

## Philippines: Aquino Government Made in U.S.A.

# Reagan Pulls Plug On Marcos

## U.S. Bases Out!

FEBRUARY 25—Now that deposed Philippines dictator Ferdinand Marcos has been shipped off to Guam on a stretcher, and Corazon Aquino is sworn in as head of a provisional government, Ronald Reagan is trumpeting a triumph for "free world democracy"...and breathing a sigh of relief for the strategic U.S. naval and air force bases in the Pacific island nation of 50 million. Liberal Democrats are joining in the chorus, proclaiming yesterday's military butchers today's "democratic" saviors. But for the Filipino people, the replacement of the corrupt, brutal Marcos dictatorship with the "clean team" of Aquino and Salvador Laurel will mean the substitution of one set of American lackeys for another. Marxists say: beware of coups "Made in U.S.A."

Beginning now, attempts by the Filipino masses to fight against IMF starvation policies imposed by international bankers and their handmaidens in Manila will be suppressed in the name of "democracy." More ominously, the Reagan administration is on a roll, having extracted itself from potential disasters in Haiti and the Philippines. But a more "democratic" oligarchic regime can't even begin to deal with the bankruptcy of Philippines capitalism, which has fueled widespread worker and peasant unrest and a deep-rooted popular insurgency. And the new

Before the fall:  
Philippine  
masses block  
pro-Marcos  
forces in streets  
of Manila.



regime's attempts at "reconciliation" to preserve the bloody repressive apparatus will run head-on into the burning desire to avenge the brutal crimes of the Marcos regime.

On Saturday, two top Philippine military officials declared themselves in rebellion against the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos, swinging their support to his rivals Aquino and Laurel, who were denied victory in fraud- and violence-ridden elections February 7. Defense Minister Ponce Enrile and Deputy Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos switched their allegiance after informing the American ambassador and within one hour of the departure of Ronald Reagan's plenipotentiary envoy Philip

Habib, on a "fact-finding" mission to Manila. The Filipino masses, sick of two decades of corrupt and brutal tyranny, poured into the streets to form a human wall protecting the rebel headquarters from tank assault by Marcos-loyal troops.

The scene was elaborately choreographed by the bourgeois opposition and their supporters in the Catholic church hierarchy headed by Jaime Cardinal Sin. The Catholic radio Veritas functioned as a command center, calling the masses to come out in support of the military rebellion. While nuns paraded in front of pro-Marcos troops with crucifixes, priests handed out communion wafers. (Cory Aquino

appeared briefly outside the Defense Ministry to sing "Ave Maria.") Demonstrators put daisies in the gun barrels and McDonald's burgers in the soldiers' hands. Marcos knew he was finished when the "people's inauguration" of Aquino was broadcast over the formerly government TV channel, while his own "official" inauguration was blacked out. The "nonviolence" of the whole affair was an expression of the degree to which the mass outpouring has been kept safely within the bounds of bourgeois rule.

As they gathered with their supporters in the Defense Ministry on the capital's outskirts, Ramos and Enrile

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## Black Masses Jeer Bishop Tutu, Demand Power

# South Africa: Workers Must Rule!

On February 21, an angry crowd of 40,000 blacks in the rebellious South African township of Alexandra told Nobel "Peace" Prize winner Bishop Desmond Tutu, the liberal imperialists' favorite anti-apartheid cleric, where to stick his message of "non-violence." When Tutu tried to lull the throng with promises that blacks "are going to be rulers in this land," the seething multitude shouted back, "When? When?" (*New York Times*, 22 February). After a year and a half of

continuous revolt, the black masses will not be fobbed off with empty talk of freedom in the sweet by and by. The issue is *power*: who shall rule, the arrogant white *baas* or the millions of toilers who make the wheels of apartheid slavery turn? What's urgently needed is a proletarian vanguard to lead a struggle for socialist revolution.

A squalid slum surrounded by some of Johannesburg's fanciest white suburbs, Alexandra exploded on the 15th, when police fired on protesters attack-

ing the homes of black cops and officials of the racist regime after a funeral for two anti-apartheid activists. As they have done countless times around the country, black youth went up against the heavily armed police and army with stones and Molotov cocktails. The official death toll is 23—the real figure may be as high as 80, with hundreds of wounded. But it seems that this time the black victims struck back: police acknowledged that a cop was shot dead. Witnesses say

four other cops and soldiers, three of them whites, were shot, an armored vehicle was gasoline-bombed and two automatic rifles stolen.

When the rage of South African blacks reaches fever pitch, Tutu's job has been to step in and defuse it. On previous occasions he has intervened in the townships to save police informers from the wrath of the people. On February 18, he sweet-talked 30,000 protesters into calling off their

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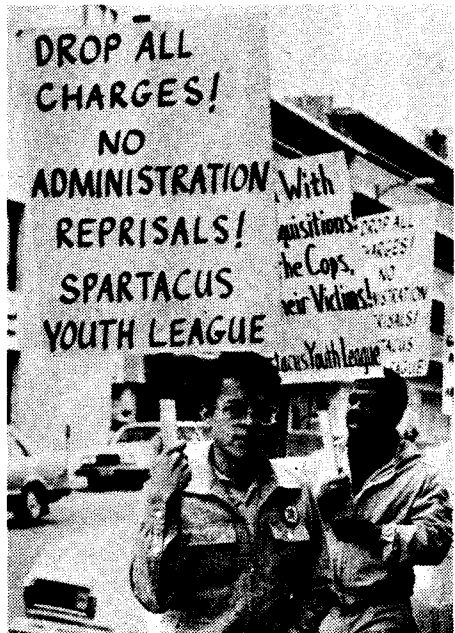
## Berkeley Anti-Imperialist Protest Case

# Hung Jury Blocks Frame-Up Of Guillermo Bermúdez

BERKELEY—The administration of the University of California at Berkeley has been handed a stinging setback in its attempt to railroad Spartacus Youth League member Guillermo Bermúdez. On February 14, a hung jury refused to buy the prosecutor's frame-up, voting 11 to 1 for acquittal on the trumped-up charge that Guillermo had "assaulted" the cops who brutalized him at a campus protest against Marine recruiters. Also, two jurors voted against conviction on the equally bogus charge of "resisting arrest."

As student protest against U.S. support to South Africa's apartheid butchers swept universities and colleges last spring, Berkeley again became a hotbed of campus radicalism. It reached the point that when the UC Board of Regents held a meeting in the hills above the seething campus, they had to be ferried in by helicopter. While thousands turned out in Sproul Plaza day after day, the administration counter-attacked with a combination of cooption and brute force. But the concerted effort to create a climate of fear and intimidation through use of police, courts and campus disciplinary measures has not been successful in quashing campus protest.

So far, UC Berkeley has been unable



Young Spartacus Guillermo and supporters protest UCB frame-up, February 11.

to obtain a single criminal conviction at trial against student activists. The verdict in Guillermo's case is significant for all who would protest U.S. imperialism's policies on campus.

While leading a militant protest against Marine recruiters in January 1985, 5'4" Bermúdez was seized in a

deadly choke hold by 6'4" UC cop Joseph Johnson (known by students since then as "Choke Hold" Johnson). After being held in this potentially lethal choke hold and suffering a fractured arm, Guillermo was charged with "assault" on Johnson—and faced nearly three years in jail. Prior to the trial, Guillermo was hauled before a university kangaroo court on January 30. So were five students who protested ROTC last August; their "disciplinary hearing" was protested by some 200 on February 6. On February 13, another hearing was held against the anti-ROTC protesters—over 100 student supporters, including SYL militants, attended. In the face of administration/cop repression, leftist students at Berkeley have demonstrated an admirable ability to unite in action despite divergent political programs. As noted civil rights attorney Howard Moore—Guillermo's counsel—said of the hung jury verdict: "It represents the collective efforts of the SYL, supporters and sympathetic students."

Testifying on Guillermo's behalf were anti-apartheid student activists who have been subjected to UCPD terror tactics and frame-up charges as well; among them were Kyle Reniche, Robert Franklin, Michel Brode as well as Campaign Against Apartheid member Oliver Nicholson. Redbaiting harassment by the prosecution did not dissuade these students from telling the truth about what they saw the day comrade Guillermo was assaulted, and assisting in the necessary defense effort against the UCPD thugs run amok. Frank Saunders, a retired Santa Monica police officer who is now a consultant on police practices, also testified for the defense. Saunders noted that the now-infamous photo of Johnson choking Bermúdez showed the burly cop using a "bar-arm control" or "trachea hold," even more deadly than the often-used "carotid hold."

The prosecution offered three allegedly "unbiased" witnesses to back up Johnson's incredible claim that he had used no choke hold while arresting Guillermo. Under cross-examination, one of these supposedly "unbiased" students—one Bryan Bloom—admitted that he was the author of a letter to the ultrarightist *California Review* in which he vowed to "exterminate the parasitic dredge of the earth: liberals." The defense produced a photograph of another "neutral" witness, Anthony Argyriou, standing with Berkeley College Republicans, holding a picket sign saying communism equals the Nazi swastika; others in the photo are holding signs reading "Hang Guillermo." And the third witness, as inexora-

bly discredited as the two before him, was one Kevin Southerland, quoted in the *Daily Californian* on the day after Guillermo's arrest as saying that the protesters were "biting the hand that feeds them" and "I think there are a lot of people who don't realize the opportunities and freedoms of this country." The UCPD could not dredge up a single witness who would or could corroborate Johnson's claim that he had been "kicked" by Guillermo.

One of the supposedly inviolate rights in this country is a trial by jury, based on the presumption of innocence in which the burden of proof is on the prosecution. If he had his way, Ronald Reagan's attorney general Edwin Meese would do away with these "niceties." And it is no accident that UC Berkeley has been the scene for over a year of some of the most brutal police terror on any campus—so pronounced that the Berkeley City Council's Police Review Commission felt compelled to hold public hearings last spring on the rampaging UCPD. (The U.S. State Department was even obliged to publicly apologize to the People's Republic of China after a visiting Chinese scholar was arrested and mauled by the UCPD!)

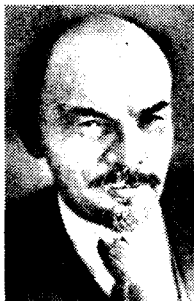
For former California governor Reagan and Meese, who used to work in the Alameda County District Attorney's office, Berkeley has long been viewed as "enemy territory," a haven for "subversives" and a target for repression. During the 1960s Free Speech Movement and antiwar protests, massive police occupations of the whole UC Berkeley area occurred repeatedly. During the 1969 "People's Park" protest, students were shot at and one



TROTSKY

### The Revolutionary Party: Key to Class-Struggle Leadership

In January 1953, at the height of McCarthyite social reaction, James P. Cannon, veteran communist and the founding leader of American Trotskyism, stressed the decisive role of the revolutionary Marxist party in forging a class-struggle leadership of labor. His remarks retain special relevance for this period of hard-fought defensive strike battles.



