

Democrats: "Liberal" Party of Imperialist War

Crush Reagan's Terrorists in Central America!

Defend Nicaragua— Kill the Invaders!

Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists!

The Reagan war machine is poised for a full-scale invasion of Central America. To prepare public opinion war minister Weinberger's continuing claim that the administration has no plans for sending in combat troops is being contradicted by other Pentagon officials who admit that such plans are being drawn up. And here we're not talking about a few thousand "peacekeeping" troops à la Lebanon, or the few thousand it took to rape the tiny black West Indian island of Grenada. Pentagon experts estimate it would take 100,000-150,000 American troops just to partition the isthmus, much less overthrow the battle-hardened Nicaraguan Sandinistas and crush the courageous Salvadoran leftist guerrillas.

"U.S. Latin Force in Place If Needed, Officials Report" is the front-page headline for a major *New York Times* study (April 23) of this massive U.S. buildup. In the last year alone U.S. military "advisers" (remember Vietnam) have increased *tenfold* and more of their



Nachtwey/Black Star

Kill the invaders! CIA's contra terrorists near evacuated Nicaraguan town of San Juan del Norte.

"advice" is given in battlefield crossfire. The once sleepy banana republic of Honduras has been turned into Fortress Honduras as the U.S. has constructed six air force bases and permanently stationed close to 2,000 troops there. In the Caribbean the U.S. has just

launched "Ocean Venture" composed of the aircraft carrier *America* group of 350 warships and 30,000 troops.

Reagan's policy of seeking to suppress the revolutionary upheaval in Central America through local butchers is visibly not working. The CIA's contra

terrorists in Nicaragua are making no headway against the Sandinistas. In El Salvador the murderous military dictatorship has been driven out of a third of the country by the leftist insurgents and its tenuous control over the remainder is

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Greensboro Verdict: Green Light for Racist Murder

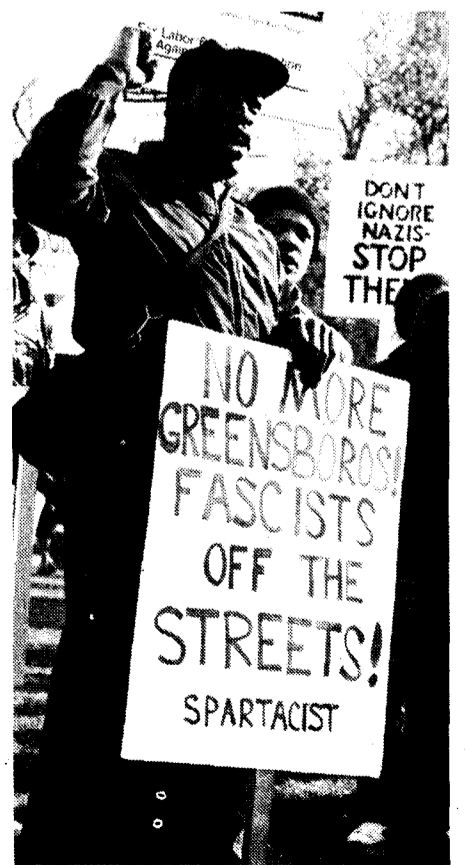
All-White Jury Lets Off KKK/Nazi Killers Again

On 3 November 1979 in Greensboro, North Carolina five leftists, civil rights activists and union organizers were gunned down in broad daylight by a heavily armed Ku Klux Klan/Nazi gang. Millions of Americans saw and heard the videotape of the 88-second methodical fusillade; a cold-blooded, premeditated massacre, staged for TV, to bring the fascists' message home: it's open season on leftists who dare to organize against the Klan. Last week, on April 15 in Winston-Salem, an all-white federal jury acquitted nine members of the

KKK/Nazi death squad of charges of violating the civil rights (!) of those killed and wounded—all supporters of the Communist Workers Party (CWP). The verdict came wrapped in the American flag, as the Klan murderers claimed they were just doing their patriotic duty in the war against communism. And with these hideous acquittals, the U.S. bourgeois state sends *its* message: a green light for racist murder. In 1984 in Reagan's America, the racist capitalist system openly declares it is not a crime to kill communists, or blacks.

The "legal defense" of the KKK/Nazi killers which was accepted by the jury was chilling. The fascists' lawyers argued literally it was okay to gun down communists, saying Nazi murderer Roland Wood was "a patriotic citizen, just like the Germans were.... That's why they went to Greensboro, to stop Communists!" That this open invitation to racist murder will be accepted was made ominously clear when *two days* after his acquittal Klan leader Virgil Griffin swore, "Every member of the Communist Party

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WV Photo

Greensboro...

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should be tried for treason and put in front of a firing squad and shot, or else sent to Russia to see how they like it there" (*Charlotte Observer*, 17 April). KKK rallies are now planned in Georgia and North Carolina to "celebrate" their victory, while a public Klan threat to kill Jesse Jackson has been issued. These KKK/Nazi killers are not just isolated nuts, but organized death squads sanctioned by the bourgeoisie. They are periodically unleashed, as at Greensboro, to do the deadly dirty work for the country's capitalist rulers. Now more than ever, black people, the working class, socialists and all decent people in this country must see the urgent need for powerful mass action to stop these racist killers in their tracks. As our placards proclaimed at the Spartacist-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization that stopped the KKK from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982, "No More Greensboros! Fascists Off the Streets!"

Four years ago, in the November 1980 state murder trial, another all-white jury likewise exonerated the fascists in the Greensboro Massacre. As we wrote at the time:

"With the cross hairs of the Klan's M-16s trained on the communists, standing behind the white-sheeted killers trained at the Bay of Pigs and in Vietnam are the black-robed judges and the powerful apparatus of the U.S. government."

—"Greensboro Was Racist Murder!" *WV* No. 269, 28 November 1980

The government was complicit in the Greensboro Massacre from start to finish. Early on, the Klan and Nazis had been infiltrated and orchestrated by local police informer Edward Dawson, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) agent Bernard Butkovich. Indeed, no less than 41 KKK chapters were organized by the FBI in North Carolina alone, according

to former North Carolina state senator Morgan. Thus, it came as no surprise when Justice Department prosecutor Daniel Bell quickly and magnanimously reconciled himself to the verdict: "It's obvious that we disagree with the verdict and were deeply disappointed with it. However, under our system of justice, the jury has the final say and we have to accept that" (*Greensboro News and Record*, 16 April). The "final say" the government is so willing to accept is precisely the message they want to drive home: as the bourgeoisie gears up its anti-Soviet war drive, the fascists get a license to kill blacks, labor militants and communists here at home.

The Greensboro Massacre was cynically painted by the capitalist press as "a shootout" between "two violent fringe groups." Obscenely equating the victims with the killers, supposed defenders of civil liberties like the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League and the *New York Times* apologized for racist murder. The killing in Greensboro occurred at the high point of Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade to refurbish and rearm post-Vietnam U.S. imperialism. Subsequently Reagan reaction has accelerated the plunge toward war with the Soviet Union. So domestic opponents are labeled "unpatriotic," Marxists and socialist militants become "terrorists" and are subject to "pre-emptive strikes." And that is just what the fascists did in Greensboro on 3 November 1979. No wonder the KKK made Ronald Reagan their Kandidate in the 1980 elections and just endorsed him again for '84. The Klan and the Nazis are Reagan's dogs of war.

The liberals are complaining that the verdict may have been the result of a wrong "legal strategy" on the part of the feds, since the indictments required the prosecution to prove "racial motives" for the Klan/Nazi "disruption." A *New York Times* (22 April) editorial commented, "the trial may have turned on a provision of the Federal civil rights law

The Greensboro Massacre, 3 November 1979—In broad daylight Klansmen/Nazis open fire on union organizers, civil rights activists and leftists, killing five.



Davis/Greensboro Daily News

...[which] requires prosecutors to prove the men were present at the rally because of racial hatred rather than patriotism, as they claimed." No—the Greensboro Massacre was a government/fascist conspiracy—from the "former" FBI agent who *literally* rode shotgun for the Nazi/KKK caravan to the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear. Under what "law" of the bourgeois state would the government be expected to indict itself?

Roy Hall, lawyer for the backwoods Nazi leader Wood, positively bragged about the fascist murder:

"You're going to hear an awful lot about the fact that Roland Wayne Wood was head of the local Nazi party. But these are not the war crime Nazis. At the end of the war Roland Wayne Wood was only two months old. He is a patriotic citizen, just like the Germans were. The largest ethnic minority in the country are Germans. Many of you on the jury have German blood. This court sits on a tract of land owned by a German family.... Across the street there is a bust of a German man.... The German people are always with us. Think of Werner von Braun and all the contributions the Germans have made to science and technology. Werner von Braun was a Nazi, but no one asked him his politics before they made him a high-ranking official at NASA. He started the space program! The Germans gambled everything and lost all in opposition to communism! Aren't they a lot more attractive now than they were 40 years ago at the end of the war? These defendants are patriotic citizens just like the German citizens. That's why they went to Greensboro, to stop Communists!"

—*Workers Viewpoint*, 2-15 February

In a nutshell, he argued, they were just American patriots on a Saturday outing. This was not a risky approach in a state where Nazi candidate for attorney general Harold Covington got 56,000 votes, or 43 percent of the Republican primary total in 1980.

The latest trial opened in January. The federal judge ordered that the jury selection process would be secret, a ruling unprecedented even in North Carolina. Thus a second all-white, middle-aged jury was empaneled. It included a Vietnam War veteran, wounded in battle, and one woman who at the time of the Greensboro killings was the best friend of the sister of the chief of the Greensboro police force. A gag order prohibiting public statements on the trial was slapped on all trial participants, including the anti-Klan survivors. Prominent CWP black leader Nelson Johnson was stifled.

There can be no justice when the prosecutors are the perpetrators. BATF agent Butkovich testified only briefly. He had participated in the planning meeting on 1 November 1979 where the use of pipe bombs was explored and a poster of CWP leaders was studied. He had trained Nazis in the use of semi-automatic weapons and suggested specific ways they could be transported. On November 3, however, he was mysteriously absent on another assignment. The FBI absolved the Greensboro police of any wrongdoing. Yet Edward Dawson, their informer, led the Klan and Nazi caravan to the rally, and the shooting began as he yelled out, "You

asked for the Klan, now you've got them!"

The intersection of the fascists with the bourgeois state was crystal clear at Greensboro. Bernard Butkovich is a latter-day Gary Rowe, the FBI informer who burned churches, beat freedom riders bloody and was probably trigger man in the death of civil rights activist Viola Liuzzo. Under the FBI's COINTELPRO, the Black Panthers were physically annihilated. And now the Greensboro killers are let free, while the judge threw out the civil suit brought by the Liuzzo children and forced them to pay the court costs, on the grounds that racist assassin FBI "informer" Gary Rowe was only doing his job! The relatives of the CWP martyrs are now pursuing a \$48 million civil court suit as their last recourse under American "justice." They deserve every penny they can get and the cop/Klan conspiracy must be exposed. But it will not be in the courtrooms of Winston-Salem or any capitalist court that real justice will be done.

Liberal illusions in the capitalist state are roadblocks to revolution. What the bourgeoisie fears above all is the powerful combination of black and red, forged on the communist program, mobilizing the social power of the integrated proletariat. The CWP, zigging and zagging between adventurism and popular frontism, went from its Greensboro "Death to the Klan" rally to supporting black Democrat Jesse Jackson. Today they are so deeply liquidated into the Jackson campaign that they have not bothered to hold a single protest demonstration against the racist court verdict.

On 10 November 1979 when the Ku Klux Klan obscenely threatened to "celebrate" the Greensboro Massacre by starting a bloody provocation in downtown Detroit, the Spartacist League-initiated labor/black mobilization drew 500 mainly black participants, especially from the Detroit-area auto plants, who proclaimed, "The Klan Won't Ride in the Motor City!" The Detroit rally, organized *against* the threats of black Democrat Coleman Young, was the first mass integrated, labor-centered protest against fascist terror in the U.S. in decades. As black Spartacist spokesman Don Alexander put forward our program at Detroit's Kennedy Square that day:

"The Spartacist League has worked to build this rally because we *know*, like the brothers from Rouge and Chrysler said, it takes the power of labor to smash the KKK killers once and for all....

"The Klan shoots down black and labor organizers in the South, and we respond here in Detroit the way any Marxists would—like they did in the '30s, when they got 50,000 people to Madison Square Garden to deal with the fascists. It seems pretty simple. But who else does it?..."

"I am with the Spartacist League. We are America's last, best chance. There isn't much choice. It's either fight along with us, along the lines that made the Russian Revolution, or sink with the capitalists.

"That is the inescapable conclusion from the blood of Greensboro to the sweat of the auto plants. The road for blacks, the road for workers is the socialist revolution." ■

Death to Slavery!

Karl Marx recognized that the American Civil War was a great revolutionary bourgeois-democratic struggle the outcome of which would shape the destiny of this country for decades to come. He energetically rallied the European working classes to support the victory of the North. We reprint below excerpts from an address drafted by Marx for the First International on the occasion of Abraham Lincoln's reelection in 1864.



TROTSKY



LENIN

We congratulate the American people upon your reelection by a large majority. If resistance to the Slave Power was the reserved watchword of your first election, the triumphant war cry of your reelection is, Death to Slavery....

The working classes of Europe—understood at once, even before the fanatic partisanship of the upper classes for the Confederate gentry had given its dismal warning, that the slaveholders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy crusade of property against labor, and that for the men of labor, with their hopes for the future, even their past conquests were at stake in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic....

While the workingmen, the true political powers of the North, allowed slavery to defile their own republic, while before the Negro, mastered and sold without his concurrence, they boasted it the highest prerogative of the white-skinned laborer to sell himself and choose his own master, they were unable to attain the true freedom of labor, or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation, but this barrier to progress has been swept off by the red sea of Civil War.

—Karl Marx, "Address of the International Working Men's Association to President Lincoln" (1864)

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Crazy Qaddafi vs. "Iron Lady" Thatcher

Libyan Embassy Siege

APRIL 23—Nobody can accuse Libya's Colonel Qaddafi of paying lip service to bourgeois democracy: as soon as a few dozen anti-Qaddafi Libyan students started picketing the Libyan embassy in London on April 17, they were answered by a hail of submachine gun bullets from the so-called "People's Bureau," which was taken over by a "student" committee in February as part of Qaddafi's latest campaign against dissidents abroad. Eleven demonstrators were wounded and a British policewoman was killed. It was a taste of life in the Libyan "Jamahiriya" (Congregation).

But this is London, home of British imperialism, and more importantly, it was in St. James Square, where the upper crust walk, not to mention tourists. As the *London Times* (18 April) snottily lectured, "Britain cannot permit foreign wars to be fought on its soil." Such violence is reserved by the British ruling class for places like, say, Northern Ireland, where the British army can do what it likes with the local "non-persons." Fake-"left" Labour leader Neil Kinnock, fresh from paying his condolences to the policewoman's family, chimed in behind the *Times*: "our country is not to be regarded as a battleground for anybody's factions."

With this spontaneous popular front of classes cheering him on, British Home Secretary Leon Brittan convened his terrorist group at "Cobra," the Whitehall nerve center in such crises. London police were quickly reinforced by a helicopter and blue-bereted members of D-11, Scotland Yard's firearms marksmen, and "technicians" from MI-5, while the 22nd Special Air Services (SAS) were reportedly placed on standby. What stopped the enraged British government from launching a massive assault was not so much diplomatic convention as the Libyan warning about "the consequences," as Libyan troops surrounded the British embassy in Tripoli. A situation of mutual terror developed, and the British capitalist press weighed the value of revenge versus the loss of 300 million pounds of British trade and the possible danger to British subjects. You can't say the British capitalists are not hard-headed materialists.

Whoever fired those shots committed a criminal act. And under these circumstances, we can hardly be fond of the killing of a young woman, even if she was a member of the racist and nastily vicious London police force. But we do not want to let British imperialism hone



Challis/Daily Mail

British policewoman killed, eleven Libyan students wounded when Qaddafi fanatic submachine-gunned protesters from Libyan embassy in London.

its own terrorist skills by storming the Libyan embassy, let alone invading Libya. Moreover, as revolutionary communists who struggle for state power and fully intend to have our own embassies, we uphold the principle of "extraterritoriality." As we wrote at the time of the seizure of the U.S. embassy in Iran:

"Diplomatic immunity and territorial sovereignty of embassies are seldom violated even by nations at war, though every diplomatic office conducts its share of spying and intelligence gathering. These diplomatic rules of the game are necessary to maintain international relations between nation-states, until the nation-state itself has disappeared in a socialist world."

