

Imperialist Beast on the Loose

Reagan Thirsts to Rape Nicaragua

MARCH 4—Broadcasting from his California hilltop ranch "Eagle's Nest," American president Ronald "Adolf" Reagan declared in a nationwide radio speech February 17 that the blood-thirsty counterrevolutionaries waging war against Sandinista Nicaragua are "freedom fighters struggling for liberty and democracy." Comparing these cutthroat killers with such bourgeois revolutionary generals as Lafayette and Bolivar, Reagan proclaimed the CIA mercenaries "our brothers." At a press conference five days later he openly called for overthrowing the Nicaraguan government. And speaking at a right-wing political convention March 1 he called the "contras" the "moral equal of our Founding Fathers"!

"Freedom fighters"? These are psychopathic sadists, murderers and torturers, whose specialty is raping and mutilating women, bayoneting babies and executing unarmed civilians. "Struggling for liberty and democracy"? To a man, the top military leaders of the largest contra group, the FDN, are former officers of dictator Anastasio Somoza's mercenary National Guard. As one of these Somozaist officers declared a couple of years ago, "Come the counterrevolution, there will be a massacre in Nicaragua. We have a lot of scores to settle. There will be bodies from the border to Managua" (*Newsweek*, 8 November 1982). They're already making good on that pledge. Last year alone they killed 600 civilians in hit-and-run attacks on farming cooperatives, schools and clinics.

But Reagan's Big Lies don't stop



UPI

Big Brother Reagan and his contra cutthroats, like "Comandante Suicide," center, standing.

there. "Our objective in Nicaragua," he declared in his fireside radio chat, "is to achieve a pluralistic and fully democratic government. This can be done without the use of U.S. military forces." And at a televised press conference



LeMoyné/Newsweek

February 21, Reagan spelled out U.S. policy toward the Nicaraguan government more explicitly than ever before: the U.S.' goal is to "remove it in the sense of its present structure, in which it is a Communist, totalitarian state and it

is not a Government chosen by the people." Just what gives this arrogant imperialist pig and liar the right to impose Yankee "democracy," on a country, moreover, whose citizens just

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Thatcher Vindictive in Victory, NUM Defiant in Defeat

Bloody Thatcher Beats Back Heroic British Miners

MARCH 5—The British miners' strike has been defeated but the union has not been broken. For one full year, twelve long and bitter months, the coal miners fought valiantly against the British bosses and the bloodthirsty Thatcher regime. It was the sharpest

and most deep-going conflict of British labor since the turn of the century. The Thatcher regime and the rotten edifice of British capitalism was profoundly shaken by the miners union who fought for all of labor and the oppressed. Isolated and betrayed by

the scabberding tops of the trade unions and Labour Party, the miners and their wives resisted heroically against tremendous odds. Their pickets were arrested and beaten, even murdered; martial law was instituted in the coal fields; mining villages were

devastated by Thatcher's occupation army of cops and thugs. Hardship conditions rivaling those of the period of the General Strike of 1926 were imposed on the miners' families.

On March 3, a delegates conference
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Koch's D.A. Still Covering for Cops

Michael Stewart Was Murdered!

Once again, the transit police lynch mob which murdered black artist Michael Stewart is getting white-washed by the New York City "justice" system. Last fall a judge threw out even the slap-on-the-wrist manslaughter indictments brought by courageous grand jurors who refused to go along with the D.A.'s whitewash. But the continuing furor over this racist cop murder, the "rescue" team execution of 67-year-old, infirm black grandmother Eleanor Bumpurs, and the cover-up in both cases by Mayor Koch's notoriously discredited killer-cop coroner Elliot Gross, has put the heat on City Hall to do *something* about the Stewart case.

So two weeks ago, Manhattan D.A. Robert Morgenthau dropped the manslaughter charges and got his grand jury to indict three of the murderers on

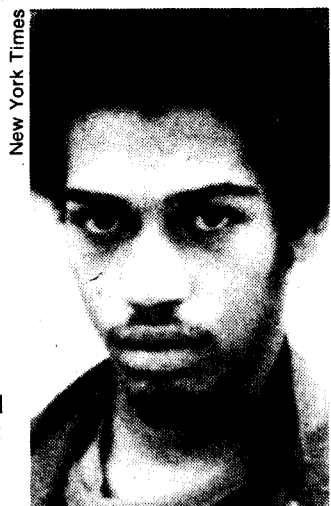
the far lesser charges of criminally negligent homicide, reckless endangerment and assault. A total of six cops, originally granted immunity, were charged with perjury. These obscenely trivial charges are so murky legally that Stewart family attorney Louis Clayton Jones branded them a "charade" that wouldn't stand up in court. Jones is right.

Michael Stewart, the 25-year-old son of a retired transit worker, was arrested and beaten unconscious on 15 September 1983 for allegedly scrawling graffiti in a 14th Street subway station. Morgenthau admitted that 40 witnesses saw at least eleven white cops kick and bludgeon their victim during and after his arrest. Stewart was brought to Bellevue Hospital hogtied and handcuffed, his ankles bound together and with more than 60

wounds on his body. When he died medical examiner Gross, in a ghoulish cover-up, secretly removed Stewart's eyes since their massive hemorrhaging proved that he had been strangled. They used to steal the pennies off a dead man's eyes; now they steal the eyes.

With racist pig Ed Koch fanning the flames, New York is on the brink of a racial explosion, and the cops want to push the city over the edge. When the triggerman who executed Mrs. Bumpurs, Stephen Sullivan, was belatedly indicted—simply for manslaughter, not murder—10,000 armed cops surrounded the Bronx Supreme Court building. In response to the latest indictments, an attorney for one of the killer cops cynically said, "Michael Stewart is responsible for his own death."

The D.A. hopes that by trivializing



Michael Stewart

the charges against the uniformed assassins, the widespread outrage over the case will be dissipated. But Koch, Morgenthau and the NYPD can't wash the blood from their hands. Put the lynch mob killers in Attica and throw away the key! The New York labor movement, and especially the heavily integrated Transport Workers Union must respond to this racist murder and cover-up by mobilizing to demand vengeance for Michael Stewart and Eleanor Bumpurs.

Bay Area Hospitals Killed Eugene Barnes

Medical "Care," U.S.A.

OAKLAND—Eugene Barnes died January 31 because he was black, poor and didn't have medical insurance. He was a victim of racist *murder* by America's "health care" system and Reagan's killer budget cuts.

Barnes, described as "an uninsured 32-year-old" (*Oakland Tribune*) unemployed black mechanic, collapsed on a street in the heavily black and poor city of Richmond in the north Bay Area, shortly before 5 p.m. on January 28. A crowd gathered where Barnes lay with a gaping stab wound in his left temple, the victim of an unknown assailant. Police

were summoned, then the fire department, finally an ambulance. Barnes was taken to Brookside Hospital, where he was clocked into the emergency room at 5:20 p.m. For nearly five hours, Barnes lay there slowly dying, without the emergency surgery he so desperately needed. Barnes' mother, brother and four sisters gathered in the waiting room, but were never told that he was not being treated.

Brookside Hospital administrators claim that their three staff neurosurgeons were either "busy" or "unavailable." Hospital officials say they called

three other hospitals; all refused to admit him. Finally San Francisco General, over 20 miles away, was contacted. A doctor there began calling other hospitals closer to Brookside, "increasingly amazed to find that no facility—private or public—would accept the transfer of the patient" (*Oakland Tribune*, 7 February). SF General finally agreed to take Barnes; he arrived there about 10 p.m. and was immediately taken into surgery. But it was too late—Barnes never regained consciousness and died three days later.

Why would no one treat Eugene Barnes until it was too late? There has been an avalanche of conflicting cover stories, denials and "no comments" from doctors and hospital administrators involved, motivated in no small part by the \$10.5 million lawsuit filed on behalf of the family by attorney Melvin Belli. But the truth is Eugene Barnes died because he couldn't afford to live.

Doctors don't like not getting paid. And Bay Area neurosurgeons polled by the *Oakland Tribune* "acknowledge that it's a good bet that anyone in an emergency room who has been shot or knifed—and who lives in a low-income neighborhood—doesn't have insurance" (*Tribune*, 13 February). The head of the Alameda Health Consortium said that "doctors are just flat out refusing to treat indigent patients in private hospitals" (*Tribune*, 6 February) because they are usually not paid.

A biting leaflet by Progressive Labor Party's International Committee Against Racism, titled "Medical Apartheid = Murder," noted that a Harvard Medical School report last year indicted Bay Area hospitals for "dumping" poor patients, citing 103 cases where patients in an unstable condition were transferred from private to public hospitals because they couldn't pay their bills. In nearly a third of these cases, the patient's life was endangered by the move, virtually all the people transferred were without insurance, and nearly 60 percent of those whose lives were endangered were black.

The death of Eugene Barnes grabbed Bay Area headlines for several days. The state cited Brookside for four specific "violations" in its handling of the case, and the U.S. Office of Civil Rights has opened an investigation. But Barnes' death was no aberrant exception. The doctor who admitted him to SF General

quoted an unnamed East Bay colleague. "You know, this is happening about once a week."

And it's not just with expensive specialists like neurosurgeons. As a result of the Reagan budget cuts, approved by both Democrats and Republicans in Congress, medical services for the poor have been dismantled and replaced by... nothing. Dr. Max Bader of the Oregon state health department reports: "We're seeing many incidents where mothers without insurance and in need of immediate maternity care literally have to park outside of hospitals until they're in labor before they are admitted" (*Tribune*, 16 February).

American medical care has always been for profit, and therefore viciously race- and class-biased. A recent national survey indicated that over 20 percent of the population has no health care insurance whatsoever. Reagan's meat-ax budget cuts have decimated health programs for the poor, disproportionately minorities. Federal officials recently revealed that a 20-year decline in infant mortality has radically slowed, and that black infant mortality remains almost twice as high as for whites (*New York Times*, 24 February). Medicaid and Medicare funding has been slashed to the bone, and California's Medically Indigent Adult program abolished entirely.

Reagan's America claims the "right to life" only up until birth. (Though even unborn fetuses suffer from Reagan's cutbacks, as pregnant women are denied decent health care and nutrition.) "Free quality health care for all" is an elementary service that decaying capitalism cannot provide. One of the early acts of a revolutionary workers government will be the complete socialization of all health care. Until then, countless others like Eugene Barnes will be sacrificed on the altar of medical profit. ■



TROTSKY

The Revolutionary Party and British Labor

The British coal miners and 1926 General Strike were betrayed by the British labor traitors with the complicity of Stalin. In 1928 Trotsky drew up a balance sheet of this betrayal and quoted from his earlier and seminal work against the Stalinist degeneration of the Comintern and Soviet state, Lessons of October:

Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a



LENIN

substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer. That is the principal lesson of the past decade. It is true that the English trade unions may become a mighty lever of the proletarian revolution; they may, for instance, even take the place of workers' soviets under certain conditions and for a certain period of time. They can fill such a role, however, not apart from a Communist party, and certainly not *against* the party, but only on the condition that communist influence becomes the decisive influence in the trade unions. We have paid far too dearly for this conclusion—with regard to the role and importance of a party in a proletarian revolution—to renounce it so lightly or even to minimize its significance.

—Leon Trotsky, *Lessons of October* (1924)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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NYC Transit Militants: Screw Kiley, Koch and Cuomo!

Get the TWU Off Its Knees!

As Mayor Koch and the New York tabloid press fan the flames of racist vigilantism, as 10,000 NYC cops rally in the Bronx for racist murder, the nation's most powerful municipal workers union, the highly integrated Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, which runs New York City's subways and buses, is facing a life-and-death contract fight. The union contract expires March 31, and Koch and Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) czar Robert Kiley are out for the transit workers' blood.

When Koch visited the huge 207th Street subway repair shop on February 22, irate transit workers roundly booed the labor-hating mayor, Kiley and his bullwhip-sporting overseer at the shop, Ronald "Jefferson" Davis. On Channel 4's evening news, a black West Indian worker and David Brewer, candidate of the Committee for a Fighting TWU for chairman of the union's car maintenance division in 1983, denounced the MTA slavedrivers. Brewer told the

WNBC TV reporters: "Mayor Koch and Cuomo, who our union unfortunately supported, have brought this gang of union-busters in here and they are really trying to do a job on this union."

Indeed, the Transit Authority's (TA) opening "offer" consisted of 46 union-busting giveback demands which would erase 50 years of hard struggle by the TWU: new workers to start at \$4 an hour, reaching full scale only after six years; unrestricted right for the TA to hire part-timers, without "fringe" benefits, and to introduce unpaid swing time between split shifts. City workers have been without a contract since June. And on February 15 firefighters union delegates overwhelmingly rejected a stinking giveback contract. As the February 12 leaflet of the Committee for a Fighting TWU, printed below, states:

"Transit along with sanitation workers should take the lead in a militant strike of all city labor to smash the Taylor slave-labor law and win decent contracts, stop the racist cutbacks and begin to turn this city around."

Committee for a Fighting TWU Leaflet:

As our union enters contract talks, the transit bosses are trying to help Reagan pay for his Star Wars against the "Evil Empire" by taking it out of workers' paychecks and hides, draining the cities of any vitality that remains, turning the Big Apple into something resembling the movie "Escape From New York." Reagan's killer cuts budget came straight from the campaign of strikebreaker Democrat Mondale (remember the '78 use of Taft-Hartley against the miners). This is the same Mondale who always runs with an outright racist, from "Ethnic Purity" Carter to "Ethnic Purity" Ferraro. And

muggers. When Bernhard Goetz pulled the trigger on four black youths who tried to rip him off the reactionary *Post* headlined a campaign for racist vigilantism. The liberals, like Breslin and the *New York Times*, call for more killer cops and gun control so only the outlaws and cops will have guns, but Willie Turks would be alive if he was packing.

Kiley and Gunn were brought to the MTA by Cuomo and Koch to do one thing: reduce transit workers to slavery. How fitting then that at the 207th St. plantation "Jefferson Bullwhip" Davis has just abolished Lincoln's birthday. Then, just for spite, he put the only black committeeman physically down on his knees in the flooring gang and personally delivered his kneepads.

Kiley can't reduce the workforce to slavery without first turning his supervisors into slavedrivers beholden only to him. The Civil Service law doesn't provide for firings for lack of viciousness, only for incompetence. So Civil Service had to go. The supervisors' association, the SSSA, had to be brought to heel and 2 weeks ago it was. The agreement between Kiley and the SSSA is so rotten that the SSSA kept it secret. Hundreds of Civil Service jobs will be eliminated and the remaining supervisors will lose all seniority rights. The clock is turned back 50 years to where everything about government jobs is decided by political patronage, cronyism, ass kissing, payoffs and racism. The SSSA leadership traded in its membership for a guaranteed dues base, compliments of the TA. Kiley literally bought the SSSA tops.

The Lawe leadership of the TWU has acted no better than the SSSA tops. Back in March 1984 the COMMITTEE FOR A FIGHTING TWU pointed out that Kiley's attack on the SSSA was only the first step in an all-out drive against the TWU. We submitted a motion to the TWU executive board which said: "The TWU must express support and solidarity to the subway supervisors association in its struggle against the abuse and victimization of members by higher management!" Lawe got that motion squashed. Such an expression of support could have acted as a starting point to put some backbone in the SSSA and to prepare the TWU for a fight against Kiley's attacks.

But Lawe, like the SSSA tops, is wedded completely to the dues checkoff. As we said in the past, the dues checkoff makes our union leaders lazy and henchmen for Kiley. Making the bosses our bankers insures we won't have our money when we need it most. Dump the dues checkoff! We must immediately institute a system of elected shop stewards to collect our dues and organize the shop floors, crew rooms, bus barns and quarters to immediately deal with our grievances and victimizations. We need a strike fund now!

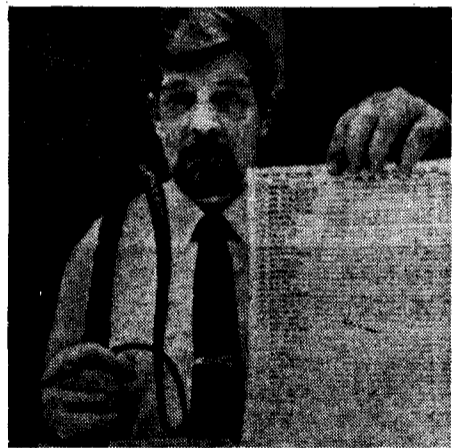
Clearly the SSSA is just target practice for Kiley's war against the TWU. Work and safety rules, seniority rights, picks and bids and the limited protections of Civil Service are all slated for destruction in Kiley's mad drive to patch up the city's crumbling transit system with our blood and guts. Kiley and Gunn want a lot more Jesse Coles. Hundreds of TWU members have been suspended and fired to intimidate and humiliate the workforce. Abolish the beakies [TA spies]! Stop the "controlled substances" victimizations! We want a \$5000 wage increase across the board with 100% COLA! For a shorter work week with no loss in pay! We demand safe job conditions and quality upgrading training instead of disciplinary

threw away seniority rights for car inspectors in the barns.