LENIN

These labor "statesmen" will not be fit for leadership in the new situation, any more than the old AFL skates were fit for the leadership of the insurgent movement of the workers in the mass production industries in the sit-down strikes of the thirties. There will be no bargaining tables. No government boards to settle things amicably, recognize the union and give the workers a few more cents. That's not going to be the bosses' program at all. They don't want to give a few more cents; they don't want to recognize unions. They want to knock the hell out of the unions, so the workers will have no means of defense against the cutting of wages and living standards. That's what is in the cards. No friendly compromises at the bargaining tables, but only mass battles and mass tests of strength.

The workers, under such conditions, must and will turn to militancy and throw up leaders of a new mold, just as the workers in the thirties threw up new trade-union leaders out of the ranks. And it is in just such a situation, when class collaboration is out the window and the class struggle is on the agenda, that the supreme expression of the class struggle, the revolutionary Marxist party, will get a hearing and become the mentor of the militant new staff of leaders arising out of the shops and the factories.

—James P. Cannon, "The Coming Struggle for Power," *America's Road to Socialism* (1953)



Jane Scherr

UCPD's Joseph "Choke Hold" Johnson applies potentially lethal hold in brutal assault on Guillermo Bermúdez, January 1985.

young man killed, and Reagan sent in the National Guard. Discussing this later, Meese openly declared that anyone attending a political demonstration deserved to be shot.

If they can get away with it at Berkeley, the ruling class figures they can get away elsewhere with police-state techniques against even the tamest campus protests. The jury's refusal to buy UCB's frame-up of Guillermo and the refusal of Berkeley students to be cowed into submission is a thorn in their side. U.S. anti-Soviet war aims abroad—from Central America to

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## WORKERS VANGUARD

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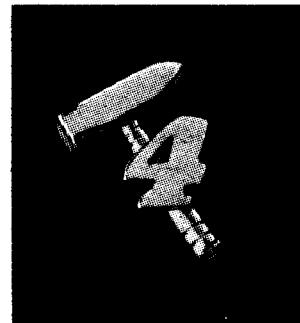
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WORKERS VANGUARD

# Kim Kilmer Remembered

On February 16, a memorial meeting was held in San Francisco for our comrade Kim Kilmer, who died tragically on 24 January 1986, at the age of 32. Some 120 people attended, including Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League comrades from the West Coast and around the country; members of the Labor Black League for Social Defense with whom Kim worked closely; campus activists and members of the phone workers' Militant Action Caucus, among others.

Kim was a victim of "landlord murder," by carbon monoxide poisoning from a faulty gas oven in her San Francisco home. Her companion Paul Costan, a phone worker and active trade unionist, was also overcome by the fumes; he has since recovered. Kim was a socialist all her adult life. She joined the SYL in 1975, and the SL two years later, and worked in the party branches in Detroit, Boston, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

The meeting room at the Holiday Inn was lined by photo displays documenting the years of Kim's work in our movement. They stood as a testament of her commitment to the cause of proletarian revolution and black liberation. We print below excerpts from the five speakers, who had worked closely with Kim over the years. The meeting was chaired by comrade Joan Parker, and ended with the singing of the *Internationale*.

## Larry Cooper

*San Francisco branch organizer*

Kim was born in Detroit on June 17, 1953. When she was four years old, her family moved to Farmington Hills, a white middle-class suburb on the northwest side of Detroit. Kim's father, Joe Kilmer, is a retired Ford Motor Company executive. Her mother, June Kilmer, also briefly worked for Ford. Kim was very proud of the fact that after raising the children her mother returned to college, and now works as a teacher. Kim had traveled to Brazil as a high school exchange student. According to her father she spent very little time with the middle-class family she was supposed to live with; rather, she explored Rio de Janeiro. Kim was a pre-med student at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and although she chose not to finish, she worked all of her life in various aspects of the medical profession. You have to understand that Kim came from and could have very easily continued a very comfortable petty-bourgeois existence. But as a very young woman she developed a sense of outrage over the oppression and injustice that she saw, from the slums of Rio to the factories of Detroit.

I first met Kim eleven years ago, in Ann Arbor in the winter of 1975. I was the Spartacus Youth League organizer for the Detroit area. That winter the graduate student employees struck the campus, and we led the organizing of student support. We intervened and participated in actions by black students seizing the administration [building], protesting discrimination and racism at the University of Michigan. In the last months of the Vietnamese civil war, we fought for "All Indochina Must Go Communist" and "Labor Strikes Against U.S. Imperialism's War" on the Indochinese workers and peasants. We fought to win the best elements from those struggles, and Kim was one of these. She began to seriously study Marxism, and joining the SYL was her apprenticeship to the task of building an international party of the working class.

We were in different cities until a year and a half ago. But when I became San Francisco organizer 15 months ago, Kim had already put in those many years of hard work that it takes to develop and mature as a professional revolutionary, with all its ups and downs, and its defeats and victories. She never hesitated to do whatever work was necessary. Kim could write and speak well, and she was an organizer and a teacher. And she had a tremendous capacity for work, which is another way of saying that she drove herself very hard.

Kim and I worked very closely over the last year. And since I tend myself to be a bit stubborn, she and I happened to lock horns a few times. She never hesitated to argue to me, or with anyone,



when she saw shortcomings or differences she felt were critical to our work. She wasn't always right—none of us is—but on more than one occasion, she quite correctly took her arguments to others in the branch leadership, if she felt she got no satisfaction from me. If she felt a difference was less important or subordinate to the work at hand, then she simply put it aside and continued on with that work. She had many fine qualities that I know that other comrades will speak of today. But I know of no better thing to say about Kim, than that she was first and foremost a revolutionary. Kim was a Bolshevik.

## John Kenney

*from the San Francisco branch*

One thing that was really striking about Kim is that she was a fighter. If she believed in something she fought for it, even if she was knocked down. Besides being a very hard communist, there was another side to Kim. She was very compassionate, listened to the struggles that you were facing. She really enjoyed revolutionary politics. We'd just sit down by the table and we'd talk about politics, what happened in world events, what's happening in our organization, different locals, what was happening with the Labor Black League, our Hispanic work, or just having discussions about our political opponents. She saw her post as lit/sales director in a very political way.

For example, I came back from Nicaragua after visiting there for a short while. And there was the MOVE massacre in Philadelphia. She had

immediate outrage about what had taken place there. She told me she had shown a copy of the bourgeois press, the pictures, to some of her coworkers and said, "Is this Dresden?" Then she started pumping me with all these questions about what had taken place in Nicaragua. She wanted to know to what extent the revolution had been carried forward, she wanted to know the changes the revolution had brought about in terms of the lives of the working people, women and children.

## Todd Nolan

*from the San Francisco branch*

I first came to know Kim in 1983 and 1984 during the trips that I on occasion make to the Los Angeles local. And I remember one trip that she proudly reported that she had filled in for the party treasurer, when that treasurer was out of town. She was a comrade with whom we would entrust considerable responsibilities in this party.

Kim also had her ups and downs. In the weeks before she died, she had requested a leave of absence, to get something of the pressure of the work away from herself for a brief period of time. I got in touch with her, and we had a long talk that lasted for several hours. I gave her an appreciation of all the work she had been doing, some of the finest work she had ever done as a communist. She said she felt inadequate. From the previous speakers you can see that there is some irony in that. I said to her at one point, well, Kim, we all have our limitations, it's always a matter of pushing against them. I said, I think there's a book you might enjoy reading, Trotsky's autobiography, *My Life*. I found out several days after she died that she was reading that book.

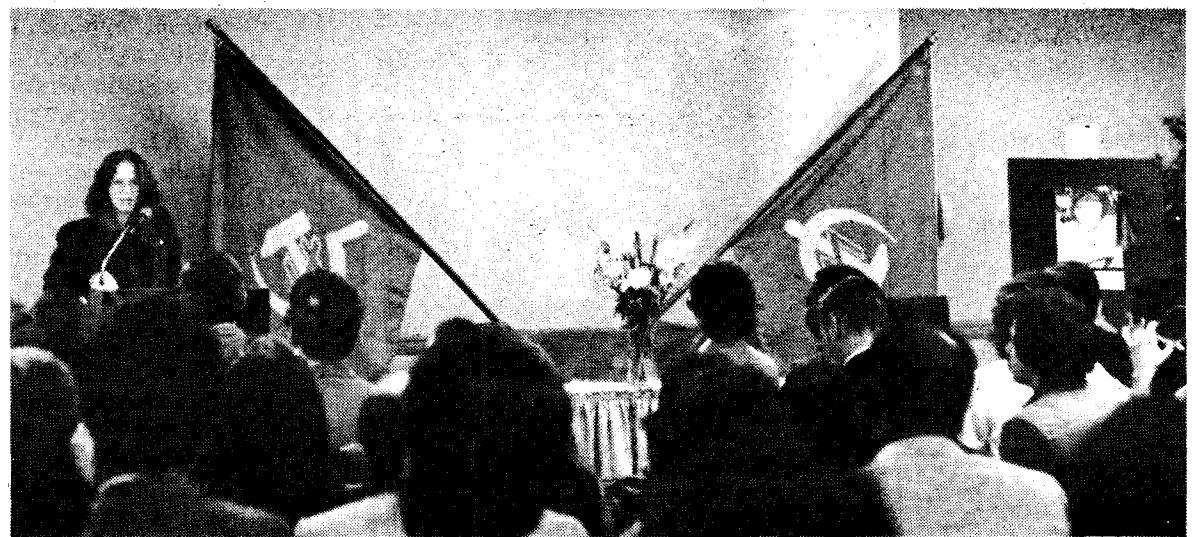
After her death, I learned from comrades and Paul that the talk Kim and I had had made a difference, that she had told Paul she was thinking of cutting short her leave and simply getting back to the political work. When Steve, Paul and I traveled to Michigan for the funeral, we took a silver-and-gold pin. I learned the other day that Kim's father had noticed that pin and called and asked if that was our emblem. He said he wanted to have the engraving of the bronze plate for the marker at her gravesite to carry the hammer and four. Our comrades have since sent an appropriate image for the engraver, for the plaque at her gravesite in Troy, Michigan.

## Jim Stark

*from the Atlanta branch*

I met Kim ten years ago in Boston. She was in her very early 20s. There was a hell-bent activism on Kim's part to get out to the campuses and recruit these young students to the Spartacus Youth League. Once there was a demonstration at Boston University, where there were several hundred students protesting against the campus administration. Midway through this rally, about half of the students spontaneously entered the student center. Kim was very quick on her feet, and managed to slip in at that time before the cops

*continued on page 4*



Spartacist League memorial meeting for comrade Kim Kilmer, San Francisco, February 16.



# Kim Kilmer...

(continued from page 3)

locked the doors. She pretty much single-handedly soapboxed to these hundreds of students who were occupying the building, polemicized against the student bureaucrats who were collaborating with the administration. It was the type of thing where a seasoned experienced communist cadre would have their hands full, but she knew what she wanted to do and she just did it. She would periodically come to the ground level and speak to us through sign language, tell us how to carry on the work outside.

