powerful forces of the working class on strike with the miners to defend jobs and get rid of Mrs. Thatcher.

Our American comrades have collected thousands of dollars for the miners. The money the miners receive goes into a special bank account to run the strike and support the miners' families. It does not go to the union's general funds for normal administration costs and officials' wages. But the miners do not just need financial support, they also need a programme to win. That is what our British comrades fight for when they demand "All out with the miners."

Yes, we believe in international working-class solidarity. It was British imperialism that was the great master of "divide and rule," of turning one community against another in its empire. Now the Sri Lankan and other capitalist ruling classes use the same tactics. But communalism and racism divide the working class against each other and divert it from the real enemy, capitalism. It is the same capitalists and UNP [Jayewardene's United National Party] government that attacks you which also attacks the Tamil people, denying them their rights. J.R.'s friend, Ronald Reagan, the man who wants to get his imperialist hands on Trincomalee harbour as part of his preparations for

*continued on page 12*



Polytex strike leader speaks to fundraising rally at Colombo University organized by Lanka Spartacist supporters, May 1984.

Lanka Spartacist

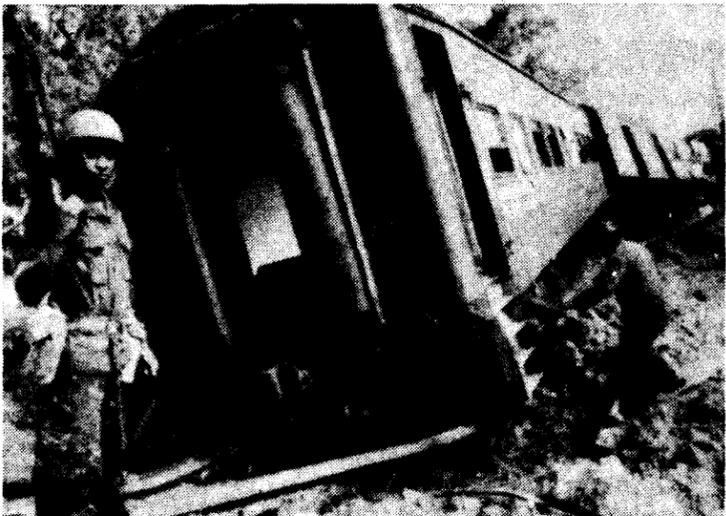
# Sri Lanka...

(continued from page 8)

after guerrillas attacked the naval base, 14 bus passengers murdered on Pannai causeway, 15 shot dead indiscriminately at Nainativu, two women on a bus raped in Puttalam, more than 70 killed in an army retaliatory rampage in the Point Pedro area, including 12 schoolchildren, and 50 young Tamils herded into a community center at Uddupiddy and blown up. After the Anuradhapura attack on Sinhalese civilians, fresh army and communalist killings erupted in the Eastern and North Central provinces. In Colombo police sweeps in Tamil areas of Wellawatte and Pettah put at least 150 Tamils in detention. The government is threatening to impose widespread martial law and claims there is a "concerted international Marxist plan" against "democracy." As well, Sinhalese youth have reportedly been arrested in the south of the island.

In Britain, the Tory government, which supplies Jayewardene with patrol boats and "former" SAS (Special Air Service) advisers, is viciously trying to prevent refugees entering Britain, claiming there is "no good reason" for Tamils to flee, in the face of hideous communalist conflagration. On May 30 the Spartacist League/Britain demonstrated in London, demanding: political asylum for Tamil refugees!

The international Spartacist tendency has consistently upheld the Tamils' right of national self-determination—in other words, we recognize their right to separate and form their own state. Before July 1983, however, we argued against the exercise of that right, in favor of united working-class struggle to redress Tamil oppression in the context of the struggle for socialist revolution within the existing unitary island state. But with the events of July 1983 the historic social balance shifted, uprooting hundreds of thousands of Tamils from the south and generating deep bitterness, hostility and mutual fear which will not easily be surmounted.



Tuccol/Gamma-Liaison

**Train derailed by pro-Eelam guerrillas earlier this year.**

The prospects for common class struggle between the Sinhalese working class and the oppressed Tamil minority have for the foreseeable future been disastrously undermined. The massive murderous repression of the Jaffna Tamil people and the escalating outbursts of government-instigated violence against the Tamils elsewhere on the island has brought to the forefront the struggle for Eelam. Therefore our socialist perspective of a struggle for a Ceylon workers state is expressed now in the slogan of federated workers republics of Eelam and Lanka. At the same time we recognize—as the Tamil nationalists, who place their hopes on pressure or intervention from capitalist India, do not—that the only real hope for the Tamil minority to wrest anything from the Lankan regime proceeds through the spreading to the south of resistance to the rapacious government, so that the repressive apparatus of the state becomes overextended.

Jayewardene's regime has used its years-long crackdown on "Tamil terrorism" to further its own dictatorial

appetites and to seek to deflect the Sinhalese working people from struggle against the brutal "austerity" measures dictated by international finance capital. Sections of the Sinhalese population, such as students and female workers in the garment sweatshops around Colombo, as well as the Tamil plantation workers, have shown willingness to struggle around their demands; what is needed is a revolutionary leadership to lead class struggle among both the Tamils and the Sinhalese against the bloody and cynical government that has it in for everybody.

While championing the right to Eelam, we cannot be enthusiastic about the prospects of an independent Tamil state in Lanka. A new mini-state in the arid, underindustrialized north and east, burdened with hundreds of thousands of immiserated refugees, would usher in no bright future for the Tamil masses, nor even ensure their national survival in the long run. For the federated socialist republics of Lanka and Eelam! For workers revolution throughout the Indian subcontinent! For a soviet federation of South Asia!

## Army Out of Tamil Areas!

In the forefront of the 1983 bloodletting were mutinous elements of the Sri Lankan armed forces. These forces were then small (16,500 army, 3,000 navy, 2,600 air force, and 19,500 police) and ill-equipped. By dropping the period of basic training to eight weeks the government hopes to augment its forces by 2,000 every two months. But the Sri Lankan armed forces are universally regarded as among the most ill-trained and ill-disciplined in the world. In the Jaffna Peninsula they spend most of their time holed up in their camps, venturing out only in large formations. Tamil youth are kept as hostages, to be shot "attempting to escape" in the event of attack. The army's characteristic response to taking casualties is the ritualistic retaliatory strike of burning, looting, raping and indiscriminate shooting. But the conduct of the army is not just a matter of poor "discipline"; rather it is part and parcel of the

bloody communalist policies of the government.

The regime's wild butchery has not stemmed the growth of the Tamil guerrilla organizations, who are estimated to have 2,000-5,000 "boys" armed in the field. They have demonstrated increasing military effectiveness and pulled off a number of spectacular successes. One group, the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), wiped out the police garrison at Chavakachcheri on 20 November 1984, then followed up on January 19 by blasting a military transport train on the main Colombo-Jaffna line (the government admitted 48 killed, the Tamils claim many more). And at times they operate with great impunity. In mid-February, 30 guerrillas lifted 2,500 gallons of gasoline from the main Petroleum Corporation depot in Jaffna in broad daylight. The fractious Tamil organizations, in particular two of the larger, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the People's Liberation Organisation of Thamileelam (PLOT) are not averse to settling their differences by machine-

gunning each other. But under the impact of the government onslaught there have been moves for unity and "coordination." Recently, the LTTE joined with TELO, the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS) and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Libera-



Workers Hammer

## Spartacist banner at London protest of anti-Tamil pogroms in Sri Lanka, 30 July 1983.

tion Front (EPRLF) in an Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF).

But if the Tamil military organizations have not fared too badly against the army, the government's policies are directed against the whole Tamil population, to terrorize and starve it into submission. On 30 November 1984 the government announced a new series of draconian measures. A coastal prohibited zone around the north coast from Mannar to Mullaitivu extending five miles to sea and 100 yards inland was declared. Immediately this rendered 97,000 fisherfolk homeless and without livelihood. As well, permits are required for all vehicles, including bicycles. The 700,000-odd bicycles in the Northern Province play an integral part in the transportation of goods and people. Now only the permit holder and his immediate family may use a bicycle, and permits are only issued by senior police officers. In Jaffna Peninsula only one police station is still open, in Jaffna itself. Tamils are wisely loath to go near the place—too many have never emerged again! Curfews that disrupt food and fuel supplies and the harvest, travel restrictions, and the destruction of road culverts by the army all add up to a calculated policy of economic spoliation and starvation. The government has a declared policy of "vicarious responsibility" to punish the local population for any "terrorist incidents" in its neighborhood.

