

## “Rambo” Reagan Sends In the 82nd Airborne

# Smash Yankee Imperialism in Central America!

The 3,200 U.S. troops Ronald Reagan dispatched to Honduras March 16 were a big step up the escalation ladder in Central America. Inventing the pretext of a supposed “invasion” by Sandinista Nicaragua, this war move was a convenient means to distract attention from the indictments of four of the Iran/Contragate conspirators announced that same day and to stampede Congress into voting for aid to Reagan’s contra terrorists. The administration’s all-purpose ploy also helps undercut the Democrats’ Arias “peace” plan, and perhaps a whiff of gunpowder would rally voters to the Republicans. But meanwhile, there are four battalions of the United States Army’s Rapid Reaction Force (two each from the 7th Light Infantry Division and the 82nd Airborne) poised along the Nicaraguan border. They won’t intimidate the Sandinistas, but they’re available for whatever provocation the lame ducks in the White House dream up: a border skirmish, “restoring order” in Panama, you name it.

In the streets of America, Reagan’s dispatch of U.S. troops to Honduras was met with an outburst of demonstrations (see article below). The protests were only a taste of what would happen in this country if large-scale U.S. military intervention were attempted. And they intersect divisions in the ruling class over Nicaragua. For the Democrats, it was another shootout at Credibility Gap with an administration that runs on lies. At the Pentagon, reaction was unanimously negative: one top official said, “I don’t know of any

### Defend Nicaragua—Complete, Extend the Revolution!



AP/Wide World

Nicaraguan women, arms in hand, march on International Women’s Day to honor Sandinista hero Nora Astorga and defend the revolution.

military person who thinks [sending troops] is a good idea” (*Washington Post*, 17 March). The generals are still gun-shy over the U.S.’ humiliating

defeat in Vietnam, the liberals think Reagan’s cowboy act has flopped and want to clean it up, and the reformist left tags along with their calls for a “dem-

ocratic” foreign policy. In contrast, we Trotskyists seek to *smash Yankee imperialism*, calling on American workers  
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## Reagan’s War Moves Provoke Coast-to-Coast Protests



WV Photo

San Francisco, March 18—Spartacist League at the SF Federal Building protesting U.S. troops to Honduras.

A wave of protests has swept the country against Reagan’s sending U.S. troops to Honduras. Within hours, thousands of demonstrators have hit the streets, demanding “U.S. Troops Out” and “No Contra Aid” everywhere from Washington, New York and Boston through Cleveland, Minneapolis, Chicago and scores of other cities, to the San Francisco Bay Area, where angry protests have escalated daily in some of the most volatile street demonstrations since the Vietnam War. The growing Bay Area actions have been greeted by many who recall those ‘60s protests and today have sons or even grandsons they fear will be swept up in another bloody, losing “Vietnam.” At Fort Ord, some anxious wives of the soldiers being

shipped out joined pacifist demonstrators; one soldier’s pregnant wife carried a sign reading “Stop the Lies.” The breadth and depth of the American population’s opposition to Reagan’s bloody mass murderers in Central America is clear in this instant response. And U.S. troops aren’t even involved in direct combat yet—these protests are only a hint of the explosion that a direct U.S. invasion of Nicaragua would ignite. Many of the protests were organized by pacifist groups like Pledge of Resistance, and the familiar tactics of “civil disobedience” have been played out in many cities, with hundreds arrested for blocking traffic, sitting in at military recruiting stations, and so on.  
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# Thatcher's Death Squads Hit IRA

The following article was adapted from *Workers Hammer* No. 96 (March 1988), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain.

Margaret Thatcher's Britain is carrying out a systematic policy of cold-blooded execution of Irish Catholic militants. On 6 March, three unarmed IRA members—Sean Savage, Mairead Farrell and Daniel McCann—were assassinated by British commandos in Gibraltar. Mairead Farrell, aged 31, was imprisoned for ten years from 1976 to 1986, during which time she led protests against the brutal strip searches of Republican prisoners; McCann, 30, was a leading IRA member; Savage was only 24.

Then, on 16 March, as the coffins of the murdered IRA members were being lowered into the grave, a crazed Orange fanatic rained grenades and gunfire into the crowd of thousands of mourners. Three people were killed instantly and more than 50 wounded, some critically. People scrambled to flatten themselves on the wet ground; hysterical mothers threw themselves upon their children to shield them; blood-drenched victims were thrown into cars from the funeral procession and rushed to a hospital. Hundreds of youth chased after the killer and began beating him, until Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police arrived 15 minutes after the bombing to take him away.

By nightfall, cars, trucks and buses in

## Grenade Attack on Belfast Funeral March



March 16—Mourners at Catholic Milltown cemetery duck for cover as crazed Orange terrorist pours gunfire and grenades into crowd, killing three.

Catholic Belfast were burning, as outraged youth hurled Molotov cocktails. And three days later, the funeral procession for one of those killed at the earlier funeral was itself attacked, as a car driven by two gun-wielding plain clothes British soldiers rammed into

the crowd. The outraged crowd dragged the two men away and they were shortly despatched. Now the arrogant British rulers who only a week earlier assassinated the three IRAers in Gibraltar are hypocritically screaming bloody murder. Northern Ireland is on the boiling point, with the flames of anti-Catholic terror and sectarian violence being stoked by Thatcher's death squads. *British troops out of Ireland now!*

British intelligence in collaboration with Spanish police had McCann and Savage under surveillance for months. When, on 6 March, the IRA members parked a car and began to walk toward the border, British agents tracked them on foot and shot them to death. By Monday morning, the government's story—reported as fact in the press—was that the car contained a 500-pound bomb which had been defused by a controlled explosion and that the IRA members were "believed to be heavily armed." However, Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe later announced that same day that the car did not contain a bomb at all and that "Those killed were subsequently found not to be carrying arms." In other words, it was cold-blooded murder!

The British bourgeoisie did not bother to conceal its glee over this bloody crime. Snapping to attention, Labour's foreign affairs spokesman George Robertson "congratulated the security forces" and went on to howl for more of the same. Indeed this lackey of imperialism was so eager to endorse the Gibraltar massacre that he asked Howe if he could be sure that all those in the conspiracy had been shot! The accolades to the SAS commandos are fully in keeping with Labour's pro-imperialist policies on Ireland. As *Workers Hammer* (No. 88, May 1987) wrote: "What can you expect from the party which in government sent in the troops in 1969, which enacted the Prevention of Terrorism Act and unleashed the SAS killers in the mid-1970s, which obscenely told [IRA hunger striker] Bobby Sands to go ahead and die in 1981?"

But, in no small part due to their prevarication and endlessly shifting stories, Thatcher & Co. have not quite pulled this off. The press began running queasy articles like that in the [London] *Guardian* (9 March) which read: "What happened in Gibraltar on Sunday... begins to look rather less simple than it did in the headlines next morning." Through the heavy tissue of government lies it emerges that the SAS hit was a planned assassination. As the *Inde-*

*pendent* (8 March) reported: "According to a source formerly in a key position at the Army's HQ Northern Ireland, when the SAS is committed there is normally an understanding that no prisoners will be taken."

While nothing can be believed from the lying accounts of the bourgeois press, if there is any truth to the story that the three IRA members were considering an attack on the Royal Anglian Regiment, such an attack—unlike the indefensible, indiscriminate bombing at Enniskillen several months ago—would clearly have targeted the armed forces of British imperialism which have been oppressing the Irish people. The British military installation on Gibraltar is part of a chain of listening posts operated by GCHQ at Cheltenham; the Rock itself has been tunnelled to house NATO centres and even a mock-up of Belfast side streets to provide training for British troops awaiting transfer to Ulster.

### Smash the RUC! British Troops Out of Ireland!

Two weeks to the day before the 6 March assassinations, Aidan McAnespie, a 24-year-old election worker for Sinn Fein, was shot to death by a British soldier at an army checkpoint in Aghnacloy, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. McAnespie was on his way to buy sweets before the start of a local football match. On 5 March, the funeral for IRA veteran Brendan Burns—who was killed with fellow IRA member Brendan Moley by the explosion of their own bomb—turned into another show of British/RUC terror. The RUC charged the funeral procession with batons swinging, injuring an elderly man and three women; the Army mounted a large backup operation including two Chinook helicopters to ferry soldiers and police to the graveside. Mourners for the slain IRA member conducted the burial service surrounded by military personnel and cops in riot gear.

The recent appearance of John Stalker's book detailing his investigation into RUC shootings in 1982, his removal from that investigation and Attorney General Mayhew's announcement that there would be no prosecutions filled the press just before Gibraltar. Stalker, at the time the deputy chief constable of Greater Manchester, went to Northern Ireland in 1984 to investigate the shootings of seven Irish Catholic youth. All had been killed (except one, who was seriously wounded) within a month and in each

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TROTSKY

### Class War Against Colonial War

The U.S. military intervention in Central America poses the urgent need for labor action against Reagan's war moves. In 1924-26, the French government (which for a time included the reformist Socialist Party) waged a savage colonial war against the Rif guerrilla forces fighting for the independence of Morocco. The French Communist Party sought to aid this national liberation struggle by waging class war on the home front. Below is a

statement summarizing the revolutionary campaign of the Communists, who raised the slogan "immediate peace with the Rif."

Along with this slogan, the Party raised that of *withdrawal from Morocco, recognition of the Rif*, and proposed the following measures: boycott of war manufacture and transport, preparation of a 24-hour general strike, and *fraternization at the front*. The maneuvers of the Painlevé government in preparation for its offensive (the peace offer to Abd el-Krim), the passing of the Socialist Party into opposition in order to disorient public opinion, have made necessary much greater precision in explaining our slogans.

We can no longer raise the slogan of immediate peace without criticizing the imperialist peace proposed by Painlevé or the peace under a [League of Nations] mandate proposed by the Socialists. We must denounce this before the workers as two specimens of imperialist peace....

The Party has raised the slogan of a *24-hour general strike*. It never thought that out of this strike, of greater or lesser magnitude, could miraculously come a definitive peace or revolution. There must be no illusions in this respect.... The 24-hour general strike was a demonstration of the proletariat's desire for peace. It was an initial blow, nothing more, but also nothing less, struck against French imperialism.

After the general strike, the protests by the proletariat must continue through the boycott of war manufacture and transport....

—*Cahiers du Bolchévisme* No. 30, 1 November 1925,  
reprinted in Jacob Moneta, *Le PCF et la question coloniale, 1920-1965* (1971)



LENIN

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Salvadoran Union Leader Kidnapped by Death Squad Regime

## Labor Solidarity Frees Humberto Centeno

When Salvadoran trade-union leader Humberto Centeno was seized and savagely beaten by government troops on March 10, it touched off a wave of international labor protests. The Partisan Defense Committee had already aided in publicizing the plight of Centeno's two sons, who had been kidnapped and held in Duarte's dungeons. Upon learning of his arrest, the PDC mobilized immediately, and within a few hours contacted several dozen unionists around the country. We print below the PDC statement issued upon Centeno's release.

We have learned from San Salvador that at 11:30 a.m. today trade-union leader Humberto Centeno was released by the notorious Treasury Police to the National Unity of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS). His union brothers are now protecting Centeno in the Diagnostic Center hospital where he remains in stable but serious condition as a result of the brutal beating he received during his arrest on Thursday evening, March 10.

In response to the vicious assault on Centeno, Salvadoran workers mobilized in militant protest. There was also an immediate outcry of protest internationally, expressing the revulsion of working people and others who are fed up with the terror regime which has piled up mountains of corpses of their class brothers and sisters in El Salvador.

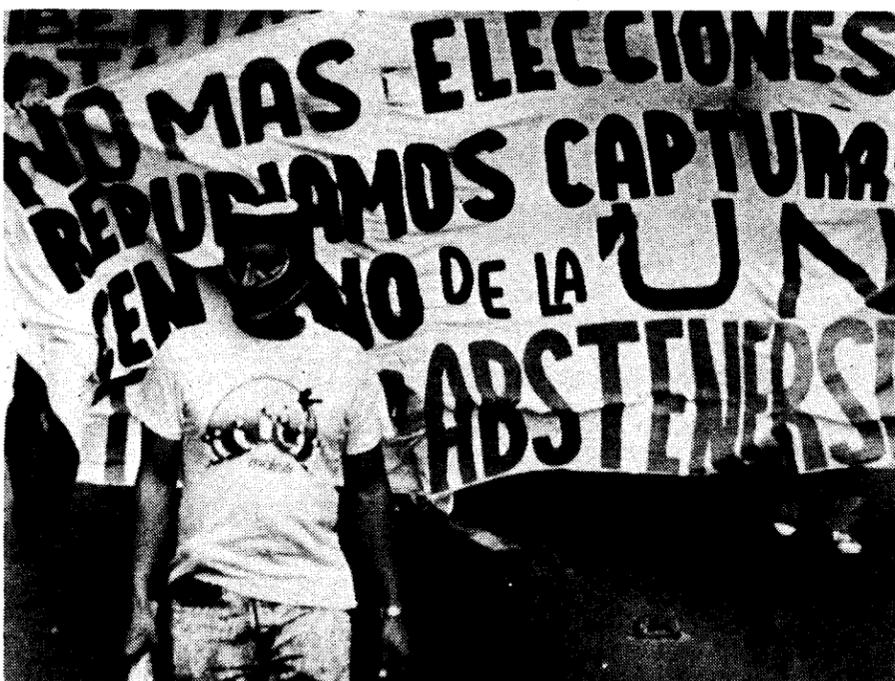
The Partisan Defense Committee holds the Salvadoran government of President José Napoleón Duarte and his U.S. government godfathers responsible for this atrocity. We hail the freeing of Centeno as a signal victory for international labor defense, while calling for continued vigilance against the death squads in and out of uniform.

Humberto Centeno is a leader of the UNTS, the principal labor federation of the country, and general secretary of the Association of Telecommunications Workers of El Salvador (ASTTEL). He and his family have suffered beyond measure from the bloody Duarte torture regime: in November 1985, his two sons José and Jaime were kidnapped, tortured and jailed for two years.

In the Thursday attack Centeno was traveling with an American delegation to the Ministry of Labor where union representatives were surrounded by several hundred government soldiers. The bus was stopped by Air Force troops, Centeno was singled out and repeatedly kicked and punched, receiving numerous blows to the head and neck, thrown onto the floor of a truck



Humberto Centeno (center) visits his two sons Jaime and José in prison, 1987. Below: Militant workers march in San Salvador demanding freedom for Centeno, March 11.



and driven off. Troops forced the other unionists back into the bus, and then fired their weapons, wounding four.

Upon learning of Centeno's arrest the Partisan Defense Committee mounted an emergency international protest campaign. The PDC issued a statement demanding his immediate release, declaring:

"The utterly legitimate social struggles by phone workers and other unions are the source of social betterment for El Salvador. The attack against the workers leader Humberto Centeno raises the lunar vista of gullies full of victims of the death squad.... In this land where murder has begotten murder, instead of

killing these leaders, as has been done to hundreds of Salvadoran workers leaders before them, as well as the Archbishop Romero, listen to the voices of the exploited and oppressed."

A PDC delegation went to the Salvadoran consulate in New York with the protest, which was also delivered to the San Francisco consulate and Salvadoran embassy in Washington, and telegraphed to President Duarte and the American Embassy in San Salvador.

The New York delegation included present and former telephone unionists and a spokesman for the Spartacist League. The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle legal defense organization in accordance with the political views of the SL. The PDC also alerted trade unionists, parliamentar-

ians, human rights organizations and others in Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Australia.