I remember once she was talking with one of the members who was chronically unhappy in his personal life, and she said, look, life is too short to be miserable all the time, when you can change it. She had a sense of living for today, and that's what made it fun to be around Kim. Kim was a nice human being to have at your side in so many situations. She died a Trotskyist communist and that's a tribute to us.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Barbara Francis

SL central committee member who worked with Kim in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco

I worked with Kim most closely in Los Angeles, and then again here in San Francisco the last six months of her life. One thing I remember very well was the blues benefit we had for Lauren Mozee and Ray Palmiero [phone strikers fired and arrested for defending a picket line]. We were trying to produce a statement of principles for the labor/black league we hoped to launch, around and including the people who had been involved in that campaign with us. Typically, we didn't finish the statement of principles until about an hour before the benefit was supposed to begin. Kim, who was our best typist, was to come in, and she had an hour to produce this leaflet. She was also supposed to be at the benefit right on time, because she was one of the people who were going to talk to those who came about joining the LBL. She was also responsible for a number of last-minute arrange-

Friends and comrades remember Kim Kilmer's contributions to the revolutionary movement.



ments. It was a real coup, she had it all orchestrated; she came in, she cut the stencil, she had a friend waiting in a car, she had her clothes laid out at home, and she arrived at the door right on time, looking great, she always did. And pretty unruffled, you'd never know what she had done to get there.

Kim was one of our best salesmen, she was a really good and aggressive propagandist on the street corners and on the work locations. Let me tell you another story, that her father told us with great glee, about Kim leafleting. After she'd been in the party a number of years, he decided it was time to drive her around and show her where he went to work. He was an executive in one of the automobile plants. So he took her on a ride and they went by the gate. She looked at him and said, Dad, I leafleted here and sold the paper here for many weeks and months! Apparently, she'd turn around and duck out of sight when she saw his car coming down the street.

What I remember best about those years in L.A. is her being on the phone. Because the reality of Kim's daily work in the party in that period was that she met a lot of people, she talked politics to them, she talked to other comrades about the people they were meeting. Most of them were black, many of them trade unionists. So, Kim

would be on the phone to our comrades, making sure they were calling back and talking to people they had met. And complaining pretty loudly if anybody was lax in that area.

During that period, besides working full-time, she was working very hard for the party. She was also studying nuclear medicine, and completed a certificate which would qualify her to work in that field. This was related to her longstanding interest in medicine. And it had taken her a while. The first job she got was at Kaiser, in that field. After she'd been there, I think it wasn't much more than a month, maybe two months, the nurses went out on strike. Kim heard that a picket line was going up the next day and she never went back to that job. It was real hard for her. She went out on the picket line and walked it. She had a lot of back bills at the time, I remember, and it took her months to find another job in the field. She had to go back to her other job for a while. But she would not cross a picket line.

I also had the pleasure, and it was a pleasure, of attending her forum on Nicaragua at San Francisco State this past fall. She gave us in rich detail, seen through the eyes of a Marxist, what that country looked like at the time. And that was our terrible loss—she was a Trotskyist and an internationalist.

# South Africa...

(continued from page 1)

march on a police station, undertaking to present their grievances to the government in Pretoria. But the arrogant apartheid president P.W. Botha refused to see him. When Tutu reported back in Alexandra on the 21st, he was met with boos, catcalls, and shouts of "It's not enough! The death of our

people must be avenged! Down with Botha!"

Against these demands for simple justice, Tutu preaches "Our Lord's ministry of reconciliation." In his Nobel lecture he intoned that the oppressed and oppressor "need each other to become truly free"! Hand in hand with this Christian sanctimony goes outright anti-communism. When the announcement of his Nobel prize first made him a real international celebrity in 1984, Tutu "compared his crusade against apartheid... to a crusade against Communism" (*New York Times*, 19 October

1984). It is precisely for this that he is lionized by the liberal media as an anti-apartheid fighter. But it's getting harder to make "the lamb lie down with the lion" in South Africa. It must make Tutu and his bourgeois friends nervous when they think of how the township activists treat those they deem to be collaborators.

When Tutu came to the United States last month, he participated in the hypocritical celebration of Martin Luther King Day along with imperialist politicians Edward Kennedy and George Bush. There are striking parallels between the roles played by Tutu and King in disarming the black struggle with constant appeals to the "humanity" of the oppressors. But King at least came out, albeit belatedly, against the imperialist war in Vietnam. Tutu, taking his anti-communism to its logical conclusion, appeals to imperialism to pressure its apartheid ally through divestment, upbraids Reagan for being "inconsistent," and calls on him to "apply to South Africa the policy that he applies to Nicaragua" (*New York Times*, 7 January)!

If only Reagan would do this, says Tutu, "Voilà! Apartheid would be over in next to no time." He preaches the utopianism of all apartheid's liberal and reformist opponents, including the major South African anti-apartheid formation, the African National Congress (ANC). For the ANC, sanctions, guerrillaism and "making the townships ungovernable" are all part of their strategy to pressure apartheid capitalism to reform itself. Segregated in the townships, many black militants also think that by torching government informers and driving out the police they can bring the apartheid regime to its knees. But the South African police state designed the townships precisely so

they can be easily sealed off and starved into submission.

We salute those who shot the police in Alexandra, and those, presumably ANC guerrillas, who set off a Czech land mine under an armored vehicle in the nearby township of Mamelodi on the 16th. But the ratio of black deaths to white is hundreds to one. A mere mile from Alexandra, whites continue to enjoy the luxury shopping mall of Sandton City. On the fringes of Alexandra, armed racist vigilantes guard their tennis courts and swimming pools, and some fired on a crowd which was allegedly attacking their factory.

These are graphic reminders of what we have been urgently warning since the Uitenhage massacre last March: township revolts by themselves will not destroy apartheid. And the rising frustration is leading to internecine factional and tribal clashes and indefensible attacks on white civilians, such as those in Natal province last December, which only serve to whip up racist frenzy among the heavily armed white population. In a black-white race war now, it is the blacks who would lose, disastrously. But the potential exists in South Africa for victorious class war leading to a black-centered workers government.

In Alexandra, it has been reported that enraged youths were beating up black workers on their return to the township from work. Such hostilities have occurred before. Yet it is the six million black South African proletarians, on whose superexploitation the country's industrial economy rests, who have the power to smash apartheid capitalism. What is urgently needed is the Trotskyist party to lead them in the fight for their own class rule at the head of all the black, coloured and Indian oppressed. ■

## JUST OUT!

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# Challenger Probers Tiptoe Around the White House

The explosion of the space shuttle Challenger on January 28 put a big crimp in Reagan's "Star Wars" plans, not to mention his State of the Union speech planned for that evening on the very subject of the "new frontier." The Great Communicator hoped to fix things up with a "credible" and quick investigation, just as "credible" snap elections in the Philippines were supposed to silence the critics. The presidential commission of inquiry, headed by Nixon's pliant secretary of state, William Rogers, has been more than willing to sweep things under the rug in secret sessions.

But the problem for the White House is there are too many independent parties interested in getting at the truth—including astronauts whose very lives depend on avoiding a repeat of the disaster. So Reagan's investigation is backfiring. As the *New York Times* (21 February), ever ready to cover up "in the national interest," delicately put it, the commission has discovered that there was an unusual "pressure to launch" the shuttle on January 28: "Just where the pressure, if any, was coming from, however, is still not clear." We suggest they phone Pat Buchanan's office at the White House.

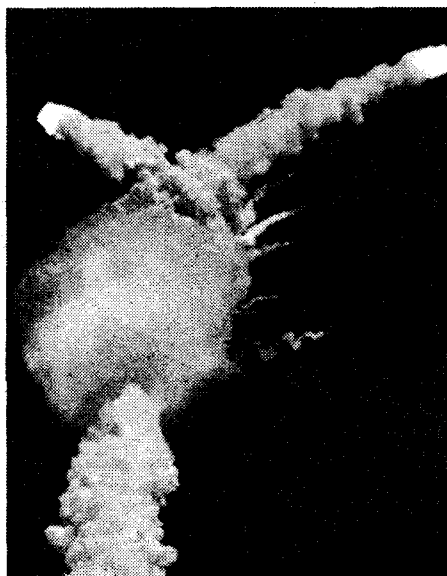
Some of the bourgeois media dared to raise the obvious question more explicitly. The reactionary sensationalists at

gan's Face," *WV* No. 397, 14 February). Everyone else kept silent on this perfectly obvious connection, except for Alexander Cockburn's parallel comments in *The Nation* (15 February). Cockburn remarked that rational discussion was excluded in the mass media, which was busy broadcasting "electronic equivalents of a Nuremberg rally."

## The Story of O-Rings

Right after the disaster, media attention focused on the abnormal plume of flame which had appeared on the right-hand solid fuel rocket booster (SRB) in the moments before the explosion. All this week massive news leaks have detailed how NASA for years ignored warnings from their own engineers about longstanding problems with the critical "O-rings," which provide a seal against hot gases in the joints of the solid rocket boosters. In 1982 a "critical items list" prophetically warned that deficiencies in the O-ring seals could result in "loss of vehicle, mission, and crew due to metal erosion, burnthrough, and probable case burst resulting in fire and deflagration." NASA responded by getting a yes-man to sign a waiver so the shuttle could continue flying.

Most spectacularly, it turns out the night before the fatal launch of Chal-



They died for "Star Wars." AP

miles away in Utah, "signed off" the approval despite nearly unanimous opposition from the engineering team on the spot. Even after his boss had signed the approval, McDonald continued to argue against it, but it was no use. "The decision was to go, period," says Senator Donald Riegle, who has been investigating events around the launch. Challenger's crew was doomed by some mysterious "additional information" allegedly obtained in that fateful half hour, but no one is saying what it was.

Fueling the suspicions, McDonald's testimony was taken in secret session by the presidential commission—not even Senators with security clearance could get in. The commission's public response was to deny the charges of NASA arm-twisting. (Among the 13 members, only maverick Richard Feynman, a Nobel Prize winning physicist, has exhibited some independence. At a lunch break in the hearings, he demonstrated the effect of cold temperature on the O-rings, squeezing a piece, then dipping it in ice water—the rubbery substance failed to spring back into shape.) Senator Ernest Hollings, in a separate Senate investigation, is calling for removal of NASA acting director William Graham, who was caught making deliberately misleading statements, such as asserting there were no objections from Thiokol to the launch.

## Starship Free Enterprise

The story of the Challenger's O-rings is by no means the only scandal that has leaked through in the "investigation" of the shuttle disaster. In our previous



Blood on his hands.

the *New York Post* (20 February) couldn't resist blowing the lid off:

"...congressional investigators are preparing to subpoena NASA telephone logs from the night before the tragic Jan. 28 launch...."

"Investigators said they will probe whether there was pressure to get schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe... aloft before President Reagan's State of the Union address."

Commentator Tom Braden on the Cable News Network's *Crossfire* was even more explicit: "There is a rumor circulating," he said, "that the president had arranged to put those people in space on the telephone in the middle of his State of the Union address which was planned, as you remember, for that evening. Is that the reason why it was a hurry-up?"

Braden ended the show with the famous Watergate cover-up question, "What did they know and when did they know it?" There's gunpowder burns all over top White House staff at this point, and if the commission can't find the smoking gun it's because they're not looking.