Since President J.R. dissolved the "Round Table Conference" negotiations in December, the government has made little or no pretense of seeking a negotiated political settlement. In January the government announced an accelerated plan for Sinhalese colonization into Tamil areas. This colonization has long been a source of grievance for the Tamils. Trincomalee, the strategic naval harbor, was once overwhelmingly Tamil; now it is half Sinhalese; and the much publicized Mahaweli Development Scheme has been used for Sinhala colonization. Now 200,000 Sinhalese are to be settled in the area between Vavuniya and Elephant Pass, south of the Jaffna Peninsula. "Disloyal" (Tamil) people will be displaced by "loyal" (armed Sinhalese) settlers. As this program accelerated in February and March a new wave of some 15,000 Tamils fled as refugees to India. The sinister Minister for National Security, Lalith Athulathmudali, calls this "racial integration." Elsewhere in the Eastern Province provocateurs have staged communalist murders in order to whip up strife between the Tamils and the significant Muslim community.

Impoverished Sinhalese are induced to volunteer to settle in the north with promises including grants of 30,000 rupees (more than \$1,000), a monthly

allowance and 3-5 acres. They are to be the cannon fodder in a bloody "conquest of the land." Despite the government's fondness for the example of the Zionist settlements (and the government's Mossad advisers), these colonies will be no kibbutzes, armed with technological superiority and backed by the might of the Zionist state. Rather they will be the focal point for an uneven, but all-sided, communal bloodletting. And for the Sinhalese peasants who survive, there will be no escape from the exploitation and poverty they may believe they left behind in the south. One result of the UNP's accession to power in 1977 and its policies of "let the capitalist robber barons come" has been a rapid acceleration in capitalist differentiation in the countryside. In the southeast Sinhalese peasants are being thrown off their land to make way for multinational sugar plantations. In the Mahaweli, many settlers have been made landless and destitute. Meanwhile the landlords, UNP politicians and their spiritual apologists, the Buddhist clergy, get fat and rich.

The horrific Sinhala-chauvinist extermination campaign has provoked a backlash from some of the Tamil fighters, many of whom in the past expressed pride that they had never attacked Sinhalese civilians. On 30 November 1984 upwards of 45 Sinhalese were slaughtered at Dollar and Kent farms in the Vanni. These farms had earlier been run as rehabilitation centers for Tamil refugees from the hill country. The army expelled the Tamils, and Sinhalese convicts were sent in. Tamil organizations claim that the settlers acted as paramilitary terror squads. But the coordinated attacks on the farms went beyond self-defense or even retribution against the guilty thugs. Men, women and children were killed indiscriminately. Soon after, on December 2, eleven Sinhalese fisherfolk were killed in the villages of Nayaru and Kokkilai on the northeast coast. Once again it was claimed that Sinhalese thugs had been terrorizing the district, but again the "reprisal" was indiscriminate. Both attacks have been ascribed to, and indeed justified by, the LTTE.

The Tigers are being blamed for the recent massacre at Anuradhapura, though they have denied responsibility. Indeed some Tiger supporters have blamed the Sinhala leftist JVP and many Tamils suspect government agents provocateurs. Given the government's use of "big lie" techniques and the press censorship, caution is dictated. But the shift in the Tigers' tactics toward indefensible communalist retaliation against non-military targets, as indicated by the earlier atrocities at Dollar/Kent and the attacks on Sinhalese fishermen, makes the government's account of the Anuradhapura massacre believable to the Sinhalese masses. Purportedly the Anuradhapura attack was intended as a reprisal for the murder of 70 Tamils in Jaffna (following a guerrilla success that killed an army major and several soldiers), and perhaps as a demonstration of the capacity to take the war to the Sinhalese heartland. But this sort of "reprisal" is indiscriminate communalist murder which can only help fuel the reactionary dynamic favored by the Sinhalese reactionaries. All the Tamil guerrilla organizations are steeped in nationalism, whose ultimate logic is "kill the Sinhalese." Meanwhile the Sinhalese, like the Israeli Zionists, hold the upper hand while seeing themselves as an inherently embattled minority in imminent danger of being swamped by the tens of millions of Tamils of south India. Thus the Tigers' nationalism points in a direction which is not only racist, but deadly dangerous for the Tamil minority in Lanka.

## U.S. Out of the Indian Ocean!

Jayewardene's massacres take place in the context of U.S. imperialism's drive for war against the Soviet Union, and help to pave the way for U.S. imperialism's counterrevolutionary plans in

the region. The U.S. imperialists would dearly love to get their hands on strategic Trincomalee harbor in the Indian Ocean, as part of a network of bases stretching from Diego Garcia to Alice Springs and Subic Bay, targeted on the Soviet and Vietnamese workers states. Trincomalee is traditionally a Tamil area; hence, the colonization of Sinhalese and the manipulated communalist violence there are part of Jayewardene's plans to become a favored tool for U.S. imperialism.

Right now perhaps, the United States is being a little coy about its appetite for Trinco so as not to upset Rajiv Gandhi, who they hope might do for India what Sadat did for Egypt and break the alliance with the Soviet Union. But in the meantime the most powerful Voice of America transmitter outside the United States itself is being installed at Chilaw on the northwest coast of Ceylon. From there the VOA will be able to beam its counterrevolutionary message to Soviet Central Asia, East Africa and China. The installation will have the capacity to jam India's defense communications systems. Jayewardene wants to trade anti-Soviet loyalty for aid in crushing the Tamils. Recently, on a visit to kindred spirit Zia in Pakistan he provocatively indicated his support for the Islamic counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan. On the same trip Jayewardene also talked of self-determination for Kashmir, a provocative gesture against India.

A flash point for India/Lanka tensions has been the narrow Palk Strait where the Lankan navy has been shooting at just about anything that moves, killing Indian fishermen and looting their catches. Early in the year, the Indians seized a Sri Lankan naval patrol boat, in a calculated warning.

The UNP regime has been flirting dangerously with ignoring the power realities of the region. India presently does not like the idea of U.S. bases on its doorstep (nor do they like having to deal with the mounting number of refugees, now estimated at over 100,000, from Lanka). Of course, the Gandhi regime does not want to be seen as encouraging a secessionist movement, having enough of its own to contend with in India itself. However the mess in Lanka could snap the tightrope the Congress Party is walking in south India. Congress does not run a single state government in the south, and its main ally the Tamil Nadu governing party threatens to disintegrate if its main leader, a paralyzed ex-film star, should die. To the Indian regime an invasion of Lanka might actually look like less trouble than the situation in Tamil Nadu, home of about 80 million Tamils, if Jayewardene cannot restrain his people from destroying the Tamil people in Lanka.

Jayewardene was just in New Delhi for talks with Rajiv Gandhi along with their respective "security" and "defense" ministers to "consider ways of ending separatist Tamil guerrilla violence and reprisal actions by the security forces. . . . Meanwhile, the Sikh week of protest to commemorate the first anniversary of the Indian army's assault on the Golden Temple began peacefully at the weekend" (London *Guardian*, 3 June).

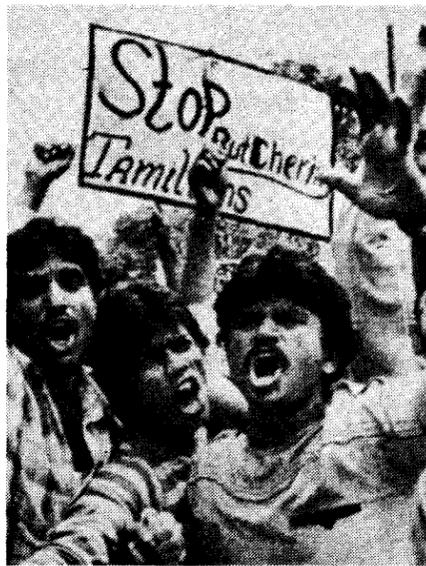
Almost without exception the Tamil organizations sow illusions in the Indian bourgeoisie. The main bourgeois parliamentarianist group, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), openly pleads for Indian intervention. And in accord with Hindu chauvinism, many Tamil militants in Lanka dismiss the legitimate rights of the Sikhs. When Mrs. Gandhi, the butcher of Amritsar, got her just deserts many of the Tamil groups fell over themselves in lamentation. One group identified Mrs. Gandhi as "One of the closest sympathisers of the oppressed people of Thamileelam" and called her assassination "one of the darkest days in the history of Thamileelam" (*PLOT Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. IV, undated). Likewise another group lamented that Tamils have lost "a mother-figure itself" who was "always a

dependable guarantor of their ultimate survival" (*EROS*, January 1985).