—"Iran Embassy Crisis," *WV*
No. 244, 23 November 1979

If the Libyans were honorable, they would turn over the perpetrator rather than shielding him with embassy extraterritoriality. But of course there is no honor among thieves.

Meanwhile the U.S. government, fresh from dropping mines into Nicaragua's harbors, hypocritically denounced the Libyan action as a violation of "international norms" and a continuation of "state-supported terrorism." The *New York Times* (19 April), reflecting Reagan's appetites, warned that Qaddafi "is asking for punishment." If ever there were a case of the pot calling the kettle black, this is it. The U.S. routinely tramples on Soviet diplomatic immunity, e.g., the humiliating prisoner-of-war treatment of Soviet embassy personnel on Grenada during the recent U.S. pirate invasion, wherein the Soviet staff was held for hours and searched with their hands behind their heads. And in fact it was "former" CIA agents Wilson and Terpil who helped arm Qaddafi, apparently as part of a CIA attempt to use Qaddafi as an anti-communist prop in the Arab world.

Now Qaddafi is targeted by the Reaganites as a Soviet surrogate, and hence even imaginary crimes are blamed on him: the phantom Libyan "hit squad" which supposedly was sent to get Reagan in late 1981 but never materialized; or the bombing raid in Sudan which was supposedly done by a Libyan plane but which even the *Times* (21 March) of London admits was probably done by the Sudanese government in order to kill an oppositionist under house arrest! In the mad, mad world of Reaganite anti-communism, the crazy

plots of the Moslem fanatic Qaddafi could become the trigger for World War III like the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in 1914.

Outside of Libya, only the British Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) of Gerry Healy tries to paint the Qaddafi regime as some kind of people's "revolution." A 21 April editorial in the Healyite *Newsline* demands the lifting of the police siege because "It is an act of intimidation and aggression against the oppressed Libyan people and their

revolution." At the same time *Newsline* takes legal care to "declare our total opposition to the shooting incident," while carefully remaining silent about the trail of bodies spread across Europe by the messengers of Qaddafi. Did they all deserve to die (including the two students recently hanged at Tripoli University, triggering the London demonstration)? The chairman of the Libyan People's Committee on "education," Abdulhafid Zallitali, has explained that an "anti-revolutionary" "could be [defined as] communist, extreme Moslem fundamentalist or others" (*Washington Post*, 23 April)—quite a broad spectrum! The Healyites have long been apologists of murderous Muslim anti-communism, from Qaddafi to Khomeini. And their latest crowing that the Tory government is now backing down looks like nutty wishful thinking—precipitous diplomatic breaks are usually intended only to remove the diplomatic barrier to unrestrained violence.

Despite Qaddafi's "socialist" and "anti-imperialist" rhetoric Libya is a backward capitalist state run by a megalomaniac according to the feudalist, anti-woman, anti-democratic laws of the Koran. But on any scale of terrorism it is a puny factor compared with the capabilities of decaying British imperialism, or especially with the nuclear madmen in Washington. When the British working class sweeps away Thatcher's army of cops now terrorizing the coal fields, then the terrorism of Qaddafi will become a very minor historical footnote. ■

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Central America...

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slipping fast. The basic alternatives for U.S. imperialism to crush the revolutionary masses in Central America are increasingly clear: the massive introduction of U.S. combat troops or pressuring and cajoling the Central American radical nationalists into selling out (a "political solution").

A U.S. occupation of Central America will be no walkover like Grenada. The Pentagon brass were so overjoyed by their "big win" in Grenada that they awarded 8,612 medals to military personnel involved in the invasion even though there were never more than 7,000 U.S. troops on the island! If the U.S. invades Nicaragua, most of those medals will be awarded posthumously. And the popular reaction within the United States to such a Central American adventure will be like nothing this country has seen since the last years of the Vietnam War.

The Democratic Road to Counterrevolution

While the Pentagon is preparing for the large-scale introduction of U.S. combat forces, Congress is voting funds for the CIA-organized *contra* terrorist war on Nicaragua and for the Salvadoran death squads. And here there is no basic policy difference between the Democrats and Reaganites, only a difference in rhetoric. Having bankrolled the *contra* terror campaign that has included brutally murdering Nicaraguan peasants, bombing the civilian airport in Managua and threatening the Pacific port of Corinto with fiery holocaust, Congress has now piously adopted a hot air "non-binding" resolution against the mining of Nicaragua's harbors... after having approved \$21 million for the *contras* a few days before. The Democratic-controlled House of Representatives has already offered \$32 million in supplemental aid to the Salvadoran regime. Besides, the invasion of Grenada was paid for with \$75 million of "unauthorized" funds, so when it comes down to it Reagan will find the money he needs.

While the Democrats and Republicans wrangle over Central America in the press and in the election campaign, there is deep bipartisan agreement on the core of foreign policy—the anti-Soviet war drive. It is because the Democrats believe that Reagan's particular Central American policies weaken the global anti-Soviet war drive and the overall role of the U.S. as world policeman that the imperialist "doves" oppose him on narrow tactical grounds. The Democrats' "negotiated solution" is another *military* solution aimed at defeating the Central American insurgencies in blood, while putting the drive

Nora Astorga, Revolutionary Heroine

Among the Nicaraguan masses and class-conscious militants internationally, Nora Astorga is a heroine of the grueling civil war that overthrew the hated tyrant Anastasio Somoza and his bloodthirsty National Guard. For the U.S. imperialists, however, for whom Somoza was "our son of a bitch," Astorga has an "unattractive" past and was unacceptable as a nominee to become Nicaraguan ambassador to the U.S. According to a high-ranking administration official, "She isn't the type of person that we want here. We wouldn't send that type of person there" (*El Diario-La Prensa*, 20 April). Indeed not. The U.S. government sends types like John Negroponte, American ambassador to Honduras, who as a political officer in the Saigon embassy accused Henry Kissinger of selling out at the 1973 Paris peace talks, preferring even a greater holocaust of napalm and carpet bombing against the Indochinese masses. And the U.S. government accepts with open arms representatives of such blood-soaked repressive regimes as South Africa, Israel and El Salvador.

The administration move, highly unusual under diplomatic protocol, was reportedly pushed by the CIA over the recommendation of George Shultz's State Department. It is fur-

ther evidence of the Reaganites' campaign of provocation and terror and an extension of their attempts to isolate Nicaragua. In this case, though, the CIA has a special grudge. Astorga played a key role in knocking off a key CIA "asset" and second in command of the notorious National Guard, General Reynaldo ("the Dog") Pérez Vega.

Widely known as an especially brutal torturer and a womanizer who obtained sexual favors either through his position or by force, Pérez was lured by Astorga into her bedroom. There she was backed up by armed Sandinista comrades who intervened at the right moment to try to kidnap Somoza's bloody henchman. When "the Dog" tried to resist, he was executed. This act of revolutionary justice was widely hailed in Nicaragua and rightly so.

The Spartacist League salutes Nora Astorga as a courageous fighter. Her revolutionary deed, which so horrifies the masters of the Yankee empire, recalls the heroic act of the biblical Judith, who helped the Israelites defeat the invading army of Assyrian King Nebuchadnezzar by luring his chief general with her charms and then chopping off his head. The butcher Pérez Vega richly deserved his fate, and we only regret that so many of the



AP

Somozaist torturers were spared by the "generosity" of the Sandinista revolution so that they now lead the *contra* mercenaries sowing terror in the Nicaraguan countryside.

Today, opposed by a counterrevolutionary fifth column from within and U.S. mercenaries from without, the Nicaraguan revolution is under attack. Only the revolutionary mobilization of the Nicaraguan masses linked to that of the isthmus' workers and peasants can ultimately defeat the forces of reaction. Defend, complete, extend the Nicaraguan revolution! Hail Nora Astorga!

for World War III against the Russians on a more politically and militarily agile footing. It is not accidental that Gary Hart, for instance, criticizes the Reagan regime for not having enough "readiness" forces. Ready for what?

The differences between the Democrats and the Reagan gang are over means rather than goals. Interviewed on NBC's "Meet the Press" (22 April), Democratic presidential candidate Gary Hart was asked: "Would you be prepared to see Central America go Communist rather than commit American forces?" Hart replied: "If I felt those were the only alternatives, I might be willing to provide a military assistance, but I don't think they are." Or as liberal Democratic Congressman David Obey put it:

"The issue isn't whether we're going to fight for our interests in Central America. The issue is, are we going to fight smart or fight stupid?"
—*Newsweek*, 23 April

Just what do the liberals mean by fighting smart? First, the Democrats understand, as Reagan does not, that most Americans are not willing to die or have their husbands and sons die in order to defend "Blowtorch Bob"

D'Aubuisson's death squads and put Tacho Somoza's torturers back in power in Nicaragua. And this is especially true for blacks, who, moreover, make up a disproportionate number of U.S. combat troops. To broaden the popular base for U.S. imperialist intervention in Central America, it has to be given a "democratic" façade. That's why all of the Democratic presidential candidates talk about making funds for the Salvadoran military conditional on a better "human rights" report card.

An especially important role is that of Jesse Jackson since blacks are deeply hostile to Reagan and generally distrustful of the Pentagon war machine. Alexander Cockburn put it well in a recent issue of the *Nation* (17 March):

"Form and custom demand that at least one Democrat speak to the disenfranchised, the have-nots, the underclass, the wretched of the earth—in other words, the electoral cannon fodder which has to be marshaled briefly at the polling booths in November to propel the consensus candidate into office. This was to be the role of Jesse Jackson, given media sanction to animate the masses with his Baptist eloquence, register them wherever possible and then take a back seat to a 'serious' candidate."

Cockburn believes that Jackson has now gone beyond this role, but his description is correct.

It is no accident that every major war U.S. imperialism has been involved in this century occurred under a liberal Democratic president: World War I under Woodrow Wilson, World War II under Roosevelt, the Korean War under Truman and the Vietnam War under Kennedy/Johnson. Because of their ties to organized labor, the blacks and other minorities, the Democrats can mobilize the American population for war in a way that the Republicans, widely viewed as the party of "big business," cannot. And for this they have the active cooperation of the rad-lib and reformist leaders of the El Salvador protest movement. Just as during the Vietnam War every two years the "peace" movement would take a break in their demonstrations to work for Democratic "dove" candidates, today CISPES et al. are devoting their efforts to building the Jesse Jackson campaign. We noted recently in *Young Spartacus* (No. 117,

April 1984) that just as the U.S. threat to the Salvadoran insurgents and Sandinista Nicaragua is greater than ever before, there are *no* protest demonstrations at all. But wait! An emergency protest against the U.S. mining of Nicaraguan harbors has now been scheduled... for June 9! No doubt they figure with the primaries over they won't step on any Democrats' electoral toes.

Secondly, the liberal Democrats have ties to European social democracy and decades of experience dealing with trade-union bureaucrats and black reformist leaders. More politically sophisticated than the Reaganites, the Democrats know how to suppress a revolution without always sending in the marines. While Reagan has already written off Nicaragua as a "Communist state," Democratic policymakers understand that the radical nationalist Sandinista regime can be split, that at least a section of it can be bought off. After all, CIA *contra* Edén Pastora (Comandante Zero) was once a hero of the civil war against Somoza. There are certainly other potential Pastoras within the Sandinista regime. But Reagan is not giving the Sandinistas the option of selling out; he wants to kill them all. At the same time, the CIA's mining of Nicaraguan harbors, the escalating war of *contra* terror is rallying the masses against the hated Yankee imperialists. Still the petty-bourgeois Sandinistas continue to tolerate, even subsidize, the capitalist "fifth column"—the *contras* from within. The only way to defend the Nicaraguan revolution is to *complete* the revolution by expropriating the bourgeoisie as a class and by *extending* the revolutionary struggle throughout Central America, deposing the surrounding right-wing, U.S.-backed regimes.

In El Salvador the liberal Democrats aim to split the "moderate" wing of the nationalist forces. After all, the head of the Revolutionary Democratic Front, Guillermo Ungo, is a small-change bourgeois politician who served in the "human rights" junta installed in 1979 by the Carter/Mondale administration. This "human rights" junta began the orgy of bloodletting which continues to this day. Today Ungo calls for a
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Hang Margaret Thatcher!

Margaret Thatcher, the nastiest thing to hit England since Winston Churchill, appears to be an outright war criminal. During the Falkland/Malvinas war, that bizarre conflict between two crazed reactionary regimes, Thatcher's British Tories and the Argentine military dictatorship, the one unambiguous atrocity was the gratuitous sinking of the ancient cruiser *General Belgrano* (formerly USS *Phoenix*). The British submarine *Conqueror* located the *Belgrano* about 35 miles outside the 200-mile "war zone" declared by London. Disregarding this fact, the British launched two long-range torpedoes. Within hours the second largest ship in the Argentine navy went down. Over 300 sailors were killed. The British naval officers, who carefully cultivate a reputation for honor and "fair play," made no effort at all to rescue the survivors huddled together in life boats trying to avoid freezing to death.

Now it has come out that Thatcher's war cabinet and the British high command apparently knew in advance the *Belgrano* was returning to port. An April 1 letter in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* cited a *Labour*

Weekly account (3 February) as revealing that a radio message from the Argentine high command ordering the *Belgrano* to leave the area was intercepted by the GCHQ Cheltenham intelligence center. It was decoded in two minutes, forwarded to the British Naval Intelligence Center and thence to the war cabinet. In other words, Thatcher & Co. presumably knew hours before the *Belgrano* was sunk that it was heading away from the "war zone." If this story is true, the British sub commander may not have been so informed, but Iron Lady Thatcher surely knew; apparently she had the Argentine ship sunk for the sheer mass-murdering hell of it.

Since then the British have revealed almost nothing about the sinking of the *Belgrano*. What, for example, was its speed and direction when attacked? (The Argentine junta was unlikely to admit it ordered the ship to leave the war zone, though the present Buenos Aires regime might verify such an order.) The name of the commander of the submarine *Conqueror*, who would normally be heaped with medals, has not to our knowledge even been made

Coffins of sailors killed in sinking of Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano*. Victims of war criminal Margaret Thatcher.



known to the public. This secretiveness strongly suggests guilt at the top. If the British commander knew the *Belgrano* was leaving the area, he, too, is guilty of mass murder and deserves to be hanged.

Evidently one of the reasons that Thatcher has tried union-bashing at GCHQ Cheltenham—along with her normal bloodlust against the labor movement—was that one of its em-

ployees leaked this evidence that she is a certified war criminal.

The account in the *Guardian* suggests an inquiry into the sinking of the *Belgrano*. But it would be hard to find a jury of Thatcher's peers—except possibly the torturers and executioners of the former Argentine junta. If Thatcher dispatched those Argentine boys to the bottom of the sea, she richly deserves hanging.

NYC Protest Hits Anti-Tamil Terror in Sri Lanka

Supporters of the Spartacist League joined several Tamil groups demonstrating in New York City on April 16 against the escalation of racist violence by the pro-American J.R. Jayewardene regime against the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka (Ceylon). As the 50 protesters marched, they were photographed by Sinhalese who drove by repeatedly in cars with diplomatic license plates.

Jayewardene's United National Party government is now promoting rumors of thousands of "terrorist Tamil Tigers" massing in Tamil Nadu, south India, ready to invade across the Palk Strait. Thus the rulers hope to justify their own bloody terror against the Tamils, carried out by Sinhalese communalist mobs in the South and by the cops and the army of occupation in the Jaffna peninsula in the North. News reports from the North are subject to stringent censorship. The Jaffna peninsula is sealed off, patrolled day and night by 5,000 cops and troops. Now the government has announced the establishment of a "surveillance zone" to blockade the Palk Strait, warning that any vessel entering the restricted zone would be fired on. Thus tens of thousands of Tamils, forced by the pogroms to flee to the North, are locked in this barren ghetto. In the last month incidents between the military personnel and the militant youth have increased. The demonstrators in New York demanded: Cops and troops out of Jaffna! Down with emergency regulations! Arms to the Tamil people! For the right of Tamil Eelam!