As we wrote two weeks ago, Reagan's now-disappeared State of the Union speech hinged on "sending greetings to Christa McAuliffe aboard the space shuttle Challenger," and so "the shuttle had to be launched by the 28th—the weather be damned" ("Star Wars Disaster—Challenger Blows Up in Rea-

lenger, at least 15 engineers from Morton Thiokol, the company which makes the SRBs, were in open revolt against NASA's push for a launch, and the focus of their objection was the O-rings. There was in fact a raging battle till late into the night of January 27, between the engineers concerned with safety, and NASA and Thiokol officials pressing for a launch no matter what. Allan McDonald, director of Thiokol's SRB project, refused to "sign off" the approval for launch because numerous tests and experience from previous missions showed that the reliability of the O-rings could be destroyed by the cold temperatures at the launch pad. At Cape Canaveral, McDonald arranged a telephone conference call with NASA officials at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Alabama and Thiokol officials in Utah.

Thiokol at first would not approve a launch at an O-ring temperature below 53 degrees Fahrenheit. (The temperature of the O-rings that night was estimated to be less than 30 degrees, and on the morning of the launch NASA "ice teams" measured apparent temperatures as low as *minus eight degrees* Fahrenheit on a strut attached to the fatal right-hand booster!) But after a half hour break in the conference call, Thiokol inexplicably reversed itself and one of its vice presidents, over 2,000

article, we recalled the fateful quip of astronaut Gus Grissom, who died in an Apollo test, that his life was in the hands of a "crowd of lowest bidders." Now it turns out that Thiokol was indeed the lowest bidder: a 1973 report on the SRB contract award reported that, despite design deficiencies, "the cost per flight... would be the lowest" with a Thiokol-built booster. It is testament to imperialist irrationality that the former head of NASA, James Beggs, is facing charges for bilking the Pentagon out of \$4.5 billion while at General Dynamics for the Sergeant York boondoggle. The kill-crazy warmongers in Washington pour billions into first-strike weapons, most of which will probably not work, but refuse to pay a dime to Christa McAuliffe's family for survivor benefits.

From Reagan's State of the Union speech on down, Challenger was launched as a giant publicity stunt. It had the most ecumenical crew imaginable—a black physicist, a Japanese American Buddhist from Hawaii, and two women (one of them a Jewish scientist). The purpose: to sell Reagan's Star Wars, or Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). A few years back a secret directive, NSDD-144, emphasized the shuttle's "unique capabilities" for "launch and deploy, retrieval, on-orbit repair, refuel, assembly"—all tasks critical to building the vast network of battle stations in space envisioned in SDI.

Already, in the guise of "reforming" NASA, Reagan has replaced shuttle project administrator Jesse Moore with Rear Admiral Richard Truly, now head of the U.S. Navy's Space Command. Curiously, Truly was commander of the Challenger when it took off on the first nighttime shuttle launching, on 30 August 1983, just in time to be aloft when KAL 007 penetrated Soviet airspace.

It's all aimed at a first strike against the Soviet Union, the homeland of the October Revolution, which Reagan is hell-bent on destroying, despite the Kremlin bureaucrats' "détente" illusions in striking a deal for "arms control" with the war-mad U.S. imperialists. In all the uproar over the Challenger explosion, the American press barely mentioned the Russians' successful launching February 20 of a massive space station, complete with six docking ports and small cabins equipped with desk, armchair and sleeping bag "for improving the astronauts' work and rest" (TASS). The dearth of publicity was a reflection of imperialist pique—the "space frontier" is secretly reserved not for mankind but for the Pentagon's violent fantasies.

So the cover-up goes on. If Reagan still seems to be the "Teflon-coated president," it's in good part because the "free but responsible" bourgeois media refuses to see the dirt right under their noses. He's gotten away (so far) with the KAL 007 spy plane war provocation, the bloody fiasco of the Marines in Beirut, the Grenada invasion and other crimes. But this time large holes have appeared in Reagan's Teflon. ■

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# Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

## Reagan's America— Nightmare for Blacks

In his 1986 "State of the Union" address, Ronald Reagan sounded the theme of the American ruling class, conservatives and liberals alike, that the misery of the ghetto is due to the "break-down of the black family." Ranting about the "welfare culture," Reagan obscenely told black people that "real and lasting emancipation" means cutting them off from the "narcotic" of the welfare check! Blacks won't get a paycheck either. The racist liar in the White House had the gall to proclaim on Martin Luther King's birthday that in the last five years black Americans have "done better than ever before." The truth is that a generation after King's "I have a dream" speech, the "American dream" is still a nightmare for blacks... and it's getting worse.

For the 28 million black people in the United States, life in the Reagan years has been devastating according to every economic and social indicator. Today, more than one half of all black men don't have jobs; half of black children live in poverty, even by official statistics; half the prison population is black, although blacks are only 12 percent of the population. Hunger has reached "epidemic proportions," school dropout rates are at a record high, infant mortality figures are rising. And from the government bombing of the black MOVE commune in Philadelphia last May to cross-burning attacks on black families in Cleveland and lynching in the San Francisco Bay Area, racist terror is on the rise.

The 1986 "State of Black America" report by the National Urban League shows that:

- Thirty-four percent of all black people live below the poverty line, roughly three times the level for whites.
- In 1984, the median black family had only 56 percent of the income of white families.
- Black unemployment is 14.9 percent, compared to 5.9 percent for whites.
- Black teen-age unemployment is 41.6 percent, compared to 15.9 percent for white teenagers.
- The infant mortality rate is 19.2 deaths per 1,000 live births for blacks, more than twice that for whites.
- Over 40 percent of black families are now headed by single females. And they are the poorest of the poor, with a median income of \$8,648, more than \$1,500 below the official poverty line.
- More than half of all black births were to single mothers. For black



Kalfus/NY Post

**Black outrage as NYC court lets off racist cops, murderers of Michael Stewart (above). Stunned Philadelphia residents watch fiery holocaust as cops bomb MOVE commune.**

Steve Webb

teenagers, 86 percent of all births are to unwed mothers.

The studies show a widening gap between the 85 percent of the black population mired in poverty, and a top 15 percent who saw the "door of opportunity" opening. This petty-bourgeois layer was largely the product of poverty programs and corporate recruitment as the (white) rulers of America sought some insurance against a repeat of the '60s ghetto upheavals by buying off a new "talented tenth." And, as professor William T. Williams from the University of Chicago noted in a *Washington Post* series on "Blacks in America 1986" last month, "The black middle class no longer lives in the inner city. Even the stable working class is moving out." Sociologists point to a chronic "black underclass" concentrated in bleak urban ghettos from Newark to Oakland. Many are joining the swelling ranks of the homeless, eating in

soup kitchens, sleeping in crime-ridden shelters or on subway gratings.

For young black men in the ghetto, practically the only way out of the vicious cycle of jail and joblessness is enlisting in the army, becoming cannon fodder for imperialist war. Even this "option" is only for the top layer of high school graduates. For black teen-age girls, it's having a baby. The Reaganites echoed by the liberals yammer away about the "breakdown of family values," and the need to "restore discipline," preparing the ground for even more massive cuts in social services. But what options really exist for a stable family when half of all black men can't find regular work, and the only way women can live is on welfare? Laura Thomas, a black student at Detroit's Wayne State University, explained the phenomenon of black teen-age mothers: "You can't get a job when you drop out of school. But you can have two or three

kids and get on welfare" (*Washington Post*, 19 January).

Today, the black condition in America is worse than at virtually any time since the Great Depression of the 1930s. In December 1955, the black unemployment rate was 8.2 percent; three decades later, in December 1985, the jobless rate for blacks had almost doubled—and that doesn't even count the 39 percent of black men who have been jobless so long they're not even counted by official statistics as looking for work! In 1967 the median income of black families headed by women was only \$9,380; in 1984, it had fallen to \$8,848. In an MLK Day feature, UPI (17 January) reported that James Todd, former director of the Southern Association of Community Health Centers, found in a ten-years-later study that "Martin Luther King's dream of equality has been slipping away from many Southern blacks." "I was horrified," said Todd: sure, today you can get on a bus or plane—but in terms of health care, social services, housing, racist terrorism, he found blacks even worse off.

Why did the civil rights movement not open the road to black freedom? As we have written:

"The civil rights movement was defeated when it moved north, coming up against the economic root causes of black oppression under American capitalism. The main demands of the Southern struggle—access to public facilities and voting rights—had existed north of the Mason-Dixon line for years. But the desperate poverty and mass unemployment of the ghettos—along with widespread police brutality and racist intimidation of the black population—these could not be solved with a new 'civil rights' bill. It would take a class struggle, together with the white workers and mobilizing the power of organized labor, to do away with capitalist exploitation (in which minorities are invariably 'last hired, first fired') and institute a socialist planned economy to achieve genuine emancipation."

—"Finish the Civil War!"  
WV No. 319,  
10 December 1982

### Racist Uproar Over the Black Family

On the eve of the French Revolution, the royalty's haughty response to news that the poor were rioting because they could not afford bread was Marie Antoinette's famous phrase, "Let them eat cake." Today as the Reaganites flaunt their "new luxury" while swinging the cutback ax, their obscene message to the jobless is, as a *New York Times* editorial put it, "Let Them Read Want Ads." So, in 1986, there are an estimated 20 million people now going hungry in America, as the surplus cheese lines get longer and longer. The planned new cuts—in the name of "balancing the budget"—amount to a program for starvation.

Through the profound social/sexual counterrevolution spearheaded by Reagan and his top cop Edwin Meese, even the limited gains blacks won through the civil rights movement are being wiped out, while black income is driven back. From 1982 to 1985, \$12.2 billion was slashed from federal food stamp and child nutrition programs in budget cuts passed with the aid of Congressional Democrats (*New York Times*, 27 February 1985). And the administration's 1987 budget calls for cutting another \$14 billion from health programs, \$1.3 billion from low-income housing subsidies and \$600 million from Aid to Families with Dependent Children—while increasing "Aid to Dependent Contras" in Nicaragua to \$100 million, and adding \$34 billion to the war budget.

The Reaganite social backlash is reflected in the hearing now being given to black "neo-conservatives" typified by sociologist Charles Murray, who argues in Congressional testimony and his 1984 book *Losing Ground* that the black struggles of the 1960s and the "Great Society" poverty programs they spun off are responsible for black misery in the Reagan years. According to Mur-



UPI

Margaret Bourke-White

Unemployed line up for food stamps in Detroit, 1982. Today's massive layoffs in Midwest mirror '30s Great Depression misery (right).



## Racist Court Rules Against Integration

# Labor Must Act to Defend Norfolk Busing!

Under the guiding light of Attorney General Edwin Meese's Justice Department, a three-man panel of the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on February 6 approved the Norfolk, Virginia school board's plan to eliminate busing in the elementary schools. This reactionary decision signals a wholesale assault on court-ordered school integration across the country. It will not be reversed by appealing to the firmly Reaganite Supreme Court. What's urgently needed is the mobilization of the Tidewater-area labor movement to lead the fight against the resegregation of Norfolk schools.