Across the U.S. there were protests. The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) called demonstrations in New York, Washington and San Francisco. SF mayor Art Agnos called the Salvadoran consulate on behalf of Centeno. The ASTTEL Support Project of the New York Area Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador mobilized union officials to send telegrams. Together with the Salvadoran Labor Defense Network in the Bay Area they are putting together a full-page ad to be published in a San Salvador newspaper, signed by several hundred American trade unionists, protesting anti-labor repression.

The PDC called unions in Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco. Telephone workers were among the first to respond. In San Francisco, officials of Communications Workers of America participated in the protest outside the Salvadoran consulate and signed a telegram along with 17 members of CWA locals in SF and Oakland. CWA union officials in New York and Cleveland also sent protests.

Dozens of local union leaders of the postal workers, auto workers, oil workers, municipal workers, machinists and teachers told the PDC they would send off protests immediately. Mike Olszanski, president of Steelworkers Local 1010, fired off a telegram to Duarte "on behalf of our 11,000 members."

The outpouring of condemnation was instrumental in obtaining the release of Salvadoran union leader Humberto Centeno in a single day. This is a tremendous victory for a land where thousands of trade unionists have been gunned down and "disappeared" by the "forces of order." But the bestial anti-labor repression continues. In the past three months, three ASTTEL phone workers have been assassinated, as well as teachers, nurses and other union members.

The UNTS, which brought out 3,000 workers Friday to demand freedom for Humberto Centeno, is campaigning against the "gunpoint elections" called at the behest of the U.S. as part of its counterinsurgency war on the Salvadoran working people. Under the guns of this U.S.-sponsored terror regime, tens of thousands of workers are courageously striking against the bloody Duarte regime of IMF starvation and death squad "democracy." We pledge them our militant solidarity and support. ■



SL and PDC join March 11 demonstrations demanding Centeno's freedom at El Salvador consulates in New York City (left) and San Francisco (right).

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# Gorbachev's Afghan Sellout: Some Russians Say Nyet

Faced with a massive imperialist military buildup and domestic economic stagnation, the response of the Gorbachev regime has been to introduce market-oriented reforms at home while seeking to accommodate the rapacious imperialist warmongers abroad. The Kremlin's desire to get out of Afghanistan is in fact the international extension of *perestroika*, Gorbachev's policy of economic "restructuring" labeled "new thinking." Now the 1979 Red Army intervention is called a "mistake" of the "old way of thinking under Brezhnev." To be sure, it was the first time since World War II that the USSR has committed troops outside the borders of the Soviet bloc. But this was in response to the growing aggressiveness of U.S. imperialism, seeking to recover from its humiliating Vietnam debacle. In addition to Washington's arming of the Afghan counterrevolutionary *mujahedin*, 1979 was the year that NATO voted to deploy first-strike Pershing 2 missiles in Europe, only six minutes flying time from Moscow.

The stodgy Brezhnev was hardly the global class warrior he is now made out to be. The conservative bureaucrats in the Kremlin simply wanted to make secure an unstable, strategically placed client state. Though this objectively opened up the possibility of a social revolution through the Sovietization of Afghanistan, almost from the outset the Kremlin tried to limit the scale of social reforms in order to conciliate the feudal opposition. Committed to its nationalist dogma of building "socialism in one country," the bureaucracy maintained a shamefaced silence about the Afghan war. Far from being a measure of the war's unpopularity at home, as the bourgeois press claimed, this refusal to acknowledge what many Soviet citizens rightly saw as their internationalist role in Afghanistan was deeply resented by the population at large. Popular demands were not for withdrawal, but for official recognition of the sacrifice of the sons of the Soviet Union who fell fighting in the internationalist cause.

Now that the Gorbachev regime has decided to pull out, it is actually encouraging war-weariness at home, which certainly exists. A lead article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (17 February) waxes lyrical about how "the soldiers will go back to their mothers." But pulling out of Afghanistan will *not* bring peace to the Soviet Union's southern border. Emboldened, the U.S.-backed *mujahedin* will do everything in their power to extend Islamic counterrevolution to Soviet Central Asia, with all kinds of provocations and cross-border raids.

So there is significant opposition in Russia to surrendering Afghanistan. The above-quoted *Literaturnaya Gazeta* article also hints at high-level divisions over the question: "A few of our citizens, basing themselves on statism, patriotism, an understanding of the agonies, of all the problems seizing us, 'catch out' their own state." Speculation abounds that key sections of the top Soviet leadership including former foreign minister Andrei Gromyko (known as "Mister Nyet"), KGB head Viktor Chebrikov and "hardline officers" in the military are opposed to a Soviet withdrawal. Anatoly Dobrynin, a prominent spokesman on international relations, while expressing support for withdrawal, warns that "We are not prepared to withdraw at any cost" (*Washington Post*, 21 February).

Indeed, there is clearly significant opposition at all levels of Soviet society to pulling out. The regime has been pushing withdrawal as a popular demand, yet a recent poll in Moscow found only 53 percent in favor. A survey of Soviet youth—the age group who would end up going to Afghanistan—found that almost half opposed pulling out until a stable, neutral government could be left behind, and fully two out of three people were concerned that "the Western powers want to establish control over Afghanistan in order to use it as a base against the Soviet Union." One



Der Spiegel  
**Moscow club of Afghan war veterans with decorated veteran of World War II. Soviet soldiers are demanding official recognition for their internationalist duty in Afghanistan.**

veteran of the Afghan war, Aleksandr Simonov, warns:

"The CIA would be a great threat. And if they deployed missiles there, I think that would be the end of everything.... 'I don't think they [Soviet troops] should be pulled out, because then the throat-cutting will really begin. There will be a sea of blood and fights all over the country between different Afghan groups.'"

—*New York Times Magazine*,  
14 February

Likewise, Victor Hirschfeld, a retired Soviet military commander, predicts, "if a bloodbath occurs after Soviet troops are brought home, people will blame him [Gorbachev]."

Contrary to the Western media and propagandists, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was generally *welcomed* by the population at large. This was especially so in Soviet Central Asia, which well within living memory had been a wretchedly backward, mullah-ridden society like Afghanistan. In the early days of the war one young student

and reservist in Soviet Tadzhikistan explained, "most of them were glad to go to help—it's a very backward country and we are neighbors, after all" (*New York Times*, 11 April 1980). And today, eight years later, the *New York Times* (12 February) reports: "Several Central Asian men who had served in Afghanistan, when asked their strongest personal impressions of the war, said without hesitation that they were shocked by how poorly the Afghans lived compared with their Soviet neighbors." One of the few Soviet cities to erect a monument to a martyred veteran of

government has repeatedly changed. State events were preceded by mullahs' prayers. The flag ceased to be red and included a green Islamic fragment. The country's star and sickle disappeared. The party stopped speaking of constructing a socialist society.... And most important—the declaration of a policy of national reconciliation.... "All this taken together permits one to say: the original aims proclaimed by the PDPA have not been achieved.... If this is the case, the presence of Soviet forces in the country loses its meaning. A departure is inevitable and logical."

—*Literaturnaya Gazeta*,  
17 February

In fact, it was the abandonment of a revolutionary *social* program which has weakened the PDPA regime. And at every step—cutting back on land reform, toning down the campaign for women's rights, restoring Islam as the state religion—the *PDPA's policies were dictated by the Kremlin*, which has held the reins of power in Kabul. More importantly, a social revolution in this profoundly backward country could *only* be introduced from without, through the agency of the Red Army. That is why a Soviet withdrawal, whatever policies the PDPA pursues, is necessarily a betrayal of the cause of social progress for the Afghan peoples. The prospect of a "future traditional Islamic, nonaligned Afghanistan" which Prokhanov holds out means a return to the dark night of medievalism.

In his attempt to prepare the Soviet population for pulling out of Afghanistan, Gorbachev has called the Afghan war a "bleeding wound," echoing imperialist propaganda that this was "Russia's Vietnam." For years the Americans have been hoping that the Soviet Union would get bogged down in a losing war in Afghanistan like the U.S. war in Indochina. The comparison is spurious: America was defeated on the battlefield by the Vietnamese workers and peasants in a *social revolution*, whereas the Soviet bureaucracy never really tried to win in Afghanistan because it refused to implement a social revolution. One bourgeois commentator recently recognized that "The Soviet army has never committed itself fully in Afghanistan" (*London Independent*, 2 March).

Furthermore, the Soviet Union shares a 1,000-mile border with Afghanistan. A U.S.-backed and fanatically anti-Communist regime in Kabul poses a direct threat to Soviet security. By contrast, the Vietnam War was an ideologically motivated anti-Communist adventure on the other side of the globe.

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the Afghan war is Dushanbe, in Tadzhikistan.

In order to bring the Turkic peoples of Soviet Central Asia into the 20th century—liberating women from the veil, teaching girls as well as boys to read and write, introducing modern medicine—during the 1920s the Red Army had to fight a savage war against Islamic fundamentalists, the Basmachi, similar to the Afghan *mujahedin*. Today, the Gorbachev regime not only repudiates social revolution in Afghanistan but actually *blames the civil war* there on the left-nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) for seeking to modernize their country! Thus, Aleksandr Prokhanov, an apologist for selling out Afghanistan to the CIA-backed Islamic fanatics, argues:

"Mistakes in the political line, incorrect formulas for directives, the spreading of socialism in such an 'un-Afghan,' 'un-Islamic' form that offended tradition, flowing over into violence and repression.

"...the political course of the Kabul

**Soviet forces in Afghanistan display war matériel, including land mines, captured from CIA-backed Islamic fanatics.**



Shone/Gamma-Liaison

# Afghanistan: Soviet Pullout Would Mean Bloodbath

## Fake-Lefts Caught in Cold War Vise

The nuclear nuts in Washington are gloating over the prospect of achieving at the bargaining table in Geneva what they couldn't win in more than eight years on the battlefields of Afghanistan: the withdrawal of Soviet troops sent in to combat a bloodthirsty CIA-sponsored feudalist insurgency. In a dramatic February 8 announcement on Soviet TV, Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed his intention to pull the Red Army out, if an agreement was reached with the U.S. and Pakistan at the Geneva talks by March 15. Gorbachev's deadline has since been buried under an avalanche of ever more humiliating "conditions" and ultimatums by the Americans and their Pakistani clients, finally forcing the Soviets to postpone the beginning of the withdrawal. But the Kremlin remains adamant about pulling out, agreement or no.

From the outset, all wings of the imperialist rulers loved the Afghan war. Here the Democrats were the hardliners, seeing an opportunity to get Russian soldiers killed on the cheap without danger of getting sucked into "another Vietnam" as in Central America. From "Socialist" Mitterrand's France to Tory Thatcher's Britain, the U.S.' imperialist allies enthusiastically echoed Washington's declaration of Cold War II over Afghanistan, parroted by their lackeys on the left and in the labor bureaucracy. We Trotskyists, however, loudly proclaimed, "*Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!*", pointing out that the Soviet intervention provided a lifeline for the Afghan masses out of medieval misery and into the 20th century. Today we warn emphatically of the terrible consequences which withdrawal will have on the Afghan peoples and the Soviet workers state. *Red Army—Mop up the mullah-led insurgency! Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!*

Now even the most stalwart imperialist backers of the *mujahedin* are predicting a bloodbath. U.S. officials describe Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, one of the main fundamentalist chiefs and recipient of \$200 million in CIA aid since 1979, as "scary... vicious... a fascist." Meanwhile the mullahs' Pakistani godfathers have been aggressively acquiring nuclear weapons capability, effectively bankrolled by the U.S. as a quid pro quo for providing a staging ground for the Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

In the face of the Cold War frenzy over Afghanistan, the international Spartacist tendency took a clear stand:

"There can be no question that for revolutionaries our side in this conflict is with the Red Army. In fact, although uncalled for militarily, a natural response on the part of the world's young leftists would be an enthusiastic desire to join an international brigade to fight the reactionary CIA-connected rebels."

—"*Hail Red Army!*"  
Spartacist No. 27-28,  
Winter 1979-80

This was an elementary position for any leftist, let alone a Trotskyist. But the Spartacist tendency was unique. Why?



Planeta Publishers

Afghan women march through Kabul (left); Reagan's Afghan cutthroats pose over downed Soviet pilot. Victory of Islamic reactionaries would mean re-enslavement of women, mass slaughter in Kabul.

Because over Afghanistan there was no middle ground. When the imperialists declared Cold War II, you had to choose which side you were on. Many of the fake-Trotskyists had already enlisted as foot soldiers in Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade. And as the Soviets fought CIA-backed mullahs, these "anti-imperialists" joined the imperialist hue and cry over Afghanistan. In different ways—some squirming, some cheering—they took their side: *with Islamic reaction and their "own" bourgeoisie*. The bottom line was anti-Sovietism.

### Left Apologists for CIA's Afghan Warriors

Within Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat of the Fourth International," one wing (led by Tariq Ali) openly endorsed the Cold War "containment" line of "Soviet troops out." Jack Barnes' American Socialist Workers Party supported the Soviet-backed People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) regime but denied that the

Soviet intervention was an issue. And the Mandelite USec majority condemned the Soviet intervention, while drawing back at calling for withdrawal.

As the imperialists turned on the heat in the coming months, the Barnesites (fearing they sounded too much like the "Sperts?") decided Soviet intervention was an issue and condemned it. And the Mandelites began squealing for Soviet troops out. A recent recap of the USec's positions on Afghanistan laments that "many people still confuse calling clearly for withdrawal of the Soviet troops with an attitude of support for the Mujahideen" (*International Viewpoint*, 6 April 1987). Why this "confusion"? Because in bloody Afghanistan there is no mythical "third camp": calling for Soviet withdrawal is supporting the CIA's mullah-led warriors.

For anyone claiming to follow the program of Leon Trotsky's Fourth International, unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism is ABC. But where the Mandelites squirmed, the late Argentine adventurer

er Nahuel Moreno flaunted the absurdity of trying to combine opposition to the Soviet intervention with any pretense of Trotskyism. First Moreno's followers denounced the Soviets' "criminal action against the Afghan people" and rhapsodized about the "possibility of extending the Iranian revolution within the borders of the USSR" (see "Morenoites Call for Counterrevolution in USSR," *WV* No. 249, 8 February 1980). The CIA was putting its money on precisely this "option." But in a 1985 resolution, after luridly denouncing Soviet "barbarism," "massacres," "economic pillage" and "genocidal war" against the Afghan people and calling for Soviet withdrawal, they then call on the Red Army to carry out a social revolution by "expropriating the landlords and laying the political basis for the emergence of a workers state in Afghanistan" (*El Socialista* [Nicaragua], May 1985).

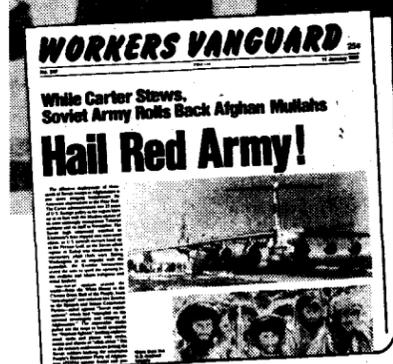
For years the Morenoites denounced Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as a "counterrevolutionary operation in the service of democratic stability and imperialism." But now that the Kremlin has agreed to withdrawal, they have the chutzpah to denounce Moscow for the "great global agreement between imperialism and the counterrevolutionary soviet bureaucracy... to prevent revolutionary processes in those hot spots" such as Afghanistan and Nicaragua (*Working Class Opposition*, November 1987). David North's Workers League pushes a similar "damned if you do, damned if you don't" line—in the same sentence!—claiming that the "deal between Moscow and Washington" to pull out of Afghanistan confirms the "counterrevolutionary character" of the Soviets going into Afghanistan! As Stalin is reported to have remarked, paper will take anything that is written on it.