Recently a special ministry of "national security" was given sweeping "emergency powers" in the North and East. This spells more of the violence for which the occupying Sinhalese army is notorious—raping, looting and massacre. In the latest attacks the government figure of 50 dead is undoubtedly considerably understated. On April 10 the army opened fire on a Catholic church in Jaffna which was sheltering hundreds of Tamil refugees who had fled from the South after the massacres last July. Army, police and air force personnel then carried out indiscrimi-



April 16—Over 50 protesters, Tamils and supporters of the international Spartacist tendency, rallied in front of the Sri Lankan Mission to the UN.

nate attacks including shooting into a crowd at the market town of Chunnakam near Jaffna, killing at least eight people.

India has expressed concern over recent events and especially over J.R.'s growing ties with war-crazy Reagan. But Indira Gandhi, bloody oppressor of her own national, religious and political minorities, faced with plenty of problems of her own, won't come to the aid of Lanka's Tamils. While some demonstrators in New York chanted "Mother India Save the Tamils," Spartacist supporters led the chant, "No Faith in Mrs. Gandhi—Remember Assam and the Mukti Bahini!"

As the Sri Lankan government's relations with India have steadily worsened, Jayewardene has made increasingly clear that he is more than willing to trade with Reagan—Lanka as a strategic outpost in the service of Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive, in exchange for IMF dollars and U.S. military hardware. What J.R. has that the U.S. wants is cheap labor in the "Free Trade Zone" and especially the rights to Trincomalee harbor, strategic to control of the Indian Ocean. Located in the historically predominantly Tamil eastern area of the island, Trincomalee is the crucial point of intersection between the U.S.'s appetites and Jayewardene's terrorization of the Tamil people.

Last November the UNP government announced a 200 percent increase in the military budget (to \$99 million) from the 1981 budget, the purchase of helicopters, artillery, communications and counterinsurgency equipment. Meanwhile, following a chat with U.S. "Defense" Secretary Caspar Weinberger in Colombo late last year, the January 12 visit of a U.S. Congressional delegation including the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee defense subcommittee, and a stopover in Colombo by the Senate Appropriations Committee chairman on January 16, a government spokesman announced an official state visit to the U.S. by Jayewardene, to be highlighted by a state dinner hosted by Reagan himself. Presumably these discussions will conclude the "treaty of friendship and cooperation" already underway. Lanka's offer of "maritime facilities" to the U.S. and perhaps the renovation of Trinco's oil tank complex will be pursued.

In December 1983, a deal was concluded permitting the Voice of America, which already has some of the most powerful radio transmitters in the world, to establish five medium- and short-wave transmitters on the island. These will be world-class transmitters rivaling those of Radio Peking and Radio Free Europe. The U.S. sure has big plans for Lanka!

As part of Jayewardene's drive to make the island safe for U.S. imperialism, left groups in the South have also been subject to censorship and repression. For their intransigent socialist defense of the rights of the Tamil people, the Trotskyists of the Spartacist League/Lanka have themselves been subjected to state repression and intimidation by the authorities and targeted in a dangerous smear attack by a major bourgeois newspaper (see *WV* Nos. 351 and 352). Hands off JVP, NSSP, Lanka Spartacists!

To forge the revolutionary unity of the besieged Tamil people of Lanka, including nearly a million Tamil plantation workers (who are economically key and mainly legally "stateless"), with the exploited Sinhalese workers and peasants requires the forging of a revolutionary proletarian vanguard fighting for real national equality and social justice in a workers state. For the right of Tamil Eelam! Ceylon must be a springboard for socialist revolution throughout the Indian subcontinent! For a Socialist Federation of Eelam and Lanka as part of a Socialist Federation of South Asia! ■

Lanka Spartacist (in Sinhala)
Elangai Spartacist (in Tamil)



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From Reformist Sellouts to Overt Repudiation of Trotskyism

Barnes Axes Last Veterans of the Old SWP

Jack Barnes has now dispatched the last ghost of his party's claims to represent the continuity of the old Socialist Workers Party (SWP) which once embodied Trotskyism in this country. Earlier this year Barnes and his traveling hatchetman Barry Sheppard polished off the remainder of a large crop of SWP oppositionists by a massive "re-registration" purge of the residual, mainly rank-and-file, supporters of two expelled minority currents, whose main spokesmen had already been purged earlier.

This mass purge over last Christmas/New Year's leaves Barnes' party free to float off into soft-core Stalinism and irrelevance while hundreds of recent ex-members grope around disunitedly in a mainly social-democratic direction; and some are even seeking to be Trotskyists, as they understand it. The Barnesites, by their own count, have rid themselves of more than 150 dissidents in the last three years ("List of Splitters," *SWP Party Organizer*, Volume 8, No. 1, January 1984). Among the recently departed are just about everyone left from the old days of the Trotskyist SWP; we can think only of Art Sharon and George Novack (Harry Ring doesn't count) as party veterans who may now remain in Barnes' party.

The important political question of the SWP's "Trotskyism" was settled programmatically and organizationally two decades ago. But it wasn't until December 1982 that Barnes dotted the i's and crossed the t's when he explicitly attacked the theory of "permanent revolution" and belittled the revolutionary stature of Leon Trotsky, in classically Stalinist terms. Upon the death last year of Farrell Dobbs, Barnes' predecessor as head of the SWP, the Barnesites crowed in their Dobbs memorial meetings over the "continuity" of the SWP—from Lenin straight to Dobbs and Barnes, thereby excising Trotsky and SWP founder and leader James P. Cannon from SWP history. Barnes had been moving increasingly overtly toward dumping the SWP's lip-service to Trotskyism. To finish the job required the ouster of the last vestiges of the cadre of the old party, who resisted the invitation to spit on the watchwords of their revolutionary youth.

While we enjoy an opponent's faction fight as much as anybody, there's no joy in it for us when an SWPer is expelled for a poem she wrote, another for falling asleep in a Militant forum (anyone who's ever attended one can sympathize with this comrade's breach of "discipline"). Even by established Barnesite standards, very special savagery has been dished out to the veterans of the old party: e.g., the obscene treatment of James Kutcher, "the legless veteran," whose ten-year fight against government witchhunters in the 1940s and 1950s was backed by significant sections of the labor movement. Now little old ladies who were SWP members for 50 years are being turned out of SWP "public" forums by open threats of goon violence.

In 1982 the resident anti-Trotskyist expert of the rad-lib Stalinist *Guardian*, John Trinkl, gloatingly observed that

the SWP "has been quietly dropping overboard some of its Trotskyist baggage" (*Guardian*, 14 July 1982). To free himself up for whatever Barnes thinks is out there waiting for him, he had to get rid not just of the "baggage" but of anyone who still wanted to tote it, even if they'd long since lost the keys to the suitcases. Barnes has spit out the SWP old-timers because they remain sentimental about Trotskyism.

This purge has been squarely on the agenda for Barnes' party since the

tively prohibited factional rights in the party. We will return to this point later.

1981 Pre-Convention Discussion: "100 Flowers" Sprout

Under the post-1965 bureaucratic "norms" of the SWP, about the only "loophole" left for organized critics is the pre-convention discussion, a three-month period prior to national conventions, which are mandated for every two

the conditions of Carter/Reagan's resurgent anti-Soviet war drive.

The two SWP minority groupings emerged mainly in opposition to Barnes' idiotic union policy of "talking socialism" on the job and in opposition to the SWP's shift, in the mid/late 1970s, toward totally slavish adulation of the Castroite (Stalinist) regime in Cuba. The emergence in Poland of the anti-socialist power bid of Solidarność sharply highlighted the eccentricity of Barnes' efforts to simultaneously pursue a niche as a "respectable," "peaceful-legal" party of nativist American reformism while posturing as a partisan of "Soviet surrogates" like the Cuban state. Solidarność, the Polish "company union" for the CIA, Western bankers and the Vatican, presented the consummate opportunity for social-democrats to become more at one with the "free trade unionism" Cold Warriors who have run the American unions since the 1950s. When Fidel Castro came out in support of the suppression of Solidarność' power bid, it threw the SWP's dilemma into sharp relief.

Over Poland, both the Weinstein and Breitman oppositions argued for more fulsome and more active support to Solidarność, while Barnes remained queasy about joining with the reactionary "captive nations" crowd in the streets the way that Weinstein did in California. On Cuba, the dissidents fervently quoted the orthodox disclaimers in the SWP's earlier documents on Castroism; a left critique was made of the Barnesites' transparent bid for a franchise from Sandinista Nicaragua. Sensible criticisms were also made of the SWP's continuing prostration before the ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic dictatorship in Iran, a position formerly shared by virtually every current on the left (except us of course) but eventually shelved in embarrassment by all of them save Barnes' weird party.

Barnes' crazy notions of trade-union work—the "talking socialism" campaign—provided more common ground for the would-be trade-union opportunists of the Weinstein grouping and older cadres like Frank Lovell, who had been trade-union director on behalf of Barnes but retained enough upper spinal column from the old days to know that six months on the job does not make anyone a credible workers leader. Lovell also took exception to the utterly contemptuous way that old-timers were being treated around SWP headquarters, a harbinger of Barnes' plans for explicit revision of the SWP's formal Trotskyism.

The minorities took full advantage of the pre-convention discussion "loophole" and the result was a full-fledged "hundred flowers" movement where bloomed more than two dozen internal discussion bulletins in the three months prior to the August 1981 national convention. At the convention the two oppositions, politically somewhat interpenetrated and both generally rightist in programmatic coloration, were substantial enough to generate significant proportional representation ("PR") in delegate voting, despite the standard SWP procedures aimed at trimming



Pathfinder Press

James P. Cannon, the founding leader of American Trotskyism.

surfacing of dreaded factionalism in the SWP prior to the party's 1981 national convention. Factional struggle in the SWP is a contradiction in terms, and has been since the mid-1960s; the bureaucratization of the party was the necessary organizational handmaiden of its qualitative shift off a revolutionary axis.

In 1963 the Revolutionary Tendency, forerunner of the Spartacist League, was purged from the SWP in the midst of a sharp political struggle. The RT was purged solely for "disloyalty"—i.e., for our political views—without the slightest evidence of indiscipline. As the purge stood flatly in conflict with the 35-year tradition of American Trotskyism, the Dobbs regime needed new organizational rules after the fact: Dobbs' 1965 organizational resolution which effec-

tively prohibited factional rights in the party. We will return to this point later.

years. In the 1981 pre-convention discussion, Barnes found himself with two sizable minorities on his hands: the West Coast-based "Trotskyist Tendency" of Nat Weinstein and Lynn Henderson and what became the "Fourth Internationalist Caucus" of Steve Bloom, Frank Lovell and George Breitman. Underlying the appearance of this virtual "hundred flowers campaign" in Barnes' party was an intimation of irrelevance. The SWP was shrinking fast as an organizationally sectarian reformist party with no stable "niche," having been eclipsed evidently decisively by Mike Harrington's Democratic Socialists (DSA), which has the numbers, the influential pals among the labor union tops and the consistent "anti-Stalinist" ideology to be the "left wing of the possible" particularly under

minority "PR." The minorities, who acted in concert at the convention, were then faced with the problem of getting back in step with SWP "norms." We hazarded the modest opinion that Barnes would close the "loophole" by purging his critics prior to the next convention.

After the 1981 convention, the Lovell/Bloom people dissolved to show their loyalty. The West Coast crew however thought to try to maintain rights as a tendency, such rights being worse than murky in the SWP. Both groups soon found themselves grist for the inexorable Barnesite meatgrinder. Continuing show trials of erring old-timers were followed by the "six day war" National Committee plenum (February-March 1982) featuring dozens of motions aimed at forcing minority supporters to "cease and desist" from any "unauthorized" political discussion or collaboration. The internal bulletin issued to bring this home to the membership had to be priced at \$8.00 to fit it all in.

The whole nasty business flowed straight from the 1965 organizational resolution, whose central syllogism can be put quite simply: 1. factions are permitted in the SWP, 2. factionalists are disloyal people, 3. disloyal people are expelled. The resolution sets out the majority's right to "regulate" internal discussion to preclude any kind of private deliberations among oppositional members. Therefore any effort to collaborate politically with cothinkers inside the party makes you a "faction" (or a "secret faction"). And so it came down on Weinstein/Henderson and Lovell/Bloom: organized tendencies may not communicate "behind the back" of the party leadership; dissolved minorities may not communicate at all; minority spokesmen placed on the National Committee by "PR" are bound to maintain majority "discipline" toward the ranks (it's rather like the storied Mafia code of "omerta"); party members are bound by party discipline in the party's own youth organization.

Out of the Closet: Barnes Attacks Trotsky

With his critics muzzled but less pacified than ever, Barnes went over to the frontal political assault in December 1982. At a public meeting in Chicago held in conjunction with the national convention of the SWP's youth group, Barnes explicitly attacked Trotsky as an irrelevant ultraleftist. Barnes also directly challenged the SWP's erstwhile cothinkers abroad, the "United Secretariat" (USec) of Ernest Mandel, by declaring that "80 percent" of the world's ostensible Trotskyists are "hopeless, irreformable sectarians." The SWP did not publish Barnes' "Their Trotsky and Ours" speech until August 1983, when the speech appeared in the SWP's *New Internationalist* magazine.

Barnes' declaration in the speech that the SWP would henceforth avoid

SWP Party Organizer gloats over final solution of the internal struggle.

looking at politics "through permanent revolution eyes" had been preceded by more weasely thrusts in the same direction, from the SWP "leadership school" where selected Barnesites could learn to read Marx and Engels unspoiled by the later theoretical conquests of Lenin and Trotsky, to the coy announcement that two volumes of Dobbs' autobiography would be titled *The Trotskyist Years* and *The Transition Years* (transition to what, we inquired). The most explicit precursor to Barnes' speech was Doug Jenness' articles resuscitating the "democratic dictatorship" formula for stagism, which Lenin the revolutionist transcended in his 1917 "April Theses."

Jenness' articles allowed the USec's Mandel to posture as an orthodox Trotskyist against SWP revisionism. But Mandel is himself no less willing than Barnes to dump "Trotskyism" if it stands in the way of perceived opportunity. In 1976, flirting with the idea of a regroupment with the French Parti Socialiste Unifié, Mandel was unambiguous:

"What difference do labels make? If in the political arena we encountered political forces which agreed with our strategic and tactical orientation and which were repulsed only by the historical reference and the name we would get rid of it in 24 hours."

The main difference between Barnes the crude and Mandel the smooth is that the latter is a lot smarter; we bet he'll wait until he has received a serious proposition before he goes and changes the ideological bedsheets. Meanwhile, Mandel is prostituting the Trotskyist opposition to Stalinism in order to ingratiate himself with anti-Soviet social-democracy. The Mandelites—

Appendix I: List of Splitters

Birmingham Judith A. Robin D.	Houston David Rossi	Elias R. Larry S.	Sandy O. Linda Ray Joe R. Ann R. Karen Schieve Michael Schreiber Carole Seligman Roland Sheppard Shannon Sheppard Margery V. Nat Weinstein Sylvia Weinstein
Boston Joseph A. David Keil Art L. Roger S. Dave W.	Iron Range Anne Teasdale Zukowski	Oakland Phyllis C. Carl Finamore May May Gong Mojgan Harri-Vijeh Jeff Mackler Don Maboney Eisher P. Hayden Perry Alice S. Dave S.	San Jose Bill Leumer
Brooklyn Naomi Allen Peter Atwood Steve Bloom Frank Lovell Sarah Lovell James M. Evan Siegel George Weissman	Los Angeles Andra B. Dave Cooper Lilian C. Leslie Evans Leo Frumkin Sherry Frumkin Max G. Sheavy Geldman Milton Genecin Thelma Genecin Edmund K. Walter Lippmann Jim O. Kathleen O. Marc Rich Evelyn Sell Jack S. Ann S. Mitt S. Alma S. Bob S.	Philadelphia Haskell B. Naomi B. Stephen M. Grace M.	Seattle Rita S.
Chicago Steven Ashby George Basley Robert B. Tina B. Larry Cooperman Rod Estvan Norine Gutekants Judy H. Michael Kramer Vivian L. Debby P. John P. Patrick Quinn Adam S.	Manhattan Alan Benjamin Lita Blanc Dorothea Breiman George Breiman Pedro Camejo Cliff C. Debby G. Penny H. James Kutcher Berta L. Ray M. Jim M. Lous P. Brian S. Paul Siegel Michael S. Dave W.	Phoenix Bill N.	Tucson Rob R.
Cleveland Glenn Campbell George C. Sophie C. Dean C. Joanna M. Shirley Pashok Andy Pollack Dennis S. Jean Tussey	Newark Gerry Foley	Pittsburgh Dianne Feeley Paul LeBlanc Carole M. Tom T.	Twin Cities Melanie Benson Cindy B. Jake Cooper Greg Cornell Harry Deboer Gillian Farnl Lynn Henderson Mary Henderson Catherine K. Bill Onasch Christine Frank Onasch Bill Peterson Gary P. Dave Riehl Karl S. Ralph Schwartz Gayle Swann Dan Y. Mike Zukowski
Dallas Gene Lantz		Salt Lake City Shawn G. Kenneth C. Morgan Millie P.	Washington D.C. Jay Fisher
		San Francisco Byron Ackerman Bob C. Paul Colvin Kate Curry Nancy E. Ralph Forsyth Laura H. Asher H. Ruth H. Don Harmon Mark H. Ann Measche	At Large Stephane Coontz George S. Alan Wald

members who were feeling increasingly uncomfortable in Barnes' nasty party. That shelter died with Hansen. And Barnes increased the tempo of his conspiracy to shift the SWP away from formal Trotskyism, becoming overt in a qualitative way around "permanent revolution." And it was time for the night of the long knives for the old party veterans. As Coard and Austin are to Maurice Bishop's movement in Grenada, so are Barnes and Sheppard to the SWP of Dobbs/Hansen. We have to wonder whether the Barnesites' despicable refusal to defend Hansen's reputation against the Healyite slander campaign resuscitated by the sinister Alan Gelfand's organization-busting court suit was due to Barnes' animus at Hansen for keeping Barnes' "theoretical" aspirations of anti-Trotskyism so long in the closet.