From the beginning we have warned against the illusions in the Indian bourgeoisie, pointing to the suppression of the Bangladeshi Mukti Bahini in 1971. By preaching faith in these capitalist allies the Tamil liberation fighters are only preparing the way for their own bloody suppression. Indeed recently some of the organizations have been getting a lesson from these "friends." In India, Lankan Tamil militants have been evicted from their bases on the Thanjavur coast. Activists from the National Liberation Front of Thamileelam (NLFT) were recently arrested in connection with arms seizures in Madras. EPRLF members have been arrested and detained by Indian patrol boats. Gandhi's new Prevention of Terrorism Act is a threat not just against the Sikhs but also against Tamil militants. And in April Indian foreign secretary Romesh Bhandari pointedly condemned all violence, a statement viewed by Tamil groups as a "betrayal." This was not a betrayal but a sign that the Indian bourgeoisie is not the type of "friend" the struggle for Tamil liberation needs.

### Jayewardene's Bonapartist Rule

To sustain its anti-Tamil repression and divert the Sinhalese masses from going after their own exploiters, the government and Sinhalese ruling class whip up communalist hysteria, playing on fears of being a beleaguered minority facing a Tamil/Indian threat and on the myths of being the Lord Buddha's "chosen people" and the true "sons of the soil." In the forefront of the racist mobilizations is the Maha Sangha, the governing body of the Buddhist monks. Fascistic elements like former cabinet minister Cyril Mathew and powerful elements within the UNP regime itself egg the J.R. regime on to further excesses. But the regime faces other pressures and constraints, underpinning its increasingly bonapartist and dictatorial nature. No elections will be held until 1989 (if then) and rumors circulate of military coups, especially if the aging Jayewardene were to die. At the same time the Sinhalese masses are not a seamless mass of seething racist reaction. In fact the Sinhalese working class has a long history of militant struggles, at times even led largely by ostensible Trotskyist formations (see "The Struggle for Trotskyism in Ceylon" by Edmund Samarakkody, *Spartacist* No. 22, Winter 1973-74). And in the last year



**University students outside Lankan embassy in New Delhi protest anti-Tamil terror, July 1983.**

significant pockets of class-struggle militancy and resistance to the regime have emerged among sections of the Sinhalese.

The economy has been driven into the ground, not solely by the present regime, and is now a real basket case, providing fertile ground for religious fanatics but also opportunities for class struggle against the common enemy. Sri Lanka is the most aid-dependent country in the world, but since July 1983 both aid and investment have dried up.

Tourism has dropped off drastically. Remittances from migrant workers in the Middle East, which is the second foreign-exchange earner after tea, face severe cutbacks. U.S. protectionism threatens the garment industry. Defense spending has of course burgeoned. The fish catch is down by 40 percent, largely as a result of the naval prohibited zone in the north. The price of fish (a crucial source of protein for the island's people) tripled in the first two months of this year. One presidential adviser has warned the government of "insurgency conditions" in the south if prices keep going up. When the regime calls on the Sinhalese not to launch new pogromist attacks on Tamils, "not to play into the hands" of the northern "terrorists," this is not just hypocrisy. They are scared



**Women and Revolution**  
**Tamil tea pickers. The sweated labor of "stateless," largely female plantation workers provides most of Lanka's foreign-exchange revenues.**

that the army and police would get overextended and that the economy would collapse completely.

It is only a boom in world tea prices that has kept the economy staggering along. But that wealth is produced by Tamils! Economically the tea plantation workers have been and remain potentially the most powerful sector of the Lankan working class. The material basis of the parliamentary reformism that infests the dominant working-class organizations in Lanka (and of the various social welfare measures like free education that were won on the island) lies in the superexploitation of the "stateless," disenfranchised and predominantly women Tamil plantation workers.

Abandoned by the reformist left parties and offered little other than that they can go to live in Eelam by the sundry Tamil nationalists, the plantation workers remain a powerful force capable of providing the key to a progressive solution on the island. Last year because of the tea price boom and the pogrom-induced plantation labor shortage, the plantation workers were able to strike successfully for pay increases. Since then other smaller strikes have broken out, often over the harassment of trade-union militants and youth by the police. In Kandy Buddhist leaders have been demanding that the Tamils be replaced with Sinhalese men and women because "estate labourers had now become a terrible headache to the nation." But an unorganized casual rural laborer earns more than a plantation worker, and no Sinhalese peasant wants to work on these virtual slave plantations (which is why the Indians were brought in there in the first place). Terribly oppressed and exploited, the plantation workers are strategically placed and have shown their willingness to struggle.

After tea exports and workers' remittances from abroad, the garment industry is Lanka's biggest exchange earner. In the Free Trade Zone and in other factories scattered around Colombo, foreign investors were promised rich pickings by exploiting a "disciplined" and educated workforce for less than a dollar a day. In the last year the textile

workers, predominantly young Sinhalese women, at factories like Polytex, Magnum Garments and most recently Apparel Exports, have fought hard strikes to improve their conditions and pay (see "Hail Lankan Women Garment Strikers!"). The same police who butcher Tamils baton-charge the picket lines of these women workers. The same government that oppresses the Tamils supervises the superexploitation of these young Sinhalese women. The resistance of these women and the struggle of the Tamil plantation workers, if linked through a revolutionary program and party, could be the death knell of capitalism in Lanka.

The Sinhalese working masses have plenty of reasons of their own to rise up against the bonapartist Jayewardene regime which is squeezing them in the interests of the bourgeoisie and international imperialism. The cop assaults on strikers, on students, on women at this year's International Women's Day demonstration in Colombo—this is what the government wants for its "own" people. When the UNP regime introduced an anti-separatist oath for Parliament to oust the Jaffna Tamil parliamentarians (who became the main Opposition in 1977 when the voters massively rejected the Sri Lanka Freedom Party), this was part of a series of sweeping moves against formal bourgeois democracy. Strikebreaking, slashing of social programs, censorship, attacks on students, Jayewardene's arrogation of dictatorial powers, the years of martial law in the north, ruinous attacks on the plantations, communal violence—these are what bloody capitalism has to offer. A revolutionary party must be forged to weld the desperate grievances of the workers and peasants into a united fight against the capitalist regime.

The IMF of international bankers dictates more austerity for Sri Lanka, including the dismantling of the state education system. In late January the Parliament passed a Universities Amendment act, introducing private universities which only the rich can afford and abolishing the democratically elected student councils. Prime Minister Premadasa declared that the government did not want any "mini-general elections" among students. Large student protests erupted with the police resorting to baton-charges and tear gas in Colombo. Opposition party leaders were arrested, a number of universities closed down and total censorship imposed on all reporting of student and university affairs. Still, on February 20 students gathered to hoot and jeer the president as he drove to the state opening of Parliament.

### Popular-Frontist Leftists Betray Tamil People

The evolved shameless parliamentary cretins of the Lankan left strive to channel the rumblings of discontent, such as the student protests, into new class-collaborationist schemes, seeking to refurbish their longstanding bloc with the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), which has traditionally been even more hostile to Tamil rights than the UNP. Founded by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike in the early 1950s as a populist-nationalist split from the UNP in alliance with the Buddhist clergy, the SLFP entered the big time in Ceylon politics with its "Sinhala Only" racist campaign on the language question in the mid-1950s. The working-class parties, the Lanka Samasamaja Party (LSSP) which is often falsely described as "Trotskyist" and the Communist Party (CP), scented future ministerial portfolios in a "united front" SLFP government. The reformists looked to the SLFP to fight the "main enemy," the UNP, which openly represented the summits of the Lankan capitalist class and was the preferred instrument for the interests of British capital. This capitulation became decisive in the mid-1960s when the LSSP and CP openly entered an SLFP

*continued on page 12*

# Sri Lanka...

(continued from page 11)

government. (The Spartacist tendency in Lanka came out of the LSSP left wing, associated with Edmund Samarakkody, which split away in opposition to the entry into bourgeois governments.) The class-collaborationism of the opportunist left thus led them straight into an unholy alliance with Sinhala-Buddhist racism, turning their backs on an honorable history of support for Tamil minority rights.