Most of the pseudo-Trotskyist left, however, has taken refuge in empty "factual" reporting about the prospect of the Soviet withdrawal they longed for, with a deafening silence about the mass slaughter which will accompany it. This is the case for both the American SWP and the Mandelite USec majority. But some in this anti-Soviet swamp have no compunctions whatever. Sean Matgamna's group, buried deep in the NATO-loyal British Labour Party,

continued on page 11



AP



1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan posed Russian question pointblank. We stood firm while fake-Trotskyists sang Washington's tune.



# Bay Area Labor Tops Wave Flag for Democrats

PITTSBURG, California, March 19— Nearly 10,000 longshoremen and construction workers and their families assembled and marched in Pittsburg, California today. The target of their march was supposed to be non-union construction and longshore work being performed at the old U.S. Steel Pittsburg plant currently being modernized by a joint venture of USX Corporation and South Korean Pohang Iron and Steel Company (POSCO). But instead of a powerful and united labor mobilization to defend union work conditions in Contra Costa County, the labor fakers pushed Jesse Jackson, local Democratic Party politicians and anti-Asian "yellow peril" protectionist poison.

The "main attraction" of the rally, held at a nearby community college, was Democratic Party front man Jackson. It was billed as a "Rally for America," and center stage at the plant site rally was the labor bureaucracy's protectionist program. After a hot and tiring march to the USX-POSCO administration building the drained unionists had to listen to Contra Costa state senator Dan Boatwright rave, "When I went in at Inchon on September 15th, 1950 I never dreamed that I would be freeing South Korea so that they could come here and put my constituents out of work." Next on the podium was Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors member Sunne McPeak, who declared that the county had been "invaded" and called for the march to "go to the polls."

The final speaker at the plant gate rally was International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) president Jimmy Herman, whose union shut down all West Coast ports and mobilized heavily for this rally, ostensibly because the USX-POSCO dock facilities are non-union. Herman pontificated: "...the issue is that when it comes to loading the cargo on ships that come in here, that cranes will hoist to those vessels, and from those vessels, it's longshoremen, it's ILWU!"

In fact Herman and the other labor tops who organized the rally deliberately fostered the deception that USX-

## Rally Pushes Racist Protectionism

POSCO is a totally non-union operation. The 1,100 steel workers in the plant are organized into the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) and, in fact, for the past 15 years or more steel workers have performed the dock work at the Pittsburg plant facility. The

The steel workers at the USX-POSCO plant, like their brothers in the rest of the steel industry (and the ILWU!), have had a concessionary contract rammed down their throats. Invoking the "no strike" clause in their contract, USWA bureaucrats have



Ten thousand longshoremen and construction workers came to fight scab construction project at steel plant in Pittsburg, California, but union tops push "hate Korea, vote Democrat" poison.

ILWU bureaucrats' perspective was captured by their main slogan, "We Shall Return!"—a paraphrase of General Douglas MacArthur's well-known quote, the anti-Japanese battle cry of U.S. imperialism in World War II. Herman uses disgusting jingoism to whip up longshoremen for his intended raiding operation against the USWA, but he has no stomach to fight union-busting outfits like Crowley Maritime, where he knifed the tugboat strikers in the back.

herded them across building trades picket lines through the usual "two-gate" arrangement. The construction workers are fighting to shut down a scab outfit, BE&K Construction from Birmingham, Alabama. Accidents have already claimed the lives of two of the non-union workers. BE&K, which is also providing 1,000 scabs at the struck International Paper plant in Jay, Maine, pays less than half of union scale. Using the "no strike" clause again as an excuse, the scabberding

local USWA leadership wouldn't endorse the rally and had its members working in the plant on the day of the demonstration.

Many of the workers who came to the rally expecting some class struggle were sorely disappointed. But they didn't go home empty-handed. *Workers Vanguard* sales teams worked hard to bring our program of workers revolution to the rank and file of these unions who know the bosses are trying to destroy their organizations. A total of 1,472 pieces of Spartacist literature were sold, including 1,265 copies of *WV*. Comrades distributed 2,000 "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win!" supplements as well.

This dull and dreary affair was in sad contrast to the 5,000-strong building trades demonstration in San Francisco on March 7. Then the bureaucrats were barely able to prevent angry workers from breaking into Moscone Center and running a scabberding contractors' convention out of town. While the union hacks crowed that the POSCO rally was the largest labor mobilization in California in 40 years, this rally and march was a diversion from the necessary class-struggle fights that must be waged to defend union conditions in the Bay Area. Instead of this orgy of Democratic Party vote hustling, poisonous protectionism and jurisdictional raiding, there could and should have been a powerful mobilization of longshore, steel and construction workers to drive out the scab contractor and raise pay and working conditions to the highest union levels.

The ILWU tops claimed they were shutting down the West Coast on Saturday. But they obscenely exempted military cargo just when Reagan had sent over 3,000 U.S. troops to Honduras to bolster his contra butchers. We've often said that anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home. The red-white-and-blue labor traitors Herman & Co. have another program: class collaboration at home and support for imperialism abroad. Dump the bureaucrats, break with the Democrats to build a fighting workers party! ■

# NYC Transit Workers: Tear Up the Taylor Law!

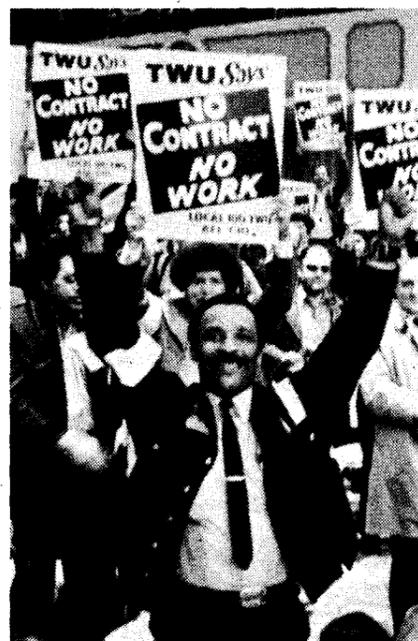
## No Contract, No Work!

The New York Democratic Party politicians, and the transit bosses who crack the whip for them, are demanding huge givebacks from Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 when the contract covering 37,000 subway and bus workers expires March 31. Governor Cuomo and racist pig Mayor Koch think Reaganism is still riding high—their Metropolitan Transit Au-

thority is demanding wage cuts for new-hires with a permanent two-tier pay scale, massive use of part-timers and a 4 percent wage increase over three years, with "bonuses" tied to ridership. Transit workers already face deadly working conditions, as the bosses rip up seniority and job titles in order to harass workers and eliminate jobs.

Behind the MTA's outrageous demands is the threat to use the no-strike Taylor Law to jail and fine TWU members. Local 100 president Sonny Hall, crawling before his buddies in Albany and City Hall (and paid off with a "labor" seat on the MTA board), pushed a state law which will send the contract to binding arbitration (where transit workers will get the shaft) if no agreement is reached. TWU members must demand "No contract, no work!" Shut down Wall Street and the banks! Koch revels in humbling the unions—it will take a solid strike, backed up by the rest of city labor, to tear up the Taylor Law and win!

The TWU is the powerhouse of integrated labor in this town, but transit workers have a "leadership" that won't get off its knees even when union



Transit workers at 1978 contract rally. TWU tops have abandoned the union's historic position of "No contract, no work."

members are blown away by the racist cops. In January, black bus mechanic Alfred Sanders was gunned down by the NYPD. But Hall stands by Koch, and demands more cops. The fake "oppositionalists" in the TWU, like the social

democrats of "Hell on Wheels" and supporters of the Communist Party and the Marxist-Leninist Party, refuse to call for a strike. They just add "militant" window-dressing to the bureaucracy's groveling no-strike program.

Like junior versions of Sonny Hall, who is one of Jackson's Democratic Party delegates in New York, they seek to chain labor and blacks to the racist, anti-labor Democratic Party. The reformist left brings in Jackson, as in the bitter Hormel meatpackers strike, to derail workers' struggles into voting for the Democrats. To win, transit workers must break with the partner parties of exploitation. The situation in New York cries out for a fighting workers party to lead all the oppressed.

Last year, when another black transit worker, Wajid Abdul-Salaam, was killed by the cops, the militants in the Committee for a Fighting TWU demanded union action to defend labor and minorities:

"Six years of increasing race-terror, union-busting and anti-Soviet war drive under Reagan is enough. Now is the time for labor and the minority populations to stand as one and strike back against the entire rotting, racist capitalist system."

There must be a mobilization of union power, by shutting this city down, to stop the rampage by Koch's cossacks and bust the union-busters! ■

### Spartacist League Public Offices

— MARXIST LITERATURE —

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# Young Spartacus

## Black History Forum at Howard University

# Russian Revolution Shows the Road to Black Liberation

During Black History Month the Spartacus Youth Clubs sponsored several forums around the country which centered on the tremendous impact of the 1917 Russian Revolution on the struggle for black freedom in this country. The political counterrevolution led by Stalin in 1924 in the Soviet Union resulted in the progressive degeneration of the parties of the Communist International—from “Third Period” sectarianism to the outright class collaborationism of the Popular Front period. Despite the political zigzags and departures from Marxism, in the area of black work the American Communist Party’s work in the 1930s is rich in lessons for how to wage a revolutionary struggle against racial oppression.

*Young Spartacus* prints below a speech made by comrade Brian Manning at Howard University on February 11 which has been edited and condensed for publication.

In 1917 there was a revolution in Russia. It was led by the Bolshevik Party and this revolution was a beacon for the world’s workers and oppressed. It emerged out of the carnage of World War I which devastated Europe. Millions and millions of young proletarians, young workers, died in that war. But the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lenin, for the first time in history, led a revolution that destroyed capitalism, destroyed the system of production for profit. It eliminated the private ownership of the means of production. They carried out their revolution under the slogans, “For Peace, Bread and Land!” And for the first time, there was a workers and peasants government in power, a government of the majority, a *soviet* government (the Russian word “soviet” means council). It was these workers’, peasants’ and soldiers’ *soviets* that ran



May Day 1917: Revolutionary workers march through Petrograd. Center banner reads: “Arm the People! Long Live the International!” Bolshevik Revolution inspired workers and the oppressed around the globe.

the government there. It was not a government for the wealthy, which is what we’ve got here and in the rest of the capitalist world.

Aside from distributing the land to the peasants, pulling Russia out of the war, one of the most important aspects of the Russian Revolution was their program for self-determination for national minorities. Tsarist Russia was considered a prison house of nations. Russia is 6,000 miles long, 3,000 miles deep, and it’s not just the ethnic Rus-

sians that inhabit that area. One of the first things Lenin and the Bolsheviks did was they enunciated the policy of the right of self-determination for nations. That is, people of different nationalities are free to determine their own way of life, free to separate and form their own state. Lenin recognized national oppression and sought to eliminate it. In line with that, the native Russian fascists, the Black Hundreds, were *smashed*, completely *smashed*, after the Russian Revolution. The Black Hundreds were roughly equivalent to the KKK here in this country.

Lenin and Leon Trotsky and the Bolsheviks appealed to the workers and oppressed around the world to rise up against their masters and expropriate the exploiters. Their call and the example of the Russian Revolution sparked revolutions around the world. There were three revolutions in Germany, in 1919, 1921 and 1923. They all went down to defeat. There were mutinies in the French navy, there was a revolution in Bulgaria, there was a revolution in China. There was a revolution in Hungary which actually established a soviet government for about four months before it was *smashed*. There were revolutions in Finland. You saw the beginnings, the awakenings of the colonial peoples around the world. So the bourgeoisie tried with might and main to isolate and destroy the Soviet Union. Right after the revolution there were the Russian contras who were funded and armed by

the imperialists. Eleven capitalist nations, including the United States which sent its expeditionary force over to Siberia, invaded revolutionary Russia. But they were unable to smash that revolution and it continued to provide inspiration to the workers and the oppressed.

### Colorblind Socialists

OK, so how was all this reflected in America? Well, the Marxist movement in the United States was heterogeneous. It was faction-ridden, a lot of programmatic differences. It was almost exclusively white. The Communist movement was dominated by foreign-language federations, and these foreign-language federations were insensitive on the black question, if not out-and-out hostile. They didn’t speak English and hadn’t been in the country for very long, so needless to say, they didn’t understand much about the situation of blacks. Also, the early Communists in this country inherited the native white American backwardness of American social democracy and AFL (American Federation of Labor) craft unionism, the backwardness on the race question. Most of the AFL unions had black exclusionary clauses in them.

One leader of the socialist movement in Milwaukee, this guy named Victor Berger, out and out said, “There can be no doubt that the Negroes and mulattoes constitute a lower race.” So that was about the worst that these American socialists were. The best that they got was Eugene Debs, who was a leader of the socialist movement in the first several decades of the 20th century. He was a leader of the rail workers union and spent a couple of years in prison during and after World War I because of his agitation against the war and the draft. He was the Socialist Party presidential candidate several times. His position was that racial oppression in this country was simply an expression of class oppression. The Socialist Party doesn’t have anything “special to offer the Negro” in this country; simply black workers are oppressed as workers and that’s it. It took the intervention of the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky led by the Bolsheviks to pound home that black oppression in the United States was special and needed special modes of struggle in order to fight it.

The Communist International was the international body where representatives from the Communist parties from around the world came to discuss particular problems, to decide different questions of policy, to resolve differences. The anti-Communists today (and back then as well) slander the Communist Party as being “controlled” by Moscow. But the Communist International was organized on a democratic-centralist basis. The Communist parties here in this country elected their

*continued on page 8*



The International Labor Defense (ILD) fought against racist capitalist injustice through mass, integrated class struggle.

# Black History Forum...

(continued from page 7)

representatives to go to the meetings in Moscow where there was discussion and voting and everything else. And then the representatives came back and said what was decided and charted a course of action for the parties here in the United States or wherever. So there's nothing inherently wrong with the Communist International telling the American Communists what to do. In fact they played an exceedingly good role.

They helped break down the factions and divisions in the early Communist movement and helped forge a united Communist party, and that was a good thing. Starting with the Second Congress of the Communist International, they hammered home the necessity to recruit blacks and develop the program orienting to the special needs of blacks. It was at this congress in 1920 that John Reed, one of the founders of the Communist movement, gave a speech on the black question [see *Workers Vanguard* No. 348, 17 February 1984]. Reed gave a good analysis of the situation but he was kind of short on program, on modes of struggle against black oppression. But it represented a start for the American Communist movement.