The "Loophole" Becomes a Noose

With the denunciation of Trotsky finally under his belt, Barnes was ready for end-game. The minorities were seething, readying for a stand at the national convention supposed according to SWP statute to be held in August 1983. This was it: Barnes would have to open pre-convention discussion, the last remaining "loophole." So Barnes simply canceled the convention.

The two opposition groupings formed a joint Opposition Bloc going into the National Committee plenum of May 1983; they submitted various minority resolutions, objected to Barnes' cancellation of the convention and sought hopelessly to defend the appeals of a number of those already expelled. This time there was no \$8 bulletin either; instead, the leadership informed the branches that no longer would time be wasted reporting on every last little motion and purge; indeed, an explicit gag rule was imposed to prevent information on the plenum from filtering down. That side of the plenum reports was communicated to the ranks only in August, as Barnes prepared his final moves against the opposition.

In August, as there was no national convention (thus no pre-convention discussion, no discussion bulletins, no delegate elections), an "educational" conference was held instead. A lot of the dissenters were already out and the ones that were left were pretty demoralized. In fact the SWP was an already split party—we reported in our press what happened when the majorityite goons tried as usual to cordon off the Spartacist sales team: a number of older SWP members told their supposed protectors to "leave me alone, I'm just buying a paper." Our literary intervention at the SWP nonconvention included an article on the continuing purge and some long selections from the "Dianne Feeley letter," a protest signed by two expelled Weinstein supporters documenting some organizational aspects of Barnesite internal anti-democracy.

At the post-nonconvention plenum, the four minority National Committee members dissolved their "Bloc"—and were promptly suspended "unconditionally" as a so-called "secret faction." The Barnesites roasted the minorityites for the presumed "secret discussions" that enabled the two groupings to make and dissolve blocs. You must tell the whole party what your differences are, said Barnes & Co.; if not, your differences can be only over how and when to split the SWP. The four suspended minority spokesmen appealed to Mandel's USec meeting in October 1983, which duly condemned the "escalation of the purge of oppositions" and called on the SWP to reinstate these "members of the Fourth International," while leaving open the question of its own future relations with all parties.

Despite the considerable political interpenetration in their critiques of

continued on page 12



Jack Barnes: anti-Trotskyist.

WV Photo



New York Historical Society



Bettmann Archive

We Tore Down the Flag of Slavery!

(continued from page 16)

the banner of slavery, and is still used today to represent movements such as the Ku Klux Klan." Feinstein backed down whining, "I want to make it very clear that my decision is based only on Supervisor Ward's request... I'm not impressed because some group shinnies up a flag pole and tears down a flag." Oh, no? Then try to put it up again! Just the day before, Feinstein's head of the Parks Department, Tom Malloy had declared: "We have no intention of removing that flag."

At the press conference to celebrate the victory, SL spokesman Al Nelson said, "Mayor Feinstein claims she doesn't want to do anything offensive to black people in San Francisco, but that flag of slavery has been up there for two years and would still be up there if we hadn't pulled it down twice and made an issue out of it." On April 19, the black-edited *Oakland Tribune* wrote an editorial in which it gives about as much credit to the Spartacist League as any group of "socialist activists" is likely to receive from a major newspaper this side of proletarian power (see "Showing the Flag," page 10).

There was also some backlash, emanating from pro-Feinstein quarters where on this issue a defeat involved more than wound-licking. Besides the usual racist hate calls and provocations, the letters in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in praise of the "genteel" ways of the



WV Photo

Peter Woolston and Richard Bradley celebrate the victory. Above right: Black soldiers turned the tide of Civil War for the Union. Above left: First major battle involving black troops, Port Hudson, Louisiana, 23 May 1863.

"Gone With the Wind" South, the *Chronicle* ran a dangerous smear of the Spartacist League with the accusation that the SL intended to violently disrupt the Democratic Convention this summer. As the Spartacist League wrote in response to the *Chronicle*, the article was "a transparent attempt to discredit the Spartacist League following our widely welcomed success..." (see "*S.F. Chronicle: Retract Your Dangerous Smear*," page 11).

That the flag will fly no more is not only a victory for blacks and all decent people of San Francisco, it is a defeat for the Klan and the rest of the racists. And it is a defeat for Feinstein, whose racist anti-labor arrogance was recently displayed when she told protesting cab drivers, "I've been Mau-Maued by the best" (*Chronicle*, 12 April).

The excuse offered by Feinstein and Malloy for flying the Confederate flag was that it represented California's history. What a lie! First of all, this battle is not merely over "history lessons" (although the mayor badly needs one). The "stars and bars" (first flag of the Slavocracy) was a call to arms in 1861, and so is the Confederate flag today for the paramilitary KKK and Nazi killers. At the SL press conference

April 17, a reporter asked, "If people have to know this history to understand it, where should they go to see a flag like that so they know it's wrong?" Spartacist spokesman Al Nelson responded:

"I'll tell you where they can go. They can go to their television sets and watch the filming of the shootings that took place in Greensboro in 1979. They may have had some zoom shots to pick up on the Confederate flags on the baseball caps of the guys pumping 12-gauge shotgun shells into those kids on the ground. That's one place they can see it. They can also go to any library in the country and read some very good histories on the Civil War and its military engagements."

Finish the Civil War! Forward to a Workers State!

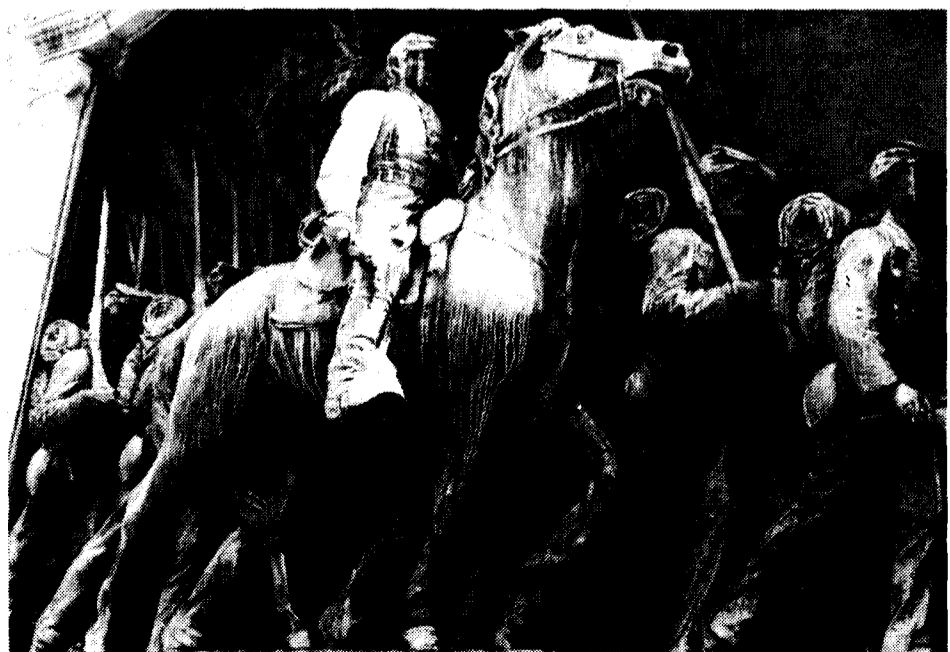
Of course the Civil War has plenty to do with California's history, but that history is not represented by the Confederate flag. California entered the Union as a free state in 1850. When the Civil War broke out, the Union military commander in California issued the order that any vessel flying the Confederate flag off the coast would be captured or if it failed to surrender "will be fired into and sunk."

The Civil War is often misrepresented as simply a war between the "Yankees"

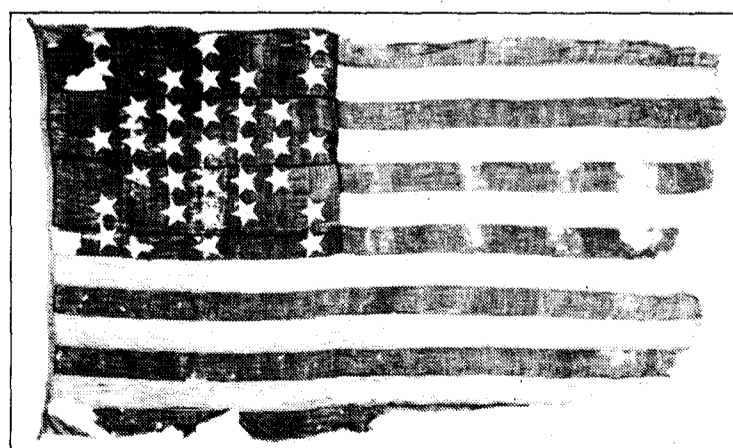
and the South. But the Civil War was part of the American revolution—the Second American Revolution, an irrepressible conflict between social systems. At the heart of the struggle was the system of slavery. The burgeoning industrial capitalists of the North could only finish their revolution by crushing the slavocracy and establishing the system of free labor throughout the country. But the Northerners who were driven into war by the provocations of the secessionists tried desperately to save the Union without "freeing even one slave," as Lincoln put it. The great black abolitionist and ex-slave Frederick Douglass remarked that Lincoln's inaugural address "bends the knee to slavery." Douglass argued that the slogan must be "Death to Slavery!"

Karl Marx writing in November 1861 saw the character of the war and was confident that "events themselves drive to the promulgation of the decisive slogan—the emancipation of the slaves." Indeed, the course of the war proved to the Unionists that it could not be won unless it was fought as a real civil war. It could not be won without a revolutionary leadership using revolutionary methods to destroy the entire social system of slavery. This finally resulted in the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and the arming of 200,000 black soldiers who fought heroically under the Union flag.

The political split in the North, therefore, almost lost the Union the war.



Young Spartacus



Library of Congress

Left: Statue in Boston of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, white commander of the Massachusetts black regiment which was nearly wiped out in assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina in 1863. Shaw was buried with his troops. Above: Tattered, but honored garrison flag of Fort Sumter. SL offers a replica of this flag as a gift to the City of San Francisco to fly where the flag of slavery flew until last week.



After victory, Jeff Higgins, spokesman for Labor Black League, meets the press.

The pro-slavery elements, who were called "Copperheads," tried to agitate for a "negotiated solution." Less known is that the South was also divided on slavery. The poor farmers despised the rich planters, and, as the war dragged on, cried out that it was "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight." They led peace agitation and deserted by the tens of thousands. At least one county of rural Mississippi refused to go along with the slavocracy, formed the "Free State of Jones" and fought the Confederate army.

The issue of slavery, symbolized by the Confederate flag, was settled by blood and iron in the Civil War. Today that flag is the symbol of resurgent racist terror from the Deep South to Contra Costa County. It has become a plebiscite on slavery and racism. And how did Jesse Jackson vote when he sat down to tea with George "Segregation Forever" Wallace in Montgomery, Alabama last year? In the cradle of the slavocracy where the Confederate flag was first unfurled—and still waves today—Jackson sang out, "The South can rise again." Thus Jackson pledges allegiance to the Democratic Party's Dixiecrats.

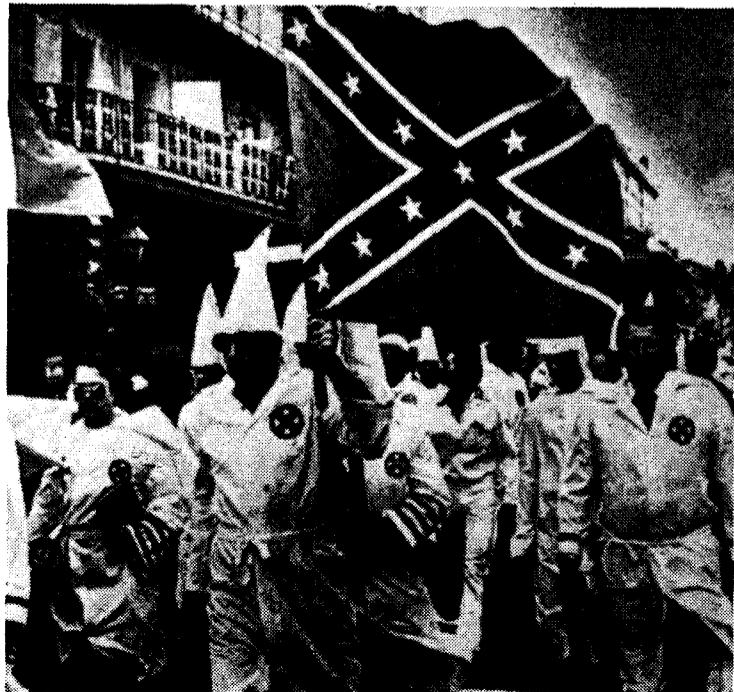
Jesse Jackson and the Democrats want to conciliate the Dixiecrats and their flag. But we will show the Union flag which flew at Fort Sumter. The shots fired on Sumter on 12 April 1861 climaxed a social struggle that had been brewing for years. The Confederacy had easily taken over every U.S. garrison in the South, but Major Robert Anderson, a Southerner loyal to the Union, refused to surrender Fort Sumter in the Charleston, South Carolina harbor. His troops held out for two days, until the Confederate army was able to lower the Union flag and raise their own flag of slavery over the fort. It must have been with great emotion that victorious Union troops returned to the scene of that first battle to occupy Charleston in 1865. And it was Robert Anderson, now major-general, who raised that same garrison flag over the ruins of Fort



California's sons fought and died for the G. A. R. (Grand Army of the Republic).

Sumter. So, Dianne Feinstein, you want a flag with some history. We of the SL offer as a gift to the city of San Francisco the exact replica of the Union garrison flag that was planted over Fort Sumter.

The U.S. Civil War had begun with the desire to save the Union and ended with a promise of black equality. But that promise was betrayed, as Radical Reconstruction in the South was crushed by Klan terror in the deal with the racist capitalist rulers. The democratic institutions of Reconstruction were crushed by institutionalized Jim Crow. Black chattel slaves had been emancipated only to be stripped of political rights and economically subjugated. To finish the Civil War, and make good on the promise of black equality, will require a Third American Revolution, a proletarian revolution led by a Trotskyist party with a strong black leadership component. We in the Spartacist League struggle for black liberation through socialist revolution, for the day when the red flag of the international proletariat flies over the entire world. ■



KKK racist terror parade with its banner, the Dixie flag.

Racist Flag No Longer Flies in Civic Center!

The "proclamation" reprinted below was distributed April 15 in San Francisco by Spartacist comrades.

The Confederate flag of slavery and the Ku Klux Klan will not fly in San Francisco! Today militants of the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League and the Labor Black League for Social Defense tore down this seditious banner of white supremacy from its flagpole in Civic Center Plaza. The flying of the Confederate flag by the City of San Francisco is an outrageous provocation and insult to every black person, every decent person in this city and the state of California.