With this kind of union response Kiley wins even when he loses, and he has gone on to tear up the contract and ignore arbitrator and courts where it suits him. MABSTOA bus operator Pete Santos remains dismissed from his job for over a year now despite an arbitration ruling and two court decisions directing that he be reinstated. Bus operators are also the victims of a pilot program for unpaid swing time between split shifts, a scourge that it took the TWU 30 years of struggle to wipe out, thus bringing back 12 to 13 hours work for 8 hours pay. The bus operators are fighting back by "working to rule." But Lawe refuses to bring the power of the entire union to bear and stop Kiley—leaving the bus operators to go it alone. He hopes that they will run out of steam and give up in frustration. Lawe played the same game at 207th St. Shop last year, resulting in hundreds of suspensions and firings.

Union busting and racist terror is the domestic side of the bosses' drive toward W.W.III with the Soviet Union. Our weapon is our organized militant strength on the picket line. John Lawe put our muscle in a straitjacket by instituting binding arbitration and by kowtowing to the Taylor Law. The off-again/on-again professional "dissident" Arnold Cherry is opposed to binding arbitration but equally opposed to a strike. So where does that leave him? On a sabbatical at Columbia University maybe?

We need a new leadership that stands up and fights for our rights! No to binding arbitration! We must prepare the union to use its power to shut this



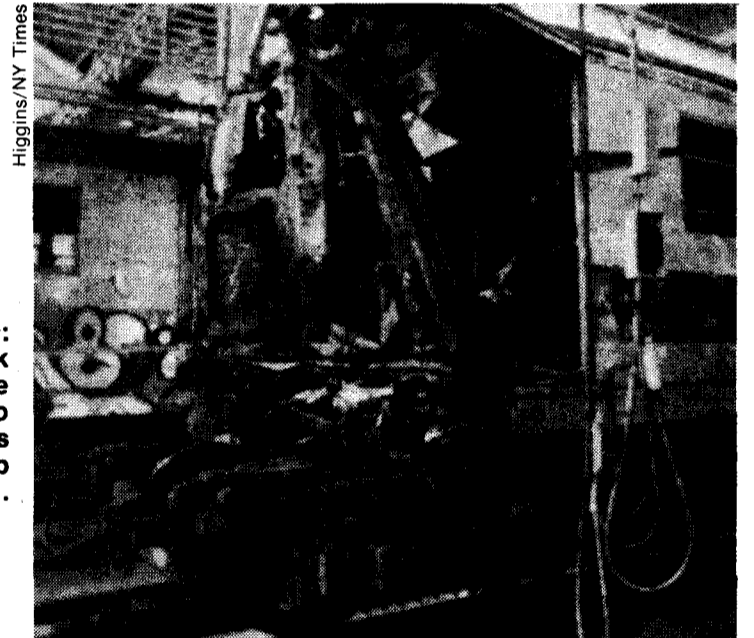
Schwartz/NY Post

Overseer "Jefferson Bullwhip" Davis of the 207th Street plantation.

Cuomo gave us CIA bigshot Kiley.

Koch's "Fear City" is a racist hellhole. Turnstile jumpers are treated like PLO terrorists. Michael Stewart, son of a black transit worker, is beaten to death by a dozen cops while Koch's killer cop coroner, Dr. Gross, gouges out Stewart's eyes to cover up this brutal racist murder. The vicious, labor-hating pig in Gracie Mansion fans the flames of racism by denouncing the grand jury indictment of killer cop Sullivan for breaking into the apartment of Eleanor Bumpurs and pumping two 12-gauge shotgun blasts into this infirm 65-year-old black grandmother. In response thousands of Koch's killer cops hold an armed mobilization in the Bronx demanding the unconditional right to gun down blacks with impunity. This city is on the razor's edge.

Every transit worker and rider knows that the subway system for the world's finance capital is a death trap where if you don't get electrocuted or asphyxiated you get shot at by transit cops and



Higgins/NY Times

TA cuts kill: bosses let black motorman Jesse Cole bleed to death in his crushed cab (right) in 1981.

actions up the ass. We want the conditions and pay of skilled workers. We want a safe, clean free subway system!

Lawe seeks to add to his resume for an MTA board seat by making the TWU membership swallow every indignity and humiliation. When even the arbitrator ruled in favor of the right of car cleaners to pick their daily jobs by seniority, Lawe rushed to Kiley and gave it back. Likewise, in a Gracie Mansion deal brokered by Koch, Lawe

city down. Transit along with sanitation workers should take the lead in a militant strike of all city labor to smash the Taylor slave-labor law and win decent contracts, stop the racist cutbacks and begin to turn this city around. Dump the rotten union buster Reagan and the union busting Democrats! For a workers party that will fight for a workers government!

Committee for a Fighting TWU
12 February 1985

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Brutal Assassination of Dr. Cooperman

Murder Trial Whitewashes Viet Fascists

Edward Cooperman, a California physics professor known for his courageous efforts to use his scientific knowledge to aid in reconstructing the war-ravaged nation of Vietnam, was brutally murdered last October 13. But the Orange County, California murder trial which ended in a hung jury February 19 was not a trial of the confessed assassin, right-wing Vietnamese student Minh Van Lam. It was Professor Cooperman himself who was put on trial, in an orchestrated effort by the defense, the prosecution, the Reagan government and the press to obscure the ominous trail pointing to the involvement of organized ultrarightist Vietnamese émigrés. The slimy, vicious defense lawyer, a former Nixon staffer and specialist in "internal security," was hired for Lam by a notorious former Saigon top cop. Also ignored at the trial was a pattern of earlier killings of supporters of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the United States. Instead, a massive disinformation campaign was mounted to blame Cooperman for his own murder, with wild accusations and innuendos of espionage, embezzlement, seducing young Vietnamese boys, and even staging his own assassination.

We share the outrage of Dr. Cooperman's family and his Vietnamese and American friends at this farcical trial. The *New York Times* (20 February) reports, "Dr. Cooperman's friends and family had maintained that the slaying was a political assassination by right-wing extremists who opposed the professor's support of the Communist Government of Vietnam." But the prosecution carefully never pursued any of the considerable evidence that the murder was linked to the sinister ultrarightist Vietnamese death squads imported here by the U.S. government as their puppet regime in Saigon crumbled ten years ago. Thus the *Times* article at the time the case went to the jury noted that "The prosecution has established no motive for the shooting, and the defense said in closing arguments today that the lack of motive supports Mr. Lam's claim that the death was accidental" (*New York Times*, 12 February).

According to the *Times*, the confessed assassin "originally... told the police that he was not present at the time of the shooting." Later he said he had planted the gun in Cooperman's hand to make it look like a suicide. Eventually he arrived at the story that he had "accidentally" shot Cooperman "in a playful wrestling match for the pistol" (*New York Times*, 20 February).

From the beginning, the D.A.'s office "denied there is evidence that Cooperman was killed because of his political beliefs" (*Orange County Register*, 31 January). But Cooperman's wife Klaaske testified that as far back as 1979 he knew he was on the hit list of Viet death squads, like the CIA-trained "Frogmen," notorious in Southern California for extortion and murder. The prosecution never pursued leads like the extra set of footprints tracked in Cooperman's blood; the unidentified black leather jacket found in his office; the repeated death threats he received; the warning Cooperman told his friends about only days before his murder, that "two young Vietnamese in a white car with Texas license plates" were coming for him (*Los Angeles Times*, 30 January).

Lam's brother is reportedly a leader of a right-wing Viet gang in Hawaii (*Frontline*, 18 February), but this was never pursued. And the prosecution never called as a witness Lam's cellmate Tauno Koivisto, who told police Lam confessed to him that he killed Cooperman "on orders from an Orange County Vietnamese businessman" who "first tried to bribe him" and then "threat-



EDWARD COOPERMAN
Friend of Vietnam

ened to kill Lam's sister if he didn't cooperate" (*Los Angeles Times*, 8 January). "The businessman told Lam he had a dream of rebuilding Vietnam and that Cooperman was on the wrong side."

The only witness to explicitly talk about political assassination was Roger Dittman, one of Dr. Cooperman's close friends and colleagues at Cal State Fullerton. Dittman told *WV*: "My impression is that the prosecution had no more interest in obtaining a conviction than the defense had in an acquittal. They're both operating on a political basis with a hidden agenda. And they both had agreed that they wanted to keep any hint of conspiracy or assassination or political implication out of the trial. So they were in collusion or collaboration." And there are indications that such collusion included at the highest levels the active participation of U.S. government intelligence agencies. According to Tony Russo, head of the Committee for Justice for Edward Cooperman, "the script was written by a disinformation klatch, probably including government officers and former CIA employees in the Vietnamese community.... [Cooperman] was becoming a virtual ambassador to Vietnam, so they hit him" (*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 23 December 1984).

The FBI's statements about the Cooperman slaying are revealing: on October 15, they denied all knowledge of any investigation involving Cooperman to the *Los Angeles Times*; on October 17, an FBI spokesman confirmed "the agency is maintaining a close liaison with Fullerton police"; on November 2, the FBI "no longer has any interest in the case." Yet on December

17, an FBI spokesman "said his office was told not to discuss the case because it involves foreign counterintelligence" and confirmed that both the FBI and CIA had been investigating Cooperman's activities to aid Vietnam (*San Francisco Examiner*, 17 December 1984). Reportedly, "the FBI's secretive foreign counterintelligence division kept a desultory eye on Cooperman" and his warehouse in Santa Ana was visited by FBI agents on at least three occasions (*Herald-Examiner*, 23 December 1984).

A Cast of Notorious Characters

Lam's defense lawyer, Alan May, a former Green Beret lieutenant and helicopter tail gunner in Vietnam, has close ties with the Vietnamese gusanos and plenty of high-level right-wing and intelligence connections. He worked for Nixon back in 1959, and again at the height of the Watergate era; he served on both Nixon's and Reagan's inaugural committees. In Nixon's Justice Department he worked on the "Pentagon Papers" case, conducting surveillance of and preparing the espionage charges against Daniel Ellsberg and Tony Russo. According to the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* (23 December 1984), "May became a special assistant to the attorney general for management, operations and internal security. In this capacity he set up a task force to coordinate CIA, FBI, State Department and Customs intelligence on radicals such as the Black Panthers and the Weathermen." This job gave May useful experience in frame-ups and lies to justify deadly violence against leftists, the most systematic application of this modus operandi being the government's assassination campaign against Black Panther Party leaders. Tony Russo characterizes May as a "disinformation agent for a clandestine agency of the U.S. government" (*Register*, 20 January).

Meanwhile, an "investigator" on Lam's payroll, William Cassidy, "works

Summary execution of Viet Cong suspect by top cop Nguyen Ngoc Loan, Saigon 1968. Bloody methods of CIA/U.S. puppets come home to Orange County.



with or runs the Intelligence Studies Foundation, which consults with police forces and foreign governments in the area of counterintelligence," reports the *Herald-Examiner* (23 December 1984). He recently worked for the right-wing "Coalition for a Free Vietnam" trying to prove absurd allegations that Hanoi is secretly controlling vast funds raised in the U.S. The *New York Times* quotes him as their authority on Vietnamese crime for a recent *Times* article whitewashing the well-documented role of former Saigon puppet officials in the Vietnamese émigré "Mafia" extortion

rings in the U.S.

In an interview with CBS News last November, credit for hiring Alan May as Lam's defense attorney was claimed by Tran Minh Cong. The *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times* describe Tran Minh Cong as a leader of the "Vietnamese Community League," the voice of the "respectable" Vietnamese in Orange County. In fact, this sinister figure used to run the Saigon Police Academy, training ground for one of the world's most corrupt and bloodthirsty police forces. He is now the spokesman for the fanatically ultrarightist "National United Front for the Liberation of Vietnam," a paramilitary outfit of former Saigon officials which has launched sabotage expeditions into Vietnamese territory from Thailand.

According to the *Herald-Examiner*, Tran Minh Cong was also "reported to be [former Saigon strongman] Ky's liaison with Alpha 66," the Miami-based Cuban gusano murder squad. In 1977 Tran Minh Cong was arrested for leading a goon squad, mainly former soldiers of the Saigon puppet army, to break up a film showing Cooperman had organized on the Fullerton campus after his first trip to Vietnam. Cooperman testified against him in court, but all charges were dropped.

When the forces of the NLF and North Vietnamese army marched victoriously into Saigon on 30 April 1975, the imperialists' venal puppet colonels came here. They brought with them more than smuggled gold and diamonds: they brought the methods of extortion and murder taught by their CIA mentors, specialists in campaigns like "Operation Phoenix," the political assassination program. Today, driven from Vietnam by social revolution, they operate in Reagan's America against those who defend Vietnam. As Tony Russo put it, "Cooperman's death was part of a pattern of organized violence toward people working for normalized relations with the present Hanoi-based government" (*Los Angeles Times*, 16 October 1984).

Pattern of Political Murders

The murder of Dr. Cooperman comes on the heels of a series of murders which fit a terrifying pattern: in each case there is clear evidence that the victims were targeted by ultrarightist Vietnamese gangs linked to the former Saigon generals; in each case the police deny the most obvious and explicit political motivations; in each case the killers have escaped prosecution.

- 1981: Lam Trong Duong, pro-Hanoi publisher and social worker, murdered in broad daylight in San Francisco. Police concluded it was "not

political," despite the fact that the fascist "Vietnamese Organization to Exterminate Communists and Restore the Nation" took credit for the murder. Case remains unsolved.

- 1982: Houston publisher Nguyen Dam Phong, executed after publishing criticism of extortion by right-wing Vietnamese gangs. Case remains unsolved.

- 1984: Nguyen Van Luy, president of the Vietnamese Residents Association in the USA, and his wife Pham Thi Luu, shot down (see "Death Squad Killers" continued on page 13)

Congratulations on Victory Against New McCarthyism

On 20 October 1983 the Spartacist League filed suit against the FBI witch-hunters' new "Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines," charging that the Guidelines falsely equate Marxist political opposition to the government with "terrorism." This was the first direct legal challenge to the Guidelines. On 30 November 1984 the FBI agreed to settle the suit by retracting their long-standing set-up "definition" of the Spartacist League as a conspiratorial grouping secretly advocating "violent overthrow of the government," and substituting a statement defining the SL as what we are, a Marxist political organization (see "FBI Admits: Marxists Are Not Terrorists," WV No. 368, 7 December 1984). In recent weeks we have published some of the many messages of support and congratulations received from a wide range of people concerned about civil liberties; more are printed below.

In settlement of SL lawsuit, the FBI agreed to withdraw its long-standing set-up "definition" of us, which in classic witchhunt language falsely charged us with conspiratorial commitment to "violent overthrow of the government." The new definition (below) of the SL as what we really are—a Marxist political organization—concedes our lawsuit's central claim: that open avowal of Marxist principles cannot be equated with terrorism.

The Spartacist League (SPL), a Marxist political organization, was founded in 1966. The historical and theoretical roots of the SPL derive from the early Communist Party, U.S.A. and the Socialist Workers Party. The immediate precursor of the SPL was the Revolutionary Tendency of the Socialist Workers Party. The SPL has an official youth section named the Spartacus Youth League.

The SPL was once the subject of an FBI domestic security investigation. The investigation was closed in 1977, however, and it did not result in any criminal prosecution.



Federal Courthouse, New York City, November 30: SL, SYL, PDC spokesmen announce settlement of lawsuit against the FBI.

People Who Mean Business

Whenever a band of people who mean business and know their business sets out to defend its rights and the rights of the American people, they have an input far more profound than their numbers might indicate. Your Partisan Defense Committee has proved that once again. The Spartacist League's victory in its lawsuit against the F.B.I. Domestic Security/Terrorism guidelines is educative for the F.B.I., heartening for all the rest of us who depend upon the courage of your expertise and principle to provide an armor against the complete cynicism that might otherwise sink us.

Sincerely yours,
Dale Riepe
Professor of Philosophy
State University of New York
at Buffalo

Sinister FBI/CIA Octopus

The All-African People's Revolutionary Party extends revolutionary congratulations to the Spartacist League for its recent victory in its lawsuit against the FBI.

The FBI and the CIA are the nerve centers of a massive, well organized, sinister, INDUSTRIAL-POLICE-INTELLIGENCE COMPLEX (IPIC); a vast octopus which stretches its tentacles into every facet of the economic, political and social life of the U.S. and the world; in order to protect the interests and profits of U.S. multinational corporations acquired through the ruthless exploitation of the labor, raw materials and markets of the world.

Each small victory against the FBI and CIA and the capitalist and imperial-

ist masters whom they serve is a victory for democratic rights, national liberation and the eventual triumph of socialism throughout the world. For this recent victory honest people will forever thank the Spartacist League.