It took a damn hard fight to break the "separate and unequal" Jim Crow system in this area. Spearheading "massive resistance" throughout the South, the state closed the high schools for an entire year in 1958 rather than submit to court-ordered integration. Although the Norfolk plan, instituted in 1971, exempted most of the wealthier West Side white neighborhoods, it was still one of the most successful programs in the country. While anti-busing forces ranted about "white flight" to neighboring Virginia Beach, between 1980 and 1986 the percentage of white students dropped a mere two points, to 41 percent.

Now, without school busing, at least ten of the 35 grade schools will be 98-100 percent black, while a fifth will be overwhelmingly white. Business interests with an eye toward "gentrifying" parts of this industrial city warmly greeted the decision. Said a member of the powerful Greater Norfolk Development Corporation:

"A number of areas will start to come back—not as much with the racial mix as with the economic mix. We want the middle-class people a city is built on."  
—*Washington Post*, 9 February

In other words, white yuppies in, poor blacks get out! The title of the 13 February *Wall Street Journal* editorial lauding the decision was "Commuting Norfolk's Sentence!"

The Reagan administration views the Norfolk case as the keystone in its efforts to wipe out the remnants of



Norfolk, Virginia, May 1983: longshoremen lead march for busing.

school integration. It was the Justice Department's espousal of "neighborhood" (read: segregated) schools that prompted the Norfolk school board to first study how to kill busing in 1981. While the administration has consistently opposed new attempts at school busing, the intervention by Assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds on behalf of the Norfolk school board last year was the first time it had endorsed abandoning an established busing program. Reynolds' boss Meese, who brazenly calls for reversing the rights won through the North's victory over the slavocracy in the Civil War, said of the court ruling, "there may be other situations comparable to Norfolk." The stage is set for reversing busing programs in over 25 cities, from Denver to Mobile.

A number of Tidewater-area unions are on record for busing. With war production booming, the shipbuilding and longshore unions make this area the beachhead of union power in the "right-to-work" South. The potential for throwing this power into the fight for black rights was seen in May 1983 when 10,000 people, the vast majority black workers, led by a 200-strong Interna-

tional Longshoremen's Association contingent, marched through Norfolk to defend the busing program.

This demonstration could have been the starting point for labor to bury the segregationists. Instead, Bishop L.E. Willis, Sr. and other middle-class black leaders flew in Democratic Party hustler Jesse Jackson, who declared, "I am not in town marching for desegregation. I am marching for the voter registration boost." Jackson rounded up the black vote for loser Democrat Walter Mondale whose running mate was the staunchly anti-busing Geraldine Ferraro.

The liberals' strategy is to rely on the "fairness" of the courts. U.S. civil rights commissioner Mary Frances Berry commented, "I think it would be unusual for the full panel [of the District Court] or the Supreme Court to abide by the decision because it would allow the Reagan administration's Justice Department to keep encouraging people to try to modify school desegregation plans" (*Norfolk Ledger-Star*, 7 February). But this is exactly what the courts are doing and have done since the rollback of busing began—under the Democrats—in the 1970s!

The courts, the cops, the capitalist parties—the entire state apparatus is on a full-scale campaign to destroy black and all working people's rights, and even their lives. Remember the 1979 KKK/Nazi massacre of five leftist civil rights and union activists in Greensboro, North Carolina! This cold-blooded mass murder was carried out with the full cooperation and assistance of the cops, from local police all the way up to Jimmy Carter's FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and then covered up by the courts. Remember, too, the firebombing of Philly MOVE last May! This hideous racist holocaust was a government conspiracy, from Reagan's FBI, which supplied the military explosives and reviewed the plans, right down to black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode who gave the green light. Now the courts step in to convict Ramona Africa, the only adult to survive the inferno, for "criminal conspiracy" and "riot" with a possible sentence of 14 years in jail.

It was the liberal Democrats who first knifed busing a decade ago, as racist mobs took to the streets in cities like Boston and Louisville. Labor and blacks must use their own power to mobilize in defense of democratic rights. Separate is not equal! All the government's talk about "quality education," when the dollars are going into the bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive, is a sick joke. In November 1982 militant black workers from the Tidewater area, with the endorsement of a number of area union officials and locals, formed the Nat Turner Brigade as part of the Labor/Black Mobilization initiated by the Spartacist League that stopped the race-murderers of the KKK from marching through Washington, D.C.

That anti-Klan victory showed the tremendous power of linking the fight for black freedom with the social muscle of the organized working class. That power must be brought to bear now to stop the government's racist rollback schemes. Labor must act: defend school busing and fight to extend it to the suburbs! ■

ray, government-financed programs have "bought" increases in crime, teenage unemployment, teen pregnancy, abortion, all of which he says could be cut down by abolishing welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, etc. Murray's economic and social "statistics" are hogwash in the service of Reagan reaction, but his "theories" are now being widely debated. The bourgeoisie used the occasion of the first official Martin Luther King week for a media barrage about the "dependency" of the black family.

On January 25, Bill Moyers broadcast a "CBS Reports" documentary on "The Vanishing Family—Crisis in Black America." Moyers harps on how welfare supposedly makes black mothers "lazy," how "irresponsible" young black fathers need to be taught "self-control" and "the values of restraint." Democrat Moyers, former press secretary for Lyndon B. Johnson, puts his theme in the mouth of a middle-aged black poverty worker who says, "It's not racism that I'm fighting—it's the lack of motivation" of ghetto kids. But what comes through instead from Moyers' profile of the mean streets of black Newark is the tragedy of a generation of vibrant youth facing a life of desperate poverty. Even a black cop, asked if "some of these kids [are] just losers," responds, "Yeah, you're born into a

dead end. How do you escape?"

Reaganite ideologue George Will used Moyers' documentary to denigrate "young Blacks, whose sexual recklessness produces oceans of misery... [who] have been taught by reflexive 'civil rights' rhetoric that they are mere victims, absolved from responsibility by the all-purpose alibi of 'white racism'." And liberal columnist Robert Samuelson in *Newsweek* (10 February) hails "The New Candor on Race," namely that in Reagan's America it's socially acceptable to openly peddle racist trash that once was the hallmark of KKK lynchings. "Whatever white racism remains [!], blacks are now harming themselves more than whites are," he writes, pushing the "blame the victim" line now in vogue. How long before they have Shockley and Jensen speaking to the National Academy of Sciences on their genocidal "theories" of Negro inferiority?!

They've even dragged out the old 1965 Moynihan report, "The Negro Family," the granddaddy of all the theories blaming ghetto poverty on the "break-down of the black family." This paternalist thesis has a little cause-and-effect problem. At the time Daniel Moynihan (now Senator from New York, then an LBJ aide) wrote it, the report was widely discredited as a cover-up for racist oppression in America. But today

"mainstream" black organizations are trying to sell this despicable lie to black people. The *Washington Post* (19 January) noted three posters they saw hanging on the walls at the Detroit Urban League. Not a word about

budget cuts, civil rights enforcement, instead the posters said, "Don't Make a Baby If You Can't Be a Father," "Blacks Killing Blacks Is the Leading Cause of Death Among Our Young People," and

*continued on page 8*

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13 May 1985: The bombing of black America—signature of the Reagan years.

Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, N.Y. 10116

# Reagan's America...

(continued from page 7)

"You Change a Life," a call for black volunteers in an inner city "Big Brother" program. Their "program" to deal with black poverty is "self-help"...and self-hate.

In contrast to this claptrap, almost half a century ago the black socialist and sociologist E. Franklin Frazier wrote his landmark study *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939), tracing the instability and precarious nature of their family life to the economic and social oppression of black people. He pointed to the historical roots in slavery, where the black family was often dispersed and broken up and its members scattered. The Civil War and then mass migrations of rural Southern blacks to the industrial North during and after the two world wars caused further disruption, and when depression hit, "Because of the uncertain employment of the men, the women... occupied a dominant position in the family." He summed up:

"The lack of opportunity for the Negro male to participate freely in the economic organization and his subordination to whites as well as the general exclusion of Negroes from political activities have all affected the organization and the functioning of the Negro family.... It represents in a sense the price which the Negro has been forced to pay in order to survive in American society."

—"The Negro Family in America" (1948)

With his materialist analysis of the black family, Frazier also had to argue against insidious racist theories of "deviations in Negro family life," which regarded the black man as "defective, dependent and delinquent." Today, behind the furor over the "dependency" of the black family there lies a sinister program for starvation, militarization and forced sterilization of minorities. What's in store for ghetto youth was crudely spelled out by black establishment columnist June Brown in the *Detroit News* (28 January), who demanded "we should militarize all black youths who drop out of school, forcing them to learn the discipline they were never taught at home." As for black teen-age girls, "If they have two babies, they will be forced to undergo an operation to render them infertile!"

## Racist America's Ghetto Hellholes

Communists stand for black liberation through socialist revolution. The needs of teen mothers will not be met by Moral Majority tyranny but by a fight for free 24-hour day care; for community kitchens to feed everyone; for socialized, quality medical care, including free abortion on demand; for integrated, free quality education; for unlimited, unconditional social benefits—incorporating unemployment insurance, welfare and social security—at full union-scale wage levels; for jobs for all. As Leon Trotsky explained in *The*



Kagen/NY Times

## No future for black youth in "free enterprise" America.

*Transitional Program*, written in 1938 during the Great Depression:

"Under the menace of its own disintegration, the proletariat cannot permit the transformation of an increasing section of the workers into chronically unemployed paupers, living off the slops of a crumbling society. *The right to employment* is the only serious right left to the worker in a society based upon exploitation."

The desperate poverty of the ghetto is rooted in the decaying racist capitalist system. Behind the grim statistics lies the massive lumpenization of the black population in America today. In the mid-1970s, millions of workers were thrown on the scrap heap, never to find jobs again including in the present "boom." In the 1986 Urban League report, economist David Swinton links "the increasing economic difficulties of blacks to the general failure of the economy," noting that "in general American workers are worse off today than they were 15 to 20 years ago."

While black poverty rates were high in every region of the country, the 1986 Urban League report noted ominously:

"Poverty for blacks in the Mid-West has increased more than in any other region since 1970. In the last few years the deteriorating situation of blacks in that region has been so marked that for the first time since such statistics have been kept, a non-southern region has higher black poverty rates than the South. The percentage of blacks in poverty in the Mid-West has almost doubled since 1970."

The study estimates a loss of nearly three million factory jobs since 1980, in everything from heavy industry, like auto and steel, to textiles and electronics. "A disproportionate number of those jobs, particularly in the unskilled and semi-skilled categories, were held by black males who without retraining—and there are precious few efforts taking place—have become superfluous in the labor market."

These figures indicate the dangerous destruction of whole sections of the American black proletariat in what is now called the Midwestern "rust bowl." While the labor traitors in "Solidarity House" agreed to mass layoffs in auto to boost the Big Three's profits, for black workers in Detroit this meant the initials "UAW" now stood for "You Ain't Workin'." A century ago, Marx pointed

out that with its boom-bust cycle, the capitalist system generated an "industrial reserve army of labor," the pool of unemployed and semi-employed. And in racist America—where the black population is doubly oppressed, as wage slaves forcibly segregated at the bottom of capitalist society, last-hired/first-fired, victimized, terrorized—this surplus labor increasingly overlaps with the ghetto. It is desperately necessary to fight this mass lumpenization, for black workers concentrated in strategic industrial sectors are the powerhouse of the struggle for black emancipation.