The Confederate flag is the banner of racist terror. It is the flag of the slaveowner's whip and the Ku Klux Klan's years of lynching, burning, shooting and bombing. From the night patrols which went after the Negro freedman as Black Reconstruction was being destroyed, to the lynchings of blacks in the 1920s, to the bombings and brutal murders of the '60s civil rights movements, to the hideous resurgence of racist violence in the present Cold War climate, the Confederate flag is an incitement to racist violence. Five labor and civil rights organizers in Greensboro, North Carolina were massacred by Klan/Nazi killers in 1979. The KKK lynched a black youth in Mobile, Alabama last year. Black families in Contra Costa County are terrorized by nightriding racists and the "Cowboys" in Richmond mete out racist "street justice." And everywhere, the banner of the race terrorists is the Confederate flag.

The "issue" of the Confederate flag was decided by blood and iron in the Civil War. Over 350,000 Union troops died to bring down the accursed Confederate flag. Over 200,000 black soldiers entered the fight and turned the tide against the South. Nearly 20% of these black soldiers gave their lives in desperate battle for their freedom. By tearing down the Confederate flag today, we are commemorating the 119th anniversary of the April 1865 surrender of the Confederacy at Appomattox.

California entered the Union in 1850 as a solid free state, over the objections of the slave states, and thousands of Californians volunteered to fight against the Confederacy. Mass pro-Union demonstrations were held in San Francisco—that's how Union Square got its name. The "California Battalion," as part of the 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry, took part in more than 50 engagements during the Civil War. A plaque in the State Capitol in Sacramento commemorates the "comrades who died in defense of their country

during the late rebellion and whose bodies lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land."

Just last year, at the University of Mississippi—"Ole Miss"—heroic black students waged a successful fight to ban official use of the Confederate flag. The students faced down a backlash of Ku Klux Klan death threats, daily harassment and a march of 2,000 white racists who besieged a black dormitory, singing "Dixie" and screaming racist slurs. If these courageous students can stop the official flying of the Confederate flag in the very heart of the old Confederacy, it damn well will not fly here!

To put an end to the lynchings once and for all time, it is necessary to mobilize militant labor/black action to crush the fascist slime and to draw the masses of workers and oppressed minorities into political struggle against all the capitalist politicians—from the liberal Northern Democrats who killed busing to the Dixiecrats and "New South" Republicans. The Spartacist League initiated such a mobilization in April 1980 that stopped the Nazis from "celebrating" Hitler's birthday in Civic Center. On November 27, 1982, the Spartacist League-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization of some 5,000 mainly black unionists and youth stopped the Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. The Klansmen were forced to stuff their robes and Confederate flags into paper bags and slink out of town. The Labor Black League for Social Defense was formed in the wake of that anti-Klan victory and stands for mobilizing the masses of black working people along with their white class brothers and sisters in militant, integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America.

We stand in the revolutionary tradition of the anti-slavery fighters John Brown and Frederick Douglass. To complete the unfinished democratic tasks of the Civil War, we look to the multiracial American working class. In this period of imperialist decay, there is no longer a radical or "progressive" wing of the capitalist ruling class; the whole system stands squarely counterposed to black freedom. Forward to the third American Revolution, a proletarian revolution led by a Trotskyist vanguard party with a strong black leadership component. Finish the Civil War—For black liberation in a workers' America!

Spartacist League
Spartacus Youth League
Labor Black League for
Social Defense

April 15, 1984



Confederate General Robert E. Lee signs the surrender at Appomattox, Virginia.

Showing the flag

Protesters who engage in acts of civil disobedience must be prepared to take the consequences of their actions.

Thus, the members of the Spartacist League, a small group of socialist activists, who climbed a flag pole at San Francisco's Civic Center earlier this week and cut down a Confederate banner flying there, must pay the penalty — in this case a misdemeanor citation for malicious mischief.

Such illegal acts are difficult to condone under most circumstances. Yet, there are times when they highlight a contradiction in public policy that needs broader attention.

In this instance, the "malicious mischief" of the Spartacist League members has served to raise a question in the public mind: why was a Confederate flag flying in front of San Francisco City Hall anyway?

The answer: Because it's been flying there, off and on, since 1965. That's when a private donor gave the city a set of flags meant to illustrate "a short hand of American history."

By 1981, the original flags had gone threadbare, leading Mayor Dianne Feinstein to request private help to replace them. The Bechtel Group Inc., answered the call, donating \$1,800 for a new set, including the Confederate banner.

Though the mayor's office has received occasional complaints about the flag since then, nothing happened until the Spartacists, declaring this month the 119th anniversary of the surrender of the Confederacy at Appomattox, marked the date by tearing down and burning the Old South's best-known symbol.

The protesters said they weren't aware a jury in Winston-Salem, N.C. had that same day acquitted six Ku Klux Klansmen and three American Nazi Party members of violating the civil rights of five members of the Communist Workers Party by fatally shooting them in a street battle back in 1979.

All they knew, according to Richard Bradley, who shimmied up the pole to remove the flag on Sunday and its hurried replacement on Monday, was that the Stars and Bars (as it is known) "stands for racism and slavery."

Bradley got backing from San Francisco Supervisor Doris Ward, who asked Mayor Feinstein on Tuesday not to replace the banner a third time. In a letter to the mayor, Ward said the flag not only symbolizes slavery but "is still used today to represent movements such as the Ku Klux Klan." Feinstein has complied with Ward's request so far, being careful to note she is responding to Ward and not to the protestors while she "studies" the situation.

We hope that all due consideration will lead the mayor to furl the Confederate symbol permanently. Its message has no place in such a public arena. There are more appropriate banners that could substitute.

Flags carried by the Union Army in the Civil War, perhaps. Or, better yet, flags from the period in California history when it was a Spanish territory.

Including the Confederate banner in a display meant to show off the richness of American history is offensive to many San Francisco citizens. It is an unnecessary provocation.



WV Photo



Hessmeyer

The second day: Mayor Feinstein orders the flag of slavery back up again and calls out the cops and fire department. Ritchie takes it down again. And it stays down!

Bay Area Gets the News: Dixie Flag Down!

South's Banner Falls at City Hall

A man dressed in a Union Army Civil War uniform climbed a 40-foot flagpole in front of San Francisco City Hall yesterday and cut down a Confederate flag waving there as part of a historic display.

About 50 members of the Spartacist League and other leftist political groups applauded Richard Bradley, 34, as he cut the flag down. They were but them to

San Francisco Chronicle

The protesters denounced the flag as a "banner of racist terror."



Examiner/Kim Komenich

FIREMEN, POLICE WAIT FOR RICHARD BRADLEY TO DESCEND. He tore Confederate flag from display of historic banners

Black activist rips flag again

Richard Bradley shimmied up a flagpole in front of San Francisco City Hall for the second time in as many days yesterday to tear down a Confederate flag he finds offensive.

When he got to the ground, after ripping the flag to shreds and throwing the pieces to the ground, he was arrested and charged with malicious mischief. He was arrested on the same charge Sunday after he climbed the same flagpole and tore apart another Confederate flag.

Bradley belongs to the Spartacist League and the Labor Black League for Social Defense, two organizations that



By Chris Ste...

and dropped pieces to the ground where they were burnt

Feinstein Orders Rebel Flag Down

Mayor Dianne Feinstein, in response to a complaint by Supervisor Doris Ward, said yesterday she will halt the flying of the Confederate flag over San Francisco's Civic Center Plaza.

San Francisco Chronicle

Spartacist League climbed up the flagpole and tore down the Confederate flag, calling it a symbol of racism.

Feinstein said she is ordering that the flag no longer be flown out of deference to Ward, and "not because some group shimmied up a flag pole."

Ward, who is black, said in a statement that "the display of the Confederate flag is not appropriate in either a historic or a symbolic context."

"The Confederate flag was carried as the banner of slavery, and is still used today to represent movements such as the Ku Klux Klan, which attempt to restrict the basic freedoms of the American people."

Feinstein said these were "legitimate concerns" and that "this need not become an issue for our black community."

"I don't intend to do anything to open a wound or be otherwise offensive," said the mayor. "I will take a look at that historic display and see how history can be represented without the Confederate flag."

A representative of the Spartacist League called the mayor's move "a victory" and said they plan to offer the city a Union Army flag to replace the Confederate

4A • MONDAY, APRIL 16, 1984 • USA TODAY

CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO — 'Stars and bars' set afire: A Confederate flag in front of City Hall was cut down and burned by about 50 demonstrators who



Mayor Dianne Feinstein ordered removal of a Confederate flag flown in a historic display over the San

A Confederate flag that was part of a historic display in front of San Francisco City Hall was cut down and called

Los Angeles Times

man climbed up the 40-foot flagpole and cut the flag down. Then he and

THE TRIBUNE, Oakland, California

Confederate flag is ripped down again in S.F.

Bay City News Service

Mayor Feinstein won't replace Confederate flag at S.F. City Hall

By Terry Link

SAN FRANCISCO — Mayor Dianne Feinstein acceded to a request by Supervisor Doris Ward not to replace the Confederate flag at City Hall.

The flag was one of 10 in an historic display which flank both sides of the reflecting pool in front of city hall. On Sunday and again yesterday,



Confederate flag was cut down for the second time yesterday by protesters and the Labor Black League for Social Defense.

Feinstein said she will not replace the flag. She said she will study the situation.

Reporters said the flag was cut down by protesters and the Labor Black League for Social Defense.

Dixie flag won't rise again, Feinstein decides

The Confederate flag, which was torn down twice this week by groups who consider it offensive, will not fly again above Civic Center plaza, Mayor Feinstein says.

The mayor made her decision yesterday, after Supervisor Doris Ward

The organizations consider the flag a symbol of racism.

Bradley was arrested Sunday and Monday, after he climbed the flagpole and tore the Confederate banner apart. He was charged with malicious mischief and released on his own re-

partment, said Monday he intended to replace the flag indefinitely.

"The flags as a set were intended to depict American history," Malloy said.

As long as that message is recognized

tempt to restrict the basic freedoms of American people," Ward said in a prepared statement.

Ward aide Chelsea Baylor said the

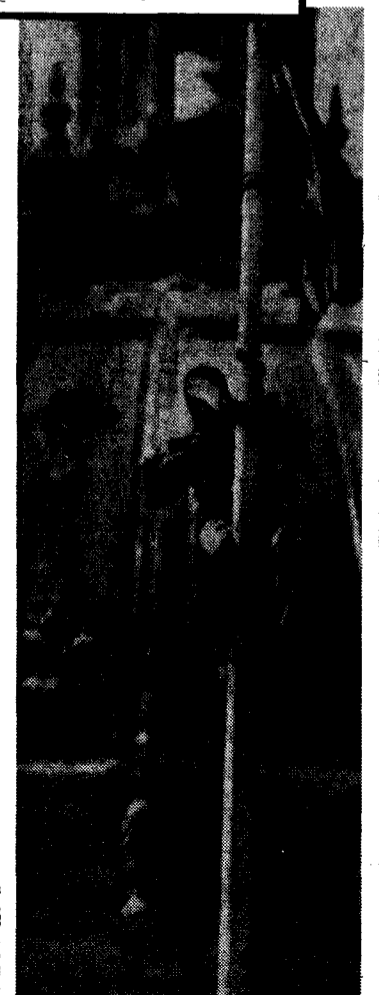
several calls who are of

San Francisco Examiner



City's Dixie flag torn, down, burned in protest

Two men were arrested yesterday and charged with vandalism for cutting down a Confederate flag in San Francisco's United Nations Plaza and burning it. The men, affiliated with the Spartacist League and the Labor Black League for Social Defense, staged the flag-burning to protest the City's use of what they called a symbol of Southern racism. Witnesses said Richard Bradley, 34, on the flagpole at right, cut down the banner and Pete Woolston, 41, at far left, set the "Stars and Bars" ablaze. The pair was booked and released on their own recognizance. "We



S.F. Chronicle: Retract Your Dangerous Smear!

In the wake of the SL's successful action taking down the Confederate flag in San Francisco, the Chronicle (20 April) smeared the SL in a hatchet job article about groups who allegedly intend to "play a violent role" at this summer's Democratic Party convention in SF. This dangerous smear has since been picked up by Murdoch's New York Post (23 April) where it was further "elaborated" by the gutter disinformant, Niles Latham with the whole-cloth lie that the SL was involved in violence at the anti-Kissinger demonstration in San Francisco on April 16. The violent role

April 20, 1984

Editor
San Francisco Chronicle
To the Editor:

In the article "3 Militant Groups Cause Convention Fears," (*Chronicle*, p. 16, April 20, 1984) you falsely and maliciously list the Spartacist League as among "some of the small, ultra-left groups operating in the Bay Area that police fear may play a violent role in demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in July."

This statement is not only absolutely false and libelous, but viciously sets up the Spartacist League for police violence and state repression. This outrageous article is also a transparent attempt to discredit the Spartacist League following our widely welcomed success in twice tearing down the Confederate flag of slavery and the Ku Klux Klan at the Civic Center earlier this week. Our actions forced the mayor to announce that this racist flag would not fly in San Francisco. The *Chronicle's* linking of our peaceful protests against the flag of slavery with police fairy tales about fears of potential acts of violence by the Spartacist League at the Democratic Party convention is a vile smear and an attempt to intimidate all those who support our very popular actions. The only possible connection between our ripping down the despicable Confederate flag and the upcoming convention is that some Dixiecrat delegates and Democratic Party KKK grand dragon Tom Metzger will be upset that that pro-slave banner does not fly in San Francisco. Good!

Your article also carries a menacing threat to those who do want to exercise their democratic rights to demonstrate at the Democratic Party convention. Additionally, the police "concerns" reported in the article are a bald attempt by them to exonerate themselves for the police riot at the Kissinger protest and to give a clear message of intimidation to would-be protesters at the Democratic convention. For our part, we think the Democratic Party convention will be a monumental bore. We have no interest in seeking to lobby or pressure this party of racism and imperialist war. To do so would only serve and strengthen the unfortunate illusion that this party has something to offer working people.

at that demonstration against the war criminal Kissinger was played by the cops who rioted against demonstrators, clubbing them and arresting nearly 200.

Our response to this dangerous smear came quickly (see below). The *Chronicle* tried to cover their ass on April 21. We demand a full retraction now! The hysteria and cop intimidation being whipped up over "fears" of violence at the Democratic convention only serve the Reaganites and their McCarthyite campaign.

The printing of these libelous falsehoods dovetails with the attempt of the Reagan administration, now joined at least by the administration of the politically ambitious and union-busting Democratic mayor Dianne Feinstein, to define Marxists and other political opponents as terrorists. Your false branding of us as violent sets us up as "terrorists" to be targeted for infiltration, investigation and harassment or worse under the notorious Smith FBI Guidelines on Domestic Security/Terrorism and to be the victims of police repression and right-wing violence. We are Marxists not terrorists or criminals and as a workers party have the right to organize for our views.

The Spartacist League has a history of successfully defending its good name against attack by those who in the growing cold war climate have attempted to falsely brand us as terrorists and criminals. In June of 1980 a well known supporter of the Spartacist League, Jane Margolis, received an apology and \$3,500 from the Secret Service. In 1979, they dragged her off the floor of the Communications Workers of America national convention where she was an elected delegate, to prevent her from criticizing then-President Jimmy Carter.

We sued then-Attorney General George Deukmejian when he included us in the "Terrorism" section of his 1979 Report on Organized Crime. Deukmejian's office was forced to retract this characterization, as the *Chronicle* reported in an article headlined "Spartacists Off Terrorist List" (*Chronicle*, December 26, 1981). Your article resurrected the libel of us as "violent" and you know better.

Following the Spartacist League-initiated Labor Black Mobilization of 5,000 unionists and youth—mainly black—that stopped the KKK from marching in Washington, D.C. on November 27, 1982, the Moonies' *Washington Times* libelled us by charging that we "provoked violence" against the police. We sued and the Moonies were forced to retract this libel that kills.

We demand a full and immediate retraction by the *Chronicle* of its false, libelous and damaging characterizations of our organization.

Al Nelson
For the Spartacist League

San Francisco Chronicle
Fri., April 20, 1984

3 Militant Groups Cause Convention Fears

These are some of the small, ultra-left groups operating in the Bay Area that police fear may play a violent role in demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in July:

■ **THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY:** A Maoist group founded in 1969 by a Bay Area offshoot of Students for a Democratic Society and led by Bob Avakian, 40, a former Berkeley student and son of retired Alameda County Superior Court Judge Spurgeon Avakian.