Victories like this make us even more determined to intensify our call for a broad-based, mass-oriented COALITION TO SMASH THE FBI AND CIA. Suffering and struggling world humanity demands of us nothing less.

Kwame Ture, for the All-African People's Revolutionary Party

A Time of Official Terror

This is a time of official terror being directed against the peace and solidarity movements, so there is a need for these movements to unify and defend themselves. This particular lawsuit is a major contribution because it shows that the official terror is directed against nonviolent movements and exposes government disinformation.

Tony Russo
Chairman, Committee for Justice
for Edward Cooperman

Dissenting Voices Must Not Be Silenced

During this period of right wing reaction to the advances in civil liberties and civil rights achieved in the 1960s, it is especially important that voices of dissent and radicalism not be silenced. The recent victory in federal court of the Spartacist League against the FBI's Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines is thus to be supported by all persons committed to democratic principles and the right to dissent.

Robert C. Smith
Associate Professor
Howard University

A Major Step Forward

Your organization's victory on winning your organization's suit against the United States government is our victory and should be considered as a major step forward for the movement in its fight against government infiltration and surveillance, oppression and repression of the masses.

Virginia Collins
New Orleans, Louisiana
Civil rights activist

Government Targets Controversial Organizations

I congratulate the Partisan Defense Committee and the Spartacus League/U.S. for its successful suit against the 1983 Attorney-General's Guidelines for Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigations. Big government, however liberal or conservative, will always tend to encroach on liberties in general. It is exactly the unpopular and controversial people and organizations and points of view that governments target as they try to silence opposition; few will speak out in behalf of the unpopular or controversial, and the result is that bad laws, bad rulings, and bad precedents are estab-

lished. Any removal of impediments to speech—as you have accomplished—works for us all.

Sincerely yours,
Stanley K. Sheinbaum
Economist
Regent, University of California

Congratulations

Congratulations on your victory over the Reagan so-called "anti-terrorist" guidelines. I enclose a modest check toward your litigation expenses.

Sincerely,
Vern Countryman
Harvard Law School

Michigan Chronicle

2 February 1985

Marxist group wins suit against FBI

The Spartacus League won an "important victory" when the FBI agreed to change its official designation of the League to "a Marxist political organization."

According to League general counsel Rachel Wolkenstein, "Under the Reagan and the 1983 FBI guidelines the government has tried to equate political opposition with criminal conspiracy and terrorism, thus mandating the secret police to get you."

The former definition of the League in FBI guidelines said, "While the Spartacus League does not openly advocate the violent overthrow of the U.S. government at this time...the League does believe that eventual violent revolution to overthrow the present capitalist system of government in the U.S. is inevitable."

That designation placed the League in the Guidelines for Domestic Security and Terrorism Investigations, along with organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, the American Nazi Party and the Mafia, all of which advocate and practice violence in pursuit of their goals.

"The Spartacus League does not believe in violence," Ms. Wolken-

stein said during an interview from New York. "It is capitalism which creates the danger of violence from those committed to this system."

The settlement of the year-old lawsuit, Mrs. Wolkenstein claimed, "conceded the central claim of our lawsuit...that Marxist political principles and advocacy cannot be equated with violence, terrorism or a criminal enterprise."

"This undermines the FBI's pretext for more than 60 years of harassment, surveillance, disruption and persecution of Marxist political organizations in the United States," she said.

Wolkenstein added that the settlement is crucial because of the pending confirmation of Edwin Meese as the U.S. attorney general.

"Because of implicit support for the FBI guidelines" in the courts and Justice Dept., Wolkenstein suggested that Meese, under Reagan's leadership, would certainly step up the Justice Dept.'s "spying, slandering, prosecuting and surveillance of the League" to new heights.

The new guidelines may make "victimization a little harder," she said.

Spartacist Forum

FBI Admits: Marxists Are Not Terrorists

Speaker: Rachel Wolkenstein
General Counsel
Spartacist League

Thursday, March 7, 7:30 p.m.
Pound, Room 107
Harvard Law School

For more information: (617) 492-3928

BOSTON

ILWU Anti-Apartheid Action Sabotaged

Labor Traitors and Their Lackeys

SAN FRANCISCO—Back in December, longshoremen in the Bay Area got international attention when they refused to touch South African cargo aboard the *Nedlloyd Kimberley*. Fake-leftists and liberal Democrats, of course, are always calling to boycott Krugger-rands, pressuring GM to divest its South African subsidiaries, and similar "moral" gestures. After spending the fall (and for many, the spring and summer as well) stumping for Democratic loser Mondale, who said not a word about South Africa in his campaign, their anti-racist credentials were in need of some refurbishing. So after the elections were over, everyone from black preachers to AFL-CIO labor fakers went and got themselves arrested at the South African embassy and consulates around the country.

But black longshoremen and other class-conscious union militants in the Bay Area wanted something different. In the face of massive repression and rebellion in South Africa, with hundreds of thousands of black workers fighting against racist Botha, they sought to strike a blow against the hated apartheid regime. So for ten days the *Kimberley* sat off Pier 80 as a political battle raged dockside over this protest. The fact that the "hot-cargo" action



Stan Gow: For solid union action against apartheid.

lasted as long as it did—and the maritime bosses' hesitation in going to the courts—reflected the receptive chord it struck among the black population. Union officials, however, feared that it could "get out of hand."

From the beginning, the boycott of the Nedlloyd blood ship was sabotaged by the bureaucrats of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), headed by social democrat Jimmy Herman. Their bottom line was that there would be no union backing for the work action, because that would mean breaking the no-strike clause of the contract with the maritime bosses. And they finally called off the ban in order not to confront the capitalist state. But Herman & Co. couldn't pull off this stab in the back by themselves. The ILWU tops needed all the help they could get from some fakers who could divert the ranks away from militant action.

For the past decade, the misleaders of the West Coast longshore and warehouse union have had to contend with a class-struggle opposition grouped around the Militant Caucus, led by Local 10 executive board member Stan Gow and politically supported by the Spartacist League. These militants raised hell about bomb parts bound for the blood-soaked Chilean dictatorship, insisting they be hot-cargoed when Herman only wanted an empty gesture

against Pinochet. The Militant Caucus fought to put teeth into the ILWU's paper ban on arms shipments to El Salvador, calling for a 24-hour port shutdown against the U.S. war drive in Central America. When this got wide support the Local 10 tops tried to run Stan Gow out of the union for picketing a ship bound for El Salvador. Thereupon he defiantly picketed the *Kimberley* in protest against the execution of three ANC fighters against apartheid. Hundreds of longshoremen, predominantly blacks, came out to vote down the witchhunt against Gow.

When ILWU tops felt the pressure building to "do something" on South Africa they knew they had a problem. So they looked to a couple of two-bit aspiring bureaucrats in Local 10, Leo Robinson and his sidekick Howard Keylor, to bail them out. Robinson is a long-time supporter of the reformist Communist Party (CP); Keylor is an ex-member of the Militant Caucus and the labor "star" of the External Tendency (ET), a clot of embittered white renegades from the Spartacist League and Trotskyist League of Canada. Every day this pair was down on the docks opposing any attempt to set up a union picket line, instead sending gangs in to work the *Kimberley* so that the ILWU misleaders could claim that refusal to work the cargo was simply an individual "act of conscience."

Howard the Coward Keels Over

So after the double-dealing comes the double-talk. Across the Bay in Berkeley, Howard Keylor struts around in his beret at a student anti-apartheid rally, puffing his pipe for the TV cameras and posing as the champion of workers action against the South African police state. In the pages of the *rad-lib Guardian* (19 December 1984), he and Robinson were ballyhooed as "leaders of the boycott," which Keylor hailed as "the longest boycott or political strike of its type in U.S. history." But back on the SF docks, Keylor sings a different tune, because in Local 10 there are a lot of guys who are royally pissed off at the way the boycott was organized. Namely, that in order to get Herman off the hook, the members were left hanging on the line.

In an election leaflet (dated January 7), after one paragraph praising the action, Keylor spends two whole pages talking about the "shortcomings in the boycott." These include, among other things, that the South African cargo was finally unloaded, the local lost the pay guarantee for two weeks, and the union is now under an injunction. How do you suppose that happened? To hear Keylor

tell it, you'd think he was some kind of left critic of the ILWU leadership over the boycott. Keylor complains that "our officers were telling the media that our action was unauthorized and individual." "So was he," replied a Militant Caucus leaflet (appropriately titled, "Hey Keylor, Where Were You?"):

"And furthermore, when the officers carried this treachery so far as to argue to the arbitrator that individual longshoremen should be penalized, not the union, Keylor, in his leaflet No. 11 on November 27, praised the arbitrator who 'ruled against the men' instead of ruling in favor of PMA's demand 'that the union be found guilty of an 'illegal work stoppage'..."

—"Longshore Militant,"
1 February

Keylor actively helped Robinson herd the men in to work the ship. As we reported (see "Battle Over Union Action at South Africa Ship," *WV* No. 368, 7 December 1984), after the first crew on Saturday, November 24, flatly refused to work the ship, Keylor and Robinson rushed down to the dock to explain that this was a "mistake." Men on the next shift didn't want to touch the *Kimberley* and asked Stan Gow and other Militant Caucus supporters to set up a picket line. Thereupon, according to the "Longshore Militant": "Robinson and Keylor flipped out, worked the guys over for half an hour and then Robinson personally led them across the picket line."

Ten days later, after the Local 10 E-Board ordered the members to work the cargo (in order to comply with a court injunction), then Keylor sets up a phony picket line of non-ILWU members. The "Longshore Militant" noted: "At the Executive Board the night before he had kept his big mouth shut when Local 10 President Larry Wing ruled out of order Stan Gow's motion to defy the injunction, stop the dispatching and shut down the port. So then after it was all over, Keylor tried a little ass-covering grandstanding and politely acceded when [CPer] Franklin Alexander emphatically said no."

In his leaflet, Keylor has some oh-so-polite criticisms of Robinson and his supporters who "honestly believe that Local 10 had no choice but to give in to the injunction," and who "have a commitment to individual acts of consciousness," etc. He wagged his finger at *People's World* for its reliance on the liberal Democrats. But you would never know from this that Keylor supported Robinson's amendment to work the ship at the October 18 Local 10 meeting, that he chaired meetings of Robinson's Southern African Liberation Support Committee (which was put in charge of the action by the officers), and worked

hand in glove with Robinson and the CP right up until the injunction.

Keylor saved his venom for Stan Gow, Peter Woolston and other Militant Caucus supporters, "fully backed by the Spartacist League," who supposedly did their level best to "divide, confuse and disrupt our action" and to "wreck it." Shades of Stalin. Where have we heard this kind of foam-flecked diatribe against "Trotskyite splitters and wreckers" before? Keylor's dozen years with the CP are showing. He complains that "Stan makes much of the difference between working the cargo



RATS ON THE WATERFRONT: Democrat Julianne Malveaux, Leo Robinson (right), Howard Keylor (second from right).

and working the ship," which he dismisses as "just a matter of tactics." But this is a long-standing fight in the ILWU: it was Jimmy Herman, backed by Robinson, who introduced the work-the-ship-but-not-the-cargo subterfuge, back in 1977. At that time, Keylor was a member of the Militant Caucus, which "fully backed by the SL" denounced Herman's attempt to undercut a boycott of the very same *Nedlloyd Kimberley*.

Deputy Labor Lieutenants Discipline the Workers

Keylor told the *Guardian* that his tactic required "a high degree of internal discipline, especially under legal pressures as exist." Yes, it's quite a trick to conduct a political work stoppage, particularly the "longest in U.S. history," without running afoul of the capitalist state. In fact, it can't be done. In the end, their whole charade about individual "acts of conscience" didn't fool the PMA, the arbitrators or the federal court. Robinson and Keylor did all this dirty work because the officers were afraid a union action would be ruled illegal under Taft-Hartley. To them "discipline" means riding herd on the membership, and not even mentioning the local's October 18 vote to boycott South African cargo, on the grounds that to do so jeopardizes the union. By trying to fool the class enemy with this cynical ploy, they managed to victimize the members and have the union hauled into court.

Ever since the days of Harry Bridges, ILWU officials have been past masters at the art of espousing progressive social causes—providing nice copy for *People's World* and San Francisco's popular front cocktail circuit—while knifing any real struggle that would get them in hot water with the bosses. And then there's the endless series of Bay Area "labor solidarity" committees—for farm workers, PATCO, Greyhound, Chile, El Salvador, South Africa, you name it. They'll call a consumer boycott of anything from Kruggerrands to Hills

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Unionists block street outside SF Greyhound depot, December 1983 (left); at SF airport in support of PATCO strike, August 1981.



WV Photos

Puerto Rico at the Crossroads

For American imperialism, Puerto Rico is a military strong point for controlling the strategic Caribbean region and a launching pad for U.S. aggression in Central America. For years Washington projected its island colony as a "showcase of democracy and development." Today, under the impact of economic depression and militarization, Puerto Rico has become a political powder keg. In the first part of this article ("Militarism and Repression in Puerto Rico," *WV* No. 373, 22 February), we noted that the Reagan administration has chosen to test its draconian "anti-terrorist" witchhunt laws against Puerto Rican independence groups. Last week a speech by FBI deputy director Revell to the National Press Club produced screaming headlines of "Puerto Rican Terrorists: Threat to U.S." But it is Yankee colonial rule which threatens the future of the Puerto Rican people.

A recent news special by New York's WCBS-TV on "Puerto Rico: Trouble in Paradise" (31 January-1 February) noted that, "While the mainland's American citizens slowly dug out of recession, 3.2 million in this visual island paradise still live day to day with economic hard times." It pointed to the collapse of petroleum-based industry, once the linchpin of Puerto Rico's development plans: "Industrial skeletons of Puerto Rico's troubled economy are as abandoned tinkertoys along the island's Caribbean coast. Petrochemical plants which once employed close to 40,000 people. That was 12 years ago, before the Arab oil embargo. Less than 3,000 jobs remain today." Construction has stopped, tourism is down, the number of hotel rooms half that a decade ago. The average income is less than half that of Mississippi, the poorest state, while 70 percent of all Puerto Ricans receive U.S. government aid. The *Wall Street Journal* (30 October



Militant UTIER electrical workers in vanguard of Puerto Rican workers' struggles.

sugar cane workers broke from the misleaders of the pro-U.S. AFL unions and nationalist sentiment spread. Today, once again, intelligent imperialist circles are worrying about their Puerto Rican "showcase." This concern led the Twentieth Century Fund to sponsor a recent study by British historian Raymond Carr (*Puerto Rico: A Colonial Experiment* [1984]), who warns that "grinding poverty and massive unemployment provide a breeding ground for radical politics and for anti-American feeling."

Puerto Rico's much touted "economic miracle" was the product of Operation Bootstrap, the Popular Democratic Party program to bring in American corporations beginning in 1950. Offering exemption from federal corporate income taxes, a ten-year mor-

Puerto Rican agriculture has been destroyed (73 percent of the island's food is imported from the U.S.) and the San Juan slums are filled with hundreds of thousands of poor who have no job and no hope of finding one. Puerto Rico has become Welfare Island USA.

The profit rates are still high (20 percent a year, four times the U.S. average), but this is increasingly due to the federal tax exemption (Section 936 of the Internal Revenue Code) which the Reagan administration is seeking to eliminate. And the superexploitation of Puerto Rican labor is declining as the minimum wage has risen to the mainland level (average factory pay today is \$4.50 an hour, whereas next door in the Dominican Republic wages average \$4.50 a day). Puerto Rico is not, as Carr and the statehooders claim, just another regional economy of the United States. While the island has been economically subordinated to the U.S., industrial production is dependent on superprofits, and when they disappear so will the plants. Already by the late 1960s, 40 percent of the plants established under Operation Bootstrap closed after their local tax exemptions expired. The "commonwealth model" of an "open" export-oriented economy has been exhausted.

This situation has made union organizing particularly difficult. Private industry unions have found it difficult to strike for higher wages, as the competition is not U.S. production but low-paid unskilled labor in Hong Kong, Taiwan or Singapore. Thus the strike struggles of the 1970s were mainly in the public sector—notably the combative electrical power workers (UTIER)—organized in autonomous Puerto Rican unions unaffiliated with the American AFL-CIO. During the mid-'70s *independentista* unionists adopted a policy of raiding the AFL-CIO unions and seeking to drive them off the island. Since the "international" unions are dominant among private sector workers, the heart of Puerto Rican industry, this was an extremely destructive policy. Meanwhile, repeated UTIER strikes have had to face the police and National Guard essentially alone. For communists, as opposed to nationalists, the question of which union affiliation is a tactical matter. What is crucial is to achieve fighting unity in action.