The debacle of the popular front in power was decisively demonstrated in the 1977 elections which gave the UNP a huge parliamentary majority. The working masses had expected a vast improvement in their living standards from "their" government, headed by Bandaranaike's widow. But Mrs. B's rule became synonymous with corruption, the economy (not least the nationalized plantations) was a disaster, and when in 1971 thousands of discontented rural Sinhalese youth, led by the New Leftist JVP, rose up, enraged over broken promises and the prospect of unemployment, they were slaughtered in rivers of blood. Mrs. B held on under a draconian years-long "Emergency," paving the way for Jayewardene's massive electoral victory. The masses' increasing disenchantment with the SLFP had led to some token self-criticisms from the CP and a left split from the LSSP to form the Nava (new) Samasamaja Party (NSSP), but the whole spectrum of opportunists remain firmly wedded to their perspective of new alliances with the SLFP.

When posters appeared seeking to whip up a "Russian scare" with claims that the USSR was backing the Tamil struggle in the north, the CP scurried to display its loyalty to the Sinhala state and denounce the Tamil insurgents as "terrorists":

"Countries like America, Britain and West Germany give aid, support and make homes for northern terrorists. In those countries funds are collected on a large scale for this movement. ... However the Soviet Union has not given protection to any Tamil youth. There, funds are not collected for the terrorist movement."

—*Aitha*, 1 December 1984

And the CP pledged that it would "give the necessary support to the government at this time of severe crisis."

The NSSP, which is linked with the misnamed "Militant" tendency of the British Labour Party, seeks to occupy a

terrain somewhat to the left of the LSSP and CP and is generally more coy about supporting Mrs. B but remains wedded to class-collaborationist blocs with the SLFP. During the student protests the NSSP scurried about brokering a "joint action group" to include the SLFP, the MEP and the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party (SLMP). The MEP is a communalist outfit whose leader has made a name for himself in Parliament by advocating more and better arms for the government troops in the north. And the SLMP, which according to NSSP "theory" is a "working-class formation," is a bourgeois party run by Mrs. Bandaranaike's daughter and son-in-law which champions the "inviolability of the unitary state."

The NSSP sometimes claims to support the Tamils' right to self-determination, but in the time-honored fake-Marxist fashion gives this "self-determination" a content other than recognition of the right of separation. Thus the NSSP supported Jayewardene's meaningless "autonomy" proposals to the "Round Table Conference." And the NSSP's Wickramabahu Karunaratne writes:

"To talk of separation before taking power is to put the cart before the horse. Separation or integration entirely depends on what changes take place within the Sinhala nation."

—"Letters to a Tamil Samasamajist," emphasis in original

In other words, it's all up to the Sinhalese. For Dr. Karunaratne, Tamil self-determination must be either integration in Lanka or unification with the Tamils of south India. And scandalously, the NSSP has been careful not to say a word against the collection of funds and other resources for the National Defense Fund for the government's communalist war.

Lately there has emerged in Lanka a more leftist current of armchair advocates of "armed struggle." A leading ideologue for these enthusiasts of the "Nicaraguan road" is Dayan Jayatilleka, who to his credit has espoused the right of Tamil self-determination. But beneath this militant veneer lurks the same old popular-frontist tailism which led his forebears to ally with the communalist SLFP. Writing in 1984 Jayatilleka went into raptures over the new SLMP, mimicking the old excuses for tailing the SLFP as a supposedly dynamic mass movement of indeterminate class character:

"...the SLMP has not yet crystallized into a party which is hegemonized by, or articulates the interests of a single



Militant  
**Radical Sinhalese youth arrested in Mrs. Bandaranaike's bloody repression of 1971 JVP uprising.**

identifiable class... It is in fact a healthier phenomenon; one with greater potential: a multi-class bloc, a transitional political formation and perhaps an embryonic mass movement."

—*Lanka Guardian*, 15 May 1984

Presently leading the pack in Sinhalese chauvinism is the JVP, which had originally emerged as a leftist response to the betrayals of the reformist left. Reflecting its base among radicalized Sinhalese petty-bourgeois youth, the JVP always had a streak of anti-Tamil chauvinism, going on about "Indian expansionism," a code word for seeing the Tamils in Lanka as fifth columnists. But for years the JVP enjoyed strong support among students, controlling the student councils at most campuses (not including Jaffna). Since July 1983 the JVP has been a particular target of government witchhunting which seeks to make an amalgam of Tamil "terrorists," the USSR and "extremists" in the south.

The JVP is aggressive in espousing a virulent anti-Tamil line. It vehemently denies any contact with the Tamil liberation fighters and labels their struggle an "imperialist plot." It attacks the UNP government from the right, denouncing it for "secret attempts" to "foist on the country a federal solution." The JVP has pledged not to attack the army and police by word or deed while they are fighting "terrorism." JVP head Wijeweera pledges "sacrifices" for the nation and the JVP slogan is "Defeat Eelam." This year the JVP celebrated May Day with resolutions in its trade-union paper, *Malima*, labeling the Eelam movement as "overflowing with CIA agents who are acting according to US imperialism's regional strategy... The revolutionary movement of this country rejects the Eelamist ideology

and their violent actions." The resolutions attack the UNP for having "dragged the country to the brink of separation" and in effect call for the jailing of Amirthalingam, the most prominent of the respectable Tamil parliamentarians, denouncing J.R. for "the white-washing of Amirthalingam, who maintains relations with organisations that are directing violent acts towards the bifurcation of the country, as well as the continued free reign given to Amirthalingam to act contrary to the sixth amendment" (which illegalized advocacy of Eelam). Thus the JVP, born out of the betrayals of the "old left groups," has now more than matched their capitulation to Sinhala chauvinism.

## For Workers Revolution Throughout South Asia!

The situation on the island is on a downhill slide into even greater communal bloodletting. The main left parties in Lanka are steeped in Sinhala-chauvinist class collaboration. The petty-bourgeois Tamil guerrilla organizations are nationalist, pandering to the Indian bourgeoisie and indifferent to the crucial struggles of the plantation workers. A revolutionary workers party opposed to popular-frontist alliances and standing firmly for Tamil self-determination must be built. This is what the Spartacist League/Lanka is fighting for. Among elements of the Tamil activists the SL/Lanka, despite its small size, has won for itself a reputation as the only consistent defenders among the Sinhalese for Tamil national rights. From among the Tamil militants, including the exiles in India, a Bolshevik nucleus must be forged, linked to the construction of a Trotskyist party throughout the subcontinent. In their newspaper (*Lanka Spartacist* No. 8, January-March 1985) our comrades put forward the revolutionary slogans around which such a party must be forged:

- Not nation against nation but working class against capitalist class!
- Not one cent nor a drop of blood for the racist war!
- For the right of Eelam for the Tamil nation!
- Release all political prisoners branded as "terrorists"!
- Defeat the anti-Soviet war drive!
- For a federated socialist republic of Lanka and Eelam!
- Forward to a soviet socialist republic of South Asia! ■

## Appeal from Lanka Union...

(continued from page 9)

attempted to break the strike and get the workers back to work, but his attempts failed. One or two scabs who were trying to enter the factory were warned by the striking girls and sent away. However, on false complaints made to the Police by a scab, three Branch Union leaders—the President, Treasurer and the Assistant Secretary of the Branch Union—were taken into custody and remanded on 19.2.85 till 28.2.85, but our Union fought strongly their case in the Magistrate's Court to get them released before the 28th. One such attempt was made on 21.2.85 through the lawyers but failed. The second attempt made on 25.2.85 through the lawyers succeeded and the three girls were bailed out on a very high cash bail order of Rs.2,500/- each (about \$100) i.e. Rs.7,500/- for all three girls (about \$300). The bail order, we understand, is the highest bail order in the history of such offences. The alleged offence was that of "obstruction and throwing rotten eggs" on scabs, which under normal circumstances is a bailable offence which can be dealt with on the spot by the Police.