The party has a history of violent clashes with police and storming city council meetings, especially during "May Day" marches usually staged each year by the party in various American cities. The party has not made a public appearance in San Francisco since 1981, but has requested a permit to march in San Francisco this May Day.

San Francisco Deputy District Attorney Frank Passiglia, who prosecuted the party members, said he recognized party supporters among those arrested in Monday's demonstration. "These guys are outright disturbers who don't care who or what the cause is," he said.

■ **THE PRAIRIE FIRE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:** An above-ground arm of the old Weather Underground, the notorious, revolutionary terrorist group connected to dozens of bombings through the 1970s.

Sources familiar with the radical left said that several Prairie Fire supporters at the Kissinger demonstration were part of a wave of vocal protesters who urged other demonstrators off the sidewalks to confront police on the streets.

Born in 1974, Prairie Fire published pamphlets and provided support for members of the Weather Underground who

were fugitives from the law.

The Underground, an offshoot of SDS, drew national attention during the "Days of Rage" of the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1968. It dissolved in the late 1970s when several hard-core members surrendered and two other members were captured in connection with a Brink's armored truck holdup in New York in 1981.

■ **THE COMMUNIST WORKERS PARTY:** A national Marxist-Leninist group that organizes broadly in the peace, feminist, labor and union movements. The party, whose exact numbers are unknown, is one of eight domestic political or terrorist groups under regular surveillance by the FBI.

During the 1980 Democratic Convention in New York City, party members wielding ax handles, carrying teargas and wearing helmets and shields clashed with police outside Madison Square Garden. A small number of party members also evaded security and briefly disrupted the convention inside.

Four years ago in Greensboro, N.C., five party members were shot and killed during a "Death to the Klan" march. A Winston-Salem jury last Monday acquitted nine Klan and American Nazi Party members being tried on federal civil rights charges.

■ **THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE:** A small band of Trotskyites with the reputation for being among the most doctrinaire groups on the radical left. Its members often appear uninvited at news conferences and seize the spotlight for their own political gain.

Spartacist members climbed a flagpole in front of San Francisco City Hall twice in recent days and tore down the Confederate flag, calling it a "banner of racism."

S.F. Groups Blame Cops for Violence

By Katy Butler

Members of two groups involved in last Monday's chaotic demonstration in downtown San Francisco yesterday blamed a "police riot," rather than small groups of volatile demonstrators, for the violence.

Beth Benson, a member of the Livermore Action Group, said, "There has been more focus on a small amount of egg-throwing from the crowd, but there was very little violence from the crowd compared with the police. We feel the violence was instigated by the police."

Police have said that minimal force was used in clearing the streets during the demonstration against former Secretary of State

Henry Kissinger, and that some demonstrators threw rocks and marbles at officers and police horses.

At a press conference yesterday, the Revolutionary Communist Party blamed the violence on "members of a violent fringe group known as the San Francisco Tac Squad."

The group, which also took part in the demonstration, said it supported "the festive atmosphere of Monday's demonstration, where a variety of forces used creative activities to make a strong political statement against the U.S. war moves in Central America."

"The ruling class has an agenda for the Democratic convention that they do not want disrupted in any

way. Only those organizations that constitute themselves as an appendage of the Democratic Party and/or the state apparatus will be tolerated. All others are to be singled out for attack. ... The authorities want to make it clear starting now that protest is fine so long as it does not constitute a threat to their agenda in July."

Meanwhile, members of the Spartacist League, which was named as one of the groups police fear may be planning disruptive activities for the Democratic National Convention in July, said yesterday that they have no plans to demonstrate or foment violence.

Al Nelson of the league said he thought the convention would be "a monumental bore." He also said the league had been wrongly described as a violent group.

"We are Marxists, not terrorists or criminals, and we have a right to organize for our views," Nelson said.

In 1981, after a lawsuit by the

league, then-State Attorney General George Deukmejian admitted he had been wrong to include the Spartacist League in a list of left-wing terrorist organizations.

"Our inclusion on this list was an error, and a statement to this effect was sent out to various government and police agencies across the country," Nelson said.

He said his group worried police because of "our successful protest actions early this week in twice removing the Confederate flag from Civic Center."

"Linking these peaceful protest actions with police propaganda about alleged violence at the Democratic Party convention is an attempt to smear and disparage the people who pulled that Confederate flag down, and wide sections of Bay Area population who support that action."

"We consider the actions that took place at the Kissinger protest demonstration to have been a police riot."

(continued from page 7)

Barnes' SWP, the two minority currents were pulled in conflicting immediate directions. Weinstein's people were mainly ultra-parochialists with petty union-bureaucrat aspirations; for them, Fidelismo, "talking socialism" and increasingly the SWP itself had become a hindrance to small-time reformist appetites closer to home. But a lot of Breitman's people were still oriented to the SWP; though they had run out of revolutionary steam two decades ago, they now found themselves fighting a rearguard action in defense of a pretty attenuated centrist version of Trotskyism.

Breitman's people wanted to stay in the SWP and fight the lost battle; failing that, they wanted to continue orienting to the SWP membership as a presence from the outside. Weinstein's people wanted everybody out sooner rather than later, and onward to the so-called "mass movements" led politically by the Democratic Party. If the two tendencies had trouble maintaining a bloc when Barnes was after the both of them with his meat cleaver, could they stick together in the cold world outside? The situation was complicated by the presence of supporters still inside the SWP and by the organizational highhandedness of the Weinstein gang, who because they happened to have a slight majority insisted that the expellees from both wings should be bound by common democratic-centralist discipline.

An uneasy compromise was reached over the formula of "public faction." The formula solves nothing. What is a public faction? How does it describe itself to those outside the SWP? What does it do? The Weinstein bunch put the accent on "public" and the others on "faction" and in October "Socialist Action" (SA) was founded by the expelled supporters of both minority components; it was the beginning of a short and rocky remarriage of the former "Opposition Bloc."

SA's first national political act was to publish a leaflet, the text emanating from the SA center in California, for distribution to the protests held November 12 to pressure the imperialists to "negotiate" in Central America. But when the leaflets appeared, there were two versions, nearly identical except for the fact that one identified SA as "a public faction of the Socialist Workers Party" while the other said not one word about the origins of the infant organization. The subsequent infighting led to the resignation from SA of Frank Lovell, who began publishing a *Bulletin*



Militant puts leftist face on SWP's reformist antiwar line with photo featuring slogans for unconditional U.S. withdrawal and for NLF victory. Photo is cropped to avoid showing that placards were signed "Spartacist."



NEW YORK PARADE. Scene along mile-long parade route down Fifth Avenue in New York. When first contingent reached end of route thousands were still waiting to begin march. Official slogan of the parade, which was carried by most marchers, was "Stop the War in Vietnam Now."

in *Defense of Marxism (BIDOM)* in December. Lovell took strong exception to Weinstein's having signed Lovell's name (and the names of other Breitman group supporters) to a letter to the SWP membership which the purported signatories hadn't seen. Lovell charged the Weinsteinites with seeking to foreclose possibilities of struggle remaining inside the SWP. Lovell felt the main task was to publish for the SWP ranks the documentation of Barnes' purge and the suppressed political materials of the expellees. In January the Bloom/Breitman supporters followed Lovell out of SA to reconstitute around the *BIDOM* as the "Fourth Internationalist Tendency."

In between these events occurred the final great purge inside the SWP, a selective "re-registration" capped by a mass trial in absentia. It began at the SWP's California state convention held in early December 1983. The minority document, "Deeds, Not Words," garnered the support of 11 percent of the SWP's California membership. This was evidently too much for Barnes to stomach. The leadership used the minority reporter's statement of solidarity with Socialist Action (i.e., with his unjustly expelled ex-comrades) to launch the final solution. The six minority delegates in California were charged with "disloyal actions" because they did not take the floor to "repudiate" their reporter. Then it was de-

manded that every opposition supporter in the state repudiate their delegates' disloyalty in refusing to repudiate the minority reporter. Between December 10 and January 4, twenty members were expelled in California and three resigned in protest.

"Thus, within a period of less than two weeks, the scope of the split rapidly escalated from the minority reporter at the state convention, to the entire minority delegation, to the entire minority caucus state-wide, to every single member in California who had at any time identified himself or herself as a supporter of either the Lovell-Bloom or the Weinstein-Henderson wing of the secret faction."

This is the modest description given by the Barnesites themselves in the Political Bureau statement, "End of the Split Operation Against the SWP" in the January 1984 *Party Organizer*.

Barnes had a presumably very merry Christmas and after New Year's the purge went national. Still professing an oh-so-democratic regard for "organizational norms and principles" ("Every member is assumed to be loyal from the day they join..."), Barnes had already marked his intended victims for execution. The Political Committee decided to "draw up a list of minority supporters in every branch; prepare questions to be put to them and organize Political Committee delegations to meet with every individual on the list as rapidly as possible." The Barnesites swiftly ran through their hit list: a knock on the door, a demand that you "repudiate" a "disloyal" statement allegedly made at a California meeting, without hearing the tapes or seeing a transcript, and charges are laid. Then on January 4 or 5, the Political Committee held a mass trial—which none of those charged was permitted to attend—and it was all over.

Socialist Action, like today's Mandelite USec, has set itself on a straight-line course toward mainstream social-democracy. The Weinsteinites aim at being a competent and influential reformist organization, unlike Barnes' incompetent and weird reformist SWP.

Once liberated from the SWP, the Weinstein crowd lost no time showing what they were made of. Smelling a quick chance to earn their spurs as union bureaucrats' waterboys during the bitter Greyhound strike last winter, the Weinsteinites were a made-to-order "Solidarity with Greyhound" mass movement. In the first issue (egregiously, printed without a union bug) of their paper, *Socialist Action*, they brag about organizing big events where union fakers came to promise great solidarity actions up to and including port shutdowns... not right now of course. This was good cover for the bureaucrats' real policy, which was to squash all impulses toward concrete solidarity

action. And when in San Francisco, as elsewhere, the slogans of the Spartacist League for mass militant strike action to win the Greyhound strike were picked up by union militants who had come out for some real class struggle, that's when the bureaucrats needed some SA waterboys. And SA came through with flying colors, as the labor fakers' unpaid goons to finger and muscle the real "reds" and prevent militant labor struggle. The Weinsteinites were so gross over Greyhound that California radical gadfly Steve Zeltzer, who salutes SA as a generally "positive development," wrote in his *Workers Review*:

"During at least two rallies, Socialist Action tried to prevent the Greyhound workers and their allies from physically shutting down the San Francisco Greyhound terminal... Socialist Action acting as march 'monitors' and the union bureaucracy did succeed in dispersing a militant picket line. They even went as far as to label the chant 'picket lines mean, don't cross' as... 'ultraleft'. O.k., so the chant was originated by the Spartacist League. So what? It's a relevant chant."

Weinstein wants to be a running dog for the American labor bureaucracy, but he inevitably comes up against the same problem that has smashed up the SWP: that kennel already has a much larger inhabitant, the Harrington organization.

And what about the eclectic attenuated centrists now regrouped out of SA as the FIT? We can't see much of a future for them given their perspective of seeking to resuscitate the SWP. "Save your old dues receipts, the SWP will rise again" is a pretty belated stance applied to a party that decisively rejected the programmatic content of Trotskyism 20 years ago. The sloughing off of the old formulas has about as much real political importance as the German Social Democrats' official repudiation of "Marxism," which occurred only in 1959 (!), 45 years after Lenin and the Bolsheviks recognized the definitive passage of social-democracy into the camp of its "own" ruling classes.

What is important about Barnes' explicit revisionism on the formal plane, and the associated contemptuous discarding of the last elements of human continuity with the old-party, is that it reinforces what most leftist observers already know: the Trotskyist party in this country is not the SWP but the Spartacist League.

Expel in Haste, Repent at Leisure

In 1961-63 a fight against the centrist turn of the SWP was waged by the Revolutionary Tendency, crystallizing out of the discussion on Cuba. Castro's courageous petty-bourgeois nationalists, in the absence of the working class as a contender for state power, over-

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SPARTACIST

NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY-MARCH 1964 10 CENTS

WITCH HUNT IN THE SWP

The National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party expelled five members of the party's left wing minority at a plenum in New York City at the end of December. The five expelled supporters of the SWP's Revolutionary Tendency are Shane Mage, James Robertson, Geoffrey White, Laurence Ireland, and Lynne Harper. The Party Political Committee had suspended them two months earlier on the grounds that a Control Commission investigation had revealed that Robertson, Ireland, and Harper had expressed "disloyal" written opinions privately within their own tendency. The opinions privately written that the SWP had ceased to be a revolutionary party and had become centrist, and that an irreconcilable struggle within the framework of the party discipline was therefore required against the Majority line and leadership. Mage and White were held or permitted such views. Upon refusing to recant or disassociate themselves from one another, all five were summarily expelled.

Disciplined Acceptance

These expulsions mark a new phase in the thirty-five year history of Trotskyism in the United States. The degeneration of the party in recent years has reached such a point that for the first time in the entire experience of the SWP the leadership has used expulsions to rid the party of an internal opposition which met the Bolshevik conditions for party membership—disciplined acceptance of the policies imposed by the Majority.

Wide Support

Within the party all oppositional tendencies, dissidents, and critics, totaling more than a quarter of the membership, rallied to the defense of the expelled comrades following the preliminary suspensions. Among those opposing and protesting the PC action were: Myra Tanner Weiss, several times the party's vice-presidential candidate; Arne Swabeck, a founding leader of American Trotskyism, together with many members of his tendency across the country; prominent party members such as Jack Wright of Seattle and Wendell Phillips from Southern California; the Washforth-Phillips grouping; several party branches including New Haven and Seattle.

Control Commission

Two strong reactions felt in the party are responsible for this outpouring of support from the diverse and politically antagonistic sections of the party. One response was indignation at the exclusion of party comrades accused of having "disloyal attitudes." Intensifying this feeling was widespread disgust with the means which were, and must be, used in such political witch hunting. The party leaders refused to grant even the formality of a trial. The expulsions took place following a sordid investigation led by Control Commission member Anna Chester, wife of a PC majority member and notorious in her own right for her fanatical belief in the party leadership. The investigators first demanded access to private minority draft letters and correspondence. Under extreme protest documents and correspondence, with those documents and correspondence, the Control Commission then proceeded to call in young and new comrades for tape-recorded interrogation sessions in the rooms of their own and their tendency's indisciplinable, disloyalty, and Menshevism. Failing to win such admissions, the investigators then turned to questioning which was clumsily designed to entrap the young comrades into involuntary confessions of guilt!

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Revolutionary Tendency comrades, purged from SWP solely for their ideas, published first issue of Spartacist in early 1964.

threw Batista's made-in-America dictatorship; under the unremitting bellicose pressure of the U.S. imperialists, they uprooted capitalist property and Cuba's semi-colonial ruling class and established a deformed workers state. This in fact confirmed crucial aspects of Trotsky's understanding ("permanent revolution") that in the imperialist epoch the tasks associated previously with bourgeois-democratic revolutions (e.g., national liberation, agrarian reform) can't be achieved within capitalist confines. "Permanent revolution" was shown in practice first by the October Revolution in Russia. The Cuban case however differed from the Russian case in one crucial way: the revolution in Russia was made by the working class under the leadership of a revolutionary proletarian party. Thus the Russian Revolution was open-ended in the possibility of development toward socialism, a course which was frozen by the usurpation of political power by the petty-bourgeois Stalinist bureaucracy, while the Cuban Revolution was deformed from inception and directly gave rise to a deformed workers state.

As custodians of a deformed workers state in the process of consolidation, the Fidelistas' natural ideological development was to amalgamate as part of the Stalinized Communist movement—in fact they had to rehabilitate for that purpose a Cuban pro-Moscow party entirely discredited as reformist by the Cuban Revolution itself.

The SWP however used Cuba as a vehicle to embrace the Pabloist liquidationism it had earlier opposed. With the ever adept Joseph Hansen as theoretician, complete with the orthodox disclaimers appropriate to a centrist party, the SWP over Cuba embraced Pablo's notion (Pablo based it mainly on the creation of deformed workers states in postwar Eastern Europe) that forces other than Trotskyist vanguard parties were objectively forced to outline a roughly revolutionary path which was, basically, good enough. With this as the explicit basis, the SWP in 1963 "reunified" with the Pabloists in Europe around Ernest Mandel, and thus the USec was founded.