And joint struggle with American workers is vital in a number of sectors,

from postal and telephone workers to textiles and electronics. In fact, *only* by mobilizing the power of the mainland unions can workers of multinational corporations like Westinghouse (five plants on the island) be organized. Meanwhile, beginning after World War II and due to the failure of Operation Bootstrap industrialization to generate enough jobs, more than half a million Puerto Ricans migrated to the mainland. In the New York metropolitan area, Puerto Ricans fill many of the lowest-paid jobs. And living a welfare existence in bombed-out, run-down ghettos like the South Bronx, El Barrio (East Harlem), the Lower East Side (Loisaida) and Williamsburg, they form a large part of what Karl Marx called the "industrial reserve army" of the unemployed. Thus common struggle against the bipartisan anti-working-class austerity decreed by the Reagan administration is of crucial importance to Puerto Rican working people.

Crisis of Puerto Rican Left

While the island is experiencing the greatest economic crisis in 50 years, with the road to statehood seemingly blocked and the "commonwealth" solution at a dead end, it is remarkable that the Puerto Rican left has been utterly unable to seize the opportunity. In last November's elections, the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) of Rubén Berríos obtained one at-large seat each in the house and senate, but got only 3 percent of the vote for governor, barely 60,000 votes. This was a sharp decline since 1980 when the *pipiolos* received 87,000 votes. The Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) ran no candidates and implicitly supported the *populares* (PPD) with its campaign slogan, "the entire people against Romero," while former PSP leader Mari Bras publicly called for a PIP vote. The rest of the "patriotic left," from the "Macheteros" guerrilla group (PRTP) and the Puerto Rican Socialist Movement (MSP) to the New Left *Pensamiento Crítico* review, mostly advocated voting for Berríos' liberal nationalist party.

The deep crisis of the Puerto Rican left is a reflection of the bankruptcy of petty-bourgeois *nationalism*. Already facing economic depression, the Puerto Rican masses are hardly going to opt for a capitalist "independence" which promises the rapid flight of American corporations and guarantees an end to food stamps, Medicaid and welfare. They are not going to exchange run-down housing projects for shantytowns. The bulk of Puerto Rican workers have voted regularly for the *populares* ever since Luis Muñoz Marín formed the PPD in the 1930s as a liberal pro-"autonomy" party in alliance with FDR's Democrats in the mainland U.S. More recently the annexationists of the pro-statehood PNP have won the working-class districts of San Juan. Only a genuinely communist vanguard can break the hold of these bourgeois colonial parties, by fighting for proletarian revolution from the Caribbean to New York, for a future of plenty under socialism rather than for *pobreza con pachanga* ("poverty with soul").

The PIP is a small bourgeois-nationalist party and part of the social-democratic Second International. (In Europe, the SI is dominated by reformist workers parties such as the West German SPD, but its Latin American affiliates are mainly bourgeois populist parties, including the Dominican PRD,

continued on page 12



U.S. military's use of island of Vieques for bombing practice sparks protest in 1979, broken up by colonial police.

1984) quoted a Puerto Rican pro-independence leader's verdict: "We are a society permanently living on the dole. This has become a ghetto, like the South Bronx, not a nation."

One big Caribbean ghetto—that is Puerto Rico's present and its future under U.S. colonialism. Puerto Rico has few natural resources. Under the Spaniards it was the poorhouse of the Caribbean, and it remained so under the Americans during the first half of this century. U.S. secretary of state Elihu Root warned in 1899 that if Puerto Ricans were "left in huge and hopeless poverty they will be discontented, intractable and mutinous." During the 1930s depression this warning was confirmed: in a combative strike,

atorium on local taxes, ready-built factories and cheap labor, they attracted sweatshop industries, primarily textiles, to the island and produced an economic boom that lasted until the late 1960s. Puerto Rico became known as Profit Island USA. However, as wages rose the runaway shops from Manhattan ran away again, this time to the Far East. Puerto Rican economic planners tried to replace them with more capital intensive industries such as petrochemicals and pharmaceuticals, which paid higher wages but employed a fraction as many workers. But then the 700 percent increase in the cost of oil since 1973 cut the ground from under this development strategy as well. So now the south coast has been ecologically devastated,

Heroic Miners...

(continued from page 1)

of the National Union of Mineworkers voted narrowly to call off the strike. Hundreds of miners fervently lobbied to continue the strike. Even after the vote, Kent and Scottish areas of the NUM vowed to hold out while negotiating for amnesty. There is widespread comradely solidarity for the 700 sacked miners, effectively blacklisted, unable to move or obtain retraining, some facing jail sentences. But defeated and bloodied, *the miners union is not broken*. Assured of her coal stockpiles with the collaboration of her swinish labor lieutenants of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Thatcher cruelly stretched out the strike. She yearned to smash the NUM and watch the workers crawl back in disarray. But in this she failed. In numerous places this morning, the entire community came out—men,

women, children and dogs—as they proudly marched back to the pits, the sacked miners with them, bagpipes playing and banners flying. Even then many mines were picketed and workers stayed out.

The rabid bosses' press, from the Tory *Times* to the liberal *Guardian*, glorified committed anti-union scabs like Silver Birch. But especially at the very end many strikers were driven back in desperation by "Iron Lady" Thatcher. Despite this defeat, the miners must above all preserve their fighting capacity. They ought to go back cohesively, not split up. However understandable it is to want to continue the strike or to want to carry out individual reprisals, the immediate task must be to keep their army as intact as possible, to retreat in good order.

The Iron Lady, who vowed to be "vindictive in victory," is itching for new victimizations of militants. But all reports indicate that the miners are defiant in defeat. The existing sackings must be fought, intelligently and collectively, and new ones avoided as much as possible. The way must be prepared for

a new workers' offensive. Union martyrs like David Jones and Joe Green, cut down on the picket line, have not died in vain! Down with the despot Thatcher, unpopular even in her own circles for the cover-up of her cowardly butchery of the *Belgrano's* Argentine sailors in the squalid Falklands/Malvinas war.

Thatcher has taken aim at the entire trade-union movement. *Remember the traitors!* In the hands of the reformist misleaders of all stripes the unions were criminally misused to stab the NUM, to discipline the workers in the interests of the strikebreaking capitalist state. It is necessary to expose the base cowardice and treachery of the "lefts," who kowtowed to their big brothers in the TUC at every decisive point. The Labour Party politically scabberded and now its head Kinnock says he's against amnesty for strikers! Above all the lesson must be driven home of the burning importance of constructing a genuinely revolutionary party to mobilize the working masses in struggle. Without that the struggles of the workers, no matter how militant and courageous, are prey to the sabotage of

the reformist traitors. As the great communist revolutionist Leon Trotsky reiterated after the 1926 General Strike: "Without a party...the proletarian revolution cannot conquer."

The courageous miners' strike inspired unusual support internationally among all those fighting capitalist oppression. Food and financial support flooded in from all corners of the world, including black miners in South Africa fighting racist apartheid rule. Miners in France, dockers in Scandinavia fought to "hot-cargo" scab coal. In this country the Partisan Defense Committee initiated an Aid to Striking British Miners' Families fund drive among local unions that has collected over \$20,000 for the coal strikers, despite the treachery of the Cold War AFL-CIO tops. The bonds of international workers solidarity will triumph over the war drive of the bosses and their labor lieutenants.

Comrade Jon Brule of the *Workers Vanguard* editorial board spent ten months in Britain during the strike. We print below an edited version of a speech he gave at a New York City forum on February 26.

Twelve Bitter Months of Class War

I had the privilege of spending ten months in Britain during the miners' strike. It's a strike in which two miners have been murdered on picket lines, several other miners and members of their families have been killed, something like 10,000 strikers have been arrested, over 600 have been fired from their jobs. And a strike that has gone on now almost one full year, reflecting the grim determination of the miners to fight against great odds against Reagan's best ally, union-buster Margaret Thatcher.

The immediate thing that kicked the strike off was the announcement of the Thatcher government that they were going to close down 20,000 mining jobs, which was only the first drop in the bucket. What it means is not only busting the union, but wiping out whole mining areas in Britain, particularly in Scotland and Wales, in Yorkshire, in areas where the official unemployment rate is something like 18 to 20 percent, areas where if you walk through these villages you find men who are 20 or 21 years of age and have never worked a day in their lives. And because they leave schools roughly at the age of 15, it means that they've been completely out of work for their entire adult life.

I had the opportunity to look at the pay stubs of an older South Wales miner, who's a skilled craftsman in the mines, and his take-home every week was £65, which is roughly that number of dollars. Britain is a particular example of the advanced decay of capitalist society in which there is no possibility of even maintaining the substandard existence for the working masses in that country under capitalism. What is starkly posed in Britain is the alternative between a barbaric solution under capitalism and socialist revolution.

If you look at England, or Britain, it's essentially an island built on coal. It's the motor force of the economy in that country, and therefore the struggles of the miners have become time and time again the clarion call for the working masses as a whole. And the fate of the miners has frequently proven to be the fate of the British working masses. The alternatives in this struggle are either a massive defeat and further leveling of everyone's living standards, or else opening the road forward to the possibility of a workers government.

Among the miners there's a deep historic memory of some of these past battles, going back to the period of the 1920s and the miners' strike at that time

which led briefly to a general strike that was betrayed by the labor bureaucracy. One South Wales miner told me about what it was like after that defeat: about his grandfather who was killed in an industrial accident in the mines and never received any compensation. About his father, who lost his leg in a mining accident and received £50 compensation. About his uncle who was blacklisted after the 1926 General Strike and was never able to get work until World War II—for 14 years he was blacklisted from the mines.

And on the other side, the bourgeoisie also has a certain memory. There's a reason why the miners are Number One on Thatcher's hit list. They remember as well that it was the miners who in 1974 toppled the previous Tory government under Edward Heath. So there's a deep gulf and class bitterness on both sides of this strike.

Thatcher also has a particular hatred for the leader of the union, Arthur Scargill. Scargill was the only labor leader within the union movement in Britain to call Thatcher to order for her support for Reagan's anti-Soviet Cold War. When he came back somewhat over a year ago from a trip to Russia, he denounced "Ronald Ray-Gun" and the "Plutonium Blonde," Margaret Thatcher. And he denounced the CIA union in

Poland, Solidarność, as anti-socialist. That not only earned Scargill the hatred of Thatcher, but also of the pro-capitalist trade-union and Labour Party bureaucrats in Britain, who led a redbaiting attack on Scargill at a conference of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in September 1983. Not a single delegate rose to defend Scargill. It was at that point that Thatcher determined that Scargill was isolated and she could undertake an assault on the miners.

Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross

When the pit closures were announced, there was a walkout in the mining area of Yorkshire at a pit called Cortonwood, which was the first target. And from there they set up flying pickets, or roving pickets, that went out to the other mines and shut down the coal fields. The strike was not actually called by the union leadership. They were presented with an accomplished fact. At this point Thatcher and the ruling class set up a huge hue and cry about how there was no ballot taken by the miners. This was picked up also by such people as Neil Kinnock, the head of the Labour Party. But the miners didn't play by the bosses' rules. They voted... with their feet!

The bourgeoisie and its labor lieu-

tenants were miffed. They wanted a ballot all right, because they wanted to know where, when and how the strike was going to begin, so they could get their cops, their soldiers and everyone else there beforehand. Well, it didn't work. There were actually areas that voted to remain at work, and when they saw the pickets they came out on strike because they knew the union was determined. That's a fundamental lesson that we had better understand in the trade-union movement in this country—the power of class solidarity and the power of the picket line to mold this strike. And the capitalists have taken dead aim at the picket line: they have made it clear that if they win they will enforce Taft-Hartley type laws requiring secret ballots before any strike, outlawing secondary picketing and crippling the unions.

One of the more obscene things that Labour Party head Neil Kinnock and the labor bureaucrats have ranted about throughout the strike is the "violence" of the pickets toward scabs and cops. According to them, picketing is all right... as long as it's "peaceful." But what a picket line means is the right to have a conflict, the right to have a battle. We are for picket lines that nobody crosses! Now sometimes you'll find picket lines, like on the New York docks, where it's



Thatcher's uniformed thugs ran riot in the coal fields. Miners' picket line in North Yorkshire in September.

usually pretty peaceful. You see one guy there and nobody crosses that picket line. The reason why nobody crosses the picket line is because they know something unhealthy will happen to them if they do. But that kind of peaceful picket line has to be earned in the class struggle. Not by dismantling the class struggle, but by mobilizing the power of labor so that the bosses respect your picket lines and the scabs think twice. In this country we put out a very nice supplement, "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win," where we publicized a slogan that the coal miners in this country have—which is popular among the British miners now—that says: "Scabbing Is Dangerous To Your Health."

I want to convey the attitude that these miners have toward those who have scabbed on their strike. One story I heard was about a guy who had scabbed in 1926. And he still lived in the same mining village that he lived in at that time. When he died at the age of 85, nobody had spoken to him for 60 years, and nobody went to his funeral. In some of the marginal areas of the coal fields, where there was a fair amount of scabbing, you run into the situation of sharp divisions within a family itself. When I asked this guy what his family was doing, he said, "Well, I've got one brother who's on strike in the northeast and I've got another brother who's scabbing." Then he said, "Let me correct that—I have an ex-brother who's scabbing." So it's a real bitter blood line.

Program for Power

We sought to put forward a program that could lead to victory in this great battle. The problem confronting the miners is that you can't defeat the capitalist state alone. The Thatcher government has marshaled a massive amount of police power. You have 400 cops from Sunday to Sunday occupying a small mining village. If you're on strike they follow you to the store, they follow your kids to school, you can't go to a neighboring village a mile and a half away. If you try to ride a bus to that village, the police get on the bus and throw you off.

So it was abundantly clear that in order for Thatcher to be defeated, the key task was to mobilize other sections of the working class. From a trade-union standpoint, it would seem to be a relatively simple question. The British economy is fundamentally based on coal. If the steel workers, rail workers, longshoremen and power workers refused to handle coal, the country would quickly grind to a halt. And in Britain these kinds of actions are not all that strange to the trade-union movement. It is a union movement that is far less straitjacketed than the American trade-union movement has been within the past two or three decades.

The problem is that it is fundamentally a political question which is posed: once the country is shut down, who is going to start it up again? In short, which class is going to rule this country? Will it be the working class or will it be the capitalist class?

That fundamental question has been posed in any number of miners' strikes in Britain. In 1919 for example, there was an alliance between the miners, rail workers and transport workers called the Triple Alliance. The bourgeoisie was sweating it out, so they called in the three top union leaders. The prime minister Lloyd George told them he was at their mercy—they had the power to shut down the country. But he asked them what they would do next: "If a force arises in the state which is stronger than the state itself, then it must be ready to take on the functions of the state or withdraw." They had no answer to that. One of the trade-union leaders remarked that from that time on they knew they were beaten, because they were not prepared to exercise power. It's a little highlight on a statement that Marx made well over 100 years ago in

the *Communist Manifesto*, that every class struggle is a political struggle.

And despite the sabotage of the labor bureaucracy, the question of power was raised sharply by this strike. The courageous example of the miners' hard class struggle displaced the normal mechanisms of bourgeois society. This was palpably evident in terms of 1) key trade unions, 2) general social relationships between the oppressed layers of the country and the miners, and 3) the loss of self-confidence by the bourgeoisie itself. At least in the ranks of several strategic unions—dockers, rail workers, seamen—there was determination to bypass the established TUC to defend this strike. Had these unions gone on strike alongside the miners, it would be effectively a general strike. What was missing was a leadership willing to have an all-out confrontation with Thatcher.

When instructions were issued by the leadership of the rail union to its members not to carry coal during the strike, the ranks were steadfast, with the exception of two or three areas. These workers have braved considerable numbers of victimizations and in some instances firings in order to carry out this policy of solidarity. There's one area called Leicester, a heavily scab area where out of some 2,000 miners, there are only 30 on strike—they're nicknamed the "Dirty 30," I believe. But in the rail depot adjoining that mining area, called Coalville, for ten months the rail workers have refused to carry coal and have been sent home every day without pay. The leadership refused to back them up with nationwide strike action. And twice the dockers went out, fed up with the government using scab labor to unload imported scab coal into that country. In an island economy like Britain, if you stop what comes in and out of that country, you grind that country to a halt. It was only due to the cowardice of the leadership, which in both instances called off the strike, that the Thatcher government was not toppled.

Secondly, I want to talk about something that's even more startling in certain respects. In normal capitalist society there are numerous divisions promoted by the ruling class. In England there are racial divisions between the white population and the minority of blacks and Asians. And also national hatreds, particularly directed at the Irish in that country. Here you have a union that's predominantly white miners, and not only that, they come from the backwaters. Yet in the course of the strike, there was an amazing social radicalization of the miners. At the same time, those layers of the population which are generally those whose needs are least addressed by the trade-union bureaucracy have rallied most strongly to the cause of the miners.

For example, at demonstrations in Belfast initiated by the Irish Republican movement, there were actually—and this was not reported in the press—large contingents of striking British miners who marched with the Irish Catholics. Throughout these very poor, Catholic ghettos, hanging over the streets were large banners that said, "Victory to the Miners!" It was similar in Dublin where

large food and money collections have been taken up for the coal miners. And this is very unusual, that the Irish populace supports any struggle of the British proletariat.