Harry Haywood—he's actually still alive, but he was one of the early black members of the Communist Party. He was a World War I vet and had come around the Communist Party in Chicago. His brother Otto Hall actually joined before he did, so he goes up to his brother and says, "Why don't you speak up for me and tell me how to go about joining." And his brother says, "Well look, we've been having problems with these damn racists here in Chicago and they're actually members of the party, so I don't want you to join the party right



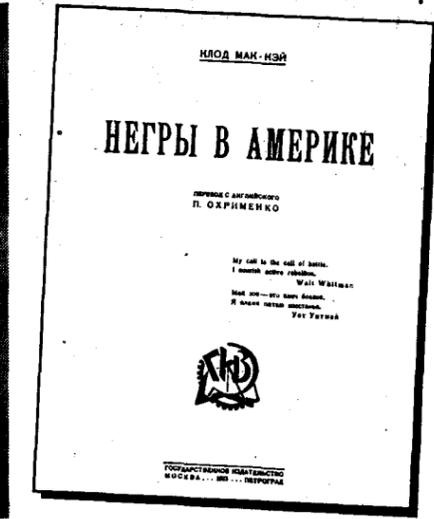
Wide World

Claude McKay's *Negroes in America* published in Soviet Russia in 1922.

the early 1920s that the Communist youth organization in Cape Town wanted to bring in a couple of "coloured" members. And the national organization was just up in arms. They said, "We can't do that." The Communist youth organization sent their representative over to Moscow. It took him about a year to get back but he came back with the word that the Communist Youth International was just furious at what was going on in South Africa and they wanted blacks recruited in massive numbers into the youth organization and into the party. There was a series of fights in the South African Communist Party and the net result was that a party was formed that *did* orient toward blacks and by the late 1920s, in some sections of the country, the majority of the party was black. And the Communists were leading whole sectors of the struggle against racist injustice in that country.

## Black Proletarians

The process was a little slower in the United States. Let me talk a little bit



no credit

The period after Reconstruction until World War I was a period where you had tremendous repression, lynchings, and no rights for blacks. It was Booker T. Washington who was the main black leader presiding over this nadir in the black struggle. What he preached was accommodation to the racist status quo: "study hard, don't make any waves." But the whole situation changed. There was increasing urbanization and proletarianization as blacks were brought into industry in the North. Blacks were excluded from the AFL craft unions, so on many occasions they were brought in as scabs. During World War I there was a boom, a big economic boom. The soldiers who were called up and drafted and pulled out of the factories had to be replaced. When the war ended and the soldiers returned (and a lot of these guys were white soldiers who were replaced in the industries by black workers) the economy went into a depression and things didn't look so pretty in this country.

The capitalists went on an all-out attack to bust the unions and there was massive unemployment. And in a combination that goes hand in hand, you had a series of anti-Communist witch-hunts, "red scares" and anti-black terror. Racial animosities increased and the culmination of that was the "red summer" of 1919. What happened during the red summer of 1919 was that there was a series of what would have been called "race riots," but were in fact attacks by whites on blacks erupting in terrible atrocities committed against blacks. The worst of these were in Chicago and East St. Louis and here in Washington, D.C. A period of defeat and despair for blacks set in.

## Blacks and Bolsheviks

One important development that did come out of the red summer of 1919 was the formation of a group called the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB). They were a secret group consisting of black World War I veterans and trade unionists and they were committed to armed self-defense of blacks against racist attacks. It was headed up by a guy named Cyril Briggs up in New York. He had been fired from his position as editor of the *Amsterdam News* because he came out for the Bolshevik Revolution and against World War I. He started this group and it became a nationwide network—pretty secret—in fact we still don't know much about it. But we do know that what they were for was the "immediate protection and ultimate liberation of Negroes everywhere." And it was the leadership cadre of this group of militants that the Communist Party recruited and trained several years later.

The African Blood Brotherhood was a rallying center for the left opposition to the Garvey movement. The movement of Marcus Garvey at this time was massive and growing. The Garvey movement was a product of despair and defeat. We're not talking about a movement or an organization that's fighting to change conditions, that's fighting for justice or equality. What we're talking

about is a black Zionist organization. They accommodate to the racist status quo and talk about getting back to some kind of so-called homeland in Africa. It's pretty reactionary in its implications when you think about it. The first schemes to send American blacks to Africa were the schemes by the racists in the South both before and after the Civil War to send the "troublesome" Negroes away—"get rid of 'em because we don't want 'em." Prior to the Civil War we're talking about the free blacks, because they were the ones who had a little bit of education, they were the ones who had a little bit of wherewithal and were the most dangerous.

You look at who else has this program and it's the KKK. In fact Garvey met with the KKK. Just like Farrakhan, who's another black Zionist, accepted money from the KKK in L.A. several years ago. All Garvey wanted to do was to exploit his own black people for his own profit. That's what all the regalia and the pomp and circumstance meant, calling himself an emperor and all his toadies "princes" and "dukes" and all this kind of thing. He had his little "black capitalist" schemes and in fact he said, "What America needs is a black Rockefeller, a black Rothschild and a black Henry Ford." We've got enough Rockefellers and Rothschilds and Fords. We've got to get rid of all these capitalists.

It was largely through the efforts of Claude McKay, the black poet who went to Moscow, that the African Blood Brotherhood was recruited to the Communist Party. Claude McKay, who had some experience with the Communist movement in Britain, was actually shuttling from the Communist Party headquarters downtown to Harlem to visit Cyril Briggs, providing the go-between for the African Blood Brotherhood and the Communist Party. The African Blood Brotherhood provided the initial and most important black cadre for the Communist Party. The ABB remained in existence for several more years and remained a recruiting ground for the Communist Party.

Meanwhile in 1922 the Communist International was still twisting the arms of the American comrades who still had trouble with the black question, still didn't want to deal with it, still didn't want to take the initiative, still fighting with their own racist backwardness. Claude McKay, who was in Moscow in 1922, writes, "Think not that it was just a revolutionary picnic and love feast in Moscow in the fifth year of Lenin! One of the American delegates was a southerner or of southern extraction. An important Bolshevik facetiously suggested to him that to untangle the Negro problem, black and white should intermarry. 'Good God!' said the American, 'if Jesus Christ came down from heaven and said that in the South he would be lynched.' The Bolshevik said: 'Jesus Christ wouldn't dare, but Lenin would.'" McKay addressed the Communist International, and although he wasn't an official delegate, he was more insightful on the situation of black people and the methods needed for struggle than the official American delegates were.

## Early CP Work in the Black Struggle

The 1920s were the period that the American Communist Party consolidated its black cadre, turned the party around. The Communists weren't always right during this period, but they certainly had the right impulses. In fact they were dead wrong in some instances, like in 1928 they formulated the theory that blacks were a nation in this country and therefore had the right to self-determination. Blacks do not constitute a separate nation in this country, never have. They constitute a specially oppressed race-color caste, segregated at the bottom of society. There's no separate area of the country for black people; blacks don't speak a separate



Labor Defender

Protest on eve of planned execution of the "Scottsboro Boys," June 1931. The CP launched international protest campaign, saving the lives of these nine youth from Southern lynch law.

now. But what we're going to do is take up the question of these racists and how to deal with them. We're going to take that up with the District Committee here in Illinois. And if we don't get satisfaction there, we're going to take it to the Central Committee. And if we don't get satisfaction in the Central Committee, we're going to take it to the Communist International in Moscow and that's where we'll get our satisfaction." It gives you a good sense of who the black comrades felt were their friends in the American Communist Party in the early 1920s.

The Bolsheviks also intervened in a similar fashion in South Africa. The people who were forming the South African party were steeped in the traditions of racist British Labourism. They were all white. In a majority black country you'd think there would be a few black members of the Communist movement as well. There was a time in

about the state of black America going into the 1920s, going into this period of the Communists' reorientation toward blacks. World War I represented an important turning point for the black population in this country and for this country in general. The black question was transformed at this time from primarily an agrarian question left unresolved by the defeat of Reconstruction, to the most important strategic question of the American socialist revolution. After the Civil War, after Reconstruction, what you had in the South (and the majority of the black population lived in the South) was a landless, rural peasantry. The black population was deprived of land, never got the "40 acres and a mule" which was promised by General Sherman on his march to the sea. You were left with a population which was deprived of land and therefore the basis to struggle for any kind of political or social rights.

language; there's no separate political economy of this supposed black nation. Luckily for the Communist Party, they never made any attempts to implement this theory. The revolutionary integrationist thrust of their work was what was important.

The Depression hit in 1929-1930 and then as now, blacks were targeted: last hired, first fired—that kind of thing. And as depressions increase misery on the part of all, there's a rise in racist terror. This time around, blacks were responsive to a call to struggle. One of the reasons was that for the first time in over 50 years, since the Radical Republicans were in the South, there was an organization that consciously and aboveboard was fighting for black rights. The Communists who led these struggles linked the struggles of blacks and workers. It shattered the racist status quo and shifted the political terrain such that it has never gone back to what it was prior to then.

The Communist Party did things like organize unemployed councils. You talk about the homeless problem today, well what these unemployed councils would do is get their members together and when one of the brothers or sisters couldn't make their rent because they didn't have a job, they weren't getting welfare, etc., and the sheriff would come and throw their belongings out on the street—the Communists weren't talking about homeless shelters then—what they did was they'd get the unemployed councils together, they'd gather up the person's belongings and bring them right back up into the apartment again. And then sit there and then if the sheriff came back again they'd throw him out! So that's the audacious kind of activity that they were doing.

You can contrast what the Communist Party looks like today, tailing after Jesse Jackson in this presidential election, to what they were doing in 1932 when they were the first party ever to nominate a black, James W. Ford, as vice president. Here in D.C. the Young Communist League was organizing and, for the first time since President Grant's inaugural ball in 1873, the Young Communist League organized an interracial dance. Now talk about *audacity*, there hadn't been an interracial dance here in D.C. for over 50 years.

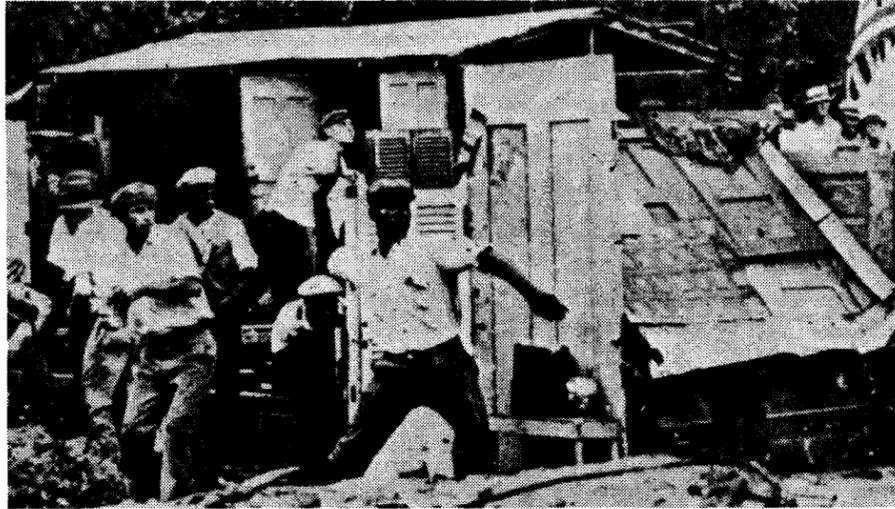
But the most important work they did was defense of victims of racist frame-ups. One of them was Angelo Herndon, who was a young black agitator in the South, a Communist agitator. He was an organizer of the unemployed, he was arrested in Atlanta for "attempt to incite insurrection." You know if you're arrested in Atlanta in 1930 for attempting to incite insurrection and you're a young black Communist, your days are numbered in that jail. What the Communists did was they organized a defense for Angelo Herndon that spread the length and breadth of this country and around the world. Let me read you some of the evidence brought up in his trial to give you some idea of what the Communists were doing in the South at this time. This is from Angelo Herndon's autobiography *Let Me Live*. The document was a leaflet called "An Appeal to Southern Young Workers":

"The Young Communist League is the champion not only of the young white workers but especially of the doubly oppressed Negro young workers. The Young Communist League fights against the whole system of race discrimination and stands for full racial, political, economic and social equality for all workers. The Young Communist League is a section of the Young Communist International, the revolutionary leadership of the young workers the world over and accepts the guidance of the Communist Party of America. The Young Communist League fights for: Full political, social and racial equality for the Negro workers. Smash the National Guard... and R.O.T.C."

Angelo Herndon actually spent a couple of years in prison and was released. You know they tortured him in prison. And if it hadn't been for the constant publicity of the Communist Party he

surely would have died.

Perhaps the most famous case that the Communists took up at this time was the Scottsboro Boys—nine youths who were framed up for rape. They were found in a boxcar and on the same train were two young white women. Even though it became clear that no rape had ever taken place, within two weeks of these guys being found in a boxcar they were sentenced to death, and they were *going*. We're talking kids. We're talking about nine years old was the youngest one of these kids who was sentenced to death. But when the CP got wind of this case they quickly brought it to the attention of the world and garnered massive support for the young blacks. This was absolutely unheard of. The NAACP didn't want to take the case because they weren't sure whether or not these guys were guilty! And here we have the Communist Party in the heart of the South publicizing this case and fighting for these guys' lives. Eventually most of



**Black and white jobless WWI veterans marched on Washington in 1932 to demand promised bonuses. Bonus marchers resist eviction from tarpaper shanties by capital police.**

them were, I believe, convicted and spent time in jail. I believe the last of the Scottsboro Boys was finally released in 1950 after being arrested initially in 1932.

The black struggle was consciously shifted to the forefront by the Communist Party. This was unheard of and so the black liberals had to follow their lead. To give you an example of this—we all know about the presidents of Howard University—they're not militants, they're not radicals, *they're toadies*, right? In 1933 Mordechai Johnson, the president of Howard University, called the Russian experiment "the beginning of the emancipation of the human race" and declared that America should move toward the same political ends without bloodshed. Meanwhile, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. stated, "the day will come when being called a Communist will be the highest honor that can be paid an individual and that day is coming soon."

Most importantly, what the CP was doing was recruiting thousands and thousands of black militants to what they regarded as being communism. The Communists also played an important role in organizing the industrial unions, the CIO, the auto unions, the steel unions. Blacks in their hundreds and thousands were brought into these unions. These were no hidebound, wimpy unions. We're talking about blacks and whites fighting and dying on the picket lines *together* for these unions. It was the CP that was fostering this integrated class struggle, the key to a socialist revolution.

### Stalinism Betrays Black Struggle

The integrated class struggle of the 1930s did not result in a successful socialist revolution and in fact the CP pissed away all their good work and their good members, both black and white. They *betrayed* the black struggle. What happened was they stopped pursuing objectively revolutionary integrationist goals and pursued their own bourgeoisie instead. Why did they aban-

don revolutionary politics? Well, to get the answer, we have to go back to the USSR once again, because the American CP degenerated as did the Bolsheviks and the Communist International and the Russian Revolution.

Marx and Engels and the Bolsheviks never envisioned building communism, which is based on plenty, which is based on abundance, in a country that hadn't even reached the advanced stage of capitalism yet. So Russia was poor to begin with and it was devastated by the Civil War. The Bolshevik Party itself was decimated during the Civil War. But most of all, the revolutions abroad were unsuccessful. The capitalists were able to smash every single one. Russia was isolated. Leon Trotsky characterized it in his book [*The Revolution Betrayed*] this way: "Two years before the Communist Manifesto, young Marx wrote: 'A development of the productive forces is the absolutely necessary practical premise [of Communism], because

Dixiecrats. They put the brakes on the black struggle. They supported Roosevelt and his New Deal policies. They supported the second imperialist war, WWII, they refused to support the "March on Washington" movement which formed under the leadership of A. Philip Randolph and was against segregation in the war industries. And during World War II they actually disbanded the Communist Party!

### Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

When WWII ended, the bourgeoisie tried to build its "American century" on the basis of anti-Sovietism, McCarthyite witchhunting and the racist status quo. And much of the American population bought it. Not the blacks. Blacks reacted differently because the American dream has always been a nightmare for blacks. This time was no exception. But this time around, at the end of WWII, the tame reformist CP had no thought of leading audacious fights against racist injustice. There were massive strikes of the unionized workers in this country after WWII but there was no mass party to link the struggles of blacks with the struggles of the workers. The abandonment of the field by militant agitators left the field open to the "inch at a time" gradualists like Martin Luther King.

