WORKERS VANGUARD

25¢

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Peking-U.S. Collusion in Vietnam Invasion

China Get Out!

FEBRUARY 28—As the Chinese troops crossed over the border into Vietnam at Friendship Pass eleven days ago, the echo of their marching boots and pounding artillery reverberated around the world. News of the invasion was emblazoned across the front pages; the stock markets trembled; governments set up their crisis monitoring teams. There were factory meetings in Moscow to protest Peking's aggression, big working-class demonstrations in Italy demanding Hands Off Vietnam! And something new: on the assembly lines of American factories workers closely followed the ominous developments, remembering the hellhole that was Vietnam. The smell of holocaust was in the air.

Washington tried to pretend it was above the battle with no immediate interests at stake, but no one saw the war as an event of merely local importance. Vietnam is tied to the USSR by treaty and it was obviously no accident that Teng launched the invasion so soon after returning from his trip to the U.S. With events moving rapidly in Peking and the crystallization of the Sino-American alliance with diplomatic recognition of Peking there was a sense of things coming unstuck. The question on everyone's lips was whether Russia would be drawn into the fighting. The tension recalled the October 1962 missile crisis, but this time it would not be an isolated incident.

The initial response of the American press was to gloat over the spectacle of two "Communist" countries in a shooting war. In a 19 February editorial, "The Red Brotherhood at War," the *New York Times* wrote: "They are singing 'The Internationale' on all sides of the Asian battles this week as they bury the hopes of the Communist fathers with the bodies of their sons." But soon glee turned to worry that perhaps Teng had gotten out of hand, setting off more than he had counted on. *Le Monde* (20 February) asked editorially:

> "Will the Soviet Union enter the fray and seek to put China 'in its place'?
> "Despite the relative optimism shown in Washington and most Western capitals, the question is far from theoretical. It is even the essential question, because the opening of a third world conflict can depend on Moscow's answer."

Vietnam News Agency

Vietnamese rush to meet the invading Chinese near Lang Son.

Soviet Union: Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam!

As the days wore on, with Chinese troops pinned down just over the border, unable to strike the "punishing blow" they had promised, the pressure on the Kremlin to intervene on behalf of its ally increased.

Initially Peking announced that its action was a counterattack against Vietnamese border incursions. However, it was immediately recalled that on his U.S. junket, Deputy Prime Minister Teng Hsiao-p'ing had repeatedly mentioned the need to "teach Vietnam a bloody lesson" in reply to its lightning Cambodian offensive in January that in a matter of days had toppled the Pol Pot regime supported by China. Subsequently Teng announced that the Vietnamese must be punished because "they placed Laos under their control, invaded Cambodia, signed a peace treaty with the Soviet Union that is a military alliance in nature and encroached on Chinese soil at will" (*New York Times*, 27 February). The attack was launched on the day the top Vietnamese leaders were in Phnom Penh to sign a treaty with its newly installed Cambodian puppet regime.

There are various elements involved in the recent clashes in Indochina: in the case of the Vietnam-Cambodian disputes over the last few years, the local/regional factors were predominant. On the other hand, behind the Vietnam-China conflict lurks U.S. imperialism's ultimate appetite for capitalist reconquest of the USSR, main military/industrial powerhouse of the deformed workers states. Up to now, however, the main content of the confrontation between Peking and Hanoi has been the question of who will dominate Indochina. After the removal of American imperialist influence in the peninsula, the Chinese evidently felt that because of their great weight in the East they should inherit the region. But with their own history as the most active force in the area, the Vietnamese chose instead to make a deal with the Russians and then began to consolidate their influence.

The Peking Stalinist bureaucracy wants to take a swipe at Hanoi because it believes China must reign supreme in Southeast Asia and Vietnam is in the way. But the connection to the Sino-Soviet hostilities and the clear collusion of the Chinese invasion with imperialist aims are not a minor element. Perhaps the most revealing indication is the history of Teng's famous threat to "teach Vietnam a bloody lesson." This remark was made on at least three occasions in the weeks prior to the invasion—in Tokyo, to a banquet attended by Washington newspapermen and to President Carter himself—yet each time the key word "bloody" was

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Spartacist League Press Release

The following is a press release for the SL/U.S. demonstration outside the Chinese Mission to the U.N. February 20.

Tomorrow, Tuesday, February 20, at 1 p.m., the Spartacist League will demonstrate outside the Chinese Mission to the United Nations, located at 155 West 66th Street, demanding: *China Get Out of Vietnam Now!*

The invasion of Vietnam is a dangerous anti-Soviet provocation by the U.S. China Japan axis. While this criminal assault is being carried out by Chinese troops, there should be no mistake who is behind it and what is its ultimate target. China is acting as the spearhead of a renewed drive by U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union and the working people of Indochina.

The nationalistic Stalinist bureaucracies of the Sino-Soviet blocs pose the greatest threat to the gains of their anti-capitalist revolutions. The increasingly reactionary Chinese foreign policy, both under Mao and Teng, has called on everyone from Carter's Dr. Strangelove, Brzezinski, to the deposed shah of Iran to join in an unholy anti-Soviet alliance. And it is obvious to all that Peking would not have undertaken this ominous step without at least tacit backing from Washington. The heroic victory of the Vietnamese working people is in mortal danger. Not empty dreams of détente but only worldwide proletarian solidarity for socialist revolution can defend that victory. The Spartacist League calls upon the working class internationally to combat the reactionary U.S. China alliance.

- China: Get Out of Vietnam Now! Don't Be a Cat's Paw for U.S. Imperialism!
- Soviet Union: Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam!
- Nixon/Mao and Carter/Teng—Anti-Soviet Diplomacy Means Bloody Aggression Against the Vietnamese People!
- For Workers Political Revolutions in Peking, Hanoi, Moscow to Oust the Nationalist Bureaucracies! For a Trotskyist World Revolutionary Party!

"China: Don't Be a Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism"

For Americans Vietnam isn't just another faraway place. Last week in factories from one end of the country to the other, workers worriedly talked about a war that could affect them personally—money, blood, taxes—in a way they hadn't felt since the late 1960's or even the Cuban missile crisis. No one bought the administration's charade of "hands off" neutrality—"Carter's going to get us back into Vietnam one way or another," said a black auto worker in New Jersey—and there was widespread fear that Washington's alliance with China would drag the U.S. into a global conflict with Russia.

But while memories of the second Indochinese war were awakened, when it came to protesting the Chinese invasion of Vietnam there was no repeat of the "broad-based peace movement" of yesterday. In a point-blank question of siding with the Soviet Union against American imperialism, the "progressive" rad-libs preferred to stay home. So anyone who looked carefully at the picket lines in front of Chinese diplomatic offices in New York and San Francisco would have found only the members and fellow travelers of the Communist Party U.S.A. (CP), the Stalinoid mush of the Mareyite Workers World group...and the Trotskyists of the Spartacist League/U.S.

Three days after the invasion the SL held a protest at the Chinese mission to the United Nations on NYC's Upper West Side. With signs proclaiming "China: Don't Be Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism!" and "Soviet Union: Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam!" more than 50 Spartacist supporters demanded immediate withdrawal of the Chinese troops. The demonstrators chanted "Carter/Teng, Nixon/Mao—Out of Indochina Now!" stressing the continuity of Peking's anti-Soviet diplomacy. The SL press release and signs also called for "Workers Political Revolutions in Peking, Hanoi and Moscow to Oust the Nationalist Bureaucracies."

Significantly the Vietnamese UN mission telephoned greetings to the February 20 SL protest. Equally interesting, reporters and cameramen from the Soviet press and television showed up to cover the demonstration. *Izvestia* interviewed a Vietnam veteran as Moscow TV extensively filmed the protest. However, while they were eager to show that opposition to the Chinese invasion extended beyond the isolated CP, the reporters carefully turned off their microphones when the demonstrators chanted, "Not Stalinist Nationalism but Workers Internationalism!"

WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at the Chinese Mission in NYC, February 24: Only the Trotskyists will truly defend the Soviet Union against imperialism.

The SL protest was also the subject of a long article in the New York *Daily News* (circulation 2,000,000, the largest of any newspaper in the U.S.) by columnist Pete Hamill. Hamill was intrigued that "Here were people calling themselves Trotskyites, defending the Soviet Union which is run by the heirs of Joseph Stalin, who had Trotsky murdered with an ax." While expressing sympathy for the "young revolutionaries" pounding the bricks in front of the Chinese mission, he wearily professed inability to understand the "logic" of it all.

> "'We oppose the Soviet bureaucracy,' this intense young woman was saying. 'But we defend the Soviet Union'."

The logic of this position is straightforward. It is easily understood by any trade-union militant faced with the task of defending his union and the gains it has won for the workers against attack by the employers while at the same time seeking to oust the sellout labor bureaucrats who act as the bosses' agents.

The *News* column ended by quoting an onlooker at the demonstration who, perplexed by the Chinese invasion, said that since Russia, China and Vietnam are all supposed to be Communist, how come they were fighting each other instead of the U.S.? "There was no way to explain," commented Hamill. The answer is that none of these states *is* communist; instead they are bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states ruled by a parasitic caste resting on collectivist property forms. The Stalinist bureaucracies defend not the internationalist interests of the proletariat but rather the privileges they derive from control of the different national state apparatuses. This is the root of the nationalism of the Stalinist regimes and their often murderous repression against their own workers; and it is the reason the SL demonstrators called for political revolution to oust the bureaucracies.

Also last week the U.S. Peace Council, a Communist Party front, sponsored two demonstrations against Peking's invasion of Vietnam. On February 19, 300 people marched outside the Chinese mission and on Saturday a thousand protestors turned out at the same site. With signs like "U.S. People Salute Peace Loving Vietnam" and "U.S. Youth Demand: Break Ties with China," signed by groups like NYC Mobilization for Survival and Women for Racial and Economic Equality, only the 100-strong Spartacist contingent gave casual observers any clue that the demonstration was something more than a pacifist rally. The SL carried a large banner with the twin slogans, "China: Don't Be Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism. USSR: Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam."

Notably absent from the protest was the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Their spokesman James Harris justified their abstention with the lame excuse that since the U.S. was the "*real* instigator of the war," a demonstration at the Chinese mission was "inappropriate" and reflected only the pro-Moscow Stalinism of the CP. Of course, the entire demonstration repeatedly chanted, "U.S./China—Out of Vietnam!" in clear recognition that Washington and Peking are in collusion in this invasion. In reality, the SWP merely reflected the anti-Soviet sentiment rampant in left-liberal circles, and in its usual cowardly opportunist fashion was doing everything to avoid being identified with the USSR. So much for its false claims to Trotskyism. Trotskyism stands for unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism.

Through its various front groups, the CP sought to give the demonstration a soppy liberal coloration. One of its slogans was "Brzezinski/Teng—Enemies of World Peace." By singling out the successor to Kissinger in this fashion, the Stalinists put forward their

WV Photo

CP fronts appeal to liberal pacifism, Spartacists demand of the Soviet Union: "Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam."

WORKERS VANGUARD

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EDITOR: Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Darlene Kamiura

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Karen Wyatt

EDITORIAL BOARD: Jon Brule, Charles Burroughs, George Foster, Liz Gerdon, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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perennial illusion that the enemy is a cabal of crazed ultra-rightist generals while Jimmy Carter is supposedly "peace-loving" and pro-détente. At the rally concluding the picketing, "Peace Council" spokesman Michael Myerson even called on the Carter administration to pressure China into withdrawing from Vietnam! This class-collaborationist illusion-mongering was challenged by SL signs proclaiming, "Down with Carter's Anti-Soviet 'Human Rights' Crusade!"

Although the Moscow Stalinists controlled the demonstration, with the Mareyites politically indistinguishable from their Brezhnevite big brothers, the large and militant Spartacist contingent had a powerful impact. Many CPers were surprised at our presence, with one veteran "progressive" remarking to his wife, "Look, even Spartacus is here." (To which she replied, "But of course, dear.") On the other hand, our slogans and chants drove the most rabid Trotsky-haters left over from the Moscow Trials period into a frenzy. Little old Stalinist ladies jabbed the air with their umbrellas shouting "CIA" and "police," while Myerson began his speech with insinuating remarks about "cop agents in our midst."