As we wrote two decades ago, in our resolution "Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom":

"Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section [of the proletariat], revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution."

—Spartacist supplement, May-June 1967

While Reagan and his kept sociologists and media men grotesquely sermonize about "emancipating" blacks from food stamps, we're organizing to "liberate" the bourgeoisie from its ownership of the means of production. In this struggle, the revolutionary party as the vanguard of the working class must link the ghetto to the power of organized labor. This is no abstract matter, for as Marx pointed out about the "industrial reserve army," this desperate "mass of human material always ready for exploitation" can be recruited by the bosses as strikebreakers, vigilantes, etc.—as happened during the Greyhound strike a couple of years ago. Class-struggle unionists must organize the unemployed, fighting for a program of 30 hours work for 40 hours pay, for a massive program of public works and special job training programs for minorities, for labor/black defense against racist terror.

## Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

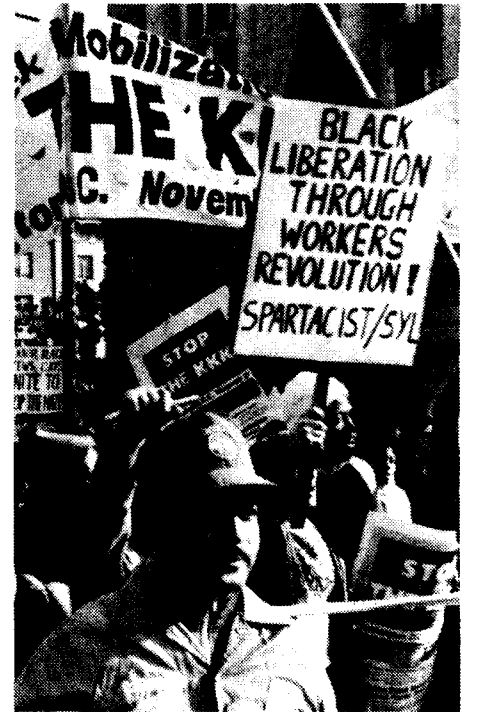
The ruling class "celebrated" MLK Day with an orgy of racist hypocrisy, lauding the pacifist preacher for telling blacks to turn the other cheek, while burying school integration. Its "Black Hall of Fame" consists of Martin Luther King, Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver...and Uncle Tom! Only because of the glaring vacuum of any leadership that defends blacks in Reagan's America can the bourgeoisie get away with its grotesque campaign blaming the black poor for their own oppression. And it's no accident: America's racist rulers jailed and murdered the most militant fighters thrown up in the '60s ghetto upheavals, the ones who wouldn't be bought off.

There will be no protest over the Reaganite "black family" crusade from the black Democrats, who share a fundamental commitment to this system of exploitation and racist oppression. "Mr. Black Capitalism," Jesse Jackson, in a round-table discussion of the Moyers documentary, echoed the accusations of "moral degeneracy" against black teenagers; asked for solutions he resorted to his inane rhymes about "hope not dope." (Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition" was a hustle to register black votes for the Democrats.) Philadelphia's black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode demonstrated his "commitment to the black family" by bombing the MOVE commune, destroying the homes of another 60 West Philly families in the process. And anti-Semitic demagogue Louis Farrakhan, the man who wanted Malcolm X dead, wants to hide black women behind the veil and condemn them to *pardah* (seclusion in the home).

All the self-help schemes, all the sermons about rescuing the black family, all the rhetoric of "empowerment" through "buy black" campaigns—they're all a cruel hoax against the black masses. The fight for black liberation is a fight against the partner parties of

racist American capitalism, for the revolutionary mobilization of the working class, leading all the oppressed in the struggle for state power. The way to cut through ghetto despair is through *class struggle*: a good sit-down strike in black Detroit, a successful militant fight to save a Harlem hospital from Koch's killer cuts, a labor/black mobilization that stops the KKK will do more to inspire ghetto youth than a hundred insipid lectures about pulling yourselves up by the bootstraps and going out to look for a job that isn't there.

A revolutionary workers party must be forged to lead the struggle against the all-sided racist onslaught. In the San Francisco Bay Area, the Labor Black



WV Photo

## SL-Initiated Labor/Black Mobilization stops the Ku Klux Klan in Washington, D.C. 27 November 1982.

League for Social Defense, initiated by the Spartacist League, has brought out hundreds in a campaign for freedom and jobs back for fired phone strikers, fought Jim Crow discrimination against black unionists at SF General Hospital, and called emergency demonstrations against the hanging of South African anti-apartheid martyr Benjamin Molloise. The Partisan Defense Committee has revived the tradition of aid to class war prisoners, supporting victims of racist frame-ups such as ex-Black Panther leader Geronimo Pratt and MOVE survivor Ramona Africa. The Trotskyist SL led mass labor/black mobilizations which stopped the Ku Klux Klan from carrying out their cross-burning terror in Washington, D.C. and northern cities.

The fight for black liberation in America is the fight to win black activists to a proletarian perspective, as well as a fight for a new multiracial, class-struggle leadership of the labor movement. Built in a battle to break the unions and the black masses from the grip of the Democratic Party, such a revolutionary vanguard needs black proletarian fighters who will write the finest pages of "black history"—by smashing racist American imperialism and opening the road to freedom for all mankind. ■

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# Philippines...

(continued from page 1)

declared that their act was no coup d'état but a "people's revolution," an example of "people's power." The presence of hundreds of thousands of Manila residents surrounding Camp Crame testifies to the popularity of the military revolt. But these "democratic" military men were Marcos henchmen only a few days before. Enrile declared that he personally ordered the falsification of 350,000 votes for the president in the sham elections. Ramos, a cousin of Marcos, has since the mid-1970s been the head of the notoriously brutal Philippine Constabulary, which last September shot up dozens of protesting sugar workers on the island of Negros.

Every major figure in the new regime is intimately connected to the U.S. Ramos graduated from West Point and Enrile is a product of Harvard Law School. Cory Aquino's slain husband Benigno spent virtually his entire political life in the service of the CIA, first participating in the suppression of the Communist-led Hukbalahap rebellion, then acting as control for a U.S.-sponsored insurgency in outlying Indonesian islands. Corazon Cojuangco Aquino is herself one of the wealthiest landowners in her home province of Tarlac; her cousin Eduardo Cojuangco is a leading Marcos crony and head of the Philippine government's coconut monopoly. Her Yale-educated running mate (and rival), "Doy" Laurel, is a typical Filipino wheeler-dealer politico who only split from Marcos in the last three years.

The United States intervened in every aspect of the recent elections. Marcos called the election exercise in the first place to satisfy White House pressure for a "credible" mandate, so that the military could get on with counterinsurgency against the Communist Party's New People's Army (NPA). To ensure that this vote would go down well in the U.S. Congress, Washington insisted on official status for poll watchers from NAMFREL, an organization funded by the U.S. "Endowment for Democracy." In addition, there were observation teams from the Democrats, the Republicans and the White House. And then, when the balloting was over, everyone looked to Washington for the verdict. When the administration finally issued a statement on February 24 declaring that "attempts to prolong the life of the present regime by violence are futile," a Filipino opposition politician declared, "That's it—the election's over." Reagan had cast the decisive vote.

The elections and the Marcos overthrow were also an American media event, like a real-life replay of Woody Allen's *Bananas*. Only this time it wasn't Howard Cosell broadcasting the last words of El Presidente of San Marcos in his death throes on the palace steps and interviewing the usurping general for the "Wide World of Sports," but Ted Koppel staging an election "debate" between Aquino and Marcos for "Nightline." The spectacle of all the actors in the drama pausing in their coup and counter-coup attempts to keep the American viewing audience at home up to date only emphasizes that the Philippines' status as the U.S.' first colony has not changed all that much since "independence."

For decades the Americans have treated the Philippines as their whorehouse. For ten years, the B-52s took off from Clark AFB on the island of Luzon on their way to carpetbomb the Indo-chinese mainland; for the GIs, Manila was an R&R stop, with bar girls and whiskey galore, and the Marcoses presiding over it all. In fact, Imelda and Ferdinand are like something out of Phil Ochs' "Vietnam Talking Blues," where dictator Diem says, "Meet my sister, Madame Nhu, the sweetheart of Dien Bien Phu. Meet my cousins, meet my aunts, the family that never takes a chance. The family that slays together

...stays together." The Philippine First Lady certainly rivaled Madame Nhu, but Marcos was spared the Diem treatment.

## Ballots and Bullets

The alarm bells began ringing in Washington late last year, when American policy makers finally noticed that the rampant corruption and terror of the Marcos clique combined with massive capital flight, inflation and unemployment were driving large sections of the Filipino masses into the camp of the NPA guerrilla insurgents, who would obtain parity with the enfeebled army in "three to five years." With Marcos in declining health, but still alive enough to rob the country blind, both Republicans and Democrats became concerned about the fate of the U.S.' largest and most strategic military outpost. Washington began planning for an "orderly succession" to a "post-Marcos environment," and stepped up pressure on their tyrant for political and military reform.

But the wily despot of Malacañang Palace, encrusted in power and privilege for 20 years, was determined not to be pushed aside so easily. Proving that he was no novice at democratic posturing,



Tucci/Gamma-Liaison

**Cory Aquino, figurehead of Philippine "democracy," CIA-style.**

Marcos in late November suddenly came up with the gimmick of the "snap election." He hoped by this ploy to deflect American pressure, provide a safety valve for popular discontent, and wield the traditional "three Gs" of Filipino politics—guns, goons and gold—to ensure his continued tenure. The U.S. went along with this election tent show conceived in the classic American style. (Marcos boasts of acquiring his bag of tricks from Chicago's mayor Daley, where loyal supporters also voted "early and often" and the dead did too.)

Ronald Reagan went on TV shortly after the February 7 vote, playing down reports of fraud and declaring the results prove "there is really a two-party system, obviously good" in the Philippines (*Washington Post*, 11 February). This gaffe made it necessary for State Department advisers and returning emissaries to pull Reagan aside and inform him what everyone already knew who had been watching the nightly news: if there were a two-party system under Marcos, it would be one party in the government and the other party in the grave.

In the Philippines, moreover, Marcos was a usurper—not old money but a grasping provincial boss, whose apprenticeship was as a black marketeer dealing with the Japanese occupation authorities during World War II. The greed of the Marcos gang was boundless, and eventually alienated not only

middle-class professionals and the Catholic hierarchy but even decisive sectors of Manila's Makati financial district. This coincided with the escalating mass discontent as real wages have fallen steadily for years, millions were unemployed, and the government's constabulary and private armies of Marcos's regional cronies ruled through capricious terror and systematic "salvaging" (disappearance) of political opponents.

The elections of February 7 were a contest between rival bourgeois factions, both equally pro-imperialist. But between them lay the corpse of Benigno Aquino, assassinated by Marcos's security police upon his arrival at Manila airport in August 1983. If "Ninoy" alive was the chief candidate for U.S. replacement puppet, Ninoy dead came to symbolize the tens of thousands who have perished at Marcos's hands during 20 years of iron-fisted rule. Vowing to avenge her husband's death, Cory Aquino threatened to put Marcos on trial for murder. Marcos therefore knew that it was not only his wealth and power, but his presidential head that was at stake in the outcome—and he spared no extreme of fraud and terror to prevent his opponent from winning.