Now I'll give credit where credit is due: the civil rights movement broke the back of the McCarthy era, opened the doors to the much wider social struggle of the 1960s, and the civil rights movement did accomplish a few things, many of which have been reversed in these past few years of reaction. But what the civil rights movement also did was that it led blacks into the arms of the Democrats, the ruling class. You know, you scratch a Democrat, you get a Dixiecrat. That's what Malcolm X said 25 years ago and the saying is true today.

The only way black liberation can be accomplished is through a fighting alliance of militant blacks and the working class. That's what we in the Spartacist League are trying to do—build the kind of party that the Communist International and the Bolsheviks were trying to build in Lenin and Trotsky's time. And it's the defense organization, the Partisan Defense Committee, that is supported by the Spartacist League, that is defending the black leaders incarcerated in the capitalist prisons around this country, people like Geronimo Pratt and Mumia Abu-Jamal. We in the SL have got a black-centered communist program that reflects the lessons taught by Lenin and Trotsky, and our tasks are to take that program, to challenge racism and anti-communism wherever it raises its ugly head and fight for the international socialist revolution that's so necessary for the liberation of black people, for the liberation of all the world's workers and oppressed. ■



**Black workers take the lead in fighting bosses' union-busting drive. Teamsters join striking Greyhound drivers on the picket line, Philadelphia, 1983.**

# Librarians to Feds: We Won't Fink!

Warning: Your term paper research may be deemed a "hostile intelligence threat" to the U.S. government. Federal Bureau of Investigation gumshoes are asking librarians, particularly in university libraries and those with large, *unclassified* technical holdings, to keep their eyes out for potential "espionage threats" loosely described as book borrowers from countries "hostile to the United States, such as the Soviet Union." Gee, Mr. G-Man, does anyone with an accent come under suspicion? Kudos to the librarians who told the feds just where they can stuff their snooping. As Quinn Shea of the National Security

Archive stated, "They've got no business screwing with libraries." The American Library Association issued an alert, warning librarians to keep an eye out for FBI agents violating the supposedly constitutionally protected right to privacy. The chancellor of the City University of New York is demanding a Congressional investigation into the FBI's cloak-and-dagger machinations.

The shabby pretext for the FBI's "Library Awareness Program" is the case of Gennadi Zakharov, a Soviet United Nations diplomat who was accused in 1986 of "spying" (and later traded for *New York Times* agent

Nicholas Daniloff). He supposedly found a student "gofer" in a Queens College library. But the FBI has been peeping and poking at librarians for years. In 1972 an informer was planted in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania's Bucknell Library to spy on Philip Berrigan and the "Harrisburg Seven" Vietnam anti-war activists. Librarian Zoia Horn went to jail in this case for refusing to testify against the defendants—all of whom were acquitted. An Oneonta, New York librarian noticed a threat to President Reagan scrawled inside a returned book, notified authorities and found herself in the middle of a federal case. She refused to testify unless subpoenaed

(she was), and the suspected "assassin" (the last hapless book borrower) was seized and held for days for mental observation.

The most likely victims of this McCarthy-like effort are foreign students who have no rights to speak of in this country and who could face death at the hands of their "free world" governments if deported. As Patrice McDermott of the American Library Association noted, the FBI's program "smacks of the intimidation of the left during the '60s. Foreigners are an easy target, especially with the anti-Libyan and anti-Middle Eastern sentiment prevalent today. It's easy to erode rights by going after groups to whom society is especially unsympathetic first" (SUNY Binghamton *Pipe Dream*, 22 January). Will checking out a book by Lenin or even researching a basic engineering paper now be added to the seemingly endless list of things a "foreigner" dare not risk doing in this country? Down with the FBI's library witchhunt campaign! ■

## BT Says Don't Hail Red Army in Afghanistan

...or anywhere else. Looking down the barrel of Cold War II, the crew of sour ex-members who now make up the "Bolshevik Tendency," formerly External Tendency, fled the Spartacist League. They found our forthright Soviet defensism too hot to handle. As we pointed out in "The 'External Tendency': From Cream Puffs to Food Poisoning" (*WV* No. 349, 2 March 1984): "If the ET were more honest, they would admit that they hated it when we hailed the Soviet Red Army's military intervention in Afghanistan." "Not true" carped the ET/BT, who at the time were ever so modestly posturing as the sole repository of authentic Spartacism against the supposed "degeneration" of the organization they quit. "We do hail the Red Army's intervention against the barbaric Afghan reactionaries," they said in the May 1984 "Bulletin of the External Tendency of the iSt."

But claiming to stand on the red side in Afghanistan doesn't go down well in the anti-Soviet swamp in which the BT mingles. Not that anyone ever took their purported politics seriously (to wit, the BT was never excluded from any of the pop-front meetings or mobilizations for its proclaimed Soviet defensism, in contrast to the treatment we've been handed). Nonetheless even the pretense of defending the Red Army intervention in Afghanistan has become an obvious encumbrance to the BT's appetites to share the sheets with the rad-libs and social democrats. Now the cards are on the table.

At a March 5 public forum of the Trotskyist League of Canada entitled "Finish Off CIA's Afghan Warriors!" Tom Riley, leading light of the Canadian BT, gave full vent to what has always been their deeply felt position. On the occasion of a meeting to celebrate International Women's Day, in particular in defense of Afghan women against the inevitable bloodbath that will come if the Soviets pull out, Riley declared: "Trotskyists never hail Stalinist traitors or their state.... The slogan 'Hail Red Army' is not a Trotskyist slogan, because what it tells workers is to trust the Stalinists, put your faith in the Stalinists, hail the Stalinists. It disappears the political treachery of Gorbachev and the other parasites he represents...." So what about the Red Army's heroic struggle to crush Hitlerite Nazism—just "Stalinist treachery"?

What the BT "disappears" is the contradictory character of the Stalinist bureaucracy. The line of "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through and to the core," a more con-

cise and eloquent expression of the BT position, first appeared as a one-sided formulation during the Socialist Workers Party's 1952-53 internal struggle against the pro-Stalinist Cochran-Clarke liquidators (Joseph Hansen repeatedly defended this formulation in internal documents). But who in the USSR could really fit this description? Only a native Russian *Pamyat* fascist, or a CIA "mole" in the KGB. In fact, in the *Transitional Program* Trotsky described the *contradictory* nature of the bureaucracy: "all shades of political thought are to be found among the bureaucracy: from genuine Bolshevism (Ignace Reiss) to complete fascism (F. Butenko)." But Riley & Co. do not want to know these things; they prefer the image of soul-destroying, monolithic Stalinist totalitarianism.

According to Riley: "It's not possible to make a meaningful distinction in the Marxist sense between an army and the state which controls it, in this case a degenerated workers state. The state is an armed body of men defending a particular set of property forms." But the property forms in the Soviet Union are, despite its Stalinist degeneration, proletarian. Riley's syllogism is hardly original. In arguing against defense of the Soviet Union at the start of World War II, Max Shachtman, leader of the petty-bourgeois opposition within the SWP, wrote: "We have never supported the Kremlin's international policy... but what is war? War is the continuation of politics by other means. Then why should we support the war which is the continuation of the international policy which we did not and do not support?" Trotsky replied: "we are presented here with a rounded-out theory of *defeatism*.... Then why not say it?" Shachtman the doubter soon became Shachtman the confirmed Third Camp Soviet-defeatist, claiming that the Soviet Union was ruled by a new "bureaucratic collectivist" class. Four years ago, the ET denied being Shachtmanite because they still endorsed "Hail Red Army!" What next for the BT?

The Red Army intervention in Afghanistan was a defense of these property forms against a counterrevolutionary, imperialist-sponsored Islamic insurgency on the Soviet Union's crucial southern flank. Moreover, the Soviet intervention offered the possibility of extending the gains of the October Revolution to the hideously oppressed Afghan peoples. But that was never the intention of the Kremlin, for it goes against the grain of the reactionary dogma of "socialism in one country." *The Stalinists never hailed the Red*

*Army in Afghanistan, only the Trotskyist Spartacist tendency did.*

As comrade Trotsky put it in the 1939-40 fight against Shachtman/Burnham's opposition to the defense of the Soviet Union in the Socialist Workers Party, "in the final analysis, through the interests of the bureaucracy, in a very distorted form the interests of the workers' state are reflected. These interests we defend—with our own methods" ("From a Scratch to the Danger of Gangrene," *In Defense of Marxism*).

In our 1984 article on the External Tendency, we noted that "These characters logically would fit right in with the Weinsteinites, late of the Socialist Workers Party, behind whom stands the lure of America's 'mainstream' social democrats, the Democratic Socialists." Now the BT has qualitatively accelerated their march on this course. The most chemically pure rendition was translated on "Canadian soil," long dear to Tom Riley. On February 2, the BT hooked up with the Alliance for Social-

U.S. Contra Aid!"

A BT letter, complaining that the TLC refused to join in peddling this as a "single issue" slogan for a "united front," read like an SWP textbook defense of its "Out Now" slogan during the Vietnam War. The SWP argued that its "antiwar coalitions" were not pop-frontist because they were built on this "single issue" (although it soon became the rallying cry of bourgeois defeatism once the more farsighted elements of the ruling class realized that the U.S. wasn't going to win). The BT wrote: "there were no bourgeois participants in the 2 February demonstration—but your position seems to be that it was 'unprincipled' because there hypothetically *could* have been."

Hypothetically?! Opposition to U.S. contra aid is the on-again, off-again position of a hefty chunk of the war-mongering Democratic Party in the U.S. itself. But in Canada this line sells at really bargain basement prices. Indeed, Tory prime minister Brian Mulroney could have marched under this banner. He opposes "U.S. contra aid" as well (as has the bourgeoisie of virtually every other imperialist country from the get-go). Where Reagan boosts the loser contras, the Canadian imperialists propose instead to send "peacekeeping" troops to Central America to hold the line against "Communism." The key to fighting the imperialist war moves is to *defend Nicaragua* by united *working-class* action.

But that would be beyond the pale, because it would mean facing the question of revolution. Ingratiating themselves with the Mandelite surrogates of Canadian social democracy, the BT wasn't about to oppose their "own" ruling class. Indeed, even the BT's *own* placards, chants and speech at the demo contained not so much as a hint of Soviet defensism in Nicaragua. Nor, for that matter, will one find any call for defense of the Soviet Union today in their articles in 1917 on Central America, Poland and Gorbachev—and that takes conscious effort!

So the BT is preparing to set up its tent in the Third Camp. In light of their whole trajectory, this was quite predictable. But some questions remain. Why does the BT continue to claim in its press that it upholds long-standing principles of the Spartacist League in flat contradiction to its political appetites and sought-for political allies? And why does it have a nasty tendency to create provocative incidents in our presence and then howl about it? Or as we headlined in *WV*, "Garbage Doesn't Walk By Itself, What Makes BT Run?" ■



Yevgeni Khaldei

**Red Army liberated East Europe from nightmare of Nazi Holocaust.**

ist Action (the latest incarnation of Canadian Mandelism) to initiate a popular-front demo over Central America around the sole demand "Oppose

# Afghanistan and the Left...

(continued from page 5)

denounces the Soviet intervention as a "war of colonial conquest," and even while admitting that "Muslim fundamentalism is very strong" and dismissing illusions in a "neutralist" coalition government, Matgamna rants: "Despite all this, the USSR can be driven out. It deserves to be driven out!" (*Socialist Organiser*, 14 January). This Stalinophile positively welcomes the impending bloodbath by the Islamic reactionaries.

## Afganos, Kabulisti and Tankies: What Now?

The left-Stalinist milieu has seen a symmetrically opposite development. A decade ago, most of the West European CPs sharply divided between Moscow-loyal Stalinists and so-called Euro-communists who sought to integrate themselves into mainstream social democracy. When the Red Army crossed the Afghan border, the "Euros" joined with their own bourgeoisies in anti-Soviet vituperation. What had been a seething cauldron erupted in open factional warfare, as those Stalinists—variously labeled "afganos" (in Spain), "kabulisti" (in Italy) and "tankies" (in Britain)—who wanted to maintain at least some semblance of opposition to NATO imperialism came out in support of the Soviet tanks moving into Afghanistan. It was a knee-jerk reaction: educated in the Stalinist school of class collaboration, they could go no further than pressure groups for the Moscow bureaucracy aimed at pulling their recalcitrant, pro-NATO leaderships into line.

But now the Kremlin has effectively disowned their struggle and denounced all they stood for as "Trotskyite heresy." With Gorbachev's renewed "détente" offensive aimed at conciliating U.S. imperialism, many of these left-Stalinists are at a loss. Do they simply repudiate the last ten years of struggle against the pro-NATO compromisers who opposed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan from the outset, or do they look in the mirror and see there the ogre of "Trotskyite heresy"? Some in this "anti-opportunist" milieu were already driven to develop broader criticisms of the Stalinist bureaucracy, particularly when the flowering of a mass-based counterrevolutionary movement in Poland exposed the criminal incapacity of the Stalinist regime there. In France the Tribune Communiste group made a clean break from Stalinism and last

month fused with the French section of the international Spartacist tendency.

In Britain, a group in and around the Communist Party affiliated to the so-called "Leninist" wing of the Turkish Communist Party in exile ran a headline demanding, "Afghanistan: no sell-out!" (*Leninist*, 10 February). In recent months the *Leninist* not only has expressed its opposition to Gorbachev's INF missile deal with Reagan, but has come out with a call for a political revolution against the Soviet bureaucracy, even identifying the decisive degeneration of the Soviet Union and the consolidation of bureaucratic power with Stalin's pronouncement of "socialism in one country" in 1924. However, despite these rather exceptional declarations, the *Leninist* still carries with it much of the political bag-

rule of any central state power. Now even the U.S. imperialists are worried that the various factions of the *mujahedin* will slaughter one another (and reportedly they have already begun to do so). If Soviet Central Asia is taken as a model, the various peoples of Afghanistan would enjoy more national rights in a Soviet-bloc satellite than under an "Islamic republic."

In its previous issue, the *Leninist* (21 January) denounces as an example of "big power chauvinism" a statement by *Izvestia* that the Red Army went into Afghanistan to wipe out a hostile regime on its border. From the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, the Red Army has not only the right but the duty to defend its borders against CIA-backed reactionary insurgencies. When Pilsudski's Poland, acting as cat's paw

not square with the Kremlin's policies of détente and 'two-stage' revolution. Reformism abroad, by conciliating the forces of reaction, undermines defense of the Soviet Union."

—"Reagan, Begin & Hitler,"  
WV No. 308, 25 June 1982

The counterpart of the Stalinist-nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" on the international plane is the "popular front," class collaboration tying the workers and oppressed to their exploiters as a bulwark against revolution. Now the counterrevolutionary repercussions of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan will be felt internationally, from South African blacks fighting apartheid slavery to the Nicaraguan masses pitted against CIA contra terror.

In his statement giving the timetable for pulling out of Afghanistan Gor-

Anti-draft demonstration in 1980—Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League stood out in hailing Red Army against Islamic reaction in Afghanistan.



gage of Stalinism. Against Gorbachev's Afghanistan policy, they argue:

"The Soviet Union has no right to horse trade the Afghan revolution. It is a living revolution, not a piece of real estate. The Afghan Revolution was not facilitated by the presence of the Soviet Army. The revolution was the work of Afghan revolutionaries organized in the *Khalqi* wing of the PDPA. A proletarian dictatorship was established through local daring and initiative."