The one SL slogan which most infuriated the Communist Party faithful was our demand, "Soviet Union: Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam!" First, it challenged the pacifist veneer which the Stalinists habitually don for their "peace" demonstrations. One woman gasped, "My god, do they want to start a world war?!" Secondly it challenges the USSR to live up to some of the pretensions of proletarian internationalism to which the Soviet regime pays lip service while endlessly betraying. Despite the vicious anti-communist cop-baiting directed at the SL, the Stalinists could not drown out our revolutionary slogans and had to stand by as we drew up to the concluding rally chanting, "Not Détente but Workers Revolution!" And again at the very end of the demonstration the crowd watched in embarrassed silence as the Spartacist contingent sang "The Internationale" and then marched off in formation through the middle of the assembled Stalinists.

The fact that the SL was able to participate, with its own slogans, in this CP-controlled demonstration without a serious confrontation was an unusual event. But this was not primarily due to our tight organization or military unpreparedness on the Stalinists' part. In the past the CP has set off brawls or called the cops in an attempt to keep the Spartacist League out of Chile demonstrations. Rather, the stand-off was the product of their political ambivalence about our presence. On the issue of opposing U.S. imperialism's anti-Soviet power politics the CP is isolated from its usual liberal-radical allies. With the danger of a Sino-Soviet war in the air, the Stalinists found themselves forced to accept an unwanted united front with the Trotskyists.

Ironically, in a commentary on the demonstration over CBS Radio on February 27 well-known broadcaster Walter Cronkite referred to it as dominated by "Maoists and Trotskyites" and centered his remarks on our slogan: "China: Don't Be Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism" (see accompanying box). The demonstration indicated, said Cronkite, that the left was disoriented; after all, he asked rhetorically, who would have predicted a decade ago that China could invade a Communist Vietnam with the tacit backing of Washington? The answer, as we pointed out in a reply to Cronkite prepared for broadcast over CBS Radio, was the Spartacist League, which in its 1969 resolution, "Development and Tactics of the SL," warned of "the growing objective possibility...of a U.S. deal *with China*." A clearer demonstration of the scientific character of authentic Marxism could not be asked for. ■

Walter Cronkite vs. the Spartacist League

The following editorial was broadcast by Walter Cronkite on February 27. Our reply has been submitted to CBS radio for future broadcast.

This is Walter Cronkite reporting with news and commentary on the CBS radio network. Last Saturday there was a demonstration in New York City near the Chinese mission to the UN. The demonstrators, a left-wing group, carried signs which variously demanded that the U.S. and China get out of Vietnam, and urged the Chinese not to become the cat's paw of U.S. imperialism. Obviously these people were having a hard time coping with reality. But that should not be surprising. It's tough for ideologues to keep their polarities straight these days, and that is true at both ends of the political spectrum.

If back in 1969 you had suggested that 10 years hence China would mount an invasion of a communist Vietnam, while Washington clucked like a maiden aunt about the threat of small wars turning into bigger ones, if you had suggested such a thing then, company would have been uncomfortable in your presence. The idea would have clashed with everyone's stereotypes, and it would have been much too far from perceived reality even to have been funny. To those who became accustomed then to viewing world events in the black and white clarity of ideological opposites, international developments today must be downright maddening. The communist victories in Indochina of a few years ago soon led to conflicts between the victors, Vietnam and Cambodia. And a Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. And that led to communist China's invasion of Vietnam. Furthermore the potential for major conflict which many fear today is not between communist and capitalist worlds, but between the two communist giants, China and the Soviet Union. Imagine, if you will, someone in a coma since the sixties waking up to a news account of Moscow's attack on Washington for encouraging the Chinese action on Vietnam, or rather, in Vietnam. It might be equally difficult for such a person to learn that conservative senator Jesse Helms today opposed confirming a new ambassador to Peking because it might seem the Senate was approving China's invasion of its communist neighbor. With such rapid wrenching changes in the ideological landscape, it is small wonder that the slogans and proclamations of America's Trotskyites and Maoists have taken on a growing incoherence, and at times even a kind of plaintive hysteria. But such confusion is not confined to the left, or to extremists on the fringes. It is shared by people across the whole spectrum. That fact recently led William Safire, the columnist, a confessed conservative and Republican partisan, to try his hand at a scorecard, a guide to help people to know whom to root for. While the Carter administration opposes both the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam, Safire roots for both invasions, the first because the Cambodian regime was such a brutal one, and the second to thwart the growth of Soviet influence in the area. Of course it may be that Safire just wants to be on a winning team for a change. However, so far, Chinese forces seem to have gotten bogged down short of their objective, which appears to be humiliating the Vietnamese army. And if they get dangerously bogged down, Washington may wait to share with China its expertise on finding that light at the end of the tunnel.

SL Replies:

On February 27 Walter Cronkite editorialized on his network radio program against leftist demonstrators at the Chinese Mission in New York City. He said they carried signs demanding that Chinese troops get out of Vietnam and urged the Chinese not to be the cat's paw of U.S. imperialism. Mr. Cronkite took these political demands as evidence of what he called "having a hard time coping with reality." In his view the U.S. government is possessed of disinterested evenhandedness and humane principle with regard to the Chinese invasion. The idea that present events were conditioned by a developed Washington-Peking axis seemed to him a sign that "America's Trotskyites" had "taken on a growing incoherence."

The left group which made these demands at the Chinese Mission is the Spartacist League. We do not expect Mr. Cronkite to agree with our Trotskyist defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism or with our program for political revolution to replace the Stalinist bureaucracies with workers soviets. But we find it curious and amusing that Cronkite considers it obvious that no one could have predicted the possiblity of the U.S.-China alliance "back in 1969." Even the suggestion of such an idea, he says, "would have clashed with everyone's stereotypes, and it would have been much too far from perceived reality even to have been funny."

We have news for the newsman. Revolutionary Marxism is not based on "everyone's stereotypes." We have a program which is based on accumulated historic experience and scientif-

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DAILY NEWS

You can't tell Red combatants without a scorecard

The pickets walked behind gray wooden horses on the corner of 66th St. and Broadway and, for a moment, they appeared to be protesting some terrible injustice inside the Juilliard School. But the young girls carrying violins, and the boys with their books on theory and harmony, were not the target. The pickets were trying to say something to the People's Republic of China, whose mission to the United Nations is down the block.

"China, Get Out of Vietnam!" shouted one placard. "Soviet Union, Honor Your Treaty!"

The young musicians took leaflets handed out by a Trotskyite group called the Spartacist League, glanced at them, and moved along through the slushy streets to their classes. The cops looked bored. Down the block, China's UN Mission, which occupies the old Loew's Motor Inn, was gleaming in the sun.

"What China has done is certainly backed by the United States," one of the pickets said. "What we're seeing is an attempt to hand Vietnam back to U.S. imperialism."

The clumsy words bumped around in the head like loose luggage in a plane. Much of the language of Marxism seems translated from the original algebra, and it is usually necessary to decode the language in order to understand it. Obviously American workers have not taken the trouble for years. Trotsky was by far the best writer produced by the old generation of Communists, but even his present-day followers were having their troubles yesterday making sense of the modern world.

"Don't Be a Cat's Paw for U.S. Imperialism," one of the placards said. Now, nobody ever uses the word "cat's-paw" any more; it seems snipped out of some old and musty slab of rhetoric. But some of the other language was more lively. From a handout:

"The increasingly reactionary Chinese foreign policy, both under Mao and Teng, has called on everyone from Carter's Dr. Strangelove, Brzezinski, to the deposed Shah of Iran to join in an unholy anti-Soviet alliance." Not bad. The logic is flawed, but it reads. Later on, however, we are told: "Not empty dreams of detente but only worldwide proletarian solidarity for socialist revolution can defend (the Vietnamese)

victory." And the brain again goes numb.

It all seemed so sad. We could make easy fun of these young revolutionaries; but they were, after all, the only human beings in this city yesterday who stepped out into the streets to protest the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. There were about 40 of them, which is a lot in this era of disco, "Superman," "Jaws," "Star Wars," est and other soul-numbing diversions. Nobody cares very much about Vietnam these days; but then nobody cares much about the Bronx either. We have mastered the art of indifference.

"We oppose the Soviet bureaucracy," this intense young woman was saying. "But we defend the Soviet Union."

The twists and turns of explanation were painful and tortured. Here were people calling themselves Trotskyites, defending the Soviet Union which is run by the heirs of Joseph Stalin, who had Trotsky murdered with an ax. There are no Trotskyites in the Soviet Union; at least none who is allowed to publish newspapers, stand on street corners and demonstrate, or talk freely to reporters. But simply because the Soviet Union is not capitalist, ideology places even its lukewarm supporters in an eerie prison of slippery thinking, bad history and worse logic.

"Down With Stalinist Nationalism!" came another chant. And one thought of all the people who were sent to the Gulag, of the painters who were murdred, of the poet Mayakovsky killing himself in despair, of Isaac Babel disappearing into the horror.

Exploitation and murder

Stalin and his gang of thugs proclaimed the workers' revolution, but they never worked another day themselves, except at murdering their own people. The Russian revolution was conceived as an act of liberation; it turned millions of people into prisoners or corpses. Stalin killed wives, friends, officers, other Bolsheviks, kulaks; he exploited the workers as ruthlessly as any capitalist, and turned the profits of their labor into the property of the state.

But is is not enough to protest the dirty years of murder under Stalin, as if they were an aberration. Brezhnev and his boys are no better, only slicker. The Chinese have Coca-Cola; but Pepsi Cola arrived in the Soviet Union years ago. After six decades in power, the heirs of Stalin are still afraid of elections. They are afraid of a free press. They are afraid of painters. They are afraid of writers. They are afraid, in short, of their own people.

And on this glorious afternoon in New York, all those old arguments were being churned up again, along with memories of old murders. The Chinese were still fighting in Vietnam, and the Vietnamese were fighting them back. The Russians were talking big and, as usual, doing nothing. Communist guerrillas were fighting Communist main force units in Cambodia. They had all come a long way from the glorious visions of Karl Marx, sitting in the reading room of the British Museum.

"It all sounds crazy to me, man," said Leroy Diggs, who was watching the demonstration yesterday from across 66th St. "They all Communists, right? I mean China is Communist. Vietnam is Communist. Russia's Communist. I thought they was suppose to be fightin' us. How come they fightin' each other?"

There was no way to explain.

China Out Now...

(continued from page 1)

deliberately left out of the main American-published reports.

The Chinese invasion fits into a consistent pattern of hardline U.S. opposition—diplomatic and otherwise—to Vietnam ever since the NLF/DRV army booted out the decrepit Thieu puppet government in Saigon in 1975. Washington opposed Vietnamese membership in the UN and has refused to pay the economic aid stipulated in the 1973 Paris "peace" accords. This hostility has escalated recently as a result of the signing of the Soviet-Vietnamese Friendship Treaty last November (preceded by Hanoi's entry into the Soviet bloc common market—Comecon—in June). As the Vietnam-Cambodia conflict was about to flare into war, the *New York Times* (6 December) headlined: "U.S. Warns Vietnam Growing Soviet Links Imperil American Tie."

The invasion comes in the context of Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade and a recent escalation of provocations by the Carter administration against the Soviet Union. Thus when the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan was kidnapped earlier this month by tribalist opponents of the Soviet-backed regime, Washington had the gall to accuse the Russians of being responsible for his death. And over Iran the State Department has fired off a number of diplomatic notes complaining about Radio Moscow broadcasts accusing the U.S. of planning to interfere in the explosive events there. Yet at that very moment a U.S. flotilla was sailing from Subic Bay in the Philippines heading toward the Persian Gulf, while giant C-130 transports were being lined up at airfields in the eastern reaches of Turkey for some "obscure" purpose!

Gamma-Liaison

Chinese troops are drilled in preparation for "hegemonism" in Indochina. Teng promised the U.S. that China would teach Vietnam a "bloody lesson."