These gangland tactics fueled popular rage. And while the opposition coalition was put together by the U.S., although Cory Aquino coordinated her every political move with the CIA, in the eyes of the Filipino masses, the widow of a slain national redeemer was taking on a despised tyrant. It was out of pent-up hatred for this used-up U.S. strongman that millions of Filipinos refused Marcos's bribes, dodged his bullets and guarded ballot boxes with their lives to prevent the dictator's henchmen from stuffing or stealing them. What started as an electoral hoax designed to prepare an "orderly succession" in the Philippines became the occasion for a volcanic eruption of popular discontent that Marcos could not repress without massive killing, and Washington could not contain without sending Ferdinand and Imelda the way of "Baby Doc" Duvalier.

Although the elections brought the Filipino masses into the streets, it was firmly under bourgeois leadership. This posed a dilemma for the Philippine left, which had a hard time deciding what attitude to take toward the Aquino/Laurel "Laban" candidacy. The "Bayan" (Nation) coalition, the Communist Party and its National Democratic Front eventually came out for boycott, but they kept their heads down during the campaigning. Moreover, a number of prominent Bayan leaders "temporarily" resigned from the organization in order to campaign for the opposition. The reason for this confusion is simple: fighting not for a socialist program but on a purely "democratic" platform, the main left groups had difficulty explaining their political differences with Laban. Yet they could not participate, because the whole sham "democratic" exercise was designed to defeat the Communists. And in fact, the yellow flags of Aquino/Laurel managed to gain ascendancy over the red flags of the left in the streets of Manila and elsewhere.

Since the election, the Philippine left has continued to stand aloof from developments. The *New York Times* (24 February) quoted the secretary general of Bayan, Leandro Alejandro, saying of the rebellion by Enrile and Ramos that "This is a war of the ruling class." An Aquino government would be a return to the oligarchic party politics of the pre-Marcos era, said a CP source. Yet Alejandro did go to Camp Crame to negotiate with Enrile, who had arrested the Bayan leader in demonstrations in 1983 after the assassination of Aquino. What neither the CP/NDF nor Bayan did was to take advantage of the division within the bourgeoisie to seize control of proletarian districts and mobilize the masses in their own class interest. Bound by their Stalinist popular-front programs, even though they can't get a

coalition with significant bourgeois forces, the Philippine left has been reduced to silence.

The U.S.' main concern in the Philippines is still to prevent the growth of "Communism," particularly given the strategic importance of the Clark Air Force Base and the U.S. Navy base at Subic Bay. These are the largest American military installations outside the United States, employing tens of thousands, and the linchpin to U.S. strategy in Asia. At a press conference on February 11, Reagan declared these bases vital to "the Western world" in order to ensure imperialist control of 16 "chokepoints" controlling vital sea lanes. It is by dominating these passages that the Americans hope to keep the Soviet navy bottled up in the event of nuclear war. And they are particularly concerned by the Soviets' access to former U.S. facilities at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam.

With the installation of Aquino/Laurel the U.S. has temporarily managed to ride a wave of popular discontent, replacing what Warsaw's *Trybuna Ludu* accurately termed a "now uncomfortable and moreover insubordinate dictator" with a new face while maintaining American control unharmed. A fight against imperialist domination and the anti-Soviet war drive which determines the life of the Philippines, described by the London *Economist* as an "archipelagic aircraft carrier," requires class struggle against popular-front illusions and for workers revolution, led by Trotskyist parties, from the Philippines to the U.S. The "special relationship" of American and Filipino workers must be that of proletarian internationalism, of a common fight for the rebirth of the Fourth International. ■

## Bermúdez...

(continued from page 2)

South Africa—are deservedly unpopular among sections of student youth; it is important that their rights to express their outrage be defended.

While on the stand, comrade Guillermo explained that he was born in El Salvador, and was won to Marxism because of the SL/SYL's forthright demand for "Military Victory to the Leftist Insurgents" there. Describing what moved him to initiate the protest against the Marine recruiters, Guillermo said:

"The first thing that came to my mind when I saw the Marines was that the Marines had been used time and time again to support and maintain military dictatorship and the rule of the oligarchs.... So what I thought that the students should do was drive the Marines off campus and express solidarity with the victims of the Marines... to send a message to the university administration and the U.S. government that the students are not going to allow military recruitment on the campuses."

For his anti-imperialist solidarity, Guillermo was to be imprisoned, dangerously labeled a "cop-beater."

But UC Berkeley lost. As counsel Howard Moore put it, the jury's verdict "demonstrates that the American people, when exposed to the truth, can disregard hysterical anti-communism and assess for themselves the truth." Having gained no satisfaction in the courts thus far, the university is vindictively going after those it wishes to purge through other means: its own star chamber "hearings." (If you can't jail them, expel them.) Guillermo is scheduled to appear on February 27 to find out if the university will try to take its nonexistent "case" to trial again, and other students still face charges stemming from last year's protests—including Michael Donnelly, David Lucas and José Carrasco.

What's needed is mass, militant protest against the university's attempt to regiment campus political life. An injury to one is an injury to all! Defend Guillermo Bermúdez and all anti-imperialist protesters! ■

A century ago Emma Lazarus wrote the poem which is inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty:

"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

All too often the "golden door" was slammed shut, as it was in the face of Jews fleeing Hitler's genocide. But the sentiment expressed in Lazarus' poem is a legacy of

the American war of independence, a bourgeois revolution against colonial rule.

Championship of the rights of the foreign-born has been a hallmark of revolutionary regimes. The French Revolution made radical republican Tom Paine a citizen. Russia following the 1917 October Revolution established the right of citizenship for all workers living in Soviet territory, and the right of asylum for refugees from political or religious persecution abroad.

In Reagan's America the lady with the torch would

probably herself get deported as a pinko defender of "secular humanism." Today the Reaganites and auto baron Lee Iacocca squabble over whether the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island complex should be turned into a luxury hotel or a shopping mall, while *la migra* refuses entry to poor black Haitians and Latin American refugees from death squad terror. So when a right-winger recently proposed to auction off green cards for profit, this seemed fully in harmony with the times.

We reprint below the apt response by satirist Russell Baker to the Reaganite modest proposal.

The New York Times Magazine, 23 February 1986

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## Sunday Observer

BY RUSSELL BAKER

# It Pays to Stay In the U.S.A.



PATRICK MCDONNELL

**S**INCE EVERYTHING is for sale these days, I wasn't surprised by Julian L. Simon's idea for selling foreigners the right to immigrate to the United States. He wants the Government to fill its immigration quota by selling to the high bidders.

Mr. Simon, who is associated with the University of Maryland, the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute, is close to having a good idea. Close but not quite there.

Explaining himself in a recent article he wrote for the Op-Ed page of The New York Times, he noted that selling immigration rights would meet "the standard of a market-oriented society: ability and willingness to pay," and be fair, too, since it would

give all the world's people equal opportunity to buy into the U.S.A.

You can't quarrel with that, especially with President Reagan working so hard to replace government with a free marketplace, and I'm not inclined to. If they want a crack at becoming Americans, let them pay for it, I say.

I suppose most of us feel like that nowadays. There's no free lunch, as the Reagan philosophers say; why should there be any free America? Obviously, there shouldn't. Mr. Simon's idea could be more than a statement of the obvious, though, if pursued to its logical conclusion. It is this:

If you've got to pay to get in, you've got to pay to stay in.

At present, the country is swarming with people—a great many of whom, I regret to say, call themselves American citizens—who do not meet "the standard of a market-oriented society: ability and willingness to pay" for living here.

Why do we let these people stay? Because for decades we have been afflicted with politicians too namby-pamby to apply market principles to the free-lunch bunch.

All they had to do was amend the Constitution to state that citizenship doesn't entitle you to stay in the United States unless you can pay.

Just because you're a citizen doesn't entitle you to a free lunch, does it? Then why should it entitle you take up valuable American space for

which people from elsewhere would pay good money?

This is the question that soft-headed politicians of the past half-century have recoiled from answering. Perhaps now that we have a market-oriented Government in the White House, men with political courage may be willing to act.

Maybe this is the purpose of Mr. Simon's seemingly innocuous idea for selling immigration rights. Perhaps he hopes to stimulate White House thinkers to move on to the larger idea; namely, those who can't pay, can't stay.

Or perhaps... just perhaps... Mr. Simon is floating a trial balloon for the President. Perhaps the decision has already been made to adopt a market-oriented population policy if the public will approve. How better to test the public mood than by floating a few proposals for making America a cash-on-the-barrelhead proposition?

I merely speculate, understand. Still, consider the benefits of shipping out everybody who doesn't ante up for the right to stay here.

One, it will not only make more room for well-heeled foreigners, but also reduce the tax costs of supporting the unproductive, thus making the United States an even more attractive immigration buy to even more well-heeled foreigners.

Two, it will make the country much prettier. Removal

of the market-disoriented segment of the population will clear the cities of such repellent sights as homeless paupers, maniacs and idle men drinking from bottles wrapped in dirty paper bags, thus making America more alluring to rich foreign tourists.

Three, foreign moneybags who once said, "America is a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there among all those bag ladies," will change their tune and ignite a bidding war with other rich foreigners that could drive immigration-rights prices higher than Manhattan real estate.

All very well, someone will say, but where shall we ship these citizens who can't meet the standards of the market-oriented society? For they will remain citizens. Never doubt it. Though inability to meet marketplace standards leaves them unable to afford the United States, no one wants to treat them badly. They remain citizens, with the right to buy their way back into the country if they become able and willing to meet the price.

Until that time, a place will be found for them. Where? I can only guess, but watching the Administration's doings in the Mediterranean lately, who can help noticing that someone in the White House seems strangely bemused by vast, thinly populated Libya? ■

## Hormel...

(continued from page 12)

Democratic "Farmer-Labor" governor Rudy Perpich. While P-9 leaders and "Corporate Campaign, Inc." consultant Rogers preached "nonviolence," Hormel recruited 1,000 scabs, half of whom are former P-9 members. Last week Hormel resumed hog-kill operations on

a limited basis. The future of the strike is on the line. Calling on housewives to "cram your Spam" is a diversion from the urgent need to *shut the Austin plant down!* NRFAC is pushing the consumer boycott precisely in order to avoid the hard political fight with the Democrats and AFL-CIO bureaucrats which real solidarity in action would mean—bringing out their locals by the hundreds and thousands to build picket lines at

Hormel that nobody dares cross!

On February 14, at one of the P-9 nightly strike meetings attended by hundreds of strikers, Chicago transit militant Kevin Quirk called for the labor mobilization that is urgently needed in Austin:

"The *New York Times* had an editorial today and it was entitled 'The Strike That Failed.' The bosses are always telling us about the strikes that failed or the gods that failed or the labor movement that has failed. Well, we know that's bull, because we're not going to lose. But in order to win, contingents of trade unionists must flood into Austin from all over the Midwest, from Chicago, from the Twin Cities, from all over the farm belt and all over the country, to build mass picket lines that will stop the scabs, drive out the Guard and shut down Hormel!"