You have to understand the impact of this stuff on the miners. You will hear many miners basically say the following thing: that until this strike I never knew what it was like to be an Irishman in Ulster, I never knew what it was to be like a black or an Asian, mistreated by

would shoot down. In the second instance it shot down by a record 30 points in one day. And just recently, Thatcher couldn't even get a vetted [screened] jury to hand down a conviction of a senior official in the defense ministry who had leaked documents about Thatcher's premeditated butchery of 300 Argentine sailors aboard the battleship *Belgrano*.

All of this has happened within a year or two after Thatcher was re-elected



Workers Hammer
Miners' wives demonstrate in London, 11 August 1984. Militant women were a mainstay of the strike.

the police. In London, the miners organized collections on the streets in order to finance food for their families. And there's quite a bit of competition among the different lodges to get down to Brixton first and to get a good street corner. Now, Brixton is the West Indian ghetto in London, and it's an area of the city which is far poorer than many other working-class areas of the city. But the miners go down there because proportionately the support they get from the blacks and the Asians is much greater. One miner told me a story, that on one occasion on his picket line the police attacked the strikers and arrested 54 miners. Fifty-two miners were charged with disturbing the peace. Two miners were charged with malicious wounding of a police officer. The two miners charged with assaulting a police officer were both black miners. The striking miners learned something from that.

Then there is the magnificent role played by the miners' wives who have in many ways become the real backbone of the strike. While at the beginning their activities were centered around the food kitchens, it wasn't very long until they pushed their way onto the picket line and took their place beside their class brothers and husbands in fighting against Thatcher's police. I've heard many a story where you've had demoralized miners who were considering returning to work, and it's the wife who has put some backbone into these guys.

You also have a loss of self-confidence in the ruling class itself which continues to this day. The pound has hit rock bottom. Even at the time I went over there in March last year, I think it was \$1.40 to one pound, whereas now it's something like \$1.10, and going down. Every time that there was a threatened mobilization of the working class, for example during the dock strike, or when the foremen's union in the mines threatened to go out on strike along with the miners, the stock market

with overwhelming majorities on the basis of the Falklands/Malvinas bloody little war. A wave of chauvinism swept over the British populace and her reactionary government was the beneficiary of that. The soldiers who came back from the Falklands had a big banner on the aircraft carrier. At the time there was a railroad strike in England, and the banner read, "Call off the rail strike or we'll call an air strike." But much of this anti-trade unionism and chauvinist prejudice that engulfed the working masses of Britain largely evaporated during the miners' strike.

There was a particular incident that illuminated this social realignment. In October the IRA set off a bomb in the Grand Hotel in Brighton where the Tories were holding their conference. The responses were quite interesting. The common joke in the mining areas and among other working-class areas was the IRA ought to be shot... because they missed Thatcher. A comrade in a car plant in Birmingham reported that somebody there made the observation that the police had better start rounding up their suspects now because there are 50 million of them.

This is a plant where ten years earlier, after a bomb blast attributed by the press to the IRA killed a number of people in a local pub, the Irish workers were physically driven out of the plant. The reaction this time was much, much different. Even among the bourgeoisie, where one could imagine them whipping up an anti-terrorist crusade, the response was more outrage at the lousy security preparations and the police incompetence.

Cold War Split in the Workers Movement

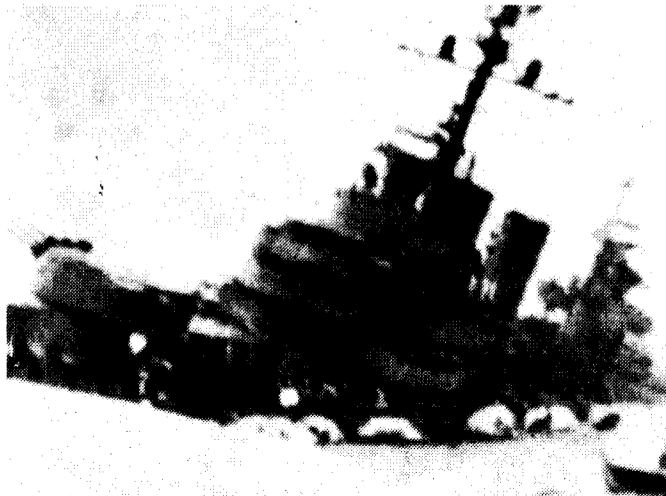
So when we talk about a program of power and of mobilizing the workers movement to bring this government down in struggle, that makes sense. Because significant sections both of the trade unions and the oppressed populace are thirsting for a fight. The problem here is the leadership within the workers movement. And in Britain the official leadership of the labor movement, like the AFL-CIO in this country, is dead-set against class struggle of any kind, let alone a class struggle that would actually drive out the Thatcher government.

At the same TUC conference where Scargill was rebaited for having told the truth about Solidarność, the TUC adopted a policy called "new realism." It was like the AFL-CIO which just issued a self-criticism saying they'd been too hard on the bosses! Thatcher took this as an invitation to go out and bust unions. One significant thing that

continued on page 10



Press Association



Der Spiegel

Vindictive butcher Maggie Thatcher gratuitously murdered 368 Argentine sailors aboard cruiser *Belgrano*.

Heroic Miners...

(continued from page 9)

happened was at this spy operation at a place called Cheltenham in England. It turned out that the unionized clerks there were known to take union action on occasion. One of the times they walked off the job was during the KAL 007 provocation that Reagan initiated. That strike was fine with us—but not with the CIA and Thatcher. Under Reagan's orders, Thatcher declared that henceforth there would be no unions at Cheltenham, and the TUC basically sat on its ass and did nothing. This was only, I think, a month before the miners' strike began and it was a premonition of what was going to come. The TUC's been in Thatcher's camp, and has been rewarded for services rendered. In the midst of the strike, the former head of the TUC, Len Murray, and the head of the power workers union, Frank Chapple, a vicious right-winger, were both elevated to peers of the realm. They don't have a lot of money there. Whereas here you can buy off union leaders by giving them big salaries, in England, because it's a very poor country, you make them into lords.

This is a very, very political strike where the trade unions have lined up, not simply on union positions, but on the basis of their attitude to the Soviet Union. Those people in the British trade-union movement who most hate the strike and instruct their members to cross picket lines are those that most rebaited Scargill and hate Russia. You can't defend the unions unless you defend the Soviet Union. Despite the political degeneration in the Soviet Union under Stalinism, we defend the revolutionary gains that were made in October of 1917: the booting out of the landlords and the capitalists, and the establishment of a planned economy. And we seek to extend this to the capitalist countries. Conversely, the social democrats and labor traitors hate with a passion this idea of social revolution and don't want to see it happen at home. So when you raise the question of power, you also raise the question of, politically, where does an organization within the working-class

movement stand in terms of its duty to defend the Soviet Union against imperialism?

On this question there's not only a division within the workers movement in Britain, but internationally. In particular, the bitterly anti-communist trade-union movements in the United States and Germany have done nothing to assist the miners. In Germany when collections were taken up for the miners, they were actually sent to the Steelworkers union in Britain, which is scabbing on the miners' strike. The AFL-CIO doesn't even make a pretense. When I came back I called up the AFL-CIO, and just for the record asked what they were doing about this strike. They put me on hold and about two minutes later a woman got back on the line and said: nothing, we haven't given any money. That's fairly well known among active strikers in Britain, so there's a real appreciation there for the solidarity campaign initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee. And let's not forget Lech Walesa & Co. During the PATCO strike, this CIA company union was the only so-called union in the world that refused to defend the air traffic controllers, because they wanted to be buddy-buddy with Reagan. Same thing this time around. Lech Walesa issued statements saying that Thatcher is a wise and brave woman, and welcomed a delegation of scab miners from Britain.

At the same time, one of the nice things about the strike is that there are actually some sections of the proletariat internationally where defense of the Soviet Union and hatred of imperialism is a *virtue*. In France, where a good section of the proletariat is pro-Soviet, the large CGT union, tied to the Communist Party, has organized an extensive campaign of fundraising and food shipments. French miners had dumped a series of truckloads of coal that were destined for Britain. And this flew right in the face of the usual protectionist practices of not only the conservative AFL-CIO bureaucrats but also the French Stalinists and British "lefts." They have a program that the way to save your own job is by keeping out imports from foreign countries—that is, blaming foreign workers for the absence of jobs. This was an instance where French workers destroyed their own coal shipments in order to side with

their British class brothers. It reflected an understanding that if the British miners could win a major battle against a government that wants to smash their union and eliminate their jobs—the same problems faced by workers not only in Britain but in France, the United States, and throughout the capitalist world—then the struggles could much more easily be fought at home.



Miners' rally in South Wales on November 13: the hangman's noose is for TUC secretary Norman Willis.

And there was the £1,000,000 donation collected by Soviet trade unions for the British miners. That drove the anti-Soviet left in Britain nuts: they couldn't handle it, so they refused to mention it. It is well known among the Russian miners and the Ukrainian miners that Scargill stuck his neck out to defend the Soviet Union against Reagan and Thatcher. And they appreciate it. And when the Soviets sent this aid, they said we remember what the British working class did for us after the civil war when the imperialists tried to invade our country. We remember that the British workers went out on strike and the dockers refused to load munitions for our enemies.

Now, one of the great crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy has been to gut that sense of internationalism. A typical example is the conduct of the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy under Jaruzelski which has scabbed on the British miners by sending massive shiploads of coal to Britain. But in Russia this time it was somewhat different: the miners' strike demonstrates in embryo how militant class struggle in the West linked to defense of the Soviet Union can crack the nationalist stranglehold of the Stalinist bureaucracies on the working masses. What is necessary to carry this perspective through consistently is the building of Trotskyist parties internationally.

Strike with the Miners!

That was the political context of the strike: on the one hand a considerable section of the British working people that are eager to fight. On the other hand, a Cold War division within the trade-union leadership—the right wing is openly scabbing, and the left wing is talking solidarity, but when anything decisive happens, they retreat in disorder. What kind of program do you put forward in such a situation in order to give the most conscious militants in the workers' movement a program to fight around?

We knew there's no point in approaching the TUC. If you want to shut down the country, to call on these guys to do it is the kiss of death. The left groups who shared the TUC's anti-Sovietism felt perfectly at home appealing to their social-democratic brothers for action. They were miles to the right of the miners themselves. I remember when the new head of the TUC, Willis, was invited to speak at a miners' rally in South Wales last fall. One of the strikers climbed a 50-foot pole and dropped a noose about two inches from this guy's head. It was an unambiguous message.

So instead we singled out a number of strategic unions that claimed to back the miners—the seamen's union, the Transport and General Workers (which includes the dockers and the truck drivers), the rail unions—to break with the TUC scab policy and go out on strike together with the miners around a program of demands that could unite the working class in struggle: no layoffs, a 10-percent wage hike with full cost-of-living protection, an end to Thatcher's policies of privatizing—or selling the nationalized industries back to the private sector. We demanded no victimizations of anybody by the government and the bosses. It was a fighting program that addressed itself to those sections of the class that were prepared to struggle, it put the left union leaders on the spot, and would effectively mean a general strike.

We raised some other demands that are equally crucial. One is that we wanted to incorporate the most militant pro-miner elements among even those who are not represented formally by the trade unions. We wanted the women's committees in the coal fields to have representatives on the strike committees, and delegates from the unemployed and minorities who have been the most militant supporters of the miners' strike. We said bring the women in and kick the scabs out of the union, who still to this day have not been expelled from the NUM.

Now, we are a fairly small organization in Britain. But when we talked about class solidarity, unlike countless left groups waiting on the TUC or crossing picket lines, we meant business. We had a supporter in a Rovers car plant in Birmingham. Now, they had been running a real dirty operation there. Basically, they'd been sneaking in large quantities of scab coal. The union leadership, Communist Party members, were pretending to back the strike and giving money to the miners, but they were collaborating with this scab operation. So we found out about it and our supporter, Patrick, initiated a campaign against this scab coal.

At one particular miners' support demonstration that Scargill addressed in Birmingham, Patrick had a sign that said, "No Scab Coal in British Leylands!" The miners there remarked on this sign—they were shocked and furious at the scabbing. Then afterwards, one of the trade-union leaders, the equivalent of a Teamsters leader here, came up and said, "You know, I've been reading the Spartacist paper, and we're going to do something about this scab coal." An article appeared for the first time in the bourgeois press on this scab operation. And miners and lorry drivers actually organized a small picket line outside the plant. It wasn't enough—it didn't shut out the scab operation. But it polarized the local trade-union movement.

Unfortunately Patrick, like many other militants who have fought to defend the miners, was victimized. He was fired for putting out a statement that when the car workers' pay claim came up they ought to go out on strike alongside the miners. The striking miners themselves organized a contingent from at least two lodges in the surrounding area to demonstrate at the plant gates in defense of this man who had stood up for them. That showed the potential for establishing unity in struggle among diverse sections of the British masses, if you have principle and determination.

For a Revolutionary Trotskyist Party!

This points to the need for a revolutionary political party of the working class. But what the British working class has got is the Labour Party, which we characterize, in the words of comrade Lenin, as a "bourgeois workers party." While organizationally based on the unions, its policies in practice are to administer the rotten capitalist system. The last Labour Party

International Women's Day

Women and Revolution

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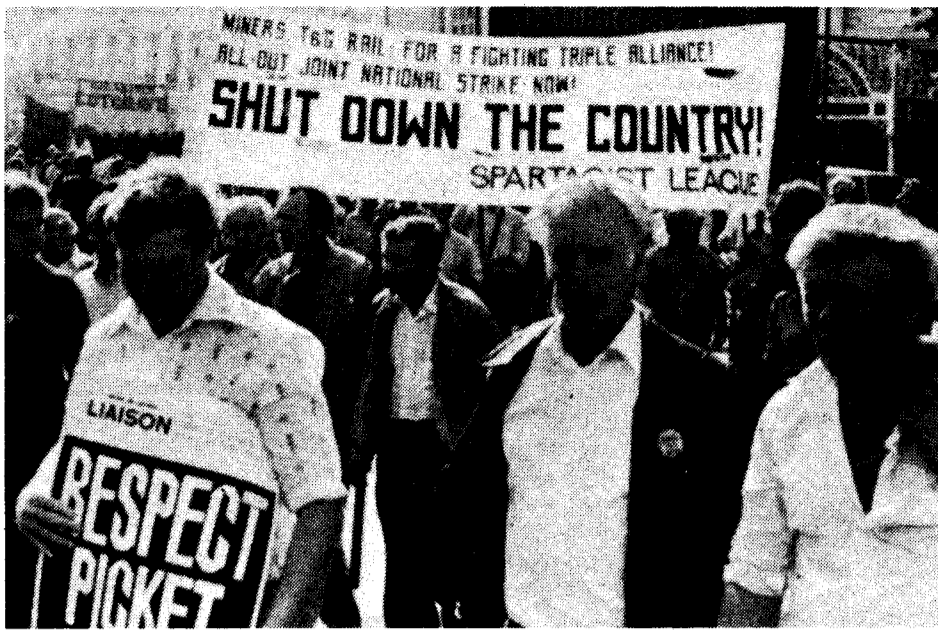
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government closed more mines than Thatcher and the Tories. They called out the troops against striking firemen. They sent the army into Ireland. You name it—they're stewards of the British ruling class.

On the road to the British socialist revolution the Labour Party must be split, its working-class base split from the pro-capitalist tops and regrouped in a revolutionary Trotskyist party. For almost the entire British left, however, the Labour Party is sacrosanct. The Labour Party can be reformed, they claim, into an instrument to achieve socialism through nice, polite discussion and debate, while maintaining it as a party that encompasses every element of the class. This Kautskyan conception of the "party of the whole class" has proven utterly bankrupt during this strike.

"Judas" Kinnock, as the miners call him, is widely reviled throughout the coal fields. Middle-aged strike leaders were resigning their long-time memberships because their local Labour Party branches were run by scabs. Kinnock's own branch in South Wales passed a motion endorsing his expulsion. At a time when class struggle was threatening to blow the Labour Party apart, the Labour "lefts" and their apologists were closing ranks behind Kinnock. The group that publishes *Socialist Action*, which is loosely affiliated with the SWP here, wrote an anguished editorial denouncing the very idea of expulsion as treason.