Marxists do not support the nationalist aims of the rival Stalinist bureaucracies in Hanoi and Peking feuding over which of them shall be the overlord of the Indochinese peninsula. However, the Chinese invasion is clearly intertwined with imperialist opposition to the gains of the Vietnamese revolution, won at the cost of more than a million lives and decades of struggle. Socialists and labor militants throughout the world must demand that China Get Out of Vietnam Now! We call on the workers and peasants of the Chinese deformed workers state to demand an end to the obscene, sinister anti-Soviet Peking-Washington alliance now aimed at bloodying the working people of Vietnam. The workers movement must stop the shipment of any military supplies to China. And we address ourselves to Moscow and the Soviet workers to demand, USSR: Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam!

But it is also necessary to warn that the continuation of China's reactionary invasion can quickly take the conflict out of a regional context. Should the Soviet Union be drawn into the fighting in a direct way it would pit the Russian degenerated workers state against the Western imperialists, principally the U.S., through the intermediary of their Chinese ally. This would pose point-blank the urgent task of militarily defending the USSR and the gains of the October Revolution. In this conflict the Trotskyists know where they stand: shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet workers against the counterrevolutionary attack. The Fourth International was founded on the principle of unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and we will not flinch in the decisive hour!

Vietnam: Graveyard for Invaders

Ever since Christmas, Western intelligence has been reporting on the build-up of Chinese forces along the Vietnamese border. More than 100,000 troops were assembled along the frontier and fully one third of China's fleet of jet fighters was transferred to airfields in Yunnan and southern Kwangsi Province. Moreover one of Peking's top generals, Yang Teh-chih, who was chief of staff of the Chinese troops in Korea during 1951-53, had been put in command of the forces. So when the invasion began on February 17 it was immediately understood that this was not just another border clash.

The Chinese forces apparently planned to lay down withering artillery barrages and then walk in behind the wall of fire, pause to bring up the big guns and ammunition and then repeat the process until it drew in regular Vietnamese forces. However, after the first day's advance the invaders seem to have lost their momentum and have been held off by stiff resistance from Vietnamese border militias and regional forces. While casualties on the Vietnamese side are not known, Western intelligence sources believe the Chinese have taken heavy losses, perhaps over 9,000 casualties out of a force of 70,000 actually engaged in battle. It was obvious that Peking was having difficulties in landing the "punishing blow" it sought.

This should have been expected. The Chinese weaponry is limited to automatic rifles, World War II-model artillery and antiquated MIG-17 aircraft; even the infantry moves largely on foot rather than trucks. Moreover, the Chinese have had no combat experience at all since their 33-day incursion into India in 1962, and not really since the Korean War, more than a quarter century ago. In the meantime most of their army commanders have grown flabby or fallen victim to the Maoist Cultural Revolution. And across their gun barrels they are facing a Vietnamese army described by *New York Times* military correspondent Drew Middleton as "the strongest military establishment in Southeast Asia." With an experienced airforce with modern MIG-21's and a few MIG-23's, it is motorized and has large numbers of heavy tanks. Most importantly, after 30 years of almost continuous fighting they managed to defeat on the battlefield not only the South Vietnamese puppet army but also the French expeditionary force and then the most powerful imperialist army in the world. Commanding the Vietnamese forces is General Van Tien Dung (successor to Vo Nguyen Giap) who led the steamroller spring offensive which took Saigon in 1975 and the recent lightning strike in Cambodia.

So far the military reports in the Western press are based on massive ignorance—relying on "Thai intelligence sources" and the like. Successive reports of a Chinese pullout, a Chinese raid on supply dumps outside Haiphong and Chinese capture of four provincial capitals have all dissipated into thin air. What is clear as we go to press is that the Chinese advance has been stopped and that a major battle is shaping up around the city of Lang Son on Vietnam's northeast border. The Vietnamese know the terrain well—during the first Indochinese war Giap chewed up French forces here for months. While the unwieldy colonial army was forced into a series of last-ditch stands pinned down on hillsides or trapped in the valleys, the Viet Minh perfected a brand of infantry warfare (often inaccurately equated with Cuban or Chinese-style guerrilla war) adapted to the mountainous terrain that has made it one of the best land combat armies in the world. Peking may find out what the French and Americans before them discovered: Vietnam is a graveyard for invaders.

Thus far the Chinese have been vague about their specific battle aims. Teng has been quoted as saying that he hopes to be out of Vietnam in less time than the 1962 China/India border clash took. At that time the People's Liberation Army swept away Indian outposts at the border, strutted up and down the Indian side of the Himalayas for three weeks, then pulled back after having totally discredited the Indian officer corps. The very idea that the Chinese could inflict such a defeat on Vietnam is ludicrous. The Vietnamese have been caught off balance—many of their crack divisions are in Cambodia, and they have occupation forces in Laos and garrisons in the South. But they will be aggressive in their methodical way: it's their country and they've lost millions of human beings to assert that. In short, it is not at all clear that China will have the whip hand in this "punitive" expedition.

Collusion

The U.S. has affected an "even-handed posture, sanctimoniously criticizing "any use of force outside one's own territory"!! According to a State Department spokesman:

> "We are opposed both to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. We call for the immediate withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia and

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Mike Peters © 1979 Dayton Daily News

'I don't know what got into me . . . I went to America . . . I ate hamburgers and Coca-Cola . . . I wore a 10-gallon hat, and then I invaded Vietnam . . .'

Betrayal in Indonesia

In June 1965 the Indonesian army carried out a counterrevolutionary coup with the aim of dismembering the Communist Party, the PKI, which had achieved a position of influence under the nationalist regime of Sukarno. This goal was achieved by unleashing a reign of terror which murdered over *half a million* leftists and worker/peasant militants. The PKI leadership shared the responsibility for this bloodbath by its line of relying on the "progressive" Sukarno, as did the Maoist bureaucracy in Peking, which urged this policy on its Indonesian comrades in the name of "peaceful coexistence" in Asia. In our article we pointed out how this betrayal by the Chinese Stalinists endangered the working class internationally:

> "Meanwhile, China's rotten maneuvers have helped drive all the other deformed workers' states (e.g., Cuba, N. Vietnam, and now N. Korea), except Albania, at best toward neutrality in siding with the USSR—at China's expense; for Russia possesses overwhelmingly greater economic preponderance while China offers neither trustworthy military, nor economic, nor political aid. (The N.Y. *Times*, 13 October 1965, reports that even the feudal Cambodian government now draws back from China on the valid grounds that she has done next to nothing to stop the incessant bombing of her other 'ally,' N. Vietnam.) Thus China is now almost totally *isolated* as she faces U.S. imperialism—a fruit of the Mao bureaucracy's policies of coexistence with 'friendly' capitalist governments and cowardly subordination of the interests of the working people to the special interests of the Maoist national ruling caste. It is no cause of joy to record that once again in the Indonesian betrayals it is proved that Mao & Co. in China as Stalin and his successors in Russia, systematically undermine the defense of the workers' states over which they rule. The defense of the Sino-Soviet bloc against imperialism urgently requires the *political revolution* by the workers in these countries against the ruling bureaucracy which strangles workers' democracy and economic growth at home and betrays revolutions abroad."
>
> —*Spartacist* No. 5, November-December 1965

2,000 Demand: Spread the Strike!

Farmworkers Caravan Shuts Down Scab Ranches

WV Photo

Cops stand by impotently as Farmworkers pull out the scabs.

LOS ANGELES—More than 2,000 striking members of the United Farm Workers (UFW) swept through southern California's Imperial Valley February 21, stopping virtually all work in the nation's largest lettuce and produce fields. It was a high point for the farm workers in a six-week-old strike that has become a crucial test of strength between California agribusiness and the UFW. *WV* reporters who accompanied the strikers on their day-long battle to shut down the fields filed the following eyewitness account:

"We pulled into Calexico, a small town near the Mexican border, before dawn on February 21. There were already over 2,000 pickets stretching down Imperial Avenue and massed together in parking lots and on corners from 8th Street to the border. A union pickup truck with loudspeakers goes up and down the street announcing over and over that no one goes to work today, that today is a general strike in the Imperial Valley.

"It is only 4:45 a.m., but the scabs have already started to arrive. Every scab-filled car that tries to go by is stopped by the picketers, who step into the street, hitting the cars with the sticks of their UFW flags, kicking them and trying to open the doors. Foremen and growers receive special attention. Less than two weeks ago, striker Rufino Contreras was shot in the face and killed by one of these thugs. Yelling 'Coyote' (the term they use for foremen), the strikers attack their cars with all they can muster.

"At 6:15, the union loudspeaker is calling everyone to 'El Hoyo' ('the hole'), a huge parking lot where the labor contractors used to recruit their workers, now used for daily strike assignments. We gather there to form a car caravan to go to the fields where scabs have been reported. These caravans, reminiscent of the Auto Workers 'Flying Squadrons' of the 1930's and the coal miners' 'roving pickets,' have become a regular feature as the strike has intensified. There have already been several clashes between busloads of scabs and the strikers who patrol the struck fields to enforce their picket lines. Today, the whole Valley is their target.

"The huge caravan pulls out from El Hoyo about 8 a.m., with strikers jammed into hundreds of cars and trucks. We stop to drop off pickets at a couple of idle fields and then head toward Sam Andrews, one of the larger farms where scabs have been spotted.

"When we arrive, 30 or 40 scabs are already at work. Hundreds of strikers line the roads surrounding the field and start yelling 'Vénganse, vénganse, que entramos a sacarles) ('You better get out of there or we're coming in after you'). After about ten minutes, 30 to 40 strikers dash across the road and into the field. Growers and foremen who have been watching nervously jump out of their cars, banging no trespassing signs into the ground and yelling threats. In a few minutes, eight squad cars filled with cops arrive, but by that time, there is no more work going on. The strikers are coming out of the field, escorting about half the scabs, who are looking sheepish and saying 'Viva la Huelga' to the strikers. This draws a round of applause. Then the union soundtruck pulls up, notifying us of scabs at another field, and we are off again.

"Next stop is the Maggio field, the scene of the day's biggest confrontation. About 40 riot-equipped cops are occupying a corner of the field where the two main access roads intersect. The local police have been beefed up during the strike with reinforcements from as far away as Yuma, Arizona, units of the U.S. Border Patrol and the California Highway Patrol, who were sent in last week by Governor Jerry Brown. Across the road from us today we see mostly county sheriffs and a few local cops.

"Most of the 2,000 strikers take up positions opposite the police, and about 200 head down the road toward the field where the scabs are working. But before they have gotten halfway down the road, tear gas is filling the air.

"Without any warning, the cops began firing straight into the crowd. Tear gas canisters are landing all around us, literally at point-blank range. There are many injuries and picketers begin retreating into surrounding fields. Many are collapsing, overwhelmed by the gas. Along with hundreds of the strikers, we manage to get back to the cars, inviting those near us to get in out of the choking fumes. After recovering, we head back out: more volleys are fired, again right in our faces. The battle seesaws back and forth like this for over two hours—salvos of gas, a brief retreat, then an advance, more gas.

"There is no panic among the strikers at any point. Smaller-scale clashes over the past few weeks have seasoned them. Men and women alike moisten their bandannas in the irrigation ditches parallel to the field, wrap them around their faces and charge right back through clouds of gas to counterattack. The cops are kept tied up, forced over and over to fall back to regroup, while more strikers enter the fields to get at the main target: the scabs.

"And it works! The scabs are fleeing. Smashed irrigation gates are flooding and ruining some sections. A short way off flames begin consuming an overturned field conveyor. A police helicopter is now overhead. It buzzes the field, several times getting so low that it seemed it would hit the strikers. A chant goes up:'Que se estrelle, el cabrón' (loosely translated, 'Let the fucker crash'). The copter gasses the field on at least seven or eight passes. While this helps clear the field of pickets, it also gets rid of any scabs who might be left.

"After two hours of this running battle, the strikers returned to their cars, leaving the cops to defend an abandoned field. When we returned later in the afternoon, the field was still deserted. The battle at Maggio had also made the point with growers and scabs throughout the Imperial Valley. Every field we visited during the rest of the day was empty save for the rotting crops that *have already cost the growers over $20* million."

The next day, newspapers in the Imperial Valley and throughout California are filled with hysterical denunciations of the strikers' "lawlessness." The growers and their press agents are livid precisely because the strikers were so effective. By their own experience, the UFW farm workers are learning how the unions were built in this country and how to win this strike: by shutting the employers down tight with militant mass picketing.