You will note how seriously this type of alleged incidents are being treated by the present Government. The girls who

were in the Remand Prison and now released are determined to carry on with the struggle against the Employer despite all obstacles by the Employer until they achieve their demands. Our Union hopes that the Minister of Labour of our country will not interfere under the powers vested on him under the Industrial Disputes Act and refer this dispute, too, like the dispute of Magnum Garments Ltd., for settlement by compulsory arbitration, which would mean that the workers will have to call off the strike.

Our Union has given much publicity to the strike amongst the working class in our country. Periodical meetings are being held amongst the workers to ensure that they carry on with the strike.

The question, as usual, is now to sustain the strikers who have not received even their earned wages for December, 1984. Even the little bits of jewelry the workers had have been pawned to meet part of the Bail money—the major part of the Bail money being met by our Union.

Our Union will be very grateful to you if you could canvass the support of the American workers, as done in the past by you, to assist us in the struggle. As indicated by us in our previous correspondence, the class struggle against capitalism by the proletariat continues—whether they are in Sri Lanka or in the United States.

We join the American workers

unitedly against oppression.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,  
S. Siriwardene,  
General Secretary

## Lankan Women Workers...

(continued from page 9)

nuclear war with the Soviet Union, uses racism to divide white workers against black workers in the United States. J.R. and the capitalists are trying the same trick here. I ask you not to be fooled.

The great Russian revolutionary leader, Leon Trotsky, once said that when they are aroused there will be no better fighters for communism than the women of Asia. I hear people say that women in Sri Lanka are not interested in politics, that they are backward. Yes it is true that women have special problems and burdens. But I cannot accept these excuses. I know that women workers can and must be in the vanguard of the struggle.

British imperialism made super profits from the tea plantations. Now the Sri Lankan capitalists share these profits. But still the plantation workers live and work in terrible conditions. Now the capitalists also want to make fat profits from the workers of the Free Trade

Zone and textile industry. They make you a slave until you are a human wreck and then they throw you on the rubbish dump. It is the Tamil women of the plantations and the young women in factories like Magnum who are the real heart of the working class in Sri Lanka. There can be no bright socialist future in Sri Lanka unless you take your place in the forefront of the struggle. Don't listen to those men who tell you that you can and must only follow behind. I know you can be the best fighters and leaders, just like Trotsky said.

As I said we will support your struggles. We have big differences with the comrades of the LSSP [reformist Lanka Samasamaja Party]. I read yesterday that an LSSP leader said capitalism is to blame for all the troubles in society. This is true, but how can you fight capitalism when you join in governments with capitalist parties which oppress workers and even become minister of finance and taxation.

No, if we want to free ourselves from exploitation and oppression, if we want to build a society that is fit for ourselves and our children to live in we cannot do it in alliance with the capitalists. We must sweep capitalism into the rubbish dump. We must build working class unity—in Sri Lanka, in Asia, in the world.

Thank you very much for letting me speak to you. Workers of the world unite! ■

# Migra Terror at El Centro Concentration Camp

LOS ANGELES—Seventy-five U.S. Immigration (INS) cops armed with baseball bats rampaged through the El Centro desert concentration camp in the early hours of May 31, the fourth day of a hunger strike by 56 prisoners, mainly Central Americans. A strike leader, Salvadoran José Israel Gómez Murrillo, described how five cops grabbed and handcuffed him: "I was beaten unconscious because I was weak from the strike, and then they dragged me around the yard as an example." Other inmates beat the walls in protest (Los Angeles Reader, 7 June). Another Salvadoran protester, José Alberto Ramírez Flores, was badly beaten in the face and received no medical attention for four days.

The hunger strikers, who initially numbered 190 of some 500 camp inmates, were demanding political asylum and protesting desperate conditions. *La migra* has concentrated Salvadoran refugees seeking political asylum into the jammed El Centro holding pen, marked by inadequate food and medical attention, poor sanitation facilities, physical abuse and lack of access to lawyers. Inmates are forced to stand outside in the blistering, 100-plus degree desert sun 14 hours a day while their air-conditioned barracks are empty and locked. Before the cop assault, the INS had already barred relatives and attorneys from any contact with the protesters. Fifty-three of the strikers (23 of them Salvadorans) have been shipped out to other detention centers as far away as Seattle. Seven who maintained the hunger strike into the fifth day were handcuffed, thrown into *El Lobo* (the isolation chamber), told that they had lost any right to legal representation and threatened with force-feeding. A local minister posted \$28,750 bail to free them two days later.

Charged with "orchestrating" a hunger strike whose participants were being held incommunicado, attorney Graciela Zavala of the Imperial Valley Immigration Project, which represents many of the refugees at El Centro, was banned from appearing before any body of the INS as a means to deprive the protesters of legal counsel. As evidence

## Asylum for Salvadoran Refugees!



Central American refugees caged by Reagan's *migra* Gestapo at El Centro. WV Photo

of the government's hard line against these refugees, of all the applications for asylum Zavala has filed with the U.S. State Department, not one has ever been granted. The American ruling class is at war against the workers and peasants of Central America—there and here. Los Angeles is home to a quarter of a million Salvadorans, yet only 3 percent of those who have requested asylum have been given permission to remain in the U.S. The INS stalks its prey in the terrified population of immigrant workers whose only "crime" is to have fled for their lives from death squad terror and to be forced to work for low subsistence wages.

The raid at El Centro coincided with the week-long INS "Operation Employer" June 3-7, marked by factory and street-corner roundups leading to the detention of 936 undocumented workers in the Los Angeles area. In the largest single roundup of its type in a decade, INS cops targeted Latin workers who congregate at well-known pickup points for casual day labor that proliferate throughout the city and

county of Los Angeles. Carlos Holguín of the National Center for Immigrants' Rights said the raids on factories were often launched in collaboration with bosses threatened by union organizing drives (*La Opinión*, 6 June). Plants hit by the current raids ranged from manufacturers of doors to furniture, mattresses and textiles.

The plight of Central American refugees in this country grows increasingly desperate. Nabbed by *la migra*, Mexican workers usually choose "voluntary" deportation and attempt to return over the border immediately or within a short period. But for Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans, a deportation order is often a death certificate. Previously, an immigrant who applied for asylum when threatened with deportation was released under his own recognizance by posting a \$100 bail bond. Under Reagan, the price has been upped to a whopping \$2,500—so hundreds and thousands of Latino refugees languish for months in the camps like El Centro in California's Imperial Valley, or Texas' El Paso

Detention Center. Incarceration has become such a growth industry in Reagan's America that many "illegals" are sent to the growing number of private, for-profit prison operations such as those authorized in Texas and New Mexico (*New York Times*, 11 February)!

Stepped-up repression at the INS camps accompanies the ruling class's hardening attitude against the immigrant population. The capitalists generally seek to regulate, not close off, the border so they can maintain a pool of superexploited, desperate workers without rights. But behind all the racist "brown peril" hysteria, Reagan's talk about hordes of "feet people" crossing the Rio Grande, lies a growing concern that the U.S. could become infected by "wetback communism." Just as in World War II, when racist hysteria about a "Jap fifth column" went hand in hand with concentration camps for Japanese Americans, today the "foreign workers steal your jobs" lie is pushed as part of a conscious campaign of poisonous chauvinism to prepare the population for war. Meanwhile, the INS is introducing elite SWAT squads at the border; trigger-happy *migra* cops shoot a Mexican child across the Tijuana/San Ysidro border; the panoply of infrared tracking devices, helicopter surveillance units and fascist vigilante patrols multiplies.

While various legal aid groups are now organizing to protest conditions at INS jails, this is part of a much bigger picture. As the government's vindictiveness in going after the church "sanctuary" movement for Central American refugees demonstrates, you can't fight the repression without confronting the imperialist war drive which produces it. While sadistic mass murderers like Marshal Ky and anti-Soviet Polish refugees get the red-carpet treatment from Ronald Reagan, Latin workers fleeing the bloodbath of Reagan's "free world" contras and juntas in Central America are locked up in concentration camps. Asylum for Salvadoran, Guatemalan, Honduran and all refugees of death squad terror! Full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers! ■

## Pilots Strike...

(continued from page 16)

PATCO of 1985. Four years ago Reagan needed a little help to smash PATCO, the air controllers. He got it from the AFL-CIO tops, from people like IAM president William Winpisinger, who refused to shut down the airports in solidarity with the controllers. Now once again Winpisinger is herding scabs instead of building picket lines. Hiding behind the no-strike clause in their contract, the cowardly IAM misleaders are "seeking permission" from the federal courts to honor ALPA picket lines. These are the same courts that had PATCO strikers hauled off to prison in chains! This is what passes for "progressive" unionism in the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), of which "Wimpy" Winpisinger is a leading member.