Well, we'd like to see the CIA-loving



Spartacist League/Britain demanded "Shut Down the Country!" at time of second dock strike last September. Workers Hammer

right-wingers driven out of the Labour Party. Not because we trust the "lefts," but because we want to make these pseudo-socialists responsible for their treacherous policies before their working-class base. But what these guys want to do is hide behind the coattails of Kinnock & Co. This was graphically demonstrated at the Labour Party conference in October, where there was a partial revolt against Kinnock and his bootlicking. They voted down Kinnock's motion to condemn the violence of the pickets as well as the violence of

the cops. They voted to authorize local councils to defy Thatcher's spending limits. Yet nothing came of it. No one wanted to take up Kinnock's challenge which he laid out in his address: if you want to change the government, you do it through the ballot box and Parliament and not by picketing and defying the law. Prominent "lefts" like Tony Benn and Scargill himself did nothing. Even a feeble call for a one-day strike was rejected. Kinnock was unanimously re-elected as head of the Labour Party. Later Benn explicitly justified this by

claiming that "unity" is necessary and you can't criticize even Neil Kinnock at a time like this.

Even those like Scargill, despite their militancy and gut desire to win, are chained to reformism and Labourism, which means ultimately subordinating themselves to the class traitors. By refusing to break openly and sharply with the Labour/TUC misleaders, particularly the "lefts," the NUM leaders have greatly weakened the strike. Futile back room negotiations with Kinnock and the TUC scabherders have taken the place of the necessary appeals to the key transport and rail unions for joint strike action. To this phony scab unity with the class traitors we counterpose unity in action on the picket line.

The Labour Party with its millions of members is impotent to defeat Thatcher. It's impotent because the trade-union fakers and Neil Kinnocks who run it don't want to fight capitalism. We seek to forge a different kind of party—a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party which will serve as the general staff of the working class. Such a party has no room for this fifth column of scabherders, racists, pro-imperialists and their left apologists. We seek to forge a party that would embrace the tens of thousands of militants who have been struggling today with all their power to see the miners victorious—a party that consciously will lead the working masses to crush capitalism for good through the road of the class struggle. ■

PDC Miners' Fund Tops \$20,000

MARCH 6—The fund drive initiated in November by the Partisan Defense Committee to appeal to American unionists on behalf of the British miners has now raised over \$20,000. The PDC's Aid to Striking British Miners' Families fund campaign was warmly received February 16 at UAW Local 719 in La Grange, Illinois near Chicago. There, workers at the huge General Motors ElectroMotive Diesel plant donated \$148.26 after a PDC spokesman, recently returned from Britain, gave an eyewitness account of the hard-fought strike. A UAW International representative had intervened to squash a donation from the local treasury, but one worker rose to demand that a collection be immediately taken up: "Don't you watch television and see what Thatcher is doing to those miners?" The PDC speaker had emphasized that "Iron Lady" Thatcher was bent on giving the embattled miners the union-busting "PATCO treatment" that Reagan & Co. aim to use against labor

struggle here in the U.S.

In addition to raising money through its own campaign for the miners, the PDC, in keeping with its announced policy of assisting others involved in parallel fundraising efforts, has also helped secure donations for the NUM's Miners' Solidarity Fund or for particular collieries. PDC representatives have assisted striking miners from Nottinghamshire touring Detroit. At UAW Local 303 outside Toronto, almost \$1,000 has been raised for a Northumberland mine after the PDC assisted a visiting miner in appealing to the local. And a miner from the NUM Armthorpe Branch in Doncaster (Yorkshire) spent four weeks in Toronto and spoke before the Metro Labor Council and at a Steelworkers meeting, after contacting the PDC. An unexpected dividend from the Doncaster striker's trip came when he forced the fake-leftist Revolutionary Workers League to back down from their three-year policy of cowardly anti-Spartacist exclusionism at a meeting

Pasadena Letter Carriers local supported appeal for British miners.



ANTHONY TRIPOLINO BRANCH, No. 2200
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS
P.O. BOX 400
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91106

26 February, 1985.

Dear Friends:

Congratulations to the Partisan Defense Committee from Branch 2200, on your support of the British mine workers in their year long strike.

Members of the Partisan Defense Committee approached our local on this occasion for financial support for British mine workers and their families. We have responded with a donation for this most urgent cause.

The Partisan Defense Committee supported and endorsed the Phone Strikers Defense Committee, whose Blues benefit this Local also supported.

The PDC's approach and follow-up was done in the most ethical manner and we were always given proof of how our funds were used. Victory to the British Miner's strike!

Donald A. Smith
Executive Board member

Leroy Collier
President

where he was speaking.

The PDC drive has had to combat opposition from right-wing exec board members who, taking their cue from the do-nothing line of the AFL-CIO, have tried to derail the PDC's efforts to enlist American unions on the side of the miners. Among the union locals that have asked the PDC not to publicize their contributions are postal workers and other government employees, uneasily aware of the redbaiting emanating from such union "leaders" as the CWA and American Postal Workers Union tops. Sometimes the obstruction has come from ostensible "leftist" spokesmen. For example, the PDC made an appeal at AFSCME Local 444, representing Bay Area waterworks employees, on February 14. After local members raised over \$80 by passing the hat and voted to send another \$100 from the treasury, a supporter of the British "Militant" group opposed sending the money through the PDC's fund. This sectarian ploy was spiked when the local voted to split the donation, sending half through the PDC fund, half via the "Militant" backer. A local member rose to challenge the latter: would he be able to give the members as good an accounting of how this money reached

the miners as the PDC has scrupulously done for every penny?

Over the past month, the Aid to Striking British Miners' Families fund has collected over \$5,000. Chicago transit workers (ATU Local 241) contributed \$300; Carpenters Local 67 in Dorchester, Massachusetts, \$500; and Los Angeles freight drivers (IBT Local 208), \$250. In Northern California, locals contributing included public employees (SEIU Local 18), butchers (UFCW Local 120) and Teamsters Local 70. Donations were also received from CWA Public Employees Local 4512 in Cleveland and AFSCME Local 171 representing University of Wisconsin employees.

Funds were also raised by passing the hat at union meetings: \$136.05 from UAW Local 148 in Lakewood, California; \$114.75 from Typographers Union Local 21 in SF. Smaller sums were raised from collections in numerous other locals including Molders Union Local 164 in Oakland, UAW Local 600 M&C Unit in Detroit, as well as SF longshoremen, machinists from IAM Lodge 68 in Daly City, California, Chicago steel workers and Boston area restaurant workers. ■

Aid to Striking British Miners' Families

Accounting of Receipts Nos. 1-220

Contributors receive numbered receipts, and the financial records of the fund drive are open to inspection by any bona fide workers organization.

Collected in Last Two Weeks:

Trade Union Donations	\$1,228.00
Union Membership Collections	167.16
Individual Donations	1,784.11
Total	3,179.27
Total Previously Reported	\$16,905.63
Total Collected (as of 6 March 1985)	\$20,084.90
Amount Sent to Miners' Solidarity Fund	16,915.63
(as of 6 March 1985)	} \$20,084.90
Amount on Deposit (as of 6 March 1985)	

Mail to: Partisan Defense Committee, Box 99, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013. Make checks payable to: Aid to Striking British Miners' Families.

Puerto Rico...

(continued from page 7)

Chilean Radicals, Acción Democrática in Venezuela, Manley's PNP in Jamaica and Guillermo Ungo's tiny MNR in El Salvador.) The PIP hates anything that smells of revolution, proposing to negotiate independence by guaranteeing the property of American investors, paying the private and public debt and creating a neocolonial bourgeoisie through government subsidies and tariff protection. This utopian program for negotiated independence is about as real as Ungo's call for a "negotiated solution" to the raging Salvadoran civil war. And if the PIP ever could carry out its program, it would mean replacing Reagan's starvation cutbacks with IMF-dictated starvation austerity, as the PRD is imposing on the Dominican masses next door. The liberation of Puerto Rico from colonial rule will only come through a revolutionary victory against Yankee imperialism.

During the 1970s the major organization of the Puerto Rican left was the social-democratic nationalist PSP. Originating as the petty-bourgeois student-based Movimiento Pro-Independencia of the '60s, the PSP never managed to gain mass working-class support. Liberal academic Raymond Carr notes that "While the PIP served as the party of the liberal bourgeoisie, the PSP became the home of the radical petty bourgeoisie." With its strategy of endless marches to the United Nations to testify before the UN Committee on Decolonization, the PSP achieved exactly nothing. Even in 1982, despite the fictitious "Latin American unity" in response to the reactionary Falklands/Malvinas war, they couldn't get a majority of the bourgeois governments of the continent—the nephews of Uncle Sam—to support Puerto Rican independence. So desperate are they that in 1978 the PSP sponsored a joint resolution with the PPD endorsing "free association" (i.e., commonwealth status) as a form of decolonization.

In recent years the PSP has mainly chased after larger forces, begging Berríos to recognize its presence or alternatively seeking alliances with "autonomist" sectors of the *populares* such as House of Representatives president Severo Colberg. Following the '84 elections this has led to an implosion in the PSP, as Secretary General Carlos Gallisá (formerly of the PIP) denounces Berríos' "sectarianism" and calls for "unity of all *independentistas*"...except the PIP! Meanwhile, his predecessor Mari Bras appeals for a movement of "national affirmation" (earlier he called it the "anti-annexationist front," i.e., a bloc with the PPD *autonomistas* against the PNP statehooders) that would be neither communist nor anti-communist, neither electoralist nor anti-electoralist, neither for nor against armed struggle! Simply to call for such a neither-fish-nor-fowl "movement" is to admit the collapse of the PSP's political perspectives.

The armed groups of the Puerto Rican independence movement, notably the Boricua Popular Army ("Macheteros") and the FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation), have not been able to shake the Yankee colossus with their actions. Their often desperate blows have included senseless and criminal acts of indiscriminate terrorism, such as the FALN's 1975 bombing of the Fraunces Tavern restaurant in New York which killed five and injured 44 diners and passers-by. The FALN, whose specialty is symbolic bombings of banks and corporation headquarters in the U.S., has been the target of heavy police repression and infiltration, with numerous supporters and mere sympathizers jailed by U.S. grand juries. In June 1983, flak-jacketed police raided the Pedro Albizu Campos school in Chicago, arresting four pro-

independence activists on charges of "seditious conspiracy to gain Puerto Rican independence." Currently their defense efforts are concentrated on preventing the extradition of alleged FALN leader William Morales from Mexico.

The Macheteros, on the other hand, have scored some spectacular coups. Most notable was their 1981 attack on the Muñiz air base of the Puerto Rican National Guard, in which they blew up nine planes (most of the fleet) and caused \$45 million worth of damage. Recently they grabbed headlines by distributing truckloads of free gifts to Puerto Rican children in Hartford and on the island on January 6 (the day of the three kings, the traditional Hispanic equivalent of Christmas), paid for with loot appropriated from a multimillion-dollar Wells Fargo armored car heist. The Macheteros have also had vicarious support from leftist *independentistas* in Puerto Rico. When Juan Antonio Corretjer, poet and long-time leader of the Liga Socialista (LSP), died recently, his coffin was covered with the Macheteros' flag.

While they may have won sympathy with their dramatic gestures, these nationalist guerrillas offer no way forward for the Puerto Rican working class. In fact the program of the PRTP (Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Party, the Macheteros' political arm), printed in *Pensamiento Crítico*, March/April 1984, includes only a few lines about industry, while going on at length about developing agriculture. This back-to-the-farm mystique (the party's symbol is the peasant machete) may appeal to nationalist intellectuals who like to mythologize the sturdy Puerto Rican *jibaro* peasant, but a life of subsistence farming is no answer to the misery of the masses. They call for protecting domestic agricultural pro-



Puerto Rican National Guard suppressed the 1950 independentista rising in Jayuya, above.

ducers (like the sugar cane plantations owned by the Bacardi rum empire) and lament the oppression of the native bourgeoisie, such as the Ferré family, prominent in construction, banking and pro-statehood politics!

For a Soviet Federation of the Caribbean!

The nationalists, including the "*independentista socialista*" variety, only offer a future of poverty and continued imperialist domination. The Puerto Rican masses' lack of enthusiasm for this prospect is certainly understandable. Recently groupings have begun to appear such as a "Socialist Collective of San Juan" which not only reject nationalism but even the fundamental demand for national independence (*Pensamiento Crítico*, October-December 1983). Their answer, harking back to the old pro-U.S. Socialist Party of the 1920s and '30s, is laborite reformism. More importantly, the present dead end of Puerto Rican nationalism can be seen in the writings of the Taller de Formación Política (Political Education Workshop), a heterogeneous academic collective with a vaguely Trotskyoid orientation. In a

book on the nationalist movement in Puerto Rico during the 1930s (*La cuestión nacional* [1982]), the Taller pointedly "does not talk of statehood or independence...but of recognition of the right of nations to self-determination."

For Leninists, the right to self-determination for colonies *can only mean* independence. Any other interpretation means conciliating imperialism and pro-imperialist false consciousness among the masses. V.I. Lenin wrote in "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1916) that socialists must

"...demand the unconditional and immediate liberation of the colonies without compensation—and this demand in its political expression signifies nothing else than the recognition of the right to self-determination."

And that is what the Spartacist League demands: unconditional and immediate independence of Puerto Rico to remove the yoke of colonialism. (Unlike the Stalinists, who during the World War II "grand anti-fascist alliance" supported the pro-"autonomy" *populares*, the Trotskyists never wavered in their support for independence.) Put another way, while *at present* the Puerto Rican masses do not favor separation from U.S. rule, communists are for independence, like it or not.

Puerto Rico is indeed a separate geographical, cultural, linguistic and economic entity from the United States (it even has its own Olympic team). This contrasts sharply to Hawaii which was progressively integrated as a territory and then a state through a substantial implantation of the U.S. bourgeoisie in the islands. Only by removing the colonial tie will it be possible to move beyond the perennial question of Puerto Rico's "status" and advance in the *class* struggle. Meanwhile, so long as the

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Puerto Rican nationalists who shot up U.S. House of Representatives in 1954, below from left: Irving Flores, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Lolita Lebrón, Andrés Figueroa Cordero.



Wide World

island is kept in bondage, since Puerto Ricans are taxed by the U.S. (only *American corporations* get federal income tax exemption) and sent off to die in U.S. imperialism's wars, they should have the right to vote on everything from president to Congress. Not that it would alter Puerto Rico's status as a colony one whit, but Washington's refusal to grant Puerto Ricans full rights of U.S. citizens exposes the fraud of statehood.

Marxists are for Puerto Rican independence, but against nationalism. For we seek the unity of Puerto Rican and American workers in common struggle against Yankee imperialism. Not only do Puerto Rican workers work in branch plants of American corporations, providing an immediate link to the class struggle in the U.S., but there are almost two million Puerto Ricans on the mainland, concentrated in New York City. Unlike the nationalist PSP, we do not see *neoricans* as part of a "divided Puerto Rican nation." They are immigrants, who will either assimilate (as many of the English-speaking younger generation are doing) or eventually return to the island.

The Taller de Formación Política claims that petty-bourgeois nationalists,

not an isolated bureaucratically deformed workers state, subjected to decades of imperialist encirclement and harassment, but a *soviet federation of the Caribbean* as part of a socialist united states of Latin America.

Puerto Rico is the principal colony of the principal imperialist power in the world today. Thus its liberation can only be the product of the closest unity in struggle of the working class, both in the colony and the metropolis. Nationalism in Puerto Rico has been, and can only be, a legacy of heroic gestures and hopeless acts of desperation, from the 1937 Ponce massacre to the 1950 revolt of Jayuya and the attacks on Truman and the House of Representatives. This "struggle" will produce endless martyrs and keep the federal prison at Alderson, West Virginia filled with courageous patriots. But it will not contribute one iota to the emancipation of the Puerto Rican people. Puerto Rico will be free only as a result of revolutionary victories that overthrow all the ruling classes of America. And if today imperialism uses Puerto Rican soldiers as its mercenaries, tomorrow class-conscious Puerto Rican workers can play a vanguard role in socialist revolution throughout the continent. ■

Racist Cleveland Cops Sue Their Victims

CLEVELAND—The police here have committed another racist criminal outrage, and this one's downright grotesque. It wasn't enough that they let cop Joseph Paskvan walk after he wantonly murdered an unarmed black motorist, Michael Woods, two and a half years ago. Now this notorious racist killer-in-blue has the audacity to file suit against his victim's father, Lucius Woods, for...defamation of character!

Michael Woods, 24, had driven downtown to buy a birthday cake for his one-year-old son on 23 July 1982. But he never returned home, for he was murdered by off-duty cop Paskvan who fired his personal 9mm pistol into Woods as both were driving away from a traffic light. Paskvan, whose whole career as a cop has been a string of racist atrocities and who boasts of killing dozens of Vietnamese, blew Woods away because of a supposed traffic argument.

This racist murder was followed by a propaganda barrage unleashed by the cop "union," whose newsletter praised "Officer Joe 'the Orkin Man' Paskvan" for exterminating "one of society's maggots." The subsequent cover-up of the murder by a select committee appointed by Mayor George Voinovich led Lucius Woods to launch a campaign to rescue his slain son's reputation and expose the whitewash. He filed a \$10 million civil suit against the city in U.S. District Court.