Yet UFW president Cesar Chavez continues to restrict the strike to less than half the 28 growers the union is bargaining with. The militancy of the Imperial Valley farm workers is setting an example for farm workers elsewhere, however, and additional walkouts have begun in Northern California and Arizona. Many of the 7,000 strike supporters who came to Rufino Contreras' funeral are eager to be called out, but Chavez has kept the majority of the farm workers in the fields.

As his members are gunned down and gassed, Chavez says his place is "in the cities" where he is trying to organize a food drive and has announced a boycott of Sun Harvest, which markets Chiquita bananas. Chavez is trying to diffuse the farm workers' struggle into impotent consumer boycotts.

This is exactly what happened to lettuce and grape strikers in 1973 who fought back against cop and Teamster goon attacks. To eschew any allegations of "violence" Chavez simply folded up the strike and started a weak consumer boycott. The union was nearly destroyed as a result.

The farm workers' fight is in the fields and on the highways where scab produce is being shipped. It is here that it will be won or lost. The Imperial Valley strikers have shown the way to win. Spread the Strike! Shut Down All 28 growers! Teamsters: Hot Cargo Scab Produce! Victory to the UFW!■

Felix Greene

VIETNAM AGAIN: U.S. IMPERIALISM'S DIRTIEST WAR

U.S. imperialism sent more than two and a half million soldiers to Vietnam. It dropped more bombs than in World War II, devastating the people and the countryside for eleven years. But the determined struggle of the Vietnamese people prevailed. America's longest and dirtiest war ended with a panicky scramble into helicopters on the U.S. embassy roof as the North Vietnamese army marched triumphantly into Saigon in April 1975.

In the U.S., collective amnesia seemed to fall upon the land. Liberal ideologue John Kenneth Galbraith bitterly hoped Vietnam would return "to that obscurity which it so richly deserves." But the American bourgeoisie's war against the Vietnamese social revolution was for 25 years the pivotal expression of imperialist revanchism against the Sino-Soviet states, while it polarized American society for a turbulent decade.

Now banner headlines about a new war in Vietnam dominate the news—but this time it's the Chinese invading after getting the green light from Washington, setting off a third Indochinese war and evoking the prospect of global holocaust.

A sampling of opinion from yesterday's bourgeois "hawks" and "doves" (*New York Times*, 22 February) shows the policy shift from the post-World War II days when the "ChiComs" were to be "contained" in Southeast Asia to today's palmy détente with the Peking bureaucrats. "Were you surprised by the invasion?" asked the *Times*. "No, I wasn't," coolly replied William C. Westmoreland, former commander of U.S. troops in Vietnam. Graham A. Martin, the last American ambassador to Saigon, echoed with bland racism: "I don't think that anyone who understands the Asian psychology is surprised." Perhaps most cynical was former Secretary of State Dean Rusk: "I've personally exhausted my capacity to be concerned about Vietnam." While hawks and doves sniped at the "irony" of each other's current positions, Eugene McCarthy was perhaps the bluntest about the real concerns of the former bourgeois anti-warriors: "I'd rather see the Chinese fighting the Vietnamese than us fighting the Vietnamese."

Where All the Flowers Went

Things certainly look different today than they did a decade ago when ringing chants of "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh" echoed off the universities' ivied walls and tens of thousands of protesters jammed the Washington Mall at six-month intervals. Apathy, self-pity and isolationism have been the late 1970's popular American attitude toward Vietnam, while demoralization must reign among those few New Left remnants who haven't sunk back into the Democratic Party or "civil disobedience" in the muddy fields around nuclear plants. Where did all the flowers go, they must wonder, seeing the former "socialist brothers" of China and Vietnam fighting each other.

Ronald L. Haeberle

It will not go away: My Lai.

In 1965, at the beginning of America's heavy military involvement in Indochina, what later became known as "the movement" was not yet entirely dominated by bourgeois defeatism. SDS's first antiwar march on Washington in April 1965 did not yet have the red armbands and militant chants of the late 1960's, but it represented a sharp break from the Cold War liberalism of the 1950's. That this potentially revolutionary energy was splintered and dissipated, mainly into Maoism, is the responsibility of the fake-socialist reformists, mainly the Communist Party (CP) and Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

The CP and SWP plunged wholeheartedly into turning the heterogeneous radical "movement" into a low-level popular front of Democratic Party liberals and the left. Hiding behind pacifism and social-patriotism, they left the field clear for the New Left Maoists to grow among impressionistic petty-bourgeois radicals seeking a more militant "anti-imperialist" line. The now-jaded New Leftists whose short honeymoon with Maoism has turned into the nightmare of China attacking their revolutionary models, Cuba and Vietnam, are the product of the pro-imperialist neutralism of the CP and SWP, best expressed in 1967 by the SWP's Fred Halstead: "I'm personally for bringing the troops home. But as for victory to the NLF, I don't know; I'm not Vietnamese."

The "official" peace movement haughtily dismissed the American working class and black population, who bore the brunt of the actual fighting as well as the economic burdens of the war. But the alienation most flamboyantly expressed by the petty-bourgeoisie went deep. Muhammad Ali spoke for a broad section of American blacks when he said, "No Viet Cong ever called me nigger." As the agony of Vietnam dragged on, the American army disintegrated into a sullen, demoralized mess. It is estimated that as many as 100,000 soldiers became drug addicts in Vietnam. The ones who limped home to their working-class neighborhoods were confused and bitter. Among all sections of the working people, America's first big losing war broke the back of aggressive patriotic moods. There was a profound sense that the era of America's unquestioned "right" (and might) to rule the world was over.

The Spartacist League alone had the program which could have turned the antiwar movement into an authentic anti-imperialist movement based on *drawing the class line* in Vietnam and at home. The SL's resolute class solidarity with the Vietnamese workers and peasants and its program for turning the multi-class antiwar movement toward working-class action against the war were the objective bases for uniting radical students, trade unionists and the black population around opposition to U.S. imperialism and its twin political parties. In the unions, among antiwar activists, on the campuses, among the soldiers, the small forces of the Spartacist League fought for the principled program of class struggle which if it had become rooted in the working masses would have given powerful assistance to the Vietnamese revolution and laid the basis for creating a Trotskyist revolutionary party in this country.

U.S.: Imperialist Policeman

The Vietnamese people have been at war for a long time. In the first Indochinese war French imperialism was the loser, totally smashed in 1954 at Dienbienphu by the North Vietnamese (under the leadership of Giap and Tien Van Dung, today's organizer of the army against the Chinese invasion). The flower of the officer corps trained at St. Cyr was crushed. France's Vietnam defeat, along with the losing colonial war in Algeria, set the stage for de Gaulle's defeatist bonapartist coup which established the basic structure of French politics for the last two decades.

After 1954 the U.S. took over directly. It was Kennedy's "Camelot."

along with McNamara's "whiz kids" and their university counterinsurgency playgrounds who were going to show how it should be done, setting up the air-conditioned bunkers of the Pentagon East, where the CIA and military men plotted their kill ratios and body counts, developed the Phoenix assassination bureau and unleashed the murder of their own puppet, the unfortunate Ngo Dien Diem. The second Indochinese war was on.

The first really heavy U.S. military involvement came in February 1965 when the Johnson administration, which already had over 20,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam, unleashed massive bombing raids over North Vietnam, the first phase of the "Rolling Thunder" sustained air war against the North. In response the Spartacist League immediately sent a cablegram to Ho Chi Minh expressing solidarity with the defense of Vietnam against U.S. imperialism and mass distributed a leaflet, "What Gives in Vietnam?" Exposing the Johnson administration's lies about North Vietnamese "provocations," we pointed out the real reason for the air raids:

> "...they want to force Hanoi to intervene in restraint of the N.L.F. The basic fact which has now been spelled out in the headlines is that the U.S. military's dirty little war in Vietnam is *already lost*. The South Vietnam 'army' is now effective only to overthrow fictitious Saigon 'governments'.... Unless the N.L.F. can somehow be persuaded not to exploit its advantage the U.S. position will soon collapse."

We demanded "Hands Off Viet Nam!" and the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the U.S. Army as the only course "in the interests of American working people and our Vietnamese brothers."

It had been obvious since Dienbienphu that the Vietnamese Communist Party led by Ho Chi Minh was in essential control of the entire country. The heroic struggles of the Indochinese people to be free of imperialism and the military capacity of the North Vietnamese army had been demonstrated time and time again, yet the Vietnamese Stalinists repeatedly held back from the final offensive.

By the fall of 1965 the fundamental class axes and issues which would dominate events for the next ten years had crystallized. In Indonesia the largest Communist Party in Southeast Asia was betrayed by its pro-Peking leaders. They preached trust in the bourgeois army, who along with Islamic fundamentalists massacred the CP's members by the hundreds of thousands. This mass murder removed much of the strategic need for continued heavy U.S. military involvement in the area. But despite repeated indications that the North Vietnamese and the southern National Liberation Front could be pressured into a coalition government, and that Moscow and Peking would stop short of all-out military support, the U.S. government and its bloody war machine escalated the war, determined to uphold their position as number-one world policeman.

SUNDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 1965
PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF VIETNAM
HANOI, NORTH VIETNAM

SPARTACIST IN FULLEST SOLIDARITY WITH DEFENSE OF YOUR COUNTRY AGAINST ATTACK BY UNITED STATES IMPERIALISM. HEROIC STRUGGLE OF VIETNAMESE WORKING PEOPLE FURTHERS THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

SPARTACIST EDITORIAL
BOARD

WV Photo

SWP appealed to liberals—Spartacists drew the class line in the antiwar movement: Washington D.C., 1973. WV Photo

"Soviet Nuclear Shield Must Cover China, North Vietnam!"

By October 1965 the U.S. had 150,000 troops in Vietnam, and the first large antiwar demonstrations led by the burgeoning "official" peace movement occurred. In September 1965 the Spartacist League was forced to walk out of the Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee—the umbrella group sheltering both socialist and liberal antiwar tendencies—in protest against political censorship. While the SWP and the pacifist ministers blocked on the single slogan of "Stop the War Now," the SL counterposed the call for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops, insisting that ostensible socialists must take a side in the civil war raging in Vietnam.

The SL was the only organization on the left which fought for the military victory of the NLF/DRV while warning that the Stalinist policies of the bureaucracy would lead to betrayal of the Indochinese people's heroic struggle. Demanding that the USSR and China give full military support to Vietnam, we picketed the Soviet mission in New York in 1965 with the slogan "Soviet Nuclear Shield Must Cover China, North Vietnam!" (see excerpts from an open letter to the Soviet military attaché distributed at a similar protest by Spartacist comrades in California).

While the SWP and its tame youth group "best-built" respectable demonstrations for the liberals, the Spartacist League recognized in SDS and sections of the New Left a growing frustration with liberalism and a potential revolutionary impulse for which the program of Trotskyism alone could provide a path forward. At antiwar conferences, at SDS meetings, in leaflets and in our press, we explained our class solidarity with the Vietnamese social revolution and warned of the dangers of Stalinist nationalism. The heroism of the Vietnamese fighters, especially the Tet offensive, spurred the growth of the "anti-imperialist" New Left. But the SL was too small to win more than a small fraction to proletarian Trotskyism, and the Maoist currents were the main beneficiary of the radicalization. For the vast bulk of these youth, Maoism was a temporary diversion from the pursuit of their careers. For those who were more serious, Maoist sympathies have now become the vehicle for reconciliation with the politics of NATO and bloody military aggression against the Vietnamese workers and peasants.

From Protest to Power: "For an Anti-War Friday!"

The Spartacist League uniquely sought to turn the militancy of radical youth in the direction of labor action against the war. We recognized the possibility—for the first time since the McCarthyite witchhunt—to begin to reforge the necessary links between the left and the workers movement, drawing together the increasingly volatile and dissatisfied layers of U.S. society: the blacks, the workers, the students.

We proposed an "antiwar Friday"—instead of one more weekend peace crawl, a one-day political strike against the war. Our leaflet, "From Protest to Power," distributed at the 21 October 1967 Washington demonstration, explained:

> "The series of demonstrations leading up to the April 15th affair not only had no effect on government policy, but the escalation of the war appears to have coincided with each demonstration.... Isaac Deutscher caught the problem exactly when he said that he'd exchange the whole huge April 15th mobilization for just one dock strike."