The Revolutionary Tendency (RT) which emerged in opposition to this course was led mainly by former Shachtmanite youth leaders who broke to the left and were won over to Trotskyism by an SWP whose cadres didn't exactly believe it any more. The pretty sterile orthodoxy which had seen the SWP safely through the fifties, when it seemed that communists could have no impact on American society, collapsed with the signs of new radicalization.

It's too bad the organizationally "loyal" SWP veterans saw the RT merely as troublesome youth. The RT also suffered an unprincipled 1962 split in the tendency (Tim Wohlforth's only lasting contribution to the history of American Trotskyism). This split didn't help either to give the RT credibility as an opposition pole in the eyes of the older party members.

The RT recognized early on the danger of becoming a (short-lived) permanent faction in the youth organization. We sought to become a tendency rooted in the SWP cadre through exercising in the party's discussions the rights established through 35 years of democratic-centralist organizational practice in the American Trotskyist movement. In a letter dated 18 October 1961 to the West Coast RT comrades, Jim Robertson laid out the necessary perspective:

"At bottom, the reason I hold a perspective of struggle against split from the SWP is because the party is far from one in which all the revolutionary juices have been drained. Factionalism now is linked with and only has use in a split perspective. In the past few years the party has begun to react to opportunities by turning each one into a cycle of opportunism until the given opening is exhausted. Each time a selection takes place, some—notably the Weiss grouping—get worse and move toward

liquidationism, but others react and are impelled in a leftward direction. This process has just begun, if one stops to view the SWP historically. There are two roads open. Either each wave of oppositionals will let themselves get washed out of the party, making it ever harder for succeeding left-wingers, or each opportunist venture into fresh fields will augment the revolutionary Marxists with additional forces.

"There is one and only one reason for which the SWP should be able to find grounds for our expulsion: the advocacy within the movement and within those circumstances as expressly laid down by the SWP leadership of our Trotskyist views."

—"Letter to Ed." reprinted in SL Marxist Bulletin No. 2, September 1965

Our comrades were scrupulous in maintaining the party's discipline. To



SWP Political Committee meeting, December 1938. Clockwise from top left: Felix Morrow, James P. Cannon, Max Shachtman, George Clarke, James Burnham, Nathan Gould, Martin Abern.

get the RT out of the way of perceived appetites, the Dobbs regime did indeed expel us solely for our views.

The ex post facto justification of that first-ever political expulsion was Dobbs' 1965 resolution titled "On the Organizational Character of the Socialist Workers Party." This resolution has been the cornerstone of SWP anti-democracy ever since. It is explicit on the expulsion of the RT without any proof of violations of discipline:

"They seemed to believe the party would have to submit to their wrecking operation until and unless specific acts of disloyalty could be proved against them....

"With or without proof of specific acts, the party had the right, and its leadership the duty, to stop the self-indicted factional raiders who were out to wreck our movement."

The new SWP expellees are now loudly bemoaning what they call the "new norms" as they address the question of when did "it" happen, when did the SWP go wrong? In this regard we are indebted to Frank Lovell's *BIDOM* No. 4 for bringing forward a 1966 letter by James Cannon to the SWP party center strenuously objecting to the notion that breaches of internal discussion procedure are grounds for expulsion. Lovell et al. surely find this particularly relevant since the four leading spokesmen of the late minorities were suspended "without conditions" for violating the prevailing SWP norms that minority National Committee members, effectively, may speak only to majority NC members (who presumably speak only to god?). Over the three years following the RT expulsion, as the SWP's rightist course consolidated on reformist appetite, local clots and leftist cliques were disposed of. The Dobbs regime got rid of the Seattle and New Haven branches, groups around Murry Weiss and Arne Swabeck and others—all told, about a third of the membership—more in the manner of the Teamster bureaucracy than of a Trotskyist party. Cannon's 1966 letter is in protest of this purge.

All the so-called "new norms" flow straight from the 1965 resolution. Crucial is the paragraph proscribing a tendency or faction from functioning politically except under the direct scrutiny of the majority: "A dissenting minority has the right to organize itself, but the conduct of organized minorities,

just as that of every individual member, must be subject to regulation by official party bodies." In the infamous 1981 \$8.00 internal bulletin, the 1965 resolution is cited no less than 14 times, and frequently it's this paragraph, which abolishes a tendency's rights of private political discussion and correspondence.

Factional rights are the test of party democracy. Virtually any kind of organization can have an orderly discussion of differences—so long as the differences aren't serious. It is in the presence of tendency struggle that one cannot rely on the objectivity of any side and requires objective criteria. It was in the 1963 RT expulsion that Dobbs introduced the new flexible standard ("dis-

first national conference "We Are Here!" in recognition of our situation as an unstable sub-propaganda group seeking out of the slender threads of our Trotskyist continuity to reforge an organization in this country—and internationally—embodying the authentic tradition of the party of Trotsky and Cannon.

Indeed, of all the significant splits from the SWP in past decades, only the Spartacists have persisted for more than 20 years as an effective national organization of ostensible Trotskyism. The Shachtmanites for all their literary intelligence lasted less than this long before entirely organizationally liquidating into the Cold War Socialists of Norman Thomas. The Marcyites (who crystallized in the 1950s SWP as an ultra-hardline current which embraced Stalinism in solidarity with the crushing of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution) gave up calling themselves Trotskyist almost at once. Meanwhile, the Healyites are certainly more out of the workers movement than in it.

But the Spartacists consolidated a stable Trotskyist nucleus, programmatically coherent and governed by democratic-centralism (including internationally, by the way) in the best traditions of the early Communist and Trotskyist movements. It is because we know where we came from, because of our political roots in the fight against the disintegration of the SWP as a revolutionary instrument, that we are here. We stand on the shoulders of the old revolutionary SWP—the American Trotskyist organization founded by Jim Cannon and a cadre of comrades who split out of the early Communist Party in defense of Leninism, the organization through which Trotsky led the Fourth International directly until his assassination by Stalin in 1940. That's *our* SWP; it's not Barnes', and it never was.

Looking for the Good Old Days

For today's expellees, the Breitman wing as much as the Weinstein crowd, the good old days aren't Cannon's organization, but the 1960s of petty-bourgeois radical ferment. All of these comrades longingly recall the SWP's role as movement brokers for the Democratic Party in the anti-Vietnam War protest movement. The SWP emerged from centrist confusion in the mid-1960s in pursuit of a perceived main chance: swelling moods of opposition to the war in Vietnam. The spectacle of the world's most awesome imperialist power losing in Vietnam was to have powerful effects, e.g., a profound

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SWP...

(continued from page 13)

upsurge of hope for social liberation among the impoverished, oppressed semi-colonial laboring masses of Latin America and worldwide; the deep erosion of the U.S. army's capacity as an effective fighting force of foreign counter-revolution. At home, with the successive Democratic and Republican administrations pursuing headlong escalation in a losing imperialist adventure, increasingly influential sectors of the ruling class and its politicians wanted to bail out, in the best interests of longer-term U.S. anti-Communist aims. This divergence of ruling-class policy, as well as the taxes/inflation, the significant American battle casualties, the shattered morale of the U.S. conscript army, fueled a real "radicalization" in this country. It was concentrated in the petty bourgeoisie and college students (the swiftest social chameleons).

The SWP, like the Communist Party, saw here a main chance to become the main organizer of antiwar protest activism on the political terms of the "progressive" labor leaders and the liberal capitalist politicians. That is, as good mensheviks: in the name of a "broad" multi-class (or "classless") "people's front" of all men of good will for "peace," to bring together the workers and oppressed with presumably enlightened representatives of the ruling class on the "single issue," to oppose the war firmly on the terrain of social-patriotism—i.e., without breaking from the capitalist parties and their pro-imperialist ideologues, advocating smarter strategies for defending "our own" country's global appetites. (In most other capitalist countries, this social-democratic role is embodied in "labourite" and Stalinist mass workers parties; in more politically backward America, the capitalist Democratic Party approximates being the political vehicle of class collaboration by the union bureaucracy.)

The SWP did not eclipse the larger CP but did nevertheless compete quite

than "Negotiations" but whether opposition to the imperialist debacle would be contained within the capitalist political framework.

Of course it was not entirely contained. Countless thousands of would-be anti-imperialist-radical kids explicitly championed the victory of the NLF/North Vietnamese forces, making the link from so-called "excesses" in Vietnam to the nature of U.S. capitalist society. Mostly these youth remained under the sway of generally pro-Maoist ideology; some of them we won to Trotskyism by fighting politically in SDS and in the antiwar milieu: for military victory to the Vietnamese social revolution, against the draft and for soldiers' political rights, against the student deferment in opposition to the petty-bourgeois elitism of the milieu, for a perspective of real labor action and political strikes against the war. The comrades we recruited from the antiwar, black and women's movements of the time enabled us to transform our unstable sub-propaganda group: a regular press, our first systematic efforts to sink roots in the labor movement, geographical expansion in the U.S. and extension beyond its borders.

The SWP was utterly discredited in this radical quadrant of the "radicalization," which it minded not at all. When young people with red flags appeared at Vietnam marches chanting "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh, NLF Is Gonna Win" the SWP replied by chanting "peaceful, legal" and setting up breakaway marches, with red baiting and sometimes more directly, for the cops' tender mercies. The SWP's "mass movement" was broad, respectable, carried lots of American flags and disappeared from the streets whenever there was a presidential election.

When the U.S. finally got out of Vietnam, that was the beginning of the end for the SWP. No more mass antiwar demos; a lot of recent recruits with high expectations. The SWP went on promising new "radicalizations" in time for each new conference resolution; meanwhile, capitalist politics was moving right and so was the whole fake-left,

protest since the Vietnam days—the SL was there as the anti-imperialist contingent in solidarity with the Salvadoran left insurgents). And it's striking, by way of contrast, that none of the ex-SWP elements are bothered by the SWP's conscious, hostile absence from the Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the KKK in Washington, D.C. ("November 27th," 1982), when under the leadership of the Spartacist League 5,000 militant working people, most of them black, prevented the Klan from staging its first march in the nation's capital since 1925.



Barnes expelled James Kutcher, whose case symbolized SWP fight against McCarthyism.

This mobilization, backed by significant sections of the labor movement, was the first massively successful proletarian anti-fascist action since the Trotskyist-initiated anti-Nazi labor rallies of more than 40 years ago, upon which we model our anti-fascist strategy. Even in hindsight the new ex-SWPs don't aspire to be there as part of the vanguard of independent, militant struggle of the workers and oppressed.

Reformist SWP Misses the Boat

The "peace" movement—directed against the irrationalities and "excesses" of U.S. Vietnam policy and not against U.S. capitalism and its war aims—ended when the U.S. was forced by military defeats at the hands of the courageous Vietnamese to pull out its troops. A decade later, the "Vietnam syndrome"—popular unwillingness to make the sacrifices necessary for serious military involvement against social revolutions abroad—is still very real, but the closest thing it has to organizational expression is Gary Hart.

Over the Vietnam War the SWP consolidated on a fully reformist axis but failed to achieve any stable "niche" on the U.S. left. Its antiwar reformism, its slavish tailism of some of the worst and most right-wing "cultural nationalist" elements of the black movement, its "consistent feminism" hypocrisy as a soft alternative to the "radical feminist" and "socialist-feminist" variants, of women's liberation—all this hadn't given the SWP any mass base to offer to sell out, unless you count the augmented ranks of the SWP itself, then swelled to perhaps 2,000 members. Eventually Barnes discovered the working class and the unions, but that was really late in the game. By then, Mike Harrington's split from the tiny, ossified, discredited, war-hawk Social Democrats had regrouped and grown into a credible social-democratic party, tied in with the black Democrats and union bureaucrats. Barnes & Co. didn't know what hit them; evidently they still don't.

If today's new expellees want to know what hit them, they would do well to consider the purge of the Internationalist Tendency (IT) in 1974, when more than a hundred SWPs were declared by Barnes to constitute a rival party, "the Internationalist Tendency party," and given the heave-ho en masse without recourse to formalities like charges or trials. The "new norms" bemoaned by the recent expellees didn't start in 1981. They made their emergence in 1963 with the RT expulsion (and the ouster of

quite a sizeable number of other comrades over the next few years); they were formalized in 1965 and used to expel over 100 ITers in one swift stroke in 1974.

The IT was a centrist oppositional current in the SWP whose possible evolution toward authentic Trotskyism was derailed when the IT accepted the political leadership of the "international," which is to say, Ernest Mandel of the USec. Mandel and the European USec were then in the grip of extreme enthusiasm for guerrilla warfare in the "Third World"; Hansen and the SWP were furiously invoking orthodox rhetoric against USec centrist impressionism much the same way that the official pro-Moscow Communist Parties quote Lenin on the centrality of the proletariat to dismiss the more left impulses of Guevarist types. The IT's rather timid criticisms of the SWP's antiwar line had brought it dangerously close to the "spectre of Spartacism," but the spectre was staved off by tailoring the IT's program to Mandel's specifications.

Mandel himself is a very erudite Belgian professor whose appetite toward social-democratic adviser status has been apparent since the mid-1950s. His stint as a pro-guerrilla centrist coincided with the USec's recruitment in the 1960s of a few thousand subjectively revolutionary youth of New Leftist bent, who moved left from the Stalinist student milieu and were recruited to what Mandel said was Trotskyism. (More recently, under the pressure of the resurgent imperialist Cold War drive, Mandel has brought his "children of May '68" squarely back into the social-democratic fold, tailing Mitterrand and singing the praises of Solidarność.)

Barnes' bureaucratic SWP ousted the IT en masse by announcing that they were splitters. Mandel refused to back up his unwanted leftist American stepchildren with a "franchise"; instead he shoved down their throats the cynical lie that the SWP remained a revolutionary party, and the corresponding suicidal perspective of trying to get back in by any means necessary. At the IT's first post-expulsion national meeting, held in October 1974, the first order of business was to expel two soon-to-be-Spartacists for arguing the IT should consider in its "perspectives" discussion the view that "the SWP is finished as a revolutionary force." Instead, the IT pinned its hopes on Mandel, who left them to twist slowly in the wind.

To understand the IT mass expulsion you have to know the "Watersuit," the SWP's ten-years-long, millions-of-dollars lawsuit against the federal government (see especially "Reformism on Trial," *WV* No. 286, 31 July 1981). Starting from the revelations about the FBI's "Counter-Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO) "disruption" campaign against black militants and the left, boosted by the Watergate exposures, Barnes envisioned irreversible bourgeois-democratic gains up to and including the "right to revolution." The suit was aimed at much more than a useful court disavowal of FBI dirty tricks after the fact; for Barnes, it was a shot at the big time. The SWP aimed at securing a special license to practice reformism unhindered by the spying and murderous disruption the state uses against its left-wing political opponents. Barnes aimed to show the SWP as deserving of a special exemption from the state as a reformist party non-threatening to the bourgeois order.

The SWP got the "Watersuit" into gear with the declaration that its legalism was not "contravened" by anything Trotsky or others might have said. The 15 May 1981 *Militant* put it quite succinctly when it summed up Barry Sheppard's testimony as follows: "SWP advocates peaceful election of workers and farmers government, which will need changes in Constitution to implement program." But the real measure of the "Watersuit" was the IT



Nat Weinstein demonstrates for Polish Solidarność with virulent anti-Communists.

competently as "best builders" of huge, liberal protest demonstrations where millions of people came to hear capitalist politicians talk about "America's best interests." Needless to say the SWP did not see itself as the right wing of the antiwar radicalization, doing the donkey work to keep American kids under the sway of those who opposed the war because it was losing. No, they just wrote out of their "mass movement" the hundreds of thousands of campus and minority youth espousing New Leftish and subjectively anti-imperialist slogans. Groups like the SDS, sprouting like wildfire on college campuses, or the Black Panthers, who were looked to by a generation of inner-city black kids as the militant alternative to reformist betrayal, were written off by the SWP as simply "ultraleft." The big political conflict of the Vietnam era was not the SWP's earnest appeals to SANE to espouse "Stop the War Now" rather

responding fundamentally to the moral/military rearmament of imperialism under Carter/Reagan in the renewed anti-Soviet war drive. Barnes played pollyanna but it happened anyway: sharply declining SWP membership rolls, eclipse by the DSA, restiveness among the more experienced and articulate, exaggerated political instabilities up to the present Stalinist shift.