This social-democratic program of chaining labor to the capitalist class—to its government, its Democratic Party, and its company boardrooms—helped pave the way for the union-busting steamroller that threatens to squash ALPA. Back in 1979, another DSA-

style "progressive" labor "statesman," former United Auto Workers (UAW) head Doug Fraser, began the flood of "givebacks" trading a billion dollars of his union members' pay for a seat on the Chrysler board of directors. Since then the UAW has continued to fork over billion upon billion to the companies while hundreds of thousands of auto workers are still laid off. Encouraged by these and other concessions in steel, transport, etc., the bosses have decided to go for labor's throat.

Noting that "many companies are taking actions that would have been unthinkable a few years ago," labor reporter William Serrin ran down the litany of union-busting in the last year:

"... the Phelps Dodge Corporation, the copper company, where nonunion personnel have been hired during the strike; Continental Air Lines, which has hired nonunion pilots in its strike; the Louisiana-Pacific Corporation, a timber products concern that hired a nonunion work force after a strike; the Danly Machine Corporation, a Chicago-area stamping press manufacturer, which used nonunion workers in a strike and wrested concessions from the union; the A.T. Massey Coal Company, which is continuing operations despite a violent mine workers' strike and by New York City hotel

operators, who are continuing operations despite a strike by employees."

—*New York Times*, 4 June

The attack on ALPA by the biggest and richest airline in the country means this union-busting thrust is pointed at the heart of the American labor movement. Locked in a fight for survival, the elite ALPA has been forced to act a little like a union. Strikers' wives have been enlisted for picket lines and other strike duties—a tactic introduced to the American union movement by the old IWW and later popularized by the communist militants who pioneered the CIO industrial unions, but since gone the way of other class-struggle traditions jettisoned by the pro-capitalist bureaucracy.

The pilots are in danger of losing this strike if they continue to take on United alone. Already ALPA chief Henry Duffy is saying that if the union is defeated, "we'd put it under our belt and absorb it," denying that the United strike is a "watershed." And the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) is holding separate back-to-work negotiations with United, and according to the *Chicago Tribune* (5 June), "Sources said the pilots would not deem an early

return to work by the attendants as a betrayal"! More than a betrayal, it would be suicide. This defeatism at the top is a threat to all airport workers, who have a vital stake in the United strike.

ALPA strikers and other airline union members are clearly looking for a way to win this strike. At a June 2 strike support rally attended by more than 500 pilots, AFA members, Teamsters, Machinists, transport workers and others, demonstrators bought 73 copies of *Workers Vanguard* with an article calling on the Machinists in particular to honor ALPA picket lines. Spartacist League supporters also distributed hundreds of copies of the *WV* supplement, "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win." The "Hardball" supplement points to the road struggles like the United pilots strike must take to beat back the union-busters:

"Solidarity is not sending \$500 and a valentine. Solidarity is respecting picket lines, it is secondary boycotts, 'hot-cargoing' struck products. 'But that's illegal,' the bureaucrats whine. So maybe some labor leaders go to jail six months after they surround the terminals with thousands of pickets and call a solidarity strike and the battle is won.... What counts is power." ■

# Nicaragua Eyewitness...

(continued from page 5)

would be 'exporting revolution' and we can't do that." Says who? Says Ronald Reagan. In the past, FSLN spokesmen have occasionally talked about waging revolutionary war throughout Central America, linking up directly with the Salvadoran rebels and Guatemalan guerrillas, *after a U.S. invasion*. But that's too late. In fact, the *refusal* of the Sandinistas to extend the struggle throughout the isthmus is directly responsible for the present situation where the U.S. generals can hope to seal off Nicaragua "tighter than a drum."

There would be no string of contra camps and U.S. bases in the narrow corridor separating Nicaragua from the insurgent zones of El Salvador if in

the globe, the need for proletarian *internationalist* revolution would seem self-evident in this region of mini-states, once part of a single Central American Union, which by themselves are condemned to the fate of banana, coffee or sugar republics subject to the dictates and depredations of the imperialist giant to the north. But in talking with leftist opposition groups in Nicaragua, our comrades found none who fundamentally break with the petty-bourgeois nationalism of the Sandinistas. At most they dream of themselves in the FSLN's place, administering a bureaucratically deformed workers state on the Cuban model. The People's Action Movement Marxist-Leninist (MAP), an ex-Maoist group which campaigned in the November 1984 elections on a platform calling for the dictatorship of the proletariat, does give more attention to the civil war in El Salvador. But their idea of internationalism is fraternal relations

admit Central America is the front line of the anti-Soviet war drive—to do so would reveal the bankruptcy of their appeals to the imperialist "doves," who when it comes to Russia have only tactical differences with Reagan. *Yet today with U.S. forces poised for invasion the Democrats line up with Reagan, solidly approving the trade embargo (their policy in the first place) and voting for the "contra aid" bills they rejected only yesterday.*

The "Russian question" is inescapable in Nicaragua. For example, Washington threatened to go to war last fall if Soviet MIGs were delivered to the Sandinistas. The Spartacists unconditionally defend the Soviet workers state (despite bureaucratic degeneration under Stalinist rule); for the last several years we have demanded, "Smash Reagan's Bay of Pigs—Nicaragua Needs MIGs!" But the MAP, which vaguely calls the Soviet Union a "revisionist" state, leaving undefined its class character, went through great contortions to write an entire article on the MIG crisis (*Prensa Proletaria*, December 1984) without once mentioning the USSR! As for those who consider our Soviet-defensist slogans a "provocation," what can they say about Daniel Ortega's trip to Moscow—which has been used by Democrats and Republicans alike as the pretext for trade sanctions and invasion preparations? In Nicaragua, it is the *bourgeois* opposition who attack the Sandinistas for appealing to the Soviet Union.

While the Spartacist comrades were in Nicaragua last month, there was a running polemic between the FSLN's *Barricada* and the pro-Sandinista *Nuevo Diario* on the one hand and the capitalist mouthpiece *La Prensa* over who defeated Nazi fascism in World War II, the Soviet Union or the "democratic" imperialist Allies. On the wall of the FANATEX union hall and the CST union headquarters in Managua we saw giant blowups of the famous photo of a Red Army soldier raising the Soviet flag with hammer and sickle over the Reichstag in Berlin (published in *WV* No. 378, 3 May). This was obviously much more than a historical controversy. The future of Nicaragua was being fought out symbolically over V-E Day. The Soviet Union remains an inspiration for workers revolution, not because of the Stalinist leadership—which dreams only of "détente" even with a crazed counterrevolutionary like Reagan, who proclaims the contras his brothers and salutes Nazi graves—but because of the legacy of the October Revolution.

A final story: in our conversations at *Barricada*, the FSLN *responsable* (organizer) at one point asked us about the Socialist Workers Party. We replied that we had been expelled from the SWP 20 years ago for our Trotskyist politics. To which he responded, "Oh yes, you're the group that sent us money to buy arms." Word of the "Red Avengers of the Spartacus Youth League" has evidently reached Managua. We apologized for the small amount, noting that it was a symbol of the SYL's commitment, fighting "in the belly of the beast," to defend Nicaragua against Yankee imperialism. Having extensively discussed the political differences which separate us, he was able to appreciate this gesture of active solidarity with those who are courageously fighting "our" bloodthirsty imperialist rulers.

FSLN *comandante* Carrión noted last November as U.S. SR-71 spy planes flew overhead that "the threat, the danger of imperialist aggression will always be present, until the United States ceases to be imperialist." As North American revolutionaries it is our special task to resolve *that* problem. As a contribution to the struggle against Yankee imperialism throughout the planet, we call upon *WV* readers to give generously to the SYL's urgent fund appeal to "Defend Nicaragua! Donate Dollars—Down with the Contras!" ■

# Hotel Strike...

(continued from page 16)

bosses long ago declared war on the unions in this city (the mid-'70s "Big MAC" fiscal crunch was in large part aimed at squelching NYC municipal labor). Transit workers bitterly remember Koch's strikebreaking in 1980, where he led a vicious media campaign against the strikers, mobilized the "yuppies" (led by his Democratic mayoral rival Carol Bellamy) for jogathons to work, and got the courts to slap the TWU membership with millions of dollars in fines under the anti-strike Taylor Law. Now, riding the national union-busting wave, the bosses here are so emboldened that they're out to scabherd on a mass scale—something that hasn't happened for decades in this once-solid union town. It's high time labor took off the gloves and fought back. With hotels sealed off by solid picket lines, deliveries shut down and mounds of garbage rotting in the summer heat, the hotel owners could quickly be brought to their knees. But to do that the backstabbing's got to stop and some union solidarity has got to be built on the picket lines.