Viewing the Afghan war through the nationalist prism of Stalinism, albeit of a Third Worldist variety, the *Leninist* is forced to conjure up a dictatorship of the proletariat in a country where there is no proletariat to speak of. And they ordain as a proletarian revolution a putsch by a group of reform-minded petty-bourgeois nationalists, primarily junior officers in the Afghan army, of the *Khalq* wing of the PDPA. In fact, Afghanistan is not even a nation but a feudal-derived state comprising a mosaic of nationalities, ethnic and tribal groupings. Much of the rural population has never lived under the effective

for the French imperialists, invaded Soviet Russia in 1920, Lenin argued for transforming the Red Army's defensive campaign into a military offensive aimed at revolutionary war—and Poland was a modern, industrialized nation-state. While Trotsky opposed waging a revolutionary war on Poland at this time, he did so on tactical grounds, not as a matter of principle.

## Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky!

From the standpoint of the Soviet bureaucracy, which seeks to defend its privileged position atop the collectivized economy through futile attempts at placating hostile world imperialism, Gorbachev & Co. now see sending troops into Afghanistan as an inadvertent adventure. But from the standpoint of Bolshevik internationalism, defense of the Soviet Union required intervention against the imperialist-bankrolled anti-Communist uprising on its border and raised the real possibility of bringing social revolution to this hideously backward country on the bayonets of the Red Army. To be sure, a Leninist government in the Kremlin would have announced its revolutionary mission from the outset rather than seeking to conciliate the feudalist opposition. As we pointed out some years ago:

"... instead of capitulating to the mullah reaction, by limiting land reform and literacy campaigns, the Soviets should be pouring the money in there on a massive scale: land to the tiller and cheap credit, health programs, etc. But that means *social revolution*, a tremendous leap from feudal backwardness to proletarian dictatorship on the backs of the Soviet Red Army. And that does

bachev promised, "When the Afghan knot is untied, it will have the most profound impact on other regional conflicts... Behind the political settlement in Afghanistan already looms a question: which conflict will be settled next? And it is certain that more is to follow." So now there is increasing pressure on the Vietnamese to pull out of Kampuchea in an attempt at a rapprochement with the U.S.-allied Peking Stalinists. Now a leading Soviet journal (*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 17 February) proclaims that "international cooperation" over "national reconciliation" with the CIA's *mujahedin* in Afghanistan is a model for "liquidating regional conflicts," for example by "the revolutionary government of Nicaragua" in dealing with the CIA's contras. And now the Soviets are pressuring the ANC to make a deal with Pretoria that, according to the *Los Angeles Times* (5 February), "would give the white minority an effective veto within a majority-rule government."

From the strangulation of the Spanish Revolution in the 1930s, which paved the way to Hitler's Operation Barbarossa, to Gorbachev's acquiescence to the "Reagan doctrine" of global counterrevolution, the Stalinist bureaucracy's nationalist perspective serves only to endanger the Soviet degenerated workers state. To restore the Soviet state and the Red Army to their revolutionary and internationalist mission requires a proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist usurpers of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party. Today that means the struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International, as the continuity of the revolutionary Communist International. ■

# Afghanistan Sellout...

(continued from page 4)

The difference between America's losing colonial war in Vietnam and the Soviet Union's progressive intervention in Afghanistan is captured well in the responses of their respective veterans. Large numbers of Vietnam vets came back from that filthy, racist war emotional basket cases, many angered and indeed radicalized by their experience into becoming opponents of U.S. imperialism. Soviet veterans, in contrast, are demanding official recognition for carrying out their "internationalist duty" and deeply resent any comparison between their just war and the imperialist war in Vietnam. By all accounts, it is the veterans of the Soviet war in Afghanistan, who saw with their own eyes what a mullah victory would mean, who are in the forefront of opposition to a Red Army withdrawal.

Afghan war songs, once forbidden, are now being released on records. The secretary of a club of Afghan veterans told the West German magazine *Der*

*Spiegel* (7 March): "Our sacrifices were not for nothing. We have after all brought there the achievements of the civilized world." One of his comrades echoed these sentiments: "The people there could at least live in peace for a while, had bread, could educate their children. What will be there tomorrow only Allah knows." Kim Selikhov, a Soviet journalist who has covered the Afghan war, writes:

"I know many internationalist fighting men who, after completing their time in Afghanistan, ask to go to the front line again as volunteers. Those who serve here are primarily children of workers and peasants."

—*Literaturnaya Gazeta*,  
14 October 1987

"The time has come," Selikhov demands, "to erect a monument in Moscow to the Soviet internationalists who have died valiantly in foreign lands at various times in our history."

Soviet veterans of the Afghan war justly view themselves as fighters for revolutionary internationalism. But the Kremlin bureaucrats abuse and betray these ideals. To truly build a monument to Soviet internationalism in Moscow, it is necessary to oust the Stalinist usurpers and return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky. ■

## Spartacist Forum

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# Central America...

(continued from page 1)

to defend the Nicaraguan Revolution with militant class struggle at home.

## U.S. Invents Invasion Scare

For years the Reaganauts have attacked Managua as a "Soviet surrogate," vituperating against "Sandino-Communism." They have intimidated the Democrats, fearful of accusations of "losing" Nicaragua. Yet everything Washington has tried for the last seven years to smash the radical-nationalist government in "America's backyard" has failed. Bloody contra terror, CIA sabotage and a U.S. trade boycott have succeeded in making life miserable for Nicaraguans. But instead of creating a mass base for counterrevolution, this bludgeoning has produced mass anger and determination to defend their "small country with a big revolution" against the Yankee colossus. Since the contras have failed, if Reagan is to make good on his vow not to leave this "problem" to his successor all that's left is direct U.S. military action. But the White House gang that can't shoot straight from the Near East to Central America doesn't have the political support at home to pull off an invasion. So they resort to provocation.

The "Sandinista invasion" story was baloney, and everyone in Washington knew it. "It looked more like an American invasion of Honduras," reported CNN television news as paratroopers were dropping into Palmerola. "I know of nothing that justifies sending troops," said Democratic Speaker of the House of Representatives Jim Wright. It was recalled on Capitol Hill how in March 1986 the administration invented another invasion scare, twisting the Honduran president's arm to get him to request U.S. assistance, in order to (successfully) get the Senate to vote for contra aid. This time, too, the Honduran military had to be informed they were "invaded," and puppet president Azcona never did formally request U.S. troops.

In Managua, Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega went on nationwide radio ordering troops, reserves and the Nicaraguan people to be in "a state of combat readiness and prepared to repel, resist and defeat any attempted aggression by the United States against Nicaragua." "Everyone to his battalion," said Carlos Carrión, coordinator of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in the capital. Speaking on ABC-TV's *Nightline* (16 March), Alejandro Bendaña, secretary general of the Nicaraguan foreign ministry, warned: "if one of those helicopters with American soldiers happens to stray into our airspace, well, we're not going to hesitate to defend ourselves." The Nicaraguans, he said, "don't plan to be exactly sitting ducks" for attacks from Honduras.

The Sandinista offensive that chased the contras out of the remote Bocay River valley in northern Nicaragua was no secret. Washington only started screaming when the CIA's mercenaries had been driven back to their base camps. Washington officials kept talking about a Sandinista "killer blow" against the contras, said to be in a "desperate" situation, only to express surprise when the Sandinistas (unfortunately) pulled back instead of finishing them off. But the Nicaraguan drive was clearly aimed at softening up the contras for cease-fire talks, by cutting off their escape routes and going after their stocks of supplies. (Official U.S. aid was supposed to stop at the end of February.) And on March 21, Nicaraguan defense minister Humberto Ortega sat down with a contra delegation in the border town of Sapoá, calling a temporary cease-fire during the negotiations



82nd Airborne parachutes into Honduras.

under the auspices of the Arias "peace" plan.

Some 100,000 rallied in Managua Sunday night to send off the government delegation to the Sapoá talks, and thousands more lined the highway to the negotiations site. But despite a decade of grueling war against the lackeys of U.S. imperialism, which has cost more than 50,000 Nicaraguan lives in the six years of contra war alone, the Nicaraguan masses were combative and aggressive. The crowd chanted "Contras, either surrender or we will crush them," and "The contras have two options: surrender or die." Their determination to "give it to the contras hard" points the way to a genuine peace with justice in Nicaragua, which can never be achieved by the Sandinista tops' treacherous talk of "reconciliation" with the CIA's hired killers. The Ortegas will have a hard time selling the Nicaraguan masses a deal that allows the Somozaist torturers and murderers to go free.

## Class Struggle Sharpens in Nicaragua

Already, the attempts by counterrevolutionaries to take advantage of the opening given to them under the Arias plan have provoked repeated sharp confrontations with supporters of the revolution. On February 7, several thousand members of U.S.-financed anti-Sandinista trade unions staged a protest march in Managua. The next day some 200 residents of Masaya rioted against a sweep by Interior Ministry troops to round up draft dodgers, burning police jeeps and stoning government offices. On February 8, about 300 youths rallied in support of the compulsory military service, a vital necessity in order to fight the contra war. Following the changeover to a new currency in mid-February, an attempt to halt 1,000 percent inflation, hundreds of Sandinista Trade Union Federation (CST) members swept through Managua's Eastern Market, overturning stands of black marketeers and confiscating hoarded stocks of food.

On March 3, CST supporters took over an opposition union meeting and several thousand protested outside *La Prensa*, the CIA-financed voice of the "internal contra." And on March 6, two competing International Women's Day marches were held in Masaya. Several thousand people organized by the block committees, unions and Sandinista Youth demonstrated in defense of the revolution and in honor of the martyrs killed by the contras. The opposition Coordinadora Democrática held a

protest against the draft by about a hundred women dressed in black. The FSLN supporters dispersed the counterrevolutionary march while chanting for "people's power" and "The streets belong to the people—the right wing has no right."

Through vigilant mobilization, supporters of the Nicaraguan Revolution should be able to keep control of the streets. But the counterrevolution cannot be smashed by repeated brawls or police action while the government signs agreements guaranteeing political and economic "rights" to the contras. Their power must be broken by expropriating the bourgeoisie, which still controls 60 percent of the Nicaraguan economy. The FSLN opposes this necessary step. But increasingly the workers are straining at the limits of the Sandinistas' program. While the government was opening a "national dialogue" with the right wing last November, trade unions grouped in the CSN federation published a declaration saying that any political reforms must aim at "socializing the revolution." The CSN calls for workers control, confiscation of companies involved in black marketeering, expropriating large landowners and elimination of the mass media in the hands of economic groups opposed to the interests of the people (*Barricada*, 2 December 1987).

While the FSLN guerrillas in power

destroyed the state apparatus of the Somoza tyranny, contrary to Reagan's assertions they did not substitute a Communist regime, but instead sought a middle road on the program of "mixed economy, pluralism and nonalignment." The petty-bourgeois nationalist regime cannot last much longer in this limbo. Their conciliation of imperialism and domestic capitalist reaction is endangering the survival of the revolution. It is urgently necessary to forge a working-class vanguard, a Leninist-Trotskyist party to carry out the program of permanent revolution, in Nicaragua and throughout Central America. The "peace" plan devised by the Democrats and the U.S.' Central American neocolonies is an attempt to strangle the Nicaraguan Revolution through negotiations. We say: *Defend Nicaragua—Complete, extend the revolution!*

## Gunpoint Elections in El Salvador

"The next trouble spot in Central America is likely to be an old one: El Salvador," wrote *Business Week* (21 March). Escalating guerrilla attacks, militant labor action and now the sharp defeat of Christian Democratic president José Napoleón Duarte in the March 20 legislative and local elections mark a turning point in the eight-year-old civil war racking that tiny country. Not only did Duarte lose a majority in the National Assembly, his son was swamped in the mayoral election in the capital, San Salvador, which Christian Democrats had held for the past quarter century. The big winner in the elections was the fascistic ARENA party, the political instrument of notorious death squad leader Roberto D'Aubuisson, who is personally responsible for ordering the assassination of liberal Archbishop Romero and masterminding the anti-communist terror which has killed over 60,000 Salvadoran workers, peasants and leftists.

The government had put the armed forces on general alert and deployed 50,000 troops to carry out its "counter-insurgency elections." They were attempting to defeat the military campaign called by the leftist guerrillas of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), which declared a highly effective transport stoppage for that weekend against the "electoral farce." The FMLN also blew up power pylons, blacking out 80 percent of the country, and occupied 19 towns during the elections. In addition to the armed insurgents, the militant National Unity of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS), the largest labor federation in the country, campaigned against the government's "attempts to force the downtrodden people of our country to the ballot boxes on March 20 at gunpoint." A



Fort Ord, California, March 17—Protesters line roadway outside main gate after soldiers from 7th Light Infantry Division were deployed to Honduras. Some soldiers' wives joined the protest.

# Coast-to-Coast Protests...

(continued from page 1)

The social-patriotic protest organizers want to keep "our boys" out of Central America by supporting the Democratic Party-inspired Arias "Peace Plan," whose aim is to strangle the Nicaraguan Revolution without sending in the 82nd Airborne.

But working people have a side to take in this war—the side of the embattled Central American workers and peasants! In Boston, at a 6,000-strong march Saturday, far larger than even organizers had expected, the Spartacist League raised the slogans "Arias 'Peace' Hoax Threatens Nicaraguan Masses" and "Defense of Cuba, Russia Begins in Central America!" At a protest in Cleveland, the SL contingent's chant "Smash Reagan's Bay of Pigs! Nicaragua needs MIGs!" was picked up on the evening TV news. At the New York City protest in Times Square, SLers opposed the liberal pacifist line of "No More Vietnams" with the slogan "Vietnam was a victory! Two, three, many defeats for U.S. imperialism!" At the large demonstrations in San Francisco, Boston and New York, hundreds of young demonstrators eagerly bought our revolutionary literature.

In SF, demonstrations have been going on morning and night for five days, with 500 people arrested so far. The *San Francisco Chronicle* (18 March) described the first day of protest in the Bay Area: "A chanting horde of nearly 1,000 people protesting the deployment of troops to Honduras swarmed through San Francisco last night, halting traffic, flattening police barricades, and threatening to storm the Federal Building." Over the next several days the protests grew, 2,000 on Friday, over 5,000 by Saturday night. "People hung out of their apartment windows to cheer the marchers on," said the *San Francisco Examiner*, while reporting that inside the Federal Building itself, 40 govern-



Spartacists raise revolutionary working-class program as antiwar protests sweep U.S., from San Francisco (above) to New York (right).



WV Photos

ment workers sent out a letter to the demonstrators saying, "We want you to know there are thousands of people in this building who support this protest."

The bourgeoisie is split right now on how to deal with the Sandinistas, so in most cases the cops have been restrained by Democratic Party politicians. In San Francisco, as antiwar slogans were being spray-painted by "guerrilla graffitists" and a metal trash can flew into the glass doors of the Federal Building Thursday night, lines of

club-wielding cops were on the verge of charging. Suddenly Democratic mayor Agnos appeared to cool out the crowd, noting Reagan's invasion was an "outrage" and he was "proud that San Francisco is again first in the nation" in protesting it. Agnos, who's also currently waging an offensive against city workers, was met by the SL contingent in the demonstration with the chant "Remember Bay of Pigs, remember Vietnam—Democratic Party, we know which side you're on!" Nobody should have any illusions: the minute these

UNTS communiqué proclaimed: "No more elections with repression—labor and political struggle are the only solution!" As a result of the union and guerrilla actions, the number of voters was down sharply.