Concretely the SL proposed:

> "...building for a one-day general strike in factories, offices, ghetto neighborhoods and schools as the next national mobilization. Given the existing strength of the anti-war movement, and proper organizing, such a mobilization could bring out huge numbers of workers and students, and have a severe effect on whole segments of the economy. Even on this modest scale, such a demonstration would put the 'fear of god' into the government, because it would mean the anti-war movement had gone far beyond accepted norms of protest and attacked the very foundations of American capitalism—production."

At the same time, the SL argued against the pacificist/utopian draft resistance current, pointing out that:

> "Far from resisting the war, the voluntary purging of radicals from the army strengthens the ideological purity and political reliability of the army.... Perhaps even more important is the effect of student draft avoidance, particularly the frenzied scrambling after 2-S student deferments, which are available only to the intellectually or financially privileged, on the attitude of working-class draftees."
>
> —reprinted in the Spartacist pamphlet, *Stalinism and Trotskyism in Vietnam*

Calling for the abolition of the class-biased student deferments and the organizing of antiwar protests among soldiers, SL supporters put out a half dozen issues of *G.I. Voice*, a newsletter carrying a working-class socialist program into the ranks of the draftees.

But in the absence of a powerful pole of united working-class opposition to the imperialist adventure, the advent of the 1970's found the left and workers movement more divided than ever. The New Left had exploded, spinning off the would-be terrorist Weathermen into a netherworld counterculture of hippiedom, drugs, draft dodging and "lifestyle liberation." Embittered blacks had retreated into hard nationalism, the best of them—the Black Panthers—getting blown away by the "pigs" they had sworn to "off." Despite widespread disaffection with the war, the labor movement in its mass remained aloof from the organized antiwar movement (though Stalinist and liberal bureaucrats occasionally affixed their signatures to the "official" peace appeals) and the hard-hats' attacks on the "faggot commie draft-dodgers" remained the most visible statement of white-worker opinion.

But by 1970 some light was beginning to dawn in some influential bourgeois quarters. The Sino-Soviet split and the

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G. Virgili/Paris Match

Heroic Vietnamese fighters: they beat the French, the Americans...

China Out Now...

(continued from page 4)

Chinese troops from Vietnam."
—*New York Times*, 18 February

This sounds oh-so-neutral until one reads it carefully and realizes that this statement coincides completely with the Peking position, namely that its attack was made "necessary" by the Vietnamese strike that toppled Pol Pot. And the U.S.' calm reaction to the Chinese adventure contrasts markedly with its hysterical frenzy over the Vietnamese drive into Cambodia or the entry of Cuban troops into Angola to fight the South Africans and CIA. When Carter remarked on February 20 that the war would not affect the new Chinese-American "friendship," the London *Economist* (24 February) noted it was "about as close as a nominally neutral observer can get to wishing China luck."

The present U.S. government is a rather peculiar fowl, posing as the purest fighter for "human rights" and then going down to the wire with the murderous shah of Iran and even backing the Pol Pot regime only a year after declaring it the all-time violator of Jimmy Carter's moral standards. The Carter administration is maximally hypocritical, overtly so, and downright stupid. So last summer it proclaimed that two U.S. government missions could not go to Russia, in protest against the trial of Soviet Jewish dissident Shcharansky, who even Pentagon sources admitted was guilty of passing military secrets to the U.S. But after the Chinese invasion Treasury Secretary Blumenthal is off to Peking where he clinked glasses with Teng while working out arrangements for U.S. investment and loans. (Likewise, the industry minister of Britain's Labour government, Eric Varley, despite a storm of left-wing criticism was packed off to China to negotiate the sale of some 70 jet fighters.)

Der Spiegel

Chinese soldiers on the way to the front.

Carter is still trying to act as gendarme of the world—the whole aim of his "moral" foreign policy is to salvage U.S. prestige after the Vietnam debacle and to rearm American imperialism (politically *and militarily*) to play a global interventionist role. He has tried to pull a hard cop/soft cop routine to hoodwink the gullible. So on the one hand his black front man Andrew Young is supposed to be saying indiscreet things on behalf of the "Third World" at the United Nations. Meanwhile back at the White House you find Ziggy Brzezinski, who comes on like something dredged up out of the Vatican catacombs. He's a Polish Catholic nationalist and ultrarightist and bitter-end Russia-hater who is so sinister that even the Israelis are nervous about him. Brzezinski's the one running the U.S. China policy, and you can bet that one way or another he had his finger in Teng's invasion of Vietnam.

That is not to distinguish him from the rest of the Carter administration, however, the way Moscow tries to do. In fact, government officials have practically said straight out that they were informed of the attack in advance. The CIA, for one thing, was so burned over its failure to get anything right about events in Iran, it rushed to the press to say they had been following Chinese troop movements for a month and a half. Earlier the *Washington Star* (1 February) reported that "Teng's comments on the China-Vietnam border situation ... seemed to be preparing the American public for the possibility of a war there" and that he "refused to deny that China's troop buildup might be used to support Cambodia by hitting its invader, Vietnam." And the latest State Department denial of foreknowledge—"we did not either give a green light or have a battle plan presented to us" (*New York Times*, 21 February)—is more like a total confession.

In U.S. political circles, both liberals and conservatives were convinced of

Vietnam Again...

(continued from page 7)

Indonesian massacre laid the basis for an anti-Communist restabilization of Southeast Asia without the continuation of the losing Vietnam adventure. Sizable sections of the bourgeois establishment came over to the "dove" camp and were hailed as comrades by the official antiwar leadership, which had been organized on the program of bourgeois defeatism from the beginning.

"Blood and Nixon"

Meanwhile Nixon was still escalating. On 30 April 1970 U.S. troops invaded Cambodia. In the ensuing mass demonstrations on college campuses, the Ohio National Guard opened fire at Kent State, killing four students. The largest antiwar demonstration in U.S. history hit Washington, where the SL banner "All Indochina Must Go Communist!" drew cheers. Campuses across the nation exploded in spontaneous "strikes" and occupations.

WV Photo

Spartacus Youth League demonstrates against Gerald Ford at Yale in 1975.

With massive outrage sweeping the nation, the SL threw its forces into building for an alliance of workers and students around the slogan of "labor strikes against the war." In California and New York, SL supporters in the trade unions fought for the passage of "labor strike" motions on the floor of union meetings, rallying many antiwar labor militants to their cause. And the SL youth group at Columbia University organized a "Work Stoppage Committee" which addressed local union meetings on the need for a one-day general strike against the war. This was the closest the SL's small forces came to implementing the class-struggle program that could have dealt a real and lasting blow to imperialism.

Meanwhile the SWP was busy cementing its alliance with the defeatist bourgeoisie. On 4 July 1971 the bloc was sealed in blood. At the New York City conference of the SWP's National Peace Action Coalition, members of Progressive Labor and the Spartacist League vehemently protested the presence of senator Vance Hartke on the platform. To reassure Hartke, the SWP unleashed its goons, who bloodied the protesters and threw them out of the meeting.

Nixon's 1972 trip to Peking and the infamous "Paris Peace Accords" negotiated by Kissinger were supposed to usher in a new era in imperialist politics and ensure "peace with honor" in Indochina. But the corrupt U.S. puppets in Saigon fled before the North Vietnamese army, which held off final victory as long as it decently could before finally being forced to move into the power vacuum created by the American retreat.

By the fall of 1974 Watergate had driven Nixon from the White House. The North Vietnamese unleashed the "great spring offensive" which drove into Saigon by April 1975. The Spartacist League hailed the victory but warned that it was fraught with dangers, for it was not the Vietnamese working class which had come to political power, but a Stalinist bureaucracy schooled in class collaboration and nationalism.

The present events in Indochina bitterly confirm our warnings that the Stalinist bureaucracies, from Moscow and Peking to Havana and Hanoi, are the greatest internal obstacle to consolidating the gains of the great social revolutions accomplished by the proletarian and peasant masses. Only the working class—through socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries and political revolutions in the deformed workers states—can safeguard and extend the social conquests won by the Vietnamese masses in three decades of bitter struggle against imperialism. ■

Open Letter to Soviet Attaché Rogochov

"Does Soviet Nuclear Shield Cover Hanoi?"

Daily Cal

SL supporter seized by University of California cops in picket of Soviet attaché on the Berkeley campus, 14 November 1966.

In November 1966 the Bay Area Spartacist League picketed the Soviet mission in San Francisco where it distributed an open letter to Soviet attaché Rogochov, asking, "Does Soviet Nuclear Shield Cover Hanoi?" Reprinted below are excerpts from this leaflet:

> "Within the limitations of our power, we and many others in this country have acted to oppose the imperialist war the U.S. government is waging against the working people of Vietnam. Now we ask you what your government, with its vast military and economic power, has done in this respect.... Why are you sending fifteen-year-old Sam II missiles to Vietnam when you have a plentiful supply of Sam III's, which would provide real protection to the cities and villages of North Vietnam? ...for years you have used the threat of your own nuclear weapons system to shield Soviet cities against U.S. nuclear attack. Does this protection extend to Peking? Does the Soviet nuclear shield cover Hanoi? Your failure to so state and your obscene chase after a détente with the imperialists at the price of other people's revolutions and ultimately at the expense of the gains of the October Revolution, encourage the U.S. on a road clearly leading to nuclear attack against Chinese nuclear installations and ... against targets in North Vietnam. A credible statement by your government that a nuclear attack on the Democratic Republic of North Vietnam or the People's Republic of China would be treated as an attack on the Soviet Union itself would not increase the danger of atomic Armageddon, but vastly lessen it.
>
> "May we suggest, Mr. Rogochov, that you cannot answer these questions in a Marxist or socialist framework because you represent a regime and a social stratum which is the mortal enemy of both.... We believe, Mr. Rogochov, that the world revolution will triumph, either that or that we will all die together, capitalist, bureaucrat and the people alike. But we think that this revolution will triumph not through and because of you and your like, but via a road whereon your political carcass will be trampled down alongside Lyndon Johnson's. Can you prove us wrong?
>
> "LONG LIVE THE WORLD REVOLUTION!"
>
> —reprinted in *Spartacist* No. 9, January-February 1967

Washington's collusion in the invasion. The liberal *New York Times* (22 February) commented editorially that "...the daily Soviet charges that President Carter encouraged the Chinese strike, at least tacitly, during Teng Hsiao Ping's recent visit cannot be dismissed as mere paranoid propaganda." The liberals were plenty worried about the possible consequences. James Wechsler wrote in the *New York Post* (20 February) that "If this is the first fruit of our 'China card,' it must be said that the Chinese had apparently stacked the deck." In contrast, former Nixon staffer William Safire cheers hooray and provides a "global tout sheet" on "Who to Root For," with the cardinal principle of hostility to the Soviet Union. On the possibility of a China-Russia clash he advises:

> "*Root for:* China. Even though we now know that Mr. Teng took Mr. Carter to the cleaners by timing normalization to his secret invasion plans, the fact remains that the enemy of our main adversary is our ally."
>
> —*New York Times*, 26 February

In all this the Kremlin has reacted quite conservatively by ordinary bourgeois diplomatic standards—i.e., wanton abdication. A 19 February TASS communiqué warned China to stop the invasion "before it is too late," but pointedly omitted any direct military threat. Later an article in the 19 February issue of *Pravda* charged that it was impossible for the U.S. not to have learned of the forthcoming attack from Teng. And on 27 February *Pravda* published a lengthy authoritative commentary saying that "The ambivalent stand taken by the U.S. ruling circles ... contributed to Peking's openly taking the warpath." The Soviet military command dispatched an intelligence ship to the Gulf of Tonkin to monitor the fighting and to aid Vietnamese communications, and sent a few planeloads of urgent supplies.

In part, this reticent response is a reflection of Moscow's dreams of détente with the United States: hopes of negotiating a new SALT treaty, desire not to strengthen the hand of "warmonger" Brzezinski over "dove" Vance, etc. More importantly it is the expression of bureaucratic selfishness. For all its talk of proletarian internationalism against the Eurocommunists, when an ally is actually under military attack the Kremlin sits on its hands, stingily doling out minimum aid. Thus there is much speculation that they are holding back in order to pressure the Vietnamese into granting base rights at Cam Ranh Bay to the Soviet navy. It is this criminal negligence, allowing the Vietnamese to stand essentially alone against the Chinese attack in collusion with U.S. imperialism, that impels our demand, "Soviet Union: Honor Your Treaty with Vietnam!"