Teamsters International president Jackie Presser issued a commendable call to members to "let the garbage pile up at every hotel that's on strike" (*Daily News*, 5 June). But that's been the exception. Longtime Central Labor Council leader Harry Van Arsdale's taxi union claims to be backing the strike, but many cabbies are doing business-as-usual at the hotels, and Local 3036 officials claim they "cannot order" their members to respect picket lines. But the vilest scabbing has come from the strategic city sanitation union. When *WV* asked hotel union spokesman Henry Sheinkopf whether the sanitation men had been approached for support, he immediately made excuses for them: "Yes, but they're public employees and



WV Photo



no credit

"All Arms to the People" proclaims billboard at July 19th Plaza, cradle of Nicaraguan Revolution. Some 35 percent of the militia are women (left).

1979-83 the Sandinistas had kept on going and established a *single front* with the Salvadorans. The FSLN's failure to do so is an expression of their policy of "nonalignment," of coexistence with Yankee imperialism. And this self-defeating nationalism is reciprocated by the Salvadoran Revolutionary Democratic Front/Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FDR/FMLN). The FMLN even required that one of its components, the Central American Workers Party, break its ties with its Honduran comrades as a condition for entering the Front! And FDR leader Guillermo Ungo accepts the U.S. supposed "right to stop the spread of communism" in Central America (*Baltimore Sun*, 3 May 1983).

More than almost anywhere else on

with one or another sector of the Salvadoran FMLN—they want an alliance of nationalist Stalinist parties.

In the Central American "solidarity" movement in the United States, the "Russian question" is the scourge of the popular-front reformists who are one and all seeking to pressure the Democratic Party. Whatever their internal squabbling, the CISPES cesspool, PAM thugs and SWP "peaceful, legal" social democrats can all unite in anti-communist violence and even calling on the capitalist police to keep Spartacist signs calling for defense of the USSR and Cuba out of "their" demonstrations. They, like Reagan, believe that if Central America has anything to do with the Soviet Union, that would justify U.S. intervention. They cannot



WV Photo

Hotel strikers stop city sanitation truck.

they have to comply with the Taylor Law."

It's no accident that city union bureaucrats are hiding behind the Taylor Law as an excuse to scab. The enthusiasm and militancy of the hotel strikers is an inspiration for the transit workers who were screwed in 1980, to the hundreds of thousands of municipal workers who still haven't seen their contract, and to the rest of the working class of New York. Such an inspiration could unleash a flood tide of labor action that strikes mortal fear in the hearts of capitalist rulers on a national scale. If determined sanitation men and other city workers successfully bust the bosses' anti-strike laws *now*, it could open the way to a real labor explosion that will blow apart the cycle of givebacks and concessions. And that's exactly what the union bureaucrats are afraid of—they *don't* want a *showdown* with the city government and Democratic Party scoundrels they support. The politicians are terrified of this strike because it could cripple the functioning of this city as the capital of American capitalism. The hotels are a *necessity* for

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housing the international corporate and government executives immersed in intensive, high-level wheeling and dealing. The French minister of finance or the president of Krupp Steel can't operate out of a motel in New Jersey or Long Island.

*Smash the Taylor Law through militant solidarity—no union was built or labor struggle won by adhering to the bosses' laws! To hell with the Democrats—for a workers party to fight for a workers government! What's needed in this strike are class-struggle tactics: stop the scabbing! Teamsters, stop all deliveries! Sanitation men, let the garbage pile up—let the bosses rot in Stink City! Taxi drivers, no pickups! Building maintenance workers, no repairs! Shut down the hotels!*

### "You Gotta Kick Scabs in the Ass!"

Shortly before the midnight May 31 strike deadline, about 60 unionists sat down in the posh lobby of the Waldorf-Astoria. Soon hundreds of strikers poured out: bellhops, bartenders, maids, clerks and others massed outside, chanting, shaking their fists and marching around the giant hotel. At one point the militant crowd surged into the Waldorf's garage area, startling upper-crust guests, until the cops swarmed in and drove them out. The scene was similar at other hotels. At the posh Plaza hotel facing Central Park, workers surged around the building with picket signs while shocked guests in tuxedos and ball gowns looked on. All in all, 45 hotels were struck on the first day, while another two hotels locked out the workers. On June 4 the union struck nine more hotels.

On the morning of the first day the cops had their hands full. At the Plaza, a delivery truck driver decided to beat a hasty retreat when cars pulled up aggressively behind and alongside him, honking their horns; at the Waldorf, hundreds of pickets swarmed around, and at least a couple of scabs were roughed up; at the Regency, a garbage truck was driven off before it could pick up anything. It was a small taste of class war, and our side won more than a few. "You gotta kick 'em in the ass," one West Indian woman said of the scabs.

The same militancy emerged at a mass meeting of over 5,000 strikers on June 6. "Give Back What? They Must Be Crazy!" proclaimed a sign carried by one striker. "Welcome to New York—Now Go Home," said another directed at hotel guests. Outside the Helmsley Palace hotel the strikers hung a noose with the sign, "Scabs Sign in Here." After a brief speech by union leader Vito Pitta—strikers grumbled when he tried to praise Koch—the crowd spilled out of the Felt Forum. Shouting, whistling, chanting, they marched for a couple of hours all over midtown, past the major hotels. It was an impressive display of militancy, but it also blew off a lot of steam while doing nothing to bolster the picket lines and union solidarity necessary to win this battle.

What triggered the strike was the bosses' attempt to ram through a laundry list of takeaways, including the merging of job titles, the removal of some supervisors from the union, a two-tier wage system, and wage deductions to pay for benefits. On top of this the bosses offered an insulting 4.5 percent wage increase in the first year of a five-year contract and fixed raises of \$14.50 in successive years—in an industry where workers on average take home a little over \$200 a week. The union's own wage demand of 24 percent over four years was less than minimal. New York hotel owners are pleading poverty and the need to stay "competitive," but that's a transparent lie. As Pitta put it at a press conference June 5:

"It's not economic—they could afford to pay the increases. So you tell me, is it an economic strike here? Or is it an attempt...to weaken the union, to intimidate us, so that they can intimi-



Left: Hotel Trades Council president Vito Pitta prevents strikers from coming to the aid of an arrested picket. Right: June 6 march—Roach Motels for Scabs!



date the unions throughout the country."

This is a struggle for survival, and (so far) class solidarity has transcended race and sex lines. The hotel unions are over 50 percent women and largely Hispanic, with many blacks. The brutal violence of Koch's cops is nothing new to these strikers—they and their families have firsthand experience with the racist NYPD thugs-in-blue who have carried out grisly executions and torturing of the Michael Stewarts, Eleanor Bumpurs and dozens of others. The hated immigration police carry out intimidating raids and deportations against the many "illegal aliens" in the union. The bosses have attempted to play the race card, as many of the scabs are black youth, who face 50 percent unemployment. But the picket lines have been remarkably free of race-baiting, and the women strikers—many of them single mothers with children, barely surviving on subsistence pay—have emerged as real militants.

Within the rigidly class-collaborationist framework of American business unionism, the Hotel Workers and Restaurant Workers International and its organizing director Vincent Sirabella have been relatively aggressive. The union has led some bitter, lengthy strikes of late, at Yale University and in Las Vegas, using flashy techniques which distinguish it from the usual flabby style of the AFL-CIO. This alone was enough to earn the hatred of the capitalist state. The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations has recently been dogging the union for alleged "mob" influence, urging that "top officers" be removed. (Vito Pitta is one of those under indictment by a federal grand jury.) The bourgeois state always finds it convenient to have the more aggressive labor leaders facing prison, as happened to Teamster chief Jimmy Hoffa in the '60s. Government hands off the unions—labor must clean its own house!