In both the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* published in New York City and the *Socialist Action Information Bulletin* based in California, the nostalgia for the good old days of the 1960s is quite explicit. That's why all the minorityites (the majority too for that matter) were so deeply shocked and sick at heart when the Marcyites outmaneuvered the SWP and brought off a large liberal demonstration against Reaganism over Central America ("May 3rd," 1981, the largest such



WV Photo

Left: SWP-initiated mass labor rally against Nazis, Madison Square Garden, 1939. Right: Spartacist-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization stops Klan in Washington, D.C., 1982.

expulsion; red-baiting deeds speak louder than words as a guarantee of reformist tameness. A spate of "terrorism"-baiting of the USec, the IT's mentors, was making the rounds of the European press and had been picked up by right-wing witchhunters in this country. And the one thing the "Water-suit" gimmick couldn't take was anything tainted with the suggestion of "terrorism." So the SWP expelled the IT and served it up on a platter to Judge Thomas Griesa, who was mightily reassured and said so explicitly, commenting that the "ouster of the minority" had "basically eliminated" any "suggestion" of SWP terrorism.

The SWP underscored its hatred for the IT in court in 1981 by its vicious frame-up of Hedda Garza, labeling her, despite her transparent innocence, a government fink, based on the incredible reasoning internally that "the government would not lie." Today the SA/FIT supporters say they're partisans of Mandel's "Fourth International." But even with the "hundred flowers" of SWP dissidence in full bloom around the 1981 convention, today's professed internationalists were pretty quiet when

Hedda Garza was pilloried for having once been too chummy with some foreign members of the "Fourth International" during the mock-heroic period of USec leftism. And we know of no cry of outrage inside the SWP when Barnes & Co. "named names" of foreign USecers in court by sorting out pseudonyms for the government, fingering international comrades to underline the SWP's reformist posture that law-abiding American socialists have nothing to fear from the American government.

Failing to get a nod as America's most favored reformist party, Barnes now looks for patrons further afield. Thus comes the newfound Stalinism: the shift toward adulation without fig leaves of Castro and the more recent shift toward fondness for the Vietnamese leadership (sharply contrasting with the SWP's hostility while the Vietnam War was on, for example in polemics against the French USec during the 1969-74 USec fight). And thus comes the explicit anti-Trotskyist revisionism.

Weinstein's SA is likely headed for the DSA, probably via maneuvers among the numerous third-campist

fragments and cliques who see the new ex-SWPers as the best thing to happen to them since Polish Solidarność. Meanwhile SA takes its place as one more splinter in the name of "movement unity," one more bit of lint on the coattails of the labor bureaucrats. Within months of their liberation from the SWP they showed in action the role they aspire to: Weinstein & Co. wanted to be to the Greyhound strike what the DSA's Winpisinger was to PATCO, conscious opponents of the concrete labor solidarity needed to win. They couldn't be further from us politically if they tried (which of course they do).

But the recently aroused SWP veterans congregated in the FIT/*BIDOM* of Lovell, Bloom and Breitman are in the grip of genuine contradiction. It's no accident that those of us who go back personally to the SWP have feelings of affection for some of these comrades and no sympathy whatever for the Weinstein crowd. This is a modest psychological reflection of the political realities. The FITers' impulse to cling to Cannon and Trotsky is not so much a program as an act of nostalgia, but an honorable act nonetheless. We have to

have some considerable respect for their decades in the Trotskyist movement and for the evident sincerity of their effort not to betray Trotskyism as they understand it—a pale pink attempt at red orthodoxy. Yet the programmatic content of their documents owes more to the pressures of U.S. imperialism's stepped-up anti-Soviet war drive than to the fighting internationalist spirit of Trotsky's "War and the Fourth International." Nor will they derive much profit from brooding about the destruction of democratic-centralism in the SWP with blinders on at the qualitative point of degeneration: the 1963 RT expulsion and the necessary redefinition of the party's "organizational character" codified in the 1965 resolution.

As for the SWP, the large reformist rump of ex-Trotskyism, it's with special pleasure that we endorse what Rhett Butler said to Scarlett O'Hara: frankly, Jack, Mary-Alice and Barry, we don't give a damn. We have paid a lot of attention to the SWP for 20 years, while it claimed to contest the Trotskyist tradition which is ours. But we're pretty bored with Barnes' party: weird, nasty and still shrinking. ■

Central America...

(continued from page 4)

"provisional government" which would include "all the country's political forces" except D'Aubuisson's party and some sections of the oligarchy. In other words, the bloody Salvadoran army would remain intact. There will be no peace for the oppressed masses of El Salvador unless the leftist insurgents smash the death-squad regime. "Negotiated solution" means a sellout of the rebels' battlefield victories at the bargaining table, setting the stage for a massive bloodbath. Military victory to Salvador leftists!

Kennedy's Alliance for Counterrevolution

Gary Hart speaks for all the Democratic "doves" when he harks back to the John F. Kennedy administration and the "vision" of U.S. imperialism using corruption, economic pressure and CIA dirty tricks when possible in place of direct military intervention. In response to the Cuban Revolution and the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the Kennedy administration organized a reign of military terror throughout Latin America against workers, peasants and radical intellectuals. It was called the Alliance for Progress. Interestingly, Kennedy declared that "Governments of the civil-military type of El Salvador are the most effective in containing communist penetration in Latin America"

(quoted in Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*).

Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, sent 22,000 U.S. troops into the Dominican Republic, proclaiming that "the American nations... will not permit the establishment of another Communist government in the Western Hemisphere" (LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*). Under Democrats Carter/Mondale the "human rights" junta was installed and began a slaughter of Salvadoran workers and peasants which totaled 30,000 dead between October 1979 and March 1982.

Imperialism is not an evil set of interventionist schemes by a "bad" wing of the ruling class. It is a system, the final stage of world capitalism. Integral to that system is the ravaging of backward regions like Latin America, where the masses are kept down by bloody military dictatorships. However, today in Central America the decades-long reign of terror maintained by Yankee imperialism is being shattered by revolution and civil war. Thus the American ruling class is faced with the prospect of direct military intervention. The U.S. armed forces, mainly working-class youth in uniform, are the last reserve to suppress the exploited classes and oppressed peoples around the globe. All the revolutionary forces in the world press against the United States. With a revolutionary vanguard which can channel and direct these pressures, U.S. imperialism can't be defeated *from within*. That possibility was particularly clear in the last years of the Vietnam War. But because the massive opposition to the Vietnam War in this country was *not* directed into revolutionary class

struggle, U.S. imperialism has recovered somewhat and is now on a desperate and bloody offensive, above all in Central America.

Yet despite the Reagan administration's constant efforts to whip up anti-Communist war fever, the bulk of the American population do not want to go to war in Central America. The stinging defeat inflicted on U.S. imperialism by the heroic peasant army of Vietnam is still too fresh in the memory. Indicative of the mood in the country is the fact that Central American war criminals like Weinberger and Jeane Kirkpatrick are shouted down practically every time they venture onto one of the nation's campuses.

A defeat of U.S. imperialism and its local butchers in Central America

would be a powerful blow against Reagan's war drive aimed at the Soviet Union. We hail the heroic Salvadoran guerrilla fighters and the workers and peasants of Nicaragua battling the CIA-organized *contra* terrorists. It is the urgent duty of all class-conscious American workers to mobilize to prevent Yankee imperialism from unleashing the full horror of its war machine against the toiling masses of Central America. Boycott military cargo bound for El Salvador, Honduras and other rightist regimes in the region! For labor strikes against U.S. intervention in Central America! Such a mobilization of the American working class against Washington's rape of Central America can be the beginning of the end for U.S. imperialism. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Racist Confederate Banner Won't Rise Again in San Francisco!

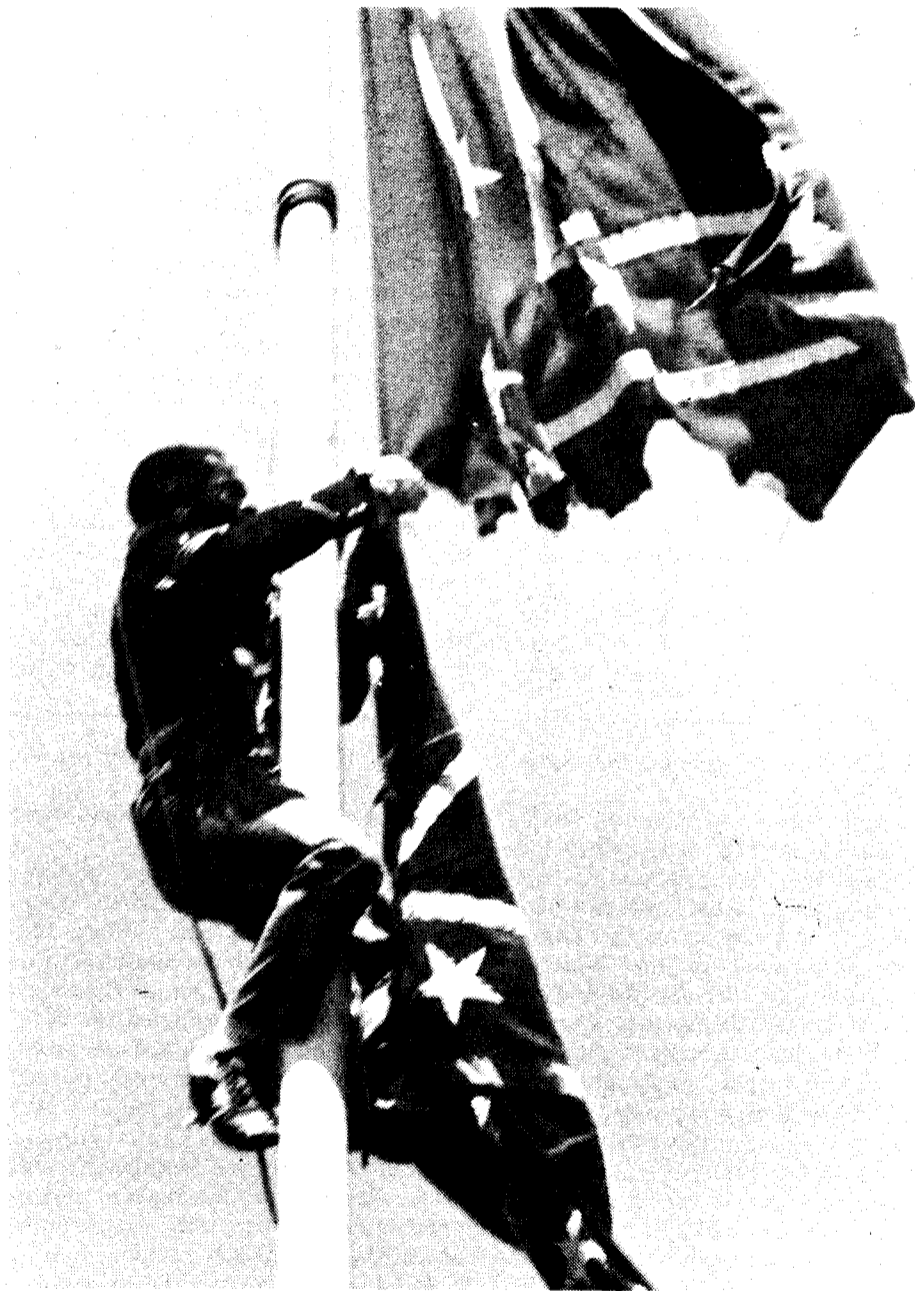
We Tore Down The Flag of Slavery!

SAN FRANCISCO, April 22—Clad in the uniform of a Union soldier in the Civil War, Richard Bradley climbed the 50-foot flagpole in the Civic Center here twice last week to cut down the Confederate flag of slavery which had flown over this city for too many years. It flies no more. Bradley, a supporter of the Spartacist League and the Labor Black League for Social Defense, tore down and burned the flag for the first time on April 15. The crowd of blacks, unionists and socialists broke into jubilant cheers as the hated symbol of racism and Ku Klux Klan terror was set ablaze. The Spartacists handed out a "proclamation" (see page 9), and sang "John Brown's Body" and chanted: "The Confederate flag flies no more! Time to finish the Civil War!"

Bradley, Spartacist candidate for SF Board of Supervisors in 1982, was arrested along with Peter Woolston, General Executive Board member of ILWU Local 6, and charged with "vandalism." At the police station, Bradley and Woolston were handcuffed to a bench. But even a couple of black cops, hearing that the alleged "vandalism" was taking down the Confederate flag, said, "Let 'em go." Some white racist cops started humming "Dixie."

As soon as the news of the Confederate flag hit, Bay Area blacks welcomed the victory as their own. In fact, the whole city was glad to be rid of the racist insult. But not union-busting mayor Dianne Feinstein. In a calculated act of political racism, her administration decided to put the Confederate flag back up the next day—one day after the outrageous Greensboro verdict which gave a green light to the KKK and Nazi murderers who gunned down blacks and labor activists in broad daylight (see page 1).

The battle with the mayor wasn't over only symbols and history, but was a question of the fight against racist terror. So, vowing that "this flag will not



fly," Bradley and the SL went back and cut this flag to pieces on April 16, just a few hours after Feinstein put it up. Again, Bradley was arrested, this time by 13 white cops who had called for the

fire department to try to remove him from the flagpole. The cops tightly handcuffed Bradley's hands behind his back and manhandled him into a police car. This time there were no black cops in the station, and they held him for seven hours. At the press conference on April 17, Bradley said, "I did not commit malicious mischief. I tore down the enemy's flag. That stands for slavery and racism. I'm originally from the South and I know what that flag means."

In the eyes of Feinstein and the cops, Bradley was some kind of criminal for tearing down the emblem of the slave South, but in the Bay Area he was a local hero. Bradley couldn't walk into a bar or restaurant without having a drink or meal bought for him. At his job, Bradley's co-workers are compiling a book of press clippings to present to Feinstein. All across the city TV, radio and press coverage made this a truly



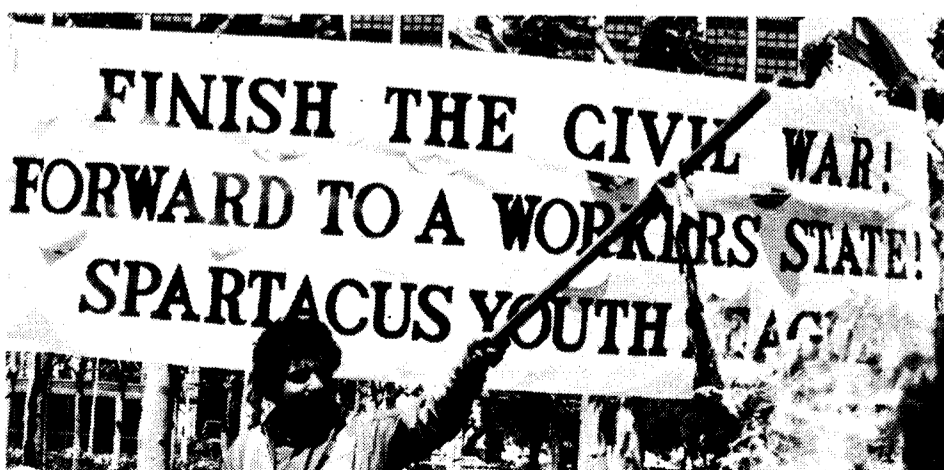
WV Photos

Richard Bradley scales Civic Center flagpole, April 15: Dixie flag will not rise again over San Francisco.

popular issue. Telegrams and phone calls poured into the mayor's office in support of the action, quite a few reportedly from local union leaders demanding the charges be dropped along with the flag. The Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity at the Berkeley Cal campus rushed to take down their Confederate flag. Symbols of slavery were no longer safe in San Francisco.

The widespread popularity forced even the haughty "Lady Di" to back down. And that does not happen every day in "her" city. "Dixie Flag Won't Rise Again, Feinstein Decides" was the headline in the *San Francisco Examiner*, 18 April. Dixie flag won't rise, because the SL and the Labor Black League had made it a real mass issue in the city. But Feinstein tried to hide behind black Supervisor Doris M. Ward's request that the Confederate flag stay down because it "was carried as

continued on page 8



WV Photo

SL/SYL and Labor Black League burn the Confederate flag.