An interesting side effect of the escalating Chinese ties to the U.S. has been the reconsolidation of a Soviet bloc, which not so long ago seemed on the verge of breaking up due to the centrifugal forces of "polycentrism," "Eurocommunism" and the Sino-Soviet split. Unlike East Germany, for example, the Hanoi regime is no mere puppet of Moscow and has withstood Kremlin pressure to make disadvantageous deals (such as over Cam Ranh Bay). But Peking's ties to Washington have pushed Vietnam toward the USSR if only out of self-defense. It has also driven away China's erstwhile ally Albania, and called into question the allegiance of Kim Il Sung's North Korea, so that today China has no firm alliance with any other deformed workers state. Its *closest* ally, in fact, is presently the U.S. Over the Chinese invasion, only Yugoslavia and Rumania of the Eastern European states took the line of "soft" support for Peking, by calling for mutual withdrawal of troops from Vietnam and Cambodia. And in West Europe even Carrillo's PCE in Spain and Berlinguer's PCI in Italy condemned the Peking aggression.

As for Moscow's ultimate option, there is much that it could do to bring China around if Brezhnev & Co. were really committed to the international solidarity they cynically profess. Peking has an extremely narrow nuclear establishment, all of it targeted by the USSR. Likewise the Chinese oil industry is extremely vulnerable even to a surgical attack by conventional forces in Sinkiang and Manchuria. And the Russian bureaucracy could find its hand forced so that it must take action, not out of devotion to defending the gains of the Vietnamese Revolution but rather in order to ensure its own survival.

The Kremlin leaders are not particularly more or less sellout per se than their Yugoslav or Rumanian counterparts. But having built up a powerful industry and military establishment at great sacrifice by the Soviet workers, the USSR is necessarily the main target of the imperialists. Failure to push back the Chinese invasion will only embolden Teng as his military establishment begins to be filled with arms supplied by the West.

Murderous Stalinist Nationalism

In trying to explain the phenomenon of two "Communist" countries at war with each other, the bourgeois press has dragged assorted sociologists and historians out of the closet to discourse on the ethnic and national animosities that go back for centuries. Their message is that it is impossible to overcome such hatreds in spite of the "fine ideals" of the founders of socialism. Thus one newspaper report recalled that the Chinese first invaded Vietnam in 111 B.C. and were not expelled from the peninsula for another millenium. Another report noted mockingly that as recently as 1975 a Vietnamese official described the two nations as having ties "as close as lips and teeth" as a result of the decade-long struggle against the U.S. invasion.

For the pseudo-Marxist radical intelligentsia, on the other hand, the Vietnam-China war, like the Vietnam-Cambodia conflict before it, has shaken their fellow-traveling loyalties. After cutting cane in Cuba, marching around with the NLF flag and waving Mao's Little Red Book, the former enthusiasts of "Third World" Stalinism are now at a loss for where to turn. The best bellweather of this milieu is the ex-Khrushchevite, ex-New Left, ex-Maoist *Guardian* (28 February), whose front-page editorial on the new Indochinese war began plaintively, "These are sorry days for socialism...." Throwing up their hands in despair, these "Marxists" ask:

> "China has invaded Vietnam. Vietnam has invaded Kampuchea. The words evoke nausea. Where will it end....
> "Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao and Ho...we pity your unquiet sleep.
> "China, Vietnam, Kampuchea. The names evoke pride. How can these brave comrades slay each other?...
> "It is a vicious cycle....
> "All socialist countries make mistakes.... The great socialist countries... make great mistakes from time to time.
> "China is a great socialist country....
> "China's invasion of Vietnam was a great mistake....
> "Vietnam, too, is a great socialist country....
> "Although our views on the situation are still developing, we think Vietnam made a great mistake in invading Kampuchea."

And so on ad nauseum. Obviously the editors don't know what to make of it and are reduced to kindergarten language expressing only their pathetic confusion. Lacking a Trotskyist understanding of the nationalism inherent in the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies, they can only see repeated betrayals of their ideals. And on top of that they report that the *Guardian*'s long-time roving correspondent Wilfred Burchett has broken with them over their opposition to Hanoi's Cambodian invasion. At least Burchett knows what master he is serving. Perhaps now would be a good time for the *Guardian* editors to throw in the towel and Irwin Silber could go back to reviewing folk music. Certainly he would sleep easier and the left would be freed of this brand of pompous Stalinoid confusionism.

The Communist Party (CP), on the other hand, has gone on the offensive against the Maoist supporters of Peking-brand Stalinism. In addition to the demonstrations outside the Chinese UN mission in New York (see accompanying article), for which they pulled their entire aging membership out of the woodwork, the CP recently issued a pamphlet by Gus Hall entitled *Letter to the Chinese Communist Party* (January 1979). The letter is a remarkable document, sounding extremely principled in its denunciations of Peking's support to Pakistan against Bangladesh, its diplomatic recognition of the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, its support to South Africa and the CIA in Angola in 1975, etc. But there is one betrayal by the Maoist bureaucracy which Hall significantly omits: Geneva 1954.

The omission is not accidental, and it is most instructive in the light of the current China-Vietnam war. Peking's role at Geneva was truly treacherous. The Viet Minh had initially refused to proceed with the talks unless the "sovereignty" and "independence" of their allies in the Khmer Rouge (Cambodia) and Pathet Lao (Laos) were recognized at the conference table. However, Chou En-lai put the arm on Ho's delegation and on 16 June 1954 forced through a "compromise" which had the Khmer Rouge and Pathet Lao attend as part of the Viet Minh delegation—in effect turning over the two French protectorates to the neo-colonialist Sihanouk and Souvanna Phouma governments respectively.

But Chou En-lai was not the only one who betrayed at Geneva. Two weeks earlier Russian foreign minister Molotov, in secret talks with Britain's Anthony Eden, cooked up the deal to divide Vietnam along the 17th parallel, even though the Viet Minh controlled some 85 percent of the country at the time. This "compromise" abandoned tens of thousands of Vietnamese independence fighters and Communists to the terror of the U.S.-backed Diem dictatorship, and meant that before all Vietnam would be liberated from the imperialist yoke it would take another 20 years of struggle and hundreds of thousands of dead. Ho Chi Minh and the rest of the Viet Minh, of course, went along with these betrayals, laying the basis for future hostilities (with Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, for example, which bitterly denounces the Vietnamese for selling them out at Geneva).

This was by no means the limit for the mutual backstabbing by the Stalinist bureaucrats. The limited amount and outdated quality of the Russian aid to Vietnam is well known (the latest model Soviet weaponry went instead to Nasser's Egypt). And as a result of the Sino-Soviet split the Chinese repeatedly held back and delayed delivery of Soviet supplies to Vietnam sent by rail through China. (At the height of the "Cultural Revolution," one of the more extreme groups of Red Guards stopped a trainload of "revisionist" supplies on its way to Vietnam. This identification with Chinese nationalism on the part of semi-dissidents has continued to the present: the Human Rights Group which has authored several important wallposters in Peking recently came out in support of Teng's invasion. However, several other less prominent groups have called for withdrawal of Chinese troops.) And in the secret codicil to the 1973 "peace" treaty negotiated by Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho, the North Vietnamese agreed to cut off its military aid to the Khmer Rouge as part of the price for receiving U.S. reconstruction aid. The Vietnamese kept their side of the bargain, as Pol Pot bitterly complained.

Or, to cite another relevant example, take the India-China border disputes of 1959 and 1962. In the former case, the Soviet Union remained formally "neutral" in the dispute between capitalist India and the Chinese People's Republic (a dispute which grew out of Peking's consolidation of control over Tibet, in which it faced a CIA-financed rebellion). However, with the Sino-Soviet split in the offing, the Russians implicitly sided with India, declaring some months later: "One cannot possibly seriously think that such a state as India, which is militarily and economically weaker than China, would really launch a military attack on China" (statement by the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 6 February 1960). In the summer of 1962, at the height of the fighting between India and China, Moscow confirmed its promises of delivery of Soviet MIGs to the Indian air force (Neville Maxwell, *India's China War* [1970]).

The most infamous incident of all in this orgy of Stalinist betrayal was undoubtedly Richard Nixon's December 1971 trip to Peking. In the middle of the murderous Christmas bombing campaign against Hanoi and Haiphong, Mao was clinking champagne glasses with Tricky Dick in the Great Hall of the Peoples.

Vietnamese Troops Out of Cambodia?

Reflecting the ideological pressure of Carter's "human rights" anti-Sovietism, not only liberals but many radicals and would-be communists as well have equated the Chinese invasion of Vietnam with the military strike by Vietnam into Cambodia a month earlier. For liberals all invasions are equal (except when their own national interests are affected); not so for Marxists. To paraphrase George Orwell, some invasions are more equal than others. What is key are the class forces involved and the interests of the proletariat. Thus on the eve of World War II, when petty-bourgeois public opinion was raising a tremendous hue and cry about "poor little democratic Finland"—i.e., the Finland of Baron von Mannerheim, which was militarily aligned with

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China Out Now...

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imperialist Britain—against Stalin's invasion, Trotsky wrote:

> "Yet in a war between the USSR and the capitalist world—independently of the incidents leading up to that war or the 'aims' of this or that government—what is involved is the fate of precisely those historical conquests which we defend unconditionally...."
>
> —"From a Scratch to the Danger of Gangrene," in *In Defense of Marxism* (1940)

So what about the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in January? To begin with, for Marxists there can be no question of political support to one Stalinist bureaucracy against another in a war between two deformed workers states. In either case the victor would exclude the working class from exercising political power through soviet organs of proletarian democracy. Thus we called for flat opposition to the war on both sides and opposed the Vietnamese invasion which overthrew the Pol Pot regime. On the other hand, the Spartacist League did *not* demand the immediate withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops propping up its creation, the FUNSK (National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea), and pursuing the remnants of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. Why?

In 1977 when fighting broke out between Vietnam and Cambodia, we were among the first to denounce this murderous Stalinist nationalism on both sides, at a time when many on the left pretended that the border war was simply a figment of the CIA's imagination.

However, once it was no longer a question of a border war, it was not immediately obvious that communists should demand immediate withdrawal of Vietnamese troops. We declared our opposition to the presence of a long-term occupation army, which would necessarily place the national question for the Khmer people on the agenda and thus raise the question of Cambodian right to self-determination. But the Vietnamese forces presently in the country are wiping out the remnants of the Khmer Rouge regime and consolidating the hold of the new Hanoi client regime under the banner of the FUNSK.

Isn't the FUNSK regime, even with the presence of Vietnamese troops, better from the point of view of the working masses of Cambodia than its predecessor Pol Pot? Immediately after taking power in the spring of 1975 the Khmer Rouge forcibly emptied the cities, evacuating even hospital patients into the countryside where they were organized into vast labor camps lacking even the most rudimentary urban facilities. Now the Vietnamese have imposed a regime which promises to do away with this irrational peasant xenophobia and atavism. Given a choice, would the Cambodians rather have national independence or schools, marriage of their own choice, food, children, medicine, schools and wages? It's not immediately clear, although it was notable that the predicted wave of Cambodian refugees fleeing before the Vietnamese troops never materialized.

And it is equally unclear whether the Vietnamese Stalinists have the capacity to create an essentially federated state in which the peoples and sub-peoples of Indochina can freely choose their national destiny. In the case of the Chinese, their practice has clearly been that of Han chauvinism, as Peking authorities have flooded minority-populated regions with millions of Han Chinese. But the Vietnamese practice toward the montagnards of central Vietnam has been far less oppressive, following more closely in the line of the autonomous regions set up for the tribal peoples of the USSR in the early years of Soviet rule.

We do not place political confidence in the Vietnamese Stalinists to overcome the national question—on the contrary, we call for the working class to carry out a political revolution to oust the heirs of Ho Chi Minh and replace them with soviets. That is the only road to a genuinely democratic socialist federation of Indochina. However, one cannot say in advance that under a client or puppet regime the national question will necessarily predominate. To declare that the national question always comes first ultimately rules out the possibility of liberation by conquest. Such a position would lead to the conclusion, for instance, that the 1920 Red Army invasion of Poland—aimed at achieving a link-up with the German proletariat—was not just tactically impossible but wrong in principle.