The showcase elections are nothing more than a cynical maneuver to give the brutal Salvadoran regime a "democratic" veneer so that the U.S. Congress can continue to pour money into this "death squad democracy." But the militant working class has been locked in a sharp battle with the Duarte government and its program of IMF-imposed austerity. Over 50,000 workers, mostly government employees, have carried out job actions over the last couple weeks, demanding emergency wage increases and the rehiring of hundreds of fired compañeros. The government has answered by targeting union militants. In the weeks preceding the elections, death squads made nearly daily attacks on unionists and students. On March 10, government troops seized Humberto Centeno, the head of the militant ASTTEL telephone workers union and member of the UNTS executive board, and savagely beat him unconscious. The next day a member of the STISSS hospital workers union, Francisco Climaco, was found murdered.

The capture of Centeno was a frontal assault on the Salvadoran labor movement. An emergency international campaign was mounted to rescue the union leader from the clutches of the notorious Treasury Police. And in San Salvador the working class mounted a combative protest. On the morning of the 11th, the coffee workers union SITCAFE called a strike demanding Centeno's freedom, and that afternoon some 3,000 militant union activists marched on the American Embassy.

AP reported:

"The demonstrators, many of whom carried nail-studded wooden clubs and iron bars, asked passengers to get off about ten buses along the march route, then deflated the bus tires so the vehicles blocked side streets. A pick-up truck was set afire near the U.S. embassy where the marchers stopped for 30 minutes to denounce U.S. support for the Salvadoran government."

The workers painted slogans on the embassy walls and chanted slogans such as, "We will bury the U.S. Marines in El Salvador one by one." Barely 24 hours after Centeno's arrest, the government gave in (see "Labor Solidarity Frees Humberto Centeno" in this issue).

Last year the guerrillas claimed nearly 9,000 casualties against the government forces, the highest yearly total of the war. As the Duarte regime grew increasingly isolated, a year-end FMLN message declared that intensifying combat and continuing labor protest have "put us on the threshold of victory." Cut off from outside aid under the Arias plan, the insurgents are talking less of a "negotiated solution" and more of fighting for a "revolutionary victory." In an interview published the day after the elections, FMLN comandante Joaquín Villalobos responded to a reporter's questions on how they could win against the U.S.-supplied helicopter gunships and jet bombers:

"Remember that our strategy is essentially insurrectional. And what good is an air war against an insurgent population, unless you are willing to commit genocide?"

—*Christian Science Monitor*, 21 March

In a country like El Salvador, where pathological killers in the death squads talk of unleashing another "necessary genocide," such as the mass slaughter of 1979-80, this is not just a rhetorical question. With ARENA again in the

ascendancy, more than ever the alternative is revolution or death. *Military victory to leftist insurgents—Workers take San Salvador!*

## Central America Under the Gun

As the class struggle mounts in El Salvador, the entire isthmus is in turmoil. Nicaragua is polarizing between revolution and counterrevolution. The U.S. is trying to strangle Panama financially in order to force out their former flunkey General Manuel Noriega. In Guatemala, army killings of Indian villagers are escalating, and thousands of elite U.S. forces are conducting "exercises" all over Honduras. The so-called Central American "peace" plan, already a dead letter in El Salvador, is on the verge of collapse. And meanwhile events in Central America are increasingly interwoven with developments in the U.S. When Ronald Reagan was elected in November 1980, jubilant right-wingers in San Salvador honked their horns and shot off guns. The head of the Guatemalan death squads attended Reagan's inaugural. Now the Salvadoran FMLN and Nicaraguan FSLN are pinning their hopes on outlasting Reagan.

The Reagan-Bush gang, which sends the 82nd Airborne into Honduras to win a vote in Congress, is more than capable of staging a military "October surprise" to get voters to rally 'round the Republican flag in November. But a Democratic victory next November would be no cause to celebrate in Central America. Mondale called for a naval quarantine of Nicaragua in '84, and don't forget how Kennedy carried out the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion planned by Eisenhower and Nixon. Speaking on ABC-TV's *Nightline* last week, both conservative Cold Warrior Albert Gore and

protests begin to go "too far," the Democrats will unleash their cops to really start busting some heads. The vicious attempted murder of pacifist Brian Willson, which maimed and nearly killed him when he was run down by a military train, shows the real intentions of this nation's rulers.

Most of the so-called left in this country has simply tailed after the liberal leadership of these protests, refusing to call for a break with the Democrats and to take the side of Sandinista Nicaragua in the war against the CIA-backed contras. At Oberlin College, the DSA (Michael Harrington's "Social Democrats of America" Cold War outfit) called a planning meeting March 17 for a protest against the U.S. troop deployment. SLers intervened to call for a united-front demonstration around the slogans "U.S. Troops Out of Central America!" and "Defend the Nicaraguan Revolution!" The DSAers waffled around until most of the students attending left in frustration, then raised their objection that defending the "revolution" would alienate people, and instead only "Nicaraguan sovereignty" should be raised; one DSAer raised the logical corollary that of course Honduran "sovereignty" equally should be defended—i.e., the supposed "justification" for the U.S. sending troops to Honduras in the first place!

The Vietnam War protests, even at their height, like the 1970 mass student strikes after the Kent State massacre and Nixon's invasion of Cambodia, did not end that long, bloody war—it was the military victory of the heroic Vietnamese Communist forces on the battlefield that forced the U.S. out. In SF on March 18, the Spartacist contingent linked our militant defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution with the call for "Labor strikes against U.S. intervention in Central America!" The key task for revolutionaries in the U.S. today, as it was in the Vietnam era, is to bring the power of the working class to bear to smash the capitalist state's imperialist war drive. Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! ■

black liberal Jesse Jackson said they might order U.S. troops to Central America. "If it would be necessary, I would do it," said Jackson.

The program of the Central American "solidarity" milieu is to pressure the Democrats in Congress. Yet after years of peace crawls and Congressional lobbying, the very same Democrats vote for "humanitarian" aid to the contra terrorists and enthusiastically approve \$1.5 million a day to the death squad regime in El Salvador. The day that Reagan sent troops to Honduras, a tape at the New York Nicaragua Solidarity Network told callers to "respond" by phoning Democratic House Speaker Jim Wright, and to protest "imbalanced reporting" such as using "Communist" to describe the Sandinistas. So with Central America at the explosive center of the Cold War (White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater denounces supposed aggression by "the Cuban- and Soviet-supported Sandinista Army"), all they can do is say "no Communists here"....and phone your Congressman.

You can't defend the Nicaraguan Revolution by ducking the "Russian question." Soviet aid has been vital in defending embattled Nicaragua. Soviet wheat, Soviet AKs, Soviet helicopters have enabled the revolution to withstand the imperialist onslaught. And for the Cold Warriors in Washington, Managua is just the first stop of their intended drive to "roll back Communism" right up to the homeland of the October Revolution. The Spartacist League has repeatedly proclaimed, "Defense of the Soviet Union begins in Central America." The fight for genuine solidarity with the heroic fighters in Central America must be a fight for the cause of proletarian revolution throughout the world. ■

# IRA...

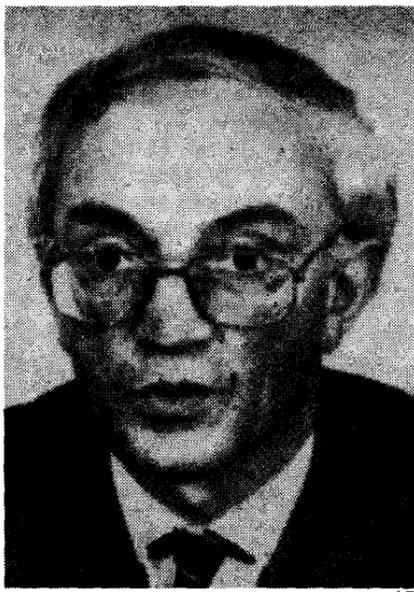
(continued from page 2)

case by the same special RUC "anti-terrorist" unit. They were unarmed: in the hay shed where 17-year-old Michael Tighe was shot to death and 19-year-old Martin McCauley wounded, several old rifles were found, but no ammunition. Early on, Stalker decided he could "not overlook the possibility that revenge killings had taken place" when he learned that four of the six had been implicated by an informant in the planting of a land mine which exploded when a cop car ran over it.

Stalker was able to determine that false stories had been planted by senior RUC officers after the shootings. Furthermore, in the McCauley/Tighe case, he learned that "An electronic bug, installed by MI5, had been operating, concealed in the rafters, throughout the entire police assault on the barn. McCauley and Tighe had walked into a sophisticated operation that had been camouflaged to look like a chance encounter." Summarily removed from the investigation after delivering an interim report recommending charges against at least eight RUC officers, Stalker became the object of a police investigation into his functioning in Manchester on manifestly trumped-up charges.

## Not Orange Against Green But Class Against Class!

Since an SAS ambush at Loughgall, killing eight IRA men and a passing motorist, the government's campaign has borne the marks of an orchestrated effort to take out leading members with maximal force. Thatcher & Co. have played a variety of cards to set the stage, ranging from officially sanctioned cover-up of RUC/Army killings to enlisting the cooperation of Dublin's



British detective John Stalker was inclined to find out what really happened in killings of IRA youth.

Garda (police) under the Anglo-Irish accord. Particularly after the IRA atrocity at Enniskillen in which eleven civilians were killed, Irish prime minister Haughey's cops and troops were unleashed in a joint operation with the RUC to hit Republican strongholds on both sides of the border.

Recent events have produced "tension" between Dublin and London, and the long-sought extradition treaty is again on the ropes. But the reactionary clericalist government of the Southern Republic is up to its neck in repression against the Republican movement. Yet it is to this clericalist South that the IRA looks for salvation, with its nationalist project of forcible reunification of the Protestant community in the North into a Catholic-dominated "Thirty-Two Counties." There is no solution to the brutal quagmire of Ireland, to imperialist oppression and sectarian division, short of a struggle for proletarian power

on both sides of the communal divide, on both sides of the border and on both sides of the Irish Sea.

The liberation of the English, Welsh and Scottish working class is inextricably tied to the struggle of the Irish masses against British imperialism. Northern Ireland is a testing and training ground for repressive techniques later employed at "home" from the inner-city ghettos to the coalfields. The Prevention of Terrorism Act, now to be enforced "permanently," provides police with vastly enhanced powers of detention, exclusion and expulsion. It is the duty and in the immediate interests of the organized working-class movement to oppose Britain's terrorism in Northern Ireland, to demand the immediate withdrawal of the troops, the smashing of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, freedom for the victims of British injustice from the H-Block prisoners to the Birmingham Six (still imprisoned despite massive evidence that their conviction for the 1974 Birmingham pub bombing was a frame-up).

Such elementary internationalism necessarily requires a break with the wretched Labour Party. In Northern Ireland, the personally courageous and dedicated militants who would otherwise squander their lives in the service of dead-end Green nationalism can and must be won to the perspective of proletarian revolution. What is urgently called for is the construction of a Leninist party to unite both Protestant and Catholic workers along class lines through intervention with a revolutionary programme against the all-sided oppression of the Catholic minority in the North as well as against murderous sectarianism and forced reunification. Black ["hot-cargo"] all military transport to Northern Ireland! British butchers out of Ireland now! For an Irish Workers Republic within a Socialist Federation of the British Isles! ■

# Jesse Jackson...

(continued from page 16)

the South and lately killed busing in the North. The Democratic Party has mobilized the population for every war in this century, from World War I and II to Korea and Vietnam.

Part of the solid black vote for Jackson no doubt represents the democratic aspirations of blacks for integration ("We have a right to vote for a black man as president"). But when Jackson says politics have transcended the "racial aspect," he is telling the mass of working-class and poor blacks to stay "in their place." His primary victories are being painted as the fit culmination of the civil rights movement: "The hands that picked cotton now pick the president." Yet if anything the political and social climate—racist cop terror, Forsyth County, the bombing of Philly MOVE—demonstrates the absolute limits of electoral politics for blacks and the working class. The civil rights movement won its gains through mass mobilizations in the streets and it will take a mass movement linked to the power of the working class to break the tide of racist "rollback."

Jackson is an *enemy* of that kind of struggle. His aim is to channel black hatred for racist injustice and exploitation into Democratic Party electoral politics. Today the entire reformist left—from the Moscow-line Communist Party to Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialists of America—are seeking to revive enthusiasm for this party of racism and war by glorifying Jackson as its great savior. They all see the Democratic Party as the arena, the only arena they can work in. They think that Jesse won't win, but that they can make change there. This is a terrible illusion.

The oppression of black people, with its roots in the old Southern slavocracy, the exploitation of all working people through wage slavery, cannot be eradicated until the capitalist system itself is rooted out—this system which has slaughtered tens of millions of human beings in two imperialist world wars and countless colonial adventures, which condemns millions of poor and minority people to go to bed hungry, which consigns entire continents to famine while plowing under food that is not profitable to harvest, which holds the Third World in thrall through crippling debt and military threat. The urgent need is the forging of a *revolutionary leadership* to mobilize the power of blacks, Hispanics, all workers and the oppressed, in struggle *against the Democrats* for socialist revolution. Break with the Democrats! Black freedom demands a revolutionary workers party!

## Running for Democratic Power Broker

In claiming "I can win," Jackson is pushing the pernicious myth that anybody can grow up to be president. "America is a better America, a stronger America," he said after winning Super Tuesday. In racist, capitalist America where black people are forcibly segregated at the bottom of society, ghettoized, terrorized, that is a lie. While appealing to race pride among blacks—that a black man is running for president—Jackson is *not* running for president. He is running for Democratic Party power broker.

He is planning to broker his front-runner status into Democratic Party kingmaker. His emissaries are putting out the word that Jesse won't be a "spoiler" in November. "He doesn't want to throw it away, he doesn't want to be blamed for a Democratic defeat," says Philly black Congressman Bill Gray. Texas Congressman Mickey Leyland is one of many of his supporters "who have approached white colleagues to explain that Jackson wants a role influencing policy, not a

# Willie Darden...

(continued from page 16)

hide... I have always, in all of the interviews that I've ever given since I've been here, complained about the injustice, about the racism, about the facts of my innocence."

Hours after millions had watched Darden's image fade from their TV screens, his body was seared by 2,000 volts of electricity. It was state murder, American-style.

Darden was black, and the simple fact that he was tried by an all-white jury in the Deep South tells the story. "Quite frankly," said Rev. Joseph Ingle on

*Nightline*, "in Willie's case, it's the old Southern way, and I'm telling you as a white Southerner, born and raised in North Carolina... It's just plain, simple racism." Darden was accused in 1973 of murdering a white furniture store owner named James Turman. Mrs. Turman made the first positive identification of Darden at a hearing (there was no line-up) in which he was the *only* black man present in the courtroom! Practically calling for a "legal" lynching, in the language of the slavocracy the prosecutor in court called Darden "an animal" who "shouldn't be out of his cell unless he has a leash on him." His court-appointed lawyer was five months out of school, had never tried a criminal case before, and failed to call a key witness who saw Darden with a disabled car

miles from the murder scene at the time it happened. It was a pure racist frame-up.

## State Murder Accelerates

Since the Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976 after a brief hiatus, the pace of executions has accelerated—96 killed since then, 25 in 1987 alone. Half of the nearly 2,000 people on death row are black and Hispanic—four times their proportion in the population, a reflection of the racial bias in the application of the death penalty. Last year the rightward-moving Supreme Court put the stamp of approval on that as well: despite statistics which proved that blacks who kill whites are given the death penalty *22 times* more frequently than those who kill blacks, the court ruled that that was a "potentially irrelevant factor" (see "Down with Racist Death Penalty!" *WV* No. 427, 1 May 1987). In Florida *no* white has ever been sentenced to death for killing a black. Now the appeals are running out and the pace of state murder accelerates. Only hours before Darden's death, Vietnam veteran Wayne Felde was electrocuted in Louisiana.