On 9 February 1984, Lucius Woods appeared on a local TV talk show, "Morning Exchange," where he forthrightly accused Paskvan of being "judge, jury and executioner" of his many victims. Now, over a year later, the cop has filed a \$150,000 suit against Woods, claiming his talk show remarks were "defamatory."

The continuing agony and victimization of the Woods family speaks volumes about this horrendous racist society. First Michael Woods is murdered in cold blood. His character is maliciously impugned, and when his father expresses outrage, he is sued by the murderer! Lucius Woods has courageously stood up against the cops and the racist courts, and also rejected scurrilous redbaiting attacks leveled against demonstrations in support of his slain son.

The new moves against Lucius Woods come in the midst of an aggressive display of cop power. Police here have recently been issued official .38 special flatnosed bullets because of their greater "stopping power." In return for this, the cops were supposed to acquiesce to an empty "review board" to be appointed by Voinovich—the same mayor who appointed the cover-up committee in the Woods case and personally squelched extension of a police investigation in a subsequent racist cop murder.

A ballot issue was passed in the November elections with the black

Protesters in Cleveland demand "Vengeance for Michael Woods!" at one-year memorial of his death.



East Side and the Near West Side with its Latin concentration voting for the mayor's review board scheme. But the cops bristled at even the pretense of civilian control, and two police "unions" successfully overturned the vote in a reactionary court suit. Now in addition to the case against Woods, we learn that David Sumskis, the racist cop who killed Gregory Williams on the Near West Side last year, is considering court action against the black Cleveland weekly, the *Call and Post*, for denouncing his heinous crime.

Killer cops suing their victims is becoming a national phenomenon. The *New York Times* (20 February)

reports that for the past two years the city of New York has been conducting an aggressive policy of slapping citizens who file police brutality cases with stiff countersuits. In Reagan's America, mad dog killer cops are claiming the right to commit racist murder with impunity. Spartacist League posters at a memorial for Woods outside the Justice Center in July 1983 demanded, "Vengeance for Michael Woods!" and "Jail the Killer Cops! For the Right of Black Armed Self-Defense!" The answer, we say again, is "Smash Reagan Racism—Build a Workers Party!" and "Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!"

Edward Cooperman...

(continued from page 4)

Gun Down Vietnamese Patriots in San Francisco." *WV* No. 357, 22 June 1984). The couple were close friends of Cooperman. Responsibility was again claimed by the Viet fascists. Case remains unsolved.

And the death threats continue. Ominously, "investigator" Cassidy hung out in the courtroom hallways during the trial taking pictures of Cooperman supporters. Tony Russo, chairman of the Committee for Justice for Edward Cooperman and a spokesman for the U.S./Vietnam Friendship Association, has been singled out as a target in the 17 October 1984 issue of *Tay Phai* (The Rightist), an organ of the Vietnamese gusanos. "Who Is Tony Russo?" runs the subtitle, next to his photo; only the crosshairs of an assassin's gunsights are left to the imagination.

During his lifetime, Cooperman was subjected to continual government harassment for his activities on Vietnam's behalf. Since his death, they have tried to cripple the work of his U.S. Foundation for Scientific Cooperation with Vietnam. When the police first arrived on the murder scene, they seized all of Cooperman's files (without a search warrant) and removed them, including all the records of the Founda-

tion. The records were later returned sealed, and police have refused to allow Cooperman's family and Foundation officials access to them. But attorney May got copies of everything, as did at least three U.S. government agencies (*Herald-Examiner*, 14 January).

For the Socialist Reconstruction of Vietnam

The Foundation, established by Dr. Cooperman in 1977, collected books, medical supplies and equipment to aid in rebuilding Vietnam, and worked for the exchange of ideas and information between American and Vietnamese scientists and physicians. They developed solar-powered rice-processing equipment and low-cost hearing aids; developed techniques aimed at converting bomb craters into fishponds; researched treatments for dengue fever and rotting jungle diseases; studied the effects of chemical defoliants on the Vietnamese land and people. The tons of Agent Orange and other defoliants that the U.S. dumped on the Vietnamese countryside have caused massive increases in birth deformities, miscarriages, cancer, chromosomal damage, as well as widespread deforestation of the countryside. The Vietnamese have lacked the sensitive soil-testing equipment capable of measuring dioxin levels; Cooperman's foundation, with the assistance of a UNESCO grant, was attempting to supply this desperately needed equipment, and to conduct computer studies to detect the effects of Agent Orange.

These humanitarian efforts marked Dr. Cooperman as a target for ultrarightist violence. Despite scare stories in the disinforming press about how Cooperman was secretly shipping contraband computer equipment to Vietnam, what he was shipping—cleared beforehand by the State and Commerce Departments—was about as hi tech as the typical children's video game. But trade with Vietnam is barred under the "Trading with the Enemy Act," and, as one Treasury Department official put it, "you can't ship an old sewing machine there" unless you prove it can't be used

to develop the country.

Edward Cooperman devoted his life to helping rebuild Vietnam, devastated by 40 years of imperialist war. He pursued every legal avenue to break through the blockade of technology to Vietnam imposed by the vindictive U.S. government, still stinging from its humiliating battlefield rout by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants. This policy was aptly expressed by one Reagan administration official in late 1981: "Hanoi hasn't paid its dues; we aid those countries we defeat, not those that defeat us" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 25 December 1981).

The U.S. imperialists tried to bomb Vietnam into submission, and they failed. They have been trying to starve Vietnam into helplessness, and they have failed. The recent victories of the Vietnamese and Kampuchean government troops in wiping out the counter-revolutionary Pol Pot nests along the Thai border demonstrate that the fighting capacity of the Vietnamese—who brought the U.S. military monster to its knees—remains intact (see "Viet-

nam Creams CIA's Khmer Contras," *WV* No. 371, 25 January).

Fascistic terror against the friends of Vietnam is intended to intimidate Americans from expressing solidarity with the hard-won victory of the Vietnamese Revolution. But the legacy of Edward Cooperman and his work stands as a courageous example of internationalism, and he will live long in the memory of the Vietnamese people. It is reported that the Hanoi government has minted a medal in his honor for the top graduate students in science.

All honor to the memory of Dr. Edward Cooperman! Down with the imperialist blockade of Vietnam—Defend the Vietnamese Revolution! Forward to the American workers revolution, which will finally settle accounts with the Viet fascists together with their imperialist puppetmasters, and will liberate the technological resources of moribund capitalism on behalf of those who have long suffered under the yoke of hunger, disease, backwardness and war—the legacy of imperialist world domination. ■

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Nicaragua...

(continued from page 1)

voted by a two-to-one margin for the Sandinista government, in elections the U.S. did everything it could to subvert or prevent?

"You can say we're trying to oust the Sandinistas," said Reagan, unless of course "if they'd say uncle." Hell, the Sandinistas have every right to declare their goal to be the removal of the government in Washington, "in its present structure," of course. Given the bloody war being waged by the U.S. against their homeland, they'd be justified in nuking the White House, to avoid having to use Nicaraguan troops! Reagan screams about Nicaragua being a "strategic threat" to the U.S. What an outrage! Beginning with the occupation of the Atlantic coast port of Bluefields in 1909, the Americans with their battle-ships have intervened militarily 14 times this century in this tiny Central American country. In that whole time Nicaragua hasn't invaded the United States once.

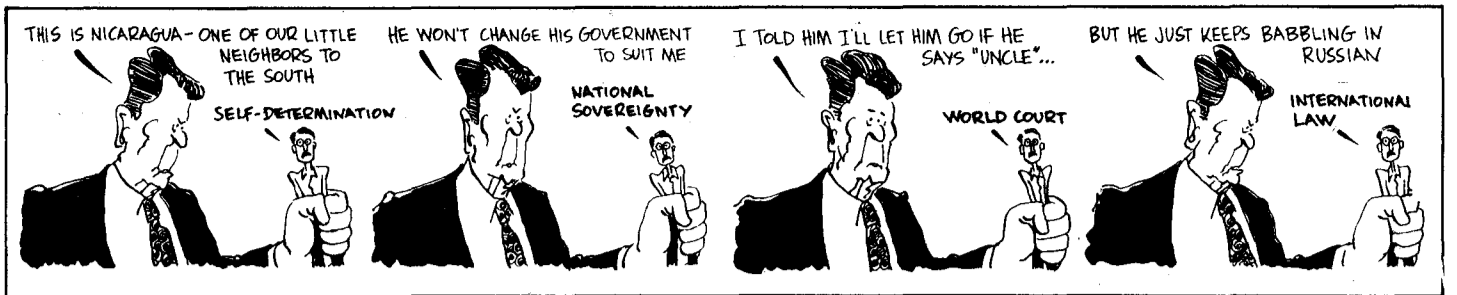
It's only because of the tremendous disparity of size and forces that Reagan can get away with such shameless bullying. Just listening to these threats is almost enough to turn you into a Third World nationalist. But not quite—for the U.S. war objectives go far beyond Nicaragua.

While Reagan acts like he's "all but ready to swing into the saddle and charge up the Nicaraguan equivalent of San Juan Hill" like Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders (*Washington Post*, 25 February), Secretary of State George Shultz is proclaiming a U.S. "right" to aid "democratic revolutions" throughout the world, and particularly in the Soviet bloc. "The Solidarity movement in Poland; resistance forces in Afghanistan, in Cambodia, in Nicaragua, in Ethiopia and Angola; dissidents in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe" all deserve "our support—whether moral support or something more." In this February 22 speech to the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, Reagan's von Ribbentrop declared that "America must be the leader of the free world" and back insurgencies against "Communist domination." Shades of Hitler's Anti-Comintern Pact.

The Reagan government is quite as clear about wanting to rule the world as the Nazis were. "Strength lies not in defense but in attack," declared the Führer in *Mein Kampf*. "Peace through strength," proclaim the Reaganites. The Americans speak so clearly, partly because they once ruled the world and it sort of "slipped away"—like in Vietnam!—so they "just" want it back. Whereas the Nazis had to be a little more openly self-serving, explaining that you all have to be conquered so the German *Volk* can get a little *Lebensraum*. Hitler wanted to conquer the world, Reagan wants to reconquer it as part of his Manifest Destiny. But Yankees and Nazis have virtually identical programs toward Soviet Russia—to overturn the social conquests of the October Revolution, cost what it may.

Big Brother Reagan's Somozaist Brothers

The Yankees installed the Somoza dynasty, which ruled Nicaragua from 1932 until 1979—almost half a century. Anastasio Somoza I, "the last Marine," who treacherously assassinated anti-imperialist fighter Augusto César Sandino, zealously guarded U.S. interests in Central America. His second son, Anastasio II, "Tachito," for whom Spanish was a second language, graduated from West Point, inheriting his father's power base in the National Guard, and became *jefe supremo* in 1967. The *guardias* were his personal praetorian guard, native mercenaries who practiced the most hideous torture and murder. *Time* magazine corre-



Dan Wasserman

spondent Bernard Dietrich gives a typical example of the National Guard's blood lust, describing a raid on the village of Varilla (which allegedly supported the Sandinistas) in 1977:

"The soldiers shot, bayoneted or strangled four men, eleven women and twenty-nine children. After dumping the bodies in an unmarked pit, the sheriffs divided the villagers' land among themselves."

—Bernard Dietrich, *Somoza* (1981)

And this is what former UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick hailed as a "moderately repressive authoritarian" regime!

The 1979 insurrection that toppled the Somoza dynasty was sparked by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, but it was the popular uprising that shattered the National Guard. Although the petty-bourgeois FSLN offered to incorporate "honest" and "patriotic" Guard officers into a new national army, the Guardsmen fled in panic fearing the fury of the Nicaraguan masses. But unfortunately, those few who were captured were not executed. The Nicaraguan masses are now paying the price of this "generosity," as the Somozaist Guard reconstituted itself in the condominiums of Miami and

ing Estelí, León, Masaya and Chinandega to rubble, just as Somoza left the capital of Managua after the devastating 1972 earthquake. After all, who needs a capital if your capital is safe and sound in Miami? The Guardia killed more than 50,000 Nicaraguans in this slaughter, and as they were preparing to flee, Somoza ordered from his underground headquarters (appropriately named El Bunker) to lay waste to every factory owned by dissident capitalists. If Nicaragua wasn't theirs, decided the Somozaist "patriots," it wouldn't be at all.

"Freedom fighters"? Remember the CIA's explanation for publishing their infamous murder manual last year was to get this kill-crazed scum to clean up their act. David Lerner of the Center for Constitutional Rights reported on one massacre in the region of Paiguas in August 1983:

"...a group of 350 contras assassinated 30 people, torturing and mutilating many of them. Among those killed were a 15-year-old boy who taught classes, and a community leader who was found hung from a beam in his house. One 14-year-old girl was first gang-raped and then decapitated and her head placed on a stake at the entry to the village.

White House basement, the roughneck secretary of state Shultz is itching to get the U.S. into a war somewhere, and Congress be damned. But this gung ho military adventurism could backfire—witness the fiasco in Beirut. As we have said repeatedly, the Reaganite "new patriotism" is extremely superficial—it will prove brittle as soon as it's tested in blood.

The Reaganites took their landslide election victory in November as a "mandate" for their "conservative revolution." But while the Heritage Foundation types talk of spreading counter-revolution to the heart of the Soviet bloc, the U.S. is increasingly bogged down in Central America. The American public, certainly, is not ready for new foreign military adventures. A *Washington Post-ABC News* poll taken after Reagan called for overthrowing the Sandinistas found that 70 percent opposed U.S. involvement in efforts to topple the Nicaraguan government; and this opposition has increased sharply since a year ago (*Washington Post*, 28 February). And in Congress there is wide opposition to funding the contras, mainly because they are losers. This ragtag bunch of thugs can shoot down unarmed civilians, but they'll never make an army that could overthrow the Sandinistas. So the administration has been looking for various subterfuges to keep the dollars flowing to its mercenary army, such as a bill for "humanitarian" payments to the contras' dependents (known on Capitol Hill as the "Aid to Families with Dependent Contras" bill).

The Sandinistas keep trying to strike a deal with Washington. The latest offer was an indefinite moratorium on acquiring new arms systems, and plans for withdrawal of 100 Cuban military advisers. When this was dismissed out of hand by the White House as a propaganda ploy, Nicaraguan vice president Sergio Ramírez offered to add more concessions. Their purpose is to induce the U.S. to revive the moribund "Contadora peace process." This attempt by regional bourgeois powers to limit revolutionary conflagration in Central America by negotiations fell apart last fall when Nicaragua accepted a draft peace treaty and the U.S. shot it down. But as Reagan has made utterly clear, there's nothing the Sandinistas could offer to appease Washington short of "crying uncle."

The truly evil American empire seeks to spread bloody counterrevolution throughout the world. When the Sandinistas talk of self-determination, national sovereignty, the World Court and international law, as the cartoon notes, they really are "babbling in Russian" as far as Reagan's concerned. You can only defeat the contra killers and their mass-murdering godfathers—the war criminals who brought us the horrors of Vietnam, Hiroshima/Nagasaki, and the firebombing of Dresden in World War II—through international socialist revolution. It's because the Sandinistas haven't destroyed the capitalist "fifth column" inside the country, because the Kremlin hasn't extended military protection to Nicaragua that today this petty-bourgeois radical-nationalist regime is tops on the Reaganites' hit list.

Kill the invaders! No appeasement of Yankee imperialism—For revolutionary war throughout Central America! Military victory to Salvadoran leftists! Defend, complete, extend the Nicaraguan revolution! Defense of the Soviet Union and Cuba begins in Central America! ■



FSLN's Barricada: Contra "Beasts Will Not Return!"

training fields in the Everglades, then shipped out to Honduras where it reappeared as the "Nicaraguan Democratic Force."

Just who are these men Ronald Reagan calls his "brothers"? The military chief of staff of the FDN is former National Guard colonel Enrique Bermúdez, who led the Nicaraguan contingent in the 1965 Santo Domingo invasion. As Somoza's military attaché in Washington, Bermúdez made influential contacts in U.S. military and intelligence circles. His general staff today consists exclusively of former Guard officers, most trained by the U.S. at Fort Gulick in the Panama Canal Zone and many of them members of Somoza's elite band of murderous thugs from the Infantry Basic Training School, the notorious EEBI. Some, like Miskito Indian leader Steadman Fagoth, are former agents of Somoza's secret police. And all are bloodthirsty murderers.

"Moral Equals of the Founding Fathers"

"Patriots"? During the repeated general strikes and insurrections which swept the country during 1978-79, Somoza's tanks and planes systematically destroyed Nicaragua's cities, reduc-

Several other victims were beheaded. One had his eyes gouged out before he was killed."

—WBAI National News, 5 December 1984

But now that they have read up on the "Selective Use of Violence for Propagandistic Effects" the Somozaist mercenaries carry out murder by the book. One example: the *London Guardian* (15 November 1984) reports on a grim massacre by contras at the state farm of Castillo Norte in Jinotega province last May. The peasants defended their farm until ammunition ran out, then the carnage began:

"Eleven were caught in their foxholes and killed in cold blood. Rosa had her breasts cut off. Then they cut into her chest and took out her heart. The men had their arms broken, their testicles cut off, and their eyes poked out. They were killed by slitting their throats, and pulling the tongue out through the slit."