Our conclusion, therefore, is that only history can decide the justice of Vietnamese-Cambodian relations.

Not Détente, But Workers Revolution!

While it is our proletarian internationalist duty to defend the degenerated/deformed workers states against imperialist attack, it is not the ruling bureaucracies we defend but the interests of the working people and the gains of their anti-capitalist revolutions. Our fundamental appeals are directed to the Soviet, Vietnamese and Chinese masses, whose interests are not served by the illusions of deals with Carter/Brzezinski but rather by the program of communist unity against imperialism. As an expression of that program we called early in the Vietnam war for the extension of the Soviet nuclear shield to cover Hanoi and Peking. Today we address the Chinese masses, drawn by their sellout leaders into a war against their Vietnamese class brothers: Don't Be a Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism! Get Out of Vietnam Now!

In calling on the USSR to honor its treaty with Vietnam we are addressing the Soviet masses, calling on them to break with Brezhnev's capitulationist policy of détente with the imperialists and to remove the bureaucracy through workers political revolution. At the February 24 demonstration outside the Chinese mission in NYC the Spartacist League chanted the slogan, "Not Détente, but Workers Revolution!" a demand which particularly enraged the assembled Stalinists pretending to be pacifistic liberals. "Warmongers," they shouted at us. As revolutionaries dedicated to constructing a socialist future for mankind, we are not callous to the horror of war. We share the hatred of war of American workers who recall Vietnam, or the Soviet population which lost 20 million in World War II. But pacifistic sentiment for good relations between the U.S. and USSR will not prevent world war. And there *is* a war *now*, wantonly killing Chinese and Vietnamese youth.

The imperialist rulers remain dedicated to overturning the social revolutions which have driven them from more than one third of the globe. This means war of one kind or another. Right now the Chinese Stalinists are "punishing" the Vietnamese people in the hopes of cementing an alliance with the American bourgeoisie while extending their own bureaucratic sway. Meanwhile, as we pointed out ten years ago, for the U.S. rulers China is an arrow directed at the heart of the USSR. The alliance which is just now being cemented diplomatically has had its first military expression in the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. While it is not yet overtly consummated, the sinister U.S./China/Japan axis is now visibly felt by everyone as a distinct possibility.

It is already very late in the epoch of imperialist decay. It is almost 60 years since the Red Army, having defeated the Polish capitalists, failed to concentrate on the east bank of the Vistula opposite Warsaw, thus losing the common border with a Germany yet facing revolution. Berlin and that wave of world revolution were thus lost. Now once again the new alignments for a coming global war are ominously being sketched out on the horizon. The task of Marxists is not to hide this terrible reality but to tell the simple truth: *only workers revolution will prevent nuclear annihilation.* ■

Is There Anything Koch Won't Do?

NEW YORK CITY, February 28—It began as an ordinary strike in which the workers were forced to walk out when management threatened to rip the guts out of their livelihoods and throw them out into the streets. New York City's school bus drivers, threatened by proposed new contract provisions which would reduce them to part-time status and wipe out their job security by clauses permitting the hiring of an entirely new crew walked off the job February 15 and vowed to stay out until they won.

For the first few days the buses were locked up tight. Then school officials and the raving anti-labor NYC mayor Koch figured out they had a real propaganda ax handle with which to beat the strikers over the head. While most of the city's kids managed to get by on public transportation, management zeroed in on the plight of New York's 45,000 handicapped school children, pulling out all the stops to give the strikers a bad press.

At this point many unions, faced with tear-jerking stories of home-bound wheelchair-confined children, would have buckled under. But the Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 1181 and 1061 refused to budge. In fact, when the Board of Education started using taxis to transport the kids, the bus drivers went down to the taxi barns and protested against this scabbing. When a number of the offending cabs were subsequently found with their windshields broken and tires slashed, New York's war of the crippled children was on.

The next morning Koch called a press conference, denouncing the strikers as "bastards" and threatening to get them. His language triggered off the drivers' wives who picketed outside the mayor's office with signs reading, "Koch: You Couldn't Produce a Bastard!" But despite Koch's threats, the tactic worked, and the scab cabs didn't roll. So when school reopened February 26 after the weekend, Koch had launched Operation Kiddie Lift and mobilized the city's chauffeurs and a fleet of city vehicles to drive the kids to school.

The chauffeurs took the kids to school in the morning, but by that afternoon the union got to District Council 37 chief, Victor Gotbaum, head of the city workers' union. Gotbaum told the chauffeurs to respect the picket lines so they walked off the job, leaving the handicapped children stranded at school. Koch then threatened to fire them all, saying the city could do without chauffeurs, and the executives would damn well jog to work. He then commandeered some 112 city vehicles, including four prison vans, put a cop into each one to ride shotgun and ordered the president of the school board, the chancellor of schools and other top officials to drive the kids to school themselves. And when on February 27 bus drivers responded by slashing the tires of some 12 Long Island school buses used to transport cerebral palsy victims to their therapy sessions, Koch lashed out again at the "gutless wonders."

In the midst of this situation, while the editors of the city's pulp press were already wallowing in their crocodile tears, the milk drivers, members of Teamsters Local 584, went out on strike. Of course everyone is affected by the strike, but the press has chosen to focus again on the poor kids who, when they finally get to school in their armored cars, receive no milk with their school lunch!

Workers Vanguard says "hats off" to the courageous school bus and milk truck drivers who have stood solid in the face of the mayor's repulsive, utterly cynical ploy to use these innocent children as pawns in his union-busting game. The entire NYC labor movement ought to get behind their beleaguered brothers with powerful action to win the strikes and put a stop to this obscene spectacle! ■

Cronkite...

(continued from page 3)

ic principle, as we like to point out at key moments like the present. Somebody did foresee this possibility way back then: us. We quote from our document "Development and Tactics of the Spartacist League," published in 1969:

> "At the present time, the Vietnam war and the extreme diplomatic and internal difficulties of the Chinese state have forced the Maoist[s] to maintain greater hostility to imperialism and verbally disclaim the U.S.S.R's avowed policy of 'peaceful co-existence' while themselves peacefully co-existing with Japan. However, we must warn against the growing objective possibility—given the tremendous industrial and military capacity of the Soviet Union—of a U.S. deal *with China*. Should the imperialists adjust their policies in terms of their long-run interests (which would take time, as such factors as U.S. public opinion would have to be readjusted), the Chinese would be as willing as the Russians are at present to build "Socialism in One Country" through deals with imperialism at the expense of internationalism." [emphasis in original]

Walter Cronkite is no more likely to tell the truth about what is going on today than he was in 1969. He is in the business of readjusting U.S. public opinion—a droning voice amid the white noise of bourgeois ideology, and a small part of the reason predictive truth sounds "funny" to the ear of so many Americans.

The perspective of revolutionary Marxism is not grounded in the ideologically self-serving stereotypes contrived by pompous media pundits for broadcast as official "perceived reality." We perceive reality and cope with it as partisans of the interests of the international working class. It so happens that the truth is also on our side. To Walter Cronkite and U.S. liberals this must seem incoherent, perhaps even dangerous. ■

Khomeini Vows...

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ing law and order and to crush the bandits," while paratroopers have been sent in.

Rebirth of the Army

Already the left apologists for Khomeini are constructing a mythology around the insurrection that provoked the overthrow of the Bakhtiar regime bequeathed by the Pahlavi monarchy. Some even speak of embryonic organs of workers rule coexisting with the government. But less than two weeks later the left is under violent attack by Khomeini and beseiged in Teheran University by the new Islamic police and a nascent National Guard. How could this turnabout of a popular insurrection come about so quickly?

Actually, the weekend of February 10-12 saw both the beginnings of a generalized insurrection and an attempt to limit this by the army chiefs who capitulated to Khomeini. The beginnings of a massive uprising were certainly there as air force technicians at the Doshan Tapeh air base in East Teheran and the guerrilla organizations took over weapons depots and began distributing rifles and machine guns to the population. After taking the air base and another army installation the insurgents proceeded to sack 23 police stations, storm the SAVAK headquarters and open up the capital's main prison to free political prisoners. However, there was no full-scale confrontation with the army.

Only the "Immortals" battalion of the Imperial Guard was militarily defeated, with even the Rangers going over to the anti-shah forces. Calculating that the bulk of their troops were unreliable, the top generals opted for preserving the "unity of the military institution" by declaring their "neutrality" in the conflict between the Khomeini-led forces and the puppet regime of Shapur Bakhtiar, installed by the deposed monarch.

In terms of their personal safety, the generals had miscalculated. They did not consummate a deal with the ayatollah, and a number of the more notorious butchers are now being executed. Predictably, this raised a flurry of "humanitarian" objections in the U.S. bourgeois press. But those ordered shot by Khomeini's revolutionary tribunal were certified torturers and mass murderers. The first batch included Nematollah Nassiri, chief of SAVAK; Riza Nazih, military commander of Isfahan; and Amir Rahimi, martial law commander of Teheran. Each one of these criminals was personally responsible for ordering the deaths of thousands and even tens of thousands of opponents of the shah and richly deserved his fate. Our only objection was that the mullahs got them instead of revolutionary people's tribunals where their crimes could have been exposed before the entire population.

In the days following the capitulation by the army chiefs, the ranks melted away in a tide of mass desertions. At this point there are reportedly almost no operational units left in the capital. But the base of the army had not risen up against their officers, and many of them have since returned to their barracks. The structure of the imperial army remains intact, although it is to be infused with Khomeini-loyal militiamen and renamed in a process of what Prime Minister Bazargan terms "rejuvenation" of the military. Among the elements of continuity are the new commander-in-chief, Qarani, who is an old friend of the CIA. Although implicated in a 1959 coup against the shah, he was saved from execution by his ties to the U.S. intelligence agency (*Le Monde*, 15 February).

Bazargan candidly explained the difficulties in reviving the army: "The problem is, the people hated the army and police and will react if we send them out into the streets again. That is why we are establishing a National Guard and will reestablish the army and police later" (*Newsweek*, 26 February). Despite objections raised by soldiers to the retention of a number of monarchist officers, some of whom have been replaced, and a resolution passed by a mass meeting of the air force technicians calling for election of officers by soldiers' committees, the situation is far from the revolutionary ferment in the Portuguese army in mid-1975.

The Left Still Bows to Khomeini

The Iranian left, from the Mojahedeen to the Guevarist Fedayeen to the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party to the pseudo-Trotskyists of the Iranian SWP, has set the stage for the present menacing situation by politically disarming the proletariat. Taken by surprise by Khomeini's vehement attacks, they are totally unprepared for a showdown. While an elemental sense of self-preservation has prevented them from surrendering their arms, they are simply sitting in their redoubts waiting for the attack to begin. They are *politically* stymied and can respond only by attempting to draw a distinction between the "anti-imperialist" Khomeini and his "bad advisors" or Bazargan's cabinet. Their appeal is for a measure of influence in the new government. But while such naiveté keeps the backward peasant masses loyal to autocratic regimes—the Russian muzhiks believed the tsar was good but simply surrounded by evil courtiers—in the mouths of leftists who represent a potential threat to the regime it is asking for a slaughter.

The Tudeh Party echoed the Kremlin's rapid diplomatic recognition of the Bazargan government and the Soviet ambassador's personal congratulations to Khomeini by lending support to the efforts to get the leftist-influenced oil workers back on the job. As for the pseudo-Trotskyists of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat, their position was spelled out in a banner headline in the American SWP's *Militant* (23 February): "VICTORY IN IRAN." A victory for whom? Not for the guerrillas, not for the Kurds, not for the oil strikers or the women who will now be pressured or ordered to put back on the *chador* (the traditional Iranian full-length veil). But for these fake-socialists even this is not enough, and the second headline reads: "Iranian masses show the way for workers around the world." Meanwhile, Khomeini and his mullahs—the *real* victors—are preparing to strike down the "satanic" left "traitors"!

Leroy/Time

Gun-toting mullah of the Islamic police: Khomeini's new SAVAK.