Despite its greater willingness to throw up picket lines, the hotel union leadership is tightly tied to the political representatives of the capitalists, the Democrats and Republicans, often supporting downright reactionaries like Koch. In last year's four-month restaurant strike in San Francisco, the leadership of hotel workers Local 2 deliberately conciliated the bosses, hoping to avoid a militant struggle that would embarrass Mayor Feinstein, Mondale and the Democrats in an election year. Restaurants were struck selectively, the union did not demand that other unions respect its picket lines. The strike withered in isolation, overwhelmed by scabs and cops. In the end, the workers were saddled with a two-tier wage system, the elimination of seniority in selecting work stations, and the continued employment of scabs.

Relying on racist strikebreakers like Koch or hoping to wage a war of attrition fought in isolation from other unions could prove equally fatal in this strike. Yet the hotel union officials have already demonstrated their desire to cool out militancy. From day one Pitta complacently accepted scabbing as an accomplished fact, bragging that the scabs would not be able to make the

beds, cook meals or run the telephones. On the contrary, these are largely unskilled jobs in which replacements can be (and are being) trained in a few days at most. After a number of scabs had been taught a lesson, Pitta warned 500 union delegates and picket captains at a June 1 meeting in the union hall against "a few bad apples," instructing the ranks to "cooperate with the police." Earlier that day Pitta showed what he meant when he intervened against his own members on the picket line who were trying to prevent the cops from arresting a union member. "Don't do this!" he lectured the crowd. "This is just what they want! Stay calm!" (see photo). And the cops made off with the striker.

New York City is teetering on the edge in this election year. Even clerks at the vital Stock Exchange are threatening to walk out on Tuesday. What's necessary to win the NYC hotel strike is a fighting union leadership that can unleash the workers' militancy and organize it for some serious class struggle. The entire city labor movement must be mobilized to reverse the bosses' racist anti-union offensive. But

that means a full-scale confrontation with labor-hater Koch, phony "friend of labor" Cuomo and the rest of the Democratic Party—and a sharp repudiation in action of the labor fakers' backstabbing, kowtowing to anti-strike laws and reliance on the capitalist state that have crippled the unions for so long.

Robert Redford and Kate Jackson refused to cross a picket line, so a dinner-dance of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts had to be transferred to Lincoln Center. The head of the uniformed firefighters warns that guests at struck hotels could be taking their lives in their hands by staying at unsafe facilities. But Victor Gotbaum, head of AFSCME's District Council 37 waltzed across a picket line into Le Cirque Restaurant in the struck Mayfair Regent Hotel. Tennis with Felix Rohatyn, anyone? It only takes a little class war to show the labor traitors in their true colors—bright yellow. Smash the scabbing with mass picketing—union solidarity with the hotel strikers! Smash the strikebreaking Taylor Law! Picket lines mean don't cross! Victory to the New York hotel strike! ■

## Subscribe!

The New York hotel workers strike is shaping up into a battle for all NYC labor, and *Workers Vanguard* has been there on the picket lines since the first night. The militant mood of the unionists who see strikebreakers as the cockroaches they are was captured in the hand-painted banner recalling the popular "Roach Motel" jingle known to every New Yorker: "Scabs—They check in but they don't check out!" We were on the same wavelength—strikers snaking through the streets of midtown, repeatedly tying up traffic, welcomed our supplement, "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win."

One *WV* salesman, seeing a scab peering at the strikers from the roof of the St. Moritz, exclaimed, "Jump!" A picket captain liked what he heard and grabbed a handful of her supplements to hand out. In the first week of the strike, 1,500 "Hardball" supplements have been distributed at the picket lines; 430 copies of our last issue of *WV* sold, as



well as 64 copies of the Spanish-language edition of *Spartacist* (the hotel unions are heavily Hispanic). Hotel strikers: subscribe to the newspaper that fights on the side of the working people!

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Labor: Honor the Picket Lines!

# Victory to NYC Hotel Strikers— Stop the Scabs!

JUNE 9—When the 25,000-member Hotel and Motel Trades Council struck New York City's major hotels June 1, the streets of Manhattan echoed with the sounds of class war. On the Friday night of the walkout, hundreds of strike militants swarmed around the posh Waldorf-Astoria and other high-class hotels, shouting "No contract, No work!" and teaching scabs a much-needed lesson. By daylight they were still there, slowing traffic, stopping scab deliveries and trying to prevent the scab garbage pickups. Repeatedly on the following days hundreds, sometimes thousands, of strikers snaked through the streets of midtown, disrupting traffic, chanting and shaking their fists at every hotel entrance. On June 6, over 5,000 strikers surged out of a mass meeting at the Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden, chanting "We're gonna win!" as they took off up Eighth Avenue toward the hotel strikers. "This is our first strike in 46 years so we might be a little rusty," said Vito Pitta, the president of the nine-union coalition. But many of the strikers got the right idea right away: "Scabs check in but they don't check out!" read a hand-scrawled banner carried on the mass march.

But spontaneous militancy is not enough. The hotel chains, their appetites whetted by the anti-labor atmosphere of the Reagan years, have hired and brought in thousands of scabs to break the union. And behind the hotel



June 6: Five thousand hotel strikers take over midtown Manhattan streets chanting "No Contract, No Work!"

bosses stand racist swine Mayor Koch and the Democratic Party. After a cheap gesture of refusing to cross a picket line, the mayor—whom the hotel union leadership has consistently backed—got down to the real business of strikebreaking. Koch ordered city sanitation men to pick up the hotel

garbage which private Teamster haulers refused to handle; he vowed to provide "as many cops as necessary" to protect scab deliveries (*New York Post*, 5 June). Over 4,000 policemen have been assigned to "special duty" as strikebreakers. Throughout the week the NYPD arrested dozens of strikers and kept the

hotel entrances clear of pickets, but when a couple of scabs slashed two strikers with a razor or knife outside the Sheraton Centre in midweek, they had no trouble "escaping" through an army of cops.

The bankers and Democratic Party  
*continued on page 14*

## Ground UAL! Bust the Union-Busters!

# Pilots Strike: Key Fight for Labor

## IAM's Winpisinger Scabherds for Bosses, Again

CHICAGO, June 7—Even the professional blind men of the AFL-CIO can see that United Airlines (UAL) chief Richard Ferris is engaged in a "pure and simple effort to bust the union." So what do they do? Capitulate, or try to. But that has only encouraged the companies, who smell blood. Militant labor solidarity is needed, now, to bust this union-buster!

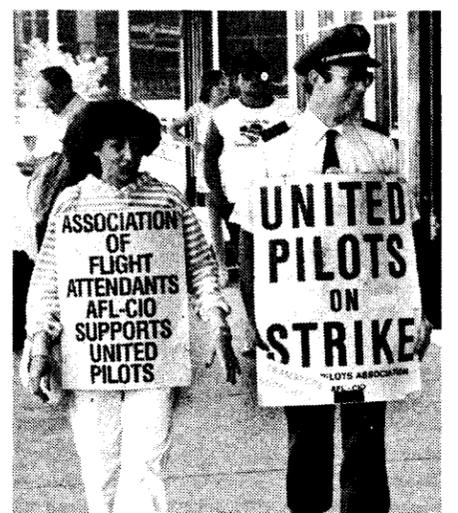
Five thousand members of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) walked out May 16 to oppose an insidious "two-

tier" wage system demanded by Ferris to slash new-hires' wages almost in half. The ALPA sellouts worked out a tentative contract settlement two weeks ago that not only *accepted* a two-tier agreement but gave the bosses' arbitrators the power to extend it beyond five years. Yet Ferris wasn't satisfied by this belly-crawling appeasement—he wants the whole cake: elimination of the pre-strike seniority list; "super-seniority" for scabs; and denial of jobs to some 570 pilot trainees, all but four of whom

shocked UAL officials by refusing to cross ALPA picket lines.

Now the pilots are on strike fighting for the survival of their union as Ferris aims to "rebuild" United with a new workforce of scab pilots, and every day the company is putting more jets in the air. The labor movement must bring Ferris to his knees! The key to winning this strike is to *stop the scabbing*. At Chicago's O'Hare Airport, UAL's base of operations, *thousands* of members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) are crossing picket lines to service the scab planes. *Mass picket lines, bolstered by contingents from other unions* throughout the Chicago area, are urgently needed to shut down United Airlines.

Ferris wants to make ALPA the  
*continued on page 13*



Chicago's O'Hare Airport: "Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!"