And these psychopathic killers are for Reagan "the moral equal of our Founding Fathers"! Well, they certainly are Reagan's brothers. The FDN even named one of its hit squads the Jeane J. Kirkpatrick Task Force.

No Appeasement of Uncle Sam!

The administration is on a binge, trying to bludgeon a reluctant Congress into voting aid to the "contras." Together with the other ex-Marines in the

Westmoreland...

(continued from page 16)

supporters in South Vietnam itself dropped from the monthly "Order of Battle." "Just old men and women in black pajamas," Westmoreland's supporters insisted, "not a military threat." So then why did Robert (Blowtorch) Komer's "Operation Phoenix" CIA program assassinate over 100,000 of them? Komer, who testified for Westmoreland, was one of the filthier war criminals on parade at the Foley Square courthouse—a cast of characters including the likes of the cold, statistics-mongering Robert McNamara, LBJ sycophant Walt Rostow, and dozens of ex-bright young CIA plotters and military men, all of whom got their hands plenty dirty in Vietnam. The debate about the importance of the "home guard" revealed the excruciating dilemma of the Americans in Vietnam: that the whole Vietnamese nation was mobilized to drive them out. A secret 1967 memo by Major General Walter Kerwin that came out at the trial estimated that perhaps as many as *one third* of U.S. casualties to that point were the result of boobytraps, mines and other devices hidden in the jungles and rice paddies; the "grunts" on the ground sure knew they were stepping into hostile territory every day, too. It was a "people's war," and so the bloody U.S. butchers' final solution, even as they knew they were losing, was—as in "Operation Phoenix"—to simply kill as many of the people as they could.

About the only one missing from the parade of war criminals was Lyndon Baines Johnson himself, dead but not forgotten. That monstrously wily, paranoid politician and the question of what he knew and when he knew it revealed another dilemma the squabbling ruling class factions tried to evade. It was clear by the end of the trial Westmoreland had in fact blocked not only the CIA's but also some of his own subordinates' higher "enemy" estimates—but how could LBJ not have known? Well, he knew what he wanted to; he was one of the big all-time liars about Vietnam himself (something neither side dared admit). The CBS trial was beginning to reveal that the order to lie about the "politically explosive" issue of vastly higher enemy strength came



Nihon Denpa News, Ltd.

Washington claimed U.S. was winning war, but heroic Tet Offensive of January 1968 shattered the lies.

from the top. Veteran columnist Joseph Kraft made the simple point that if anybody was leading anybody around by the nose over Vietnam, given their respective personalities, it was surely LBJ doing it to Westmoreland, not the other way around (*Washington Post*, 29 November 1984).

The bourgeoisie couldn't win, and they couldn't tell the truth. So of course they all lied to the American people all of the time and to each other some of the time; they kept looking for that "light at the end of the tunnel," they chopped and suppressed facts and figures that didn't show the U.S. was winning the war, they knifed other departments in the back—they lied on everything from body counts to bombings to the Army's infamous daily "five o'clock follies" press briefings in Saigon.

How "we" got into Vietnam even started with a lie—the "Gulf of Tonkin" incident in August 1965. President Johnson, Robert McNamara, Walt Rostow were all in on it—they'd had plans ready since 1964 to bomb North Vietnam, they had a resolution all set to let the president unleash American forces, and all they needed was an "incident." So they made one up, claiming the U.S. destroyer *Maddox*, which had been running provocative cruises near the North Vietnamese coast, had been fired on by North Vietnamese torpedoes. The ship's cap-

tain didn't think it was true; one of the fighter-bomber pilots searching the waters around the *Maddox* for supposed enemy boats said there weren't any—but Johnson insisted on his "incident" and so the resolution sailed through Congress and the first major U.S. escalation of the war was on.

And as the war escalated, so did the lying. By mid-1967 LBJ was so worried about the economic strains on the U.S. that "he procrastinated, juggling and faking and concealing the statistics in a desperate attempt to avoid increasing taxes," noted Stanley Karnow in *Vietnam: A History*, the companion book to the PBS TV series. Karnow recalls many of the standard, repeated lies everybody exposed at the time, like LBJ's claim the bombing raids over the North were aimed only at "military targets," a lie exposed by *New York Times* reporter Harrison Salisbury, who was there at the time. McNamara lied a lot, too—after a 1966 trip to Vietnam, he told the press progress "has exceeded our expectations," while telling LBJ privately he was "only a little less pessimistic," and that the North Vietnamese could "more than replace" their losses. The Joint Chiefs of Staff lied, issuing statements the bombing was "highly effective," while privately arguing for yet more raids because they weren't working. (And we're only dealing here with the Johnson period—Kennedy before and

Nixon/Kissinger after, with their secret bombing of Cambodia, did it too.)

Vietnam Was a Victory!

After Westmoreland left Vietnam in 1968, the war dragged on for seven more years, until in 1975 the North Vietnamese army finally triumphantly swept south to Saigon, chasing the last remnants of the South Vietnamese U.S. puppet troops who retreated in dust clouds of panic all the way. It wasn't Westmoreland's lying about "progress," nor McNamara's, nor LBJ's, nor the Pentagon's, that "lost Vietnam"—the U.S. lost on the *battlefield*, when the gigantic Pentagon war machine could not stop the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants.

That was the meaning of the Tet Offensive of 1968, and why it was such a traumatizing, stunning shock to the U.S. bourgeoisie. They faced in Tet something they couldn't believe could happen: that in the heart of South Vietnam, a massive, all-out drive, encompassing over 100 cities and towns, overrunning the "fortified villages," shelling the massive U.S. base at Cam Ranh Bay, penetrating right into the American embassy in Saigon itself, could explode with such ferocity just as they were assuring everyone the "war of attrition" was being won. Tet brought down LBJ.

Vietnam was a victory for the world's working people. For us the "trauma" of Vietnam was that it took so many years and deaths for social revolution to triumph. Yet ultimately, despite hesitations in Hanoi, despite Moscow and Peking's repeated attempts to enforce sellout deals with U.S. imperialism, the Vietnamese people won, striking a vital blow to America's ambitions for world imperialist domination. The bourgeoisie is still bleeding from that wound, as the Westmoreland trial revealed—and that is a very good thing for the oppressed and exploited peoples of the world. It has so far stayed the hand of even the Reagan administration from launching "another Vietnam" in Central America—though time is running out and the Reaganites with their "America über Alles" compulsions are becoming increasingly desperate and war-crazed. But the Vietnamese Revolution showed that U.S. imperialism could be *defeated*. We need "two, three, many defeats for U.S. imperialism!" and above all international proletarian revolution to finally sweep the vicious, lying, deadly American imperialist state into the dustbin of history. ■

Traitors' Lackeys...

(continued from page 6)

Brothers coffee, from Delano grapes to Chilean wine. What they won't do is mobilize the unions for struggle. And to make sure the ranks don't get carried away by the solidarity rhetoric, they need some "socialists" to police their events against "disrupters" who want to turn talk into action.

So they deputize their running dogs like Robinson and Keylor, to head it off. Around the South African ship boycott, their action was identical to the treacherous role played by Socialist Action, a group of former Socialist Workers Party members, during the 1983 Greyhound strike when they acted as goons for the SF labor bureaucracy. In early December 1983, just a year before the South African cargo boycott, some 1,500-2,000 militant workers tired of listening to windy bureaucrats mouth off about solidarity took off from a Greyhound strike support rally heading toward the bus terminal with the intention of shutting it down. Despite pleas from Herman and other union bigwigs, the demonstrators blocked the street for over two hours and no buses moved.

The bureaucrats were pissing in their pants. They started a whisper campaign,

blaming "the Sparts" for all the trouble. But the next week several hundred workers again defied the labor fakers and set up picket lines at the Greyhound terminal entrances. This time a line of union heavies and "socialist" goons suddenly appeared, the police commander ordered the crowd to disperse, the picket captain announced "the rally's over," and standing next to him, telling everyone to go home, was Jeff Mackler, national co-chairman of Socialist Action and a former teachers union official. At Socialist Action's public debut a week later, Mackler complained that their well-laid plans for "a nice peaceful march" had been disrupted by "ultralefts." Anticipating Keylor, he added:

"We had a spectacle of a tiny sect of 20 people leading the chants to workers of 2,000. We needed a little proletarian discipline."

—quoted in "Ex-SWPers Goon for S.F. Labor Fakers,"
WV No. 345, 6 January 1984

And the Greyhound strike saw a repeat of almost identical scenes two years earlier during the PATCO battle, where the air controllers fought alone against the full weight of the Reagan government. Machinists and Teamsters could have shut down the airports in a matter of hours, but the AFL-CIO tops tried to hide their treachery by calling an impotent consumer boycott of air travel. Again there were "solidarity" demonstrations in the Bay Area, but in one case

a rally of some 600-800 picketers surged into the streets and blocked all traffic into the SF airport for over an hour. California AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer John Henning vainly ordered picketers off the roads, and another pseudo-Trotskyist low-level union official, Steve Bryant, tried to herd demonstrators back to the curb (see "Militant PATCO Pickets Stop Traffic at S.F. Airport," *WV* No. 290, 9 October 1981).

There's a pattern here. When the ranks are "getting out of control," the labor fakers look around for some ostensible reds to run around and police things on behalf of the bureaucracy. That's the role played by Robinson and Keylor at the South African ship boycott, Mackler during the Greyhound strike, Bryant in the PATCO strike—cops for the union tops, deputies to the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class. The pattern is more pronounced in the Bay Area because of its more militant labor traditions and radical history. That's also why you have a clot of pseudo-Trotskyist anti-Soviet group-lets here which hardly exist outside California—SA, RWL, WSL, ET—and all aspire to the same function. Talk about brothers under the skin: Socialist Action, newly emerged from the SWP, makes its first splash in the labor movement as bureaucrats' goons against militant workers at Greyhound. Now the ET makes its first organized self-display in the labor movement—as running dogs

against militant union action.

Howard Keylor doubtless feels he's made it into the big time over the South Africa ship boycott. This is how you become a media star in the *Guardian*. But the policy he's enforcing is Jimmy Herman's, acting as a fireman to head off a real clash with the bourgeoisie. For Leo Robinson's "deputy dog," it's coming home to Stalinist reformism. Already over PATCO Keylor sided with the AFL-CIO bureaucracy's consumer boycott line against the SL's fight for labor action to shut down the airports. Angling for a slot in the ILWU bureaucracy, he's now paid his initiation fee by sabotaging the *Nedlloyd Kimberley* struggle.

The Spartacist League fought for mass picketing to shut down the airports during the PATCO strike, for a national transport strike together with Greyhound workers, for solid union action against the South African blood ship. As we wrote last year in our supplement "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win" (over 100,000 distributed), "Solidarity is not sending \$500 and a valentine. Solidarity is respecting picket lines, it is secondary boycotts, hot-cargoing struck products." The SL fights for class-struggle unionism, to replace the Jimmy Hermans with a leadership dedicated to independent working-class action, from Soweto to San Francisco, to build a Trotskyist party of world socialist revolution. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Vietnam War Criminals Squabble in Court

Westmoreland—You Lose, Again

The verdict on Vietnam was handed in ten years ago, by thousands of triumphant North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front (NLF, "Viet Cong") troops entering Saigon in the early hours of 30 April 1975. As the last panicked American personnel were being lifted off the embassy roof by helicopter, the Saigon CIA station head tapped out a last bitter message: "This experience unique in the history of the United States does not signal necessarily the demise of the United States as a world power. The severity of the defeat and the circumstances of it, however, would seem to call for a reassessment of the policies of niggardly half-measures.... Those who fail to learn from history are forced to repeat it.... Saigon signing off."

Having failed to learn from history, a section of the defeated U.S. military establishment recently tried to rewrite it in court—with equally humiliating results. The Reaganites need to overcome the still lingering "Vietnam syndrome." When CBS aired its documentary "The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception," charging General William C. Westmoreland and the military with deceiving America about the size of the North Vietnamese/NLF forces and thus opening the way for defeat, they thought they saw their chance. Westmoreland, backed by wealthy right-wing foundations, launched a \$120 million libel suit against CBS.

The suit was intended not only to have a chilling effect on "dissident" press reporting and establish the government's latest sinister tactic of senior government officials launching multi-million-dollar libel suits in order to harass critics. More broadly it was to pin the blame for "Who Lost Vietnam?" on the far-right's old "enemy within," the "liberal media." But on February 18, only days before the case was to go to the jury, Westmoreland was forced to abruptly drop the suit, signing a "peace accord" with CBS. Westmoreland's withdrawal was widely recognized as another defeat for the general, the commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam from 1964 to 1968, the year the stunning North Vietnamese/NLF Tet Offensive shattered the morale of the U.S. forces, marking the key turning point of the U.S. war.

Westmoreland's right-wing backers were unhappy with the general's latest pullout—but devastating revelations on his cover-ups by his immediate subordinates, including fellow West Pointer Major General Joseph McChristian, Westmoreland's former intelligence chief, were clearly swaying the jury toward CBS. CBS's defense was based on the essential truth of its broadcast (an unusual defense in libel cases), and for Westmoreland to lose on "truth" would have been devastating, so somebody pulled the plug. We don't know who, but it looks like the orders came from the top.

The "Who Lost Vietnam?" Witchhunt

The thesis of the CBS TV documentary, "The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception," was that there had



U.S. embassy, Saigon, April 1975 (left), loser Westmoreland (above). Humiliating scramble out of Vietnam as revolution triumphed still haunts U.S. bourgeoisie.

UPI

Vietnam Was a Victory! 2, 3, Many Defeats for U.S. Imperialism!

been "a conscious effort—indeed, a conspiracy at the highest levels of American military intelligence—to suppress and alter critical intelligence on the enemy in the year leading up to the Tet offensive," and that "we Americans," including Congress and the president, were "misinformed about the nature and the size of the enemy we were facing." The documentary's position was first raised by CIA analysts, one of whom was hired as a CBS consultant for the show. The multibillion-dollar media conglomerate has its own thesis on "Who Lost Vietnam?"—that it was essentially the military, Westmoreland and their lying cover-up numbers games over "enemy" strength. They wanted to get Westmoreland for subverting the "integrity" of the CIA's intelligence, and to uphold the need of the bourgeois establishment, especially its military, for reliable, accurate information. CBS, of course, is only interested in the "truth" that fits its bourgeois purposes. Those same "great liberals" declared outright on "60 Minutes" that Lt. Col. Anthony Herbert was lying when he brought charges of Army massacres of civilians in Vietnam in 1969.

The entire CBS/Westmoreland fight was carried out in the context of a frustrated and humiliated bourgeoisie still seeking desperately the elusive "enemy within" that supposedly was

responsible for its great defeat. We Marxists did follow the CBS/Westmoreland trial with interest: the spectacle of U.S. war criminals squabbling in court, trying to stab each other in the back, had its own grisly humor, while revealing the ruling class's continuing failure to overcome America's longest, dirtiest, and above all *losing* war.

Since they couldn't beat the Vietnamese, Westmoreland and his right-wing backers (including the Capital Legal Foundation and the far-right Scaife foundation, which contributed over \$2 million to his case) tried to get the "liberal media." It's no accident that CBS TV has also been singled out, simultaneously with Westmoreland's lawsuit, for a takeover bid by a far-right conglomeration headed by Republican Jesse Helms. Reagan kept the press out of his Grenada invasion, and he'd like to keep them out of Central America, gagged and toeing the far-right "party line" at home. Westmoreland's libel suit was supposed to be a show trial to break "the media," though in the end he had to cut and run. But it should be clear this is not the last Reaganite attempt to try to create the 1980s equivalent of the McCarthyite loyalty purges of the '50s, which started with the "Who Lost China?" issue and ended up stifling all dissent.

For both sides, of course, the squabble over and fascination with the numbers, with juggling the estimates and subdividing the categories of the "enemy," only serve to obscure the truth neither side can admit: that Vietnam was a *popular war* there, waged by an entire people steeled in over 30 years of battle to defeat imperialism, and that they would not stop until they had won their national freedom and social revolution. As Ho Chi Minh warned the French a generation before the Americans went in, "You can kill ten of my men for every one I kill of yours, but even at those odds, you will lose and I will win." Vietnam was an increasingly *unpopular war* in America, including among a sizable section of the ruling class, and increasingly in the armed forces themselves, composed of largely working-class and black draftees who didn't see why they should be sent to some far-off jungle to kill and die, or for what. So *everybody* in the administrations, both Democratic and Republican, that ran that dirty war lied, necessarily.

Lies, Lies, Lies

One of the central charges the CBS side made against Westmoreland was that he had the NLF's "home guard"
continued on page 15