In Teheran it is the Guevarists of the Organization of Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas that has emerged as the far left wing. Worried about the direction taken by the Bazargan government, they had called for a march on Khomeini's headquarters on February 24. But when the ayatollah denounced this plan, the Fedayeen tactically compromised by holding a rally on the university campus where they attracted a crowd estimated by the *New York Times* at 70,000 in a rainstorm, a considerable show of support for an organization whose hard core strength numbers a few thousand at most. Many of those attending were members of the Mojahedeen, with whom the Fedayeen hope to cement an alliance on the basis of a call for a "people's army" instead of a National Guard staffed by former middle-level officers of the shah's army. However, Khomeini is doing his best to split Islamic forces away from any cooperation with the left... and having considerable success by dangling the prospects of a role in the new regime.

The Fedayeen program of workers control in the factories through expanding the powers of the strike committees, of popular tribunals to try the shah's henchmen, and of arms for the masses certainly picks up widely felt sentiments in the working masses. They have become the voice of a gut-level dissatisfaction with the "Islamic Republic," such as that voiced by a construction worker who attended the February 24 rally: "Khomeini and his people want to carry on the system like it was before, only with a different color and under different slogans" (*Newsweek*, 5 March). But the central contradiction in the program of the Fedayeen, one which will soon come to a bloody resolution, is their attitude toward Khomeini, expressed in the words of one of their leaders: "We think there is a fence of reactionary mullahs around Ayatollah Khomeini, who in the last few days have diminished his direct contact with the people of Iran..." (*New York Times*, 22 February).

Last fall we warned emphatically:

> "And what of the Maoist and guerrillaist groups which vehemently denounce Tudeh's reformism? They too speak only of the 'progressive religious leaders,' echoed by their supporters in the various wings of the Iranian Students Association.... The Iranian left thus marches on the road to suicide."
>
> —"Iran in Turmoil," *WV* No. 215, 22 September 1978

The democratic and working-class demands raised by the Fedayeen are nullified by their Stalinist conception of "two-stage revolution," in which the first stage is represented by the likes of Khomeini. By first helping put him in power through their political support, and now their refusal to oppose Khomeini's "Islamic Republic" which is about to strike at them, these courageous militants may be signing their own death warrants. As pointed out by the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution and confirmed by historical experience from China 1927 to Chile 1973, the colonial bourgeoisie in the epoch of imperialism is *incapable* of breaking with imperialism and domestic reaction. While it may topple a hated monarch like the shah, the new regime will "carry on the system like it was before, only with a different color," as the construction worker remarked.

Only an Iranian workers and peasants government, raised to power by an uprising of the powerful Iranian proletariat, will guarantee the right of self-determination to national minorities, bring land to the tiller, free women from medieval subjugation and advance to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, the foundation of the Pahlavis' dictatorship. To obtain such a government what is needed above all is the leadership of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party basing itself on the lessons of October 1917 and the Transitional Program of the Fourth International.

No to Islamic reaction—Down with the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran! ■

Dondero/L'Espresso

Khomeini's revolution is no victory for women.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Khomeini Vows to Crush "Anti-Islamic, Satanic Elements"

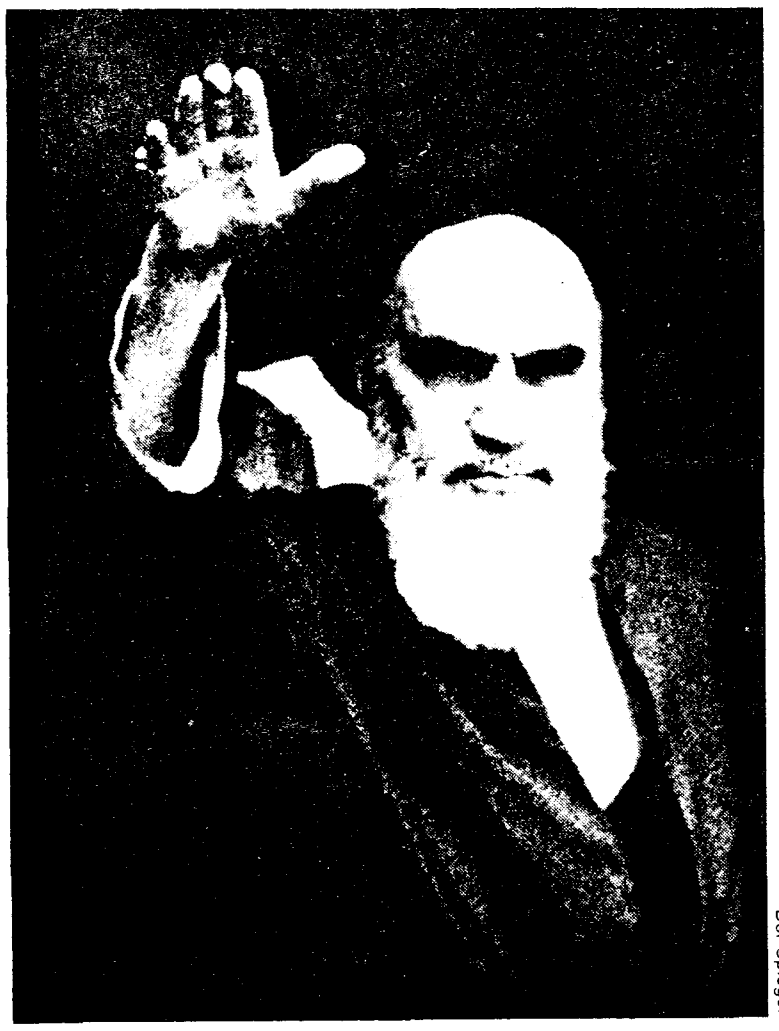
Down with the Mullahs!

FEBRUARY 28—They asked for it, they got it: Khomeini. And now that the mullahs are in power, the Iranian left is getting a bitter taste of what life under the "Islamic republic" will be like. The grim-faced oracle whose picture they held high in countless demonstrations has now turned on his leftist camp followers, branding all Marxists with the mark of Cain as "*satanic elements, worse than the shah.*" These are not just verbal pyrotechnics but orders for the executioner's sword. The Muslim fundamentalist holy man, now being revered by his followers as an imam (the representative of god on earth), vowed last week: "I won't tolerate anyone who is anti-Islamic. We will crush them." And he means it.

In the very first days of its existence Khomeini's new social order is rapidly demonstrating that it has nothing to do with the democracy so fervently desired by the millions who suffered under the shah's iron heel. Now that the Pahlavi dynasty is overthrown the new regime is issuing blood-curdling Koranic threats against any who dare question its theocratic rule. The Khomeini-installed government is feverishly organizing an "Islamic National Guard," incorporating the middle levels of the officer corps of the old imperial army, in order to go after its next target: the "atheists" and "traitors" of the ostensibly Marxist left who doggedly supported the mullah-led movement over the last year.

As the religious leaders gained dominance over the opposition to the hated shah, the opportunists simply tailed after what was popular. The international Spartacist tendency (iSt) was *unique* on the left in warning that the Islamic clericalist movement was *reactionary* in its social and political program. Pointing to Indonesia 1965, Qaddafi's Libya and General Zia's Pakistan as horrible examples of what an Islamic republic would mean, we warned that support to Khomeini could be positively suicidal. Our slogan, "Down with the shah, Down with the mullahs!" brought thug attacks on iSt meetings not only from Iranian Islamic student groups but also from the Maoists who were tailing them.

Now everyone from the CIA (which had portrayed Khomeini as a "Communist dupe") to the leftist guerrilla groups has come to see the chilling truth that Khomeini's holy war against the left is in deadly earnest. This Islamic reactionary with his sights set on the seventh century has gone from xenophobic promises to "cut the hands off foreign thieves" to ominous threats to "cut off the hands of traitors." The danger goes far beyond the medieval Koranic "justice" of mutilating petty thieves and submitting violators of puritanical social codes to the lash. Our warnings are tragically being proven true, yet still the fake-Marxists proclaim their devotion to the ayatollah. As the new regime prepares a bloody attack on the left to chants of "allah akbar" (god is great), it is the duty of socialists everywhere to protest Khomeini's threatened storm of repression!



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Khomeini: The fake-lefts asked for his blessing, received his wrath.

While there is an ongoing tug-of-war between Mehdi Bazargan's provisional government and Khomeini's shadowy "Council of the Islamic Revolution," they are united in their vows to smash the left. On February 19 Khomeini pontificated, "If the united leadership is not accepted by all groups, I shall regard this as an uprising against the Islamic revolution, and I warn these bandits and unlawful elements that we were able to destroy the Shah and his evil regime, and we are strong enough to deal with them." The same day propaganda minister Sadeq Qotbizadeh attacked the leftist People's Fedayeen guerrillas as "prostitutes," ominously adding, "Go ahead and demonstrate. We will know who you are" (*New York Times*, 20 February). For his part, prime minister Bazargan announced that if the left continued to "fight and destabilize the country, we're going to crush them" (*New York Times*, 18 February).

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Mullah-led forces take over tanks guarding the shah's palace.

The Bloody Sword of Islam

Even as the guerrillas exulted over the "insurrection" which defeated the shah's Imperial Guard and European reporters summoned up joyous images of Paris in May 1968, the new regime launched a crackdown on the widespread possession of arms (more than 70,000 were reportedly distributed over the February 10-11 weekend as guerrillas and rebellious soldiers broke into the arsenals). The fountainhead of the revolution declared:

> "All weapons must be surrendered to the mosques. The selling of arms is heresy. Don't let those weapons fall into the hands of the enemies of Islam. Islamic soldiers must be armed, but others must not be armed."
>
> —UPI dispatch, 13 February

The surrendering was not just voluntary. Spotchecks of automobiles by "Islamic defense guards" were instituted to recover arms. Teheran University, a stronghold of the left which only a few days before was ringed by the shah's tanks, now faced incursions by Khomeini's militia.

The regime's first major "anti-imperialist" action, the visit of PLO leader Yassir Arafat, also played a role in Khomeini's sinister witchhunt against the left. In return for receiving the Israeli "embassy," Arafat was prepared to do some favors for his new benefactor. Not only did the PLO chief endorse the Islamic Mojahedeen guerrillas at the expense of the Fedayeen, but he addressed a mass rally in the southern oil fields, lending his "revolutionary" prestige to the government at the height of its efforts to force strikers back to work. This supposed champion of a "democratic secular Palestine" refers to his new patron as imam.

Another of the "Islamic republic's" international forays directly confirmed the program of social reaction that lurks behind its Muslim populism. Khomeini's deputy prime minister Ibrahim Yazdi hailed the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood as "open-minded and sincere" and as "already being revolutionized by the events in Iran" (*New York Times*, 27 February). The Brotherhood, a reactionary petty-bourgeois grouping whose demagogy won it a base in the Cairo lumpenproletariat, is above all renowned for its burning down of "sinful" movie theaters, pogromist dynamite attacks on Jewish businesses and residential quarters and fanatical opposition to even the slightest secularizing measures. So great was its hatred of the left that the Muslim Brotherhood conspired with the British against the Communist Party and bourgeois nationalists in the late 1940's.

But if Khomeini's propagandists declaim that Islamic fundamentalism "can also replace Arab nationalism as a rallying point for Arab people," they have hardly convinced the Kurdish nationalists and other minorities. Events have rapidly confirmed our earlier prediction that "The Persian chauvinism and blind anti-foreign sentiments whipped up by the mullahs promise a grim future for Iran's national/communal minorities" (*WV* No. 222, 5 January). Accused of fomenting the February 15 attack on the U.S. embassy and scapegoated for the recent rise in crime in Teheran, thousands of unemployed Afghani workers have been rounded up and deported.

Baluchi, Azerbaijani and Kurdish nationalists are already locked in combat with the new regime. The Kurds have demanded autonomy within a federated Iranian state, to which Deputy Prime Minister Entezam vowed to "ruthlessly crush those behind unrests" in Kurdistan. Soon after, fighting was reported between Kurdish partisans and government troops, leading to a pitched battle near the town of Kaneh, close to the Iraqi frontier, in which more than 100 people were killed. Khomeini then issued a radio call to the Mojahedeen, "to aid the army and police in maintain-

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