In his last words, Willie Darden said: "I just hope that the American peoples will take a deeper look inside of themselves at the barbarism, at the racism, at the injustice that is created around capital punishment."

The death penalty in the U.S. is a historical legacy of slavery and racism—it is no accident that the old slave states of the Deep South account for nearly all executions of the last decade and the majority since 1900. And throughout the country the cops simply gun down blacks and Hispanics on the streets before they can even get to the courtroom. This systematic, cold-blooded state murder will come to an end only when the proletariat can overthrow the moribund capitalist class, which retains its grip on power more and more through sheer naked terror. ■

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place on the ticket or some other concession that might hurt the party" (*New York Times*, 13 March). Even staunch Dixiecrats like Texas Democratic chairman Bob Slagle now say:

"I think everybody a year ago thought Jackson would be destructive. Now Jackson has said enough times over that he's committed to the Democratic Party and its ultimate nominee that people have quit worrying about it."

Jackson is particularly key to the "Southern strategy." The Democrats cannot win an election if they keep losing the South. They need Jackson for massive black voter registration and turnout, and he is delivering.

The "Southern strategy" means racist rollback. Jackson praises the "New South" ("no more governors standing in school house doors") as he glad-hands racist Alabama ex-governor George Wallace. But the white East Texas sheriffs who beat Loyal Garner to death never heard of the "New South." Neither did the Florida governor who had Willie Darden electrocuted last week. After the Supreme Court ruled that racial discrimination is no reason to stop executions, Jackson promised to make opposition to the death penalty central to his campaign. But this was buried, along with Willie Darden. At every point Jackson, to broaden his base, has sought to distance himself from positions defending black rights.

Gearing up for the New York primary in April, Jesse praises Ed Koch for cracking down on crack. What about Koch's cops who are cracking heads, gunning down blacks and Hispanics in the streets and in their beds? No problem, says Jesse, because "today, racial violence is illegal" (tell it to the cops!):

"And though it happens that now and then we have a Howard Beach in New



Jackson courts George "Segregation Forever" Wallace in Montgomery, Alabama last summer. UPI

Jesse tells blacks the fight against race-terror is history. We have to stop dwelling "on that which pulls us apart," Jackson preached, while obscenely excusing the lynchers, declaring "we've lost more by dope than by the rope."

Jesse will come into Atlanta and sell black votes to the highest bidder. And for what? Maybe Jackson will be appointed "Drug Czar," get to be America's head narc. And black people will get the shaft once again. This deal has been floated by A.M. Rosenthal, Zionist pig emeritus editor of the *New York Times*, ex-Nixon flack William Safire and New York City mayor Ed Koch. In reward for his new moderation, suggested Rosenthal, "Between elections, Mr. Jackson can serve him-

in policing black America can be seen in the Reaganite company it keeps.

The drug witchhunt is sucker bait to disarm black people in the face of racist terror and to sanction cop terror, from narcs to police sweeps to vigilante action under the guise of "cleaning up" the black community. It is, as Jackson says, "a message of the '80s," and can only go down in a period like the late Reagan years marked by the glaring absence of black struggle. The most grotesque example of this degeneration is in New York, where a self-admitted FBI informer, Al Sharpton, continues to command the allegiance of black activists. Only in such a climate could there be a "debate" in the black press over "collaborating with the collaborator!"

### Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Jackson is pushing the flag-waving economic protectionism and anti-communism that is standard Democratic Party fare. If Jesse is not as overtly xenophobic as Gephardt with his "yellow peril" Japan-bashing, it's only because this anti-Asian racism is so blatant blacks won't buy it. Jesse's is a soft core version. In the chauvinist code words of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy he lashes out at the multinationals exporting jobs to "slave labor" markets abroad. "We must reinvest in America. We must say to Chrysler, to IBM, to GE, to stop putting profits over people and to put America back to work."

Some commentators have said that Jackson cannot get elected, not just because he's black, but because he's too far left. But as Republican political analyst Kevin Phillips told the *Wall Street Journal* (1 March), "When Mr. Jackson talks about corporate lack of patriotism, that isn't 'left.'" Jesse heartily agrees, saying he delivers tough messages on drugs, sex and education that even card-carrying conservatives could love. On foreign policy he is liberal anti-communist. Jesse says he complained to Ortega last summer about double-

crossing the Democratic Congress by going to Russia. "I said to him, 'You know, when we fought the contra-aid... you went to Moscow the next day. That undercut a constituency base in this country.'" But Ortega isn't running in the U.S. election—he's got a country to defend. In Panama, Jackson supports Reagan's ouster of Noriega.

Playing the broker is no new game for Jesse. He's a hustler whose life motto might be "I have a scheme." Jackson came to prominence in Chicago, a product of the defeat of the civil rights movement after M.L. King signed the Palmer House agreements acknowledging failure in the fight to integrate "Segregation City." Jesse turned his back on integration struggles and built his "Operation Push" on getting his "cut" by brokering black business in the ghetto. Except, in this deeply racist country, there is no space for a black bourgeoisie. So Jesse's brand of "black capitalism" was to push (or boycott, depending on the percentage) white corporate giants like Coca-Cola and Burger King.

While the Black Panthers were electrifying the ghetto, Jesse was prattling about "green power" against "black power," trying to cool out blacks by telling them the system really works. That Jesse is the ultimate broker of black defeat was most hideously obvious in May 1985, when Philadelphia black mayor Wilson Goode ordered the fire-bombing of the MOVE commune, murdering eleven black people including five children and burning out an entire block of black West Philly. Jesse uttered not a word of protest against this mass murder—but sought to use the building reconstruction as an opportunity to broker for black contractors!

A recent study—"The Kerner Report Twenty Years Later"—has documented the deepening misery of black America 20 years after the '60s ghetto explosions in which blacks in their anger began to tear this country apart. With infusions of cash in the poverty programs to appease the ghetto, and naked state power against the black militants like the Panthers, the ruling class got out sideways. The installation of the black mayors (supplemented by direct police terror) to hold the lid on the inner cities has been more or less effective to this day. The result: more ghetto poverty, more segregation, more cop terror and more BEOs (black elected officials) to administer black oppression.

It will take hard class struggle, the integrated power of black and white workers, to do away with the racist oppression rooted in the very fabric of American capitalism. And here lies the strength of blacks—not as voting cattle in the rulers' electoral shell game, but as workers in key sections of the economy. Blacks, as the most advanced sector of the proletariat, have the power to shut this country down. The crying need is for a break with the Democrats and the forging of a revolutionary workers party to lead the working class and minorities in the class struggle for power. ■



Jesse Jackson vs. black struggle. When 10,000 marched in Norfolk for school busing in 1983, Jesse told them to forget busing, vote Democrat. WV Photo

York and a Forsyth County in Georgia, the law is swift to apprehend it, because we marched and we achieved racial justice under the law."

While minority students from Amherst to Ann Arbor face a wave of race-terror, while skinhead punks bash gays in the streets of San Francisco, and prison guards in white sheets terrorize black prisoners in upstate New York jails,

self, his country and whoever is the President. He can take on the job of running and coordinating the fight against narcotics in the United States." Because of the real devastation of the ghettos reflected in drug addiction, many black people will be in sympathy with this scheme. While Jesse pushes the myth, "Up with hope, down with dope," the reactionary role of the drug witchhunt

## Norfolk NAACP Forces Down Dixie Flag of Racist Terror

On February 23 the Norfolk chapter of the NAACP marched to the Norfolk City Council to take care of some basic political sanitation—removing the Confederate flag of slavery and KKK terror from the chambers. The NAACP's Rev. L.P. Watson noted that the flag represents a time when "my grandparents were chattel and not considered human beings" (*Virginian-Pilot*, 24 February). But when they got there, the chamber was bare—the council had hastily removed the flag and banished it

to a storage room. The Confederate flag means racist terror for Norfolk's heavily black, working-class population—there has been a rash of KKK-style cross-burnings over the past year. Removal of this rallying point for the lynchers is a victory!

The NAACP's anti-Confederate flag campaign began last December all over the South, where this racist symbol forms part or all of the flags of four states. In Alabama on February 2, 14 black state legislators were arrested

as they tried to scale an eight-foot fence to tear down the Confederate flag from the state capitol building, as a crowd of racists waving the "stars and bars" screamed epithets. In mid-March, protests by a black legislator forced the removal of Oklahoma City's Confederate flag.

From Forsyth County, Georgia to Brooklyn, New York, wherever racist mobs gather the Confederate flag is sure to appear like chancre sores in a case of syphilis. In 1984, Spartacist League supporter Ritchie Bradley, wearing a Union Army uniform, twice tore down the flag of slavery from San Francisco's Civic Center as Spartacist and Labor Black League for Social Defense supporters and passers-by rallied. We need mass labor/black action against racist terror, like the 5,000-strong 1982 mobiliza-

tion, including the Nat Turner Brigade of black workers from Norfolk, that stopped the KKK in Washington, D.C., to teach these punks a little Civil War history—they lost!

They will not be taught the lesson they deserve by the likes of Democrat Jesse Jackson, who at a May 1983 Norfolk demonstration of more than 10,000 to defend Norfolk's busing program outrageously stated, "I am not in town marching for desegregation. I am marching for the voter registration boost." Then as now, Jackson's role is to round up black votes for the Dixiecrat party of war and racism. We need an integrated party of the working class to finish the Civil War—For black liberation through socialist revolution! Down with the Confederate flag of slavery and race-terror! ■

## Break with the Democrats—For a Workers Party!

# Jesse Jackson Fronts for Party of War and Racism

After Super Tuesday, the smoke cleared on the primary battlefield for the two parties of American capitalism. The Republican machine has rolled up a commanding lead for Vice President George Bush, the Number Two unindicted Contragate conspirator, over conservative Senator Bob Dole. The program of ex-CIA Director Bush, who combines Texas oil money with Connecticut Yankee prejudice: four more years of Reaganism without Reagan. Dole, they say, is running as a "populist" (the "poor boy from Gucci gulch," quipped a Bush staffer), meaning that he throws around demagogic rhetoric about invading Nicaragua while Bush was actually trying to do it through his "cabal of zealots" in the White House basement. On the Democratic side, the seven dwarfs are dwindling, presaging a "brokered" convention in Atlanta between Massachusetts governor Mike Dukakis' Northeastern yuppies and Al Gore's "New South" Cold Warriors. And then there's Jesse Jackson.

Jesse Jackson has been running as a mainstream Democrat, and doing phenomenally well. The spectre of a black front-runner coming into the Atlanta convention originally sent panic through the Democratic Party leadership. Novelist Ralph Ellison wrote of blacks as the "invisible man"—for months the bourgeois media treated Jackson as the "invisible candidate." Racist reaction ranged from death threats to a KKK plan to march on the Democratic convention.



Jackson runs for power broker amidst Democratic field of yuppies, Dixiecrats and yahoos.

In contrast to the inflatable plastic midgets running against him, Jackson seems positively presidential. "America Is Listening to Message of the '88 Jackson," headlined the *Los Angeles Times* after his big win Super Tuesday when Jesse won five states, and outpolled everyone in the raw vote. It was no surprise that black voters are uniformly voting for Jackson. But Jackson's mix of "anti-corporate" rhetoric and anti-drug crusading is attracting some white support as well.

White Iowa farmers tearfully embrace Jackson—he's the only one who stood with them against the banks' and feds' repossession of farms that have been in the family since the Homestead Act. Midwestern meatpackers at Hormel and Cudahy, Latina cannery strikers in Watsonville, California shake hands with Jesse—he's the only candidate who would fly in and walk a picket line. The thousands cheering as the candidate shouts, "we need Jackson Action," are not black students on cam-

pus, but white Appalachian miners in Hazard, Kentucky. At a flag-waving Bay Area labor rally, Jackson said he'd "rather have Roosevelt in a wheelchair than Reagan on a high horse." Under the gun in the sabre-rattling, union-busting climate of the late Reagan years, sections of the embattled labor movement are looking to Jackson as an articulate spokesman for FDR-style "friend of labor" Democratic Party coalitionism.

Make no mistake. When Jackson walks the picket lines of striking workers, or marches through the streets with black protesters, it's *not to support their struggles, but to cool them out.* Today the press (after they could no longer ignore him) patronizes Jackson, praising his newfound "mellowness," "maturity" and "moderation" (he's stopped hugging Fidel Castro and Yasir Arafat). But from his earliest days in the civil rights movement, Jesse has been Mr. Anti-Struggle—the fireman brought in to douse the flames of black revolt. The Jackson message is old-style New Deal liberalism, which from FDR to JFK and LBJ meant a raw deal for black people and the working class. From the 1930s through today the Democratic Party has masqueraded as the "people's party" of American capitalism. Supported for decades by the black establishment and labor officialdom, as well as the social democrats and Stalinists, they have tied blacks to the Dixiecrats, presided over Jim Crow in

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# The Legal Murder of Willie Darden



William Coupon

Willie Jasper Darden was executed proclaiming his innocence.

## Down with Racist Death Penalty!

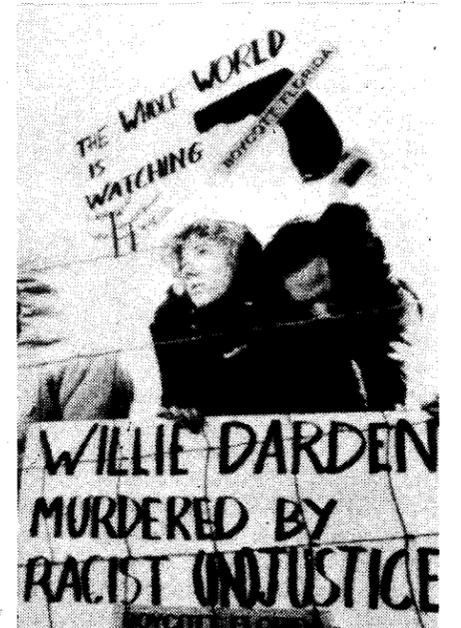
Willie Jasper Darden, aged 54, sat on Florida's death row for 14 years, longer than any other inmate. Six times he was prepared for execution, and six times he was reprieved at the last moment. For the poetry he'd written to the many thousands who wrote him sympathetic letters over the years, he became known as the "sage of death row." Last week he was readied for execution a seventh time; but last week there was no reprieve. The Supreme Court voted not to review his case. Florida governor Bob Martinez immediately set an execution date of March 15, allowing only seven days for final appeals rather than the usual 30 days. Willie Jasper Darden went to his death proclaiming his innocence, yet another victim of the "legal" murder machine of racist America.

Among those appealing for his life

were the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Amnesty International and even the Pope. Darden never got a retrial, but the night before his execution he was interviewed on ABC's *Nightline* with Ted Koppel. Like a scene in a '30s prison movie, Koppel described how the lights went out during the interview because "they were testing the generator for the electric chair." His hands manacled, Darden remained calm throughout and firmly told his audience:

"If I'm executed tomorrow morning, it's not going to change the facts that I'm innocent. I will take that innocence to the grave. I will take my principles to the grave. I will take my dignity to the grave. I will stand proud, and I'll walk with my head high, because I have no guilty conscience. I have nothing to

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March 15: Protesters outside Florida State Prison death row.