Strikers gave a standing ovation to this call for action—they know in their guts that the Austin plant is the key to victory. Last Friday, Governor Perpich removed the Guard, figuring that with all the legal injunctions to hamstringing the union, scab "replacement workers" could continue to drive into Hormel's. We say no! *P-9's fight is our fight! Labor must go all out to win the Hormel strike!*

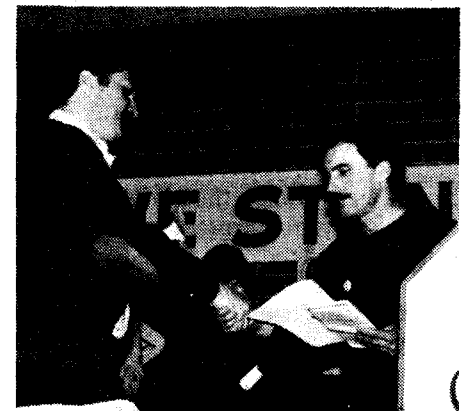
### Defend P-9 Against the Labor Traitors!

The sharp class battle in Austin has led the sellout labor bureaucracy to show its true color—bosses' yellow. It is a threat to the cozy "solidarity" between the capitalists and their "labor lieutenants." Labor reporter William Serrin

recently noted that the P-9 strike has polarized the AFL-CIO (*New York Times*, 15 February):

"Some labor authorities said a key to the bitterness that exists is that the strikers' strategy of confrontation would, if successful, demonstrate that the parent union's tactics, of accepting concessions regarded as necessary and of maintaining essentially cooperative relationships with companies, are incorrect."

A P-9 victory would lead workers in other unions who've been hit hard by givebacks to the same conclusion, from Eastern Airlines workers subjected to massive layoffs and wage cuts, to steel workers currently on national strike against can manufacturers, to *Chicago Tribune* strikers, Teamster cannery workers in Watsonville, California and



Chicago transit militant presents ATU Local 241 strike donation to P-9 president Jim Guyette (left) at rally, February 14.

WV Photo

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UFCW meatpackers all over the Midwest.

At a February 24 meeting of the International Typographers Union Local 21 in the San Francisco Bay Area, where Hormel strikers appealed for support, a motion was passed donating funds to P-9 and requesting ITU locals in Minnesota to "mobilize their members to help build mass picketing at the Austin Hormel plant to shut it down tight, drive out the National Guard and win the strike." But when a motion was put forward in warehouse Local 6 of the ILWU, local president Al Lannon, a favorite "progressive" union official of Bay Area fake-leftists, went into a tirade against the Hormel strikers that came straight out of Kirkland's book—it was "mass suicide," the strike was "finished," etc.—and tabled the motion.

The AFL-CIO leaders—the bosses' labor cops—have been working overtime to isolate and break P-9. In his efforts to break the strike, UFCW International president William Wynn has done everything but march a goon squad into the Austin Labor Center to take over P-9—and now he's threatening to do just that! At the AFL-CIO's Executive Council meeting Wynn has been sounding out support among the crusty labor fakers for a move to place P-9 in receivership and end the strike. Kirkland himself rushed to defend his protégé (and possible successor as AFL-CIO chief), denouncing the strike as "a story of inexperienced, misguided leadership and false prophets." Machinist president William Winpisinger, a Harringtonite "Democratic Socialist," joined the Kirkland/Wynn assault, just as he ordered the Machinists to cross PATCO's picket lines.

Union members fed up with this bureaucratic treachery have come to Austin from all over the Midwest to bring food and money and help man picket lines. On February 15 some 3,000 workers from across the country flocked to the city for a march and rally called by National Rank and File Against Concessions in support of P-9 at the Austin High School. The spirited crowd included busloads of iron miners from the Mesabi Range, auto workers, steel workers, building tradesmen, and a contingent of UFCW Local 431 members from Ottumwa, whose presence repeatedly sparked chanting by other workers of "431! 431!" Strikers and their supporters eagerly reached for copies of *Workers Vanguard* being distributed by Spartacist League supporters, with the headline "Hormel: Mobilize Labor—Drive Out the National Guard!"

At the rally, short greetings were given by workers honoring P-9 picket lines in Ottumwa and Fremont, Nebraska. There were empty "solidarity" speeches by a host of local officials—not one NRFAC union officer, many of whom lead large industrial union locals,



Three thousand unionists rally in Austin, February 15. "Boycotts" won't do it—For mass labor action to shut down Hormel!

pledged to call out *his local* and put it where it counts, on the P-9 line. Only one, Steelworkers Local 1397 president Ron Weisen, even addressed the massive scabbing and called for P-9 "to take over that plant." Closer to home, however, Weisen's program for steel workers facing plant closings and givebacks has been to join the bosses' chorus of racist, anti-Japanese protectionism. Near the end of the rally, NRFAC honcho Marsha Mickens, president of a bakery workers local in Detroit, undercut sentiment for direct mass labor action, dismissing the scabbing as unimportant and counterposing a consumer boycott to militant action: "No matter who is in there scabbing... it doesn't matter if nobody's buying the products." Like hell it doesn't matter—getting those scabs out is key to winning the strike!

#### Which Side Are You On?

P-9's fight has opened a chasm between the AFL-CIO tops' shameless strikebreaking and the enthusiastic response of workers in unions across the country to some old-fashioned class struggle. NRFAC and a host of fake-socialists are doing their utmost to paper over this gulf. In fact, NRFAC leaders have privately tried to get P-9 to bow to Perpich's "fact-finder" and call off their strike. In order to win in Austin there must be a hard, political fight against the pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucracy. But this "Rank and File" outfit, which excludes the unemployed and unorganized from membership, was founded on the explicit promise *not* to criticize their international unions' misleaders! For NRFAC—which apparently stands for "No Real Fight Against Concessions"—solidarity is just a theme for weekend speechifying.

The P-9 strikers galvanized meat-

packers with the tactic of roving pickets, and mass picketing shut down the Austin plant until the Guard was moved in. But the strike leadership has become paralyzed by their strategy of liberal pacifism, while Rogers organizes "civil disobedience" which can only tie up the strike in a futile contest on the capitalist state's own ground. The bosses' press echoes Hormel's slanders of "violence" by the strikers. It's the *company* which is using violence against the strikers, who are only defending their livelihoods. Labor has to play hardball to win: a massive show of force by the union and its allies would send the cops and scabs packing, and then P-9 can "negotiate" a peaceful settlement from *inside* the plant.

To win the Hormel strike, this key labor battle must be fought *politically*. The strike has already forced phony DFL "friends of labor" to show their true colors. In a perceptive letter to the *Austin Herald*, 16 February, a P-9 member nails the AFL-CIO tops for their subordination to the racist, strike-breaking Democratic Party:

"The unorganized and confused state of the labor movement is not an accident. The labor movement is where it is today because certain people led it there. Rather than leading a drive to organize the south and Puerto Rico, these men are, in the wake of Reagan's political plan, trying to put together a team that can drive down the field for a rebuilt Democratic Party."

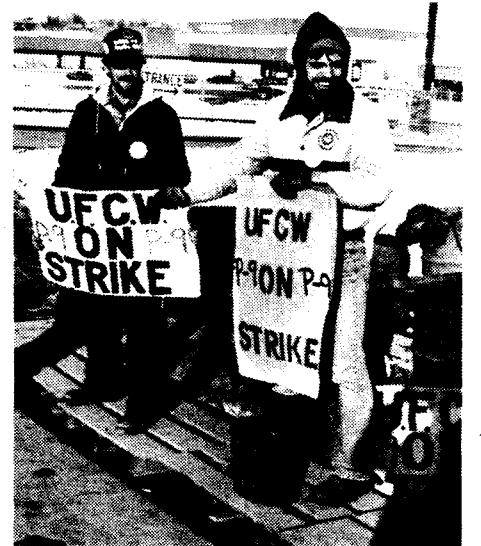
The AFL-CIO bureaucracy's loyalty to American capitalism is expressed not only in the *billions* it has handed over in "concessions" every time the bosses plead poverty, but above all in their ties to the Democratic Party. Shaken by Reagan's destruction of PATCO and mass firing of 11,000 air controllers, Kirkland & Co. went all out... to drum up votes for loser Democrat Mondale in 1984. But American workers don't need a repeat of the Carter/Mondale administration that slapped Taft-Hartley injunctions on the 1977-78 coal strike. They need a workers party to fight for a workers government. And that means confronting all the central issues of the class struggle in America, particularly racial oppression. Hormel workers should recall that it was the packing-house workers' willingness to break the color bar and organize black workers (25,000 out of a total membership of 200,000 in 1917) that first laid the basis for organization of the industry.

Far from seeking to build a class-struggle leadership to oust the present misleaders of American labor, various left groups active around the Hormel strike are doing all they can to avoid angering Kirkland & Co. The SWP's Andrew Pulley (probably the only *scab* ever to run for U.S. president as the candidate of a "socialist" organization) carefully notes that in their "strike support" work "we were not joining the internal fight provoked by Wynn in the UFCW" (*Militant*, 21 February). But with the international union tops viciously attacking the P-9 leadership, *it is impossible to support this crucial*

strike without confronting the treachery of the UFCW and AFL-CIO fat cats.

Then there is the *Bulletin* of David North's Workers League (WL). For years, this bunch pleaded with reactionary AFL-CIO chief George Meany to form a "labor party," and today they similarly try to channel the P-9 fight into pressuring the pro-company union tops. When UFCW president William Wynn refuses to sanction roving pickets and calls the strike "mass suicide," the *Bulletin* calls on Wynn to shut down the meatpacking industry. When Minnesota AFL-CIO chief Dan Gustafson scandalously supports Perpich's mobilization of the National Guard against the Hormel strikers, the WL pleads with him to organize a "general strike" against the Guard's presence in Austin! North's Workers League, which only recently broke with his long-time mentor Gerry Healy after a decade of being on the take from Libyan dictator Qaddafi, cannot see beyond acting as a pressure group on the union bureaucracy. And P-9 strikers can imagine the kind of "labor" party Lane Kirkland would create; William Wynn would be appointed "strike strategist!"

One self-proclaimed socialist organization has openly sided with Wynn, however—the reformist Communist Party. An article on the Hormel strike in the CP's 6 February *Daily World* reads like a request for a room reservation at the Bal Harbour Sheraton for next year's AFL-CIO Executive Council: "The local leadership's attacks on the leadership of the UFCW has played into



Roving P-9 pickets outside Hormel plant in Ottumwa, Iowa.

the hands of the corporation's union-busting strategy and will be used to split and divide other locals and used as ammunition against the union in organizing drives.... In addition, unity is necessary to compel Hormel to agree to a decent agreement addressing the workers' concerns... this unity includes Local P-9, the international union, the state and national AFL-CIO and Governor Perpich!!

The CP rejects NRFAC as "ultraleft"; most of the reformist left hails this grouping of local bureaucrats as the new vanguard of American labor. In contrast to these pseudo-socialist outfits, the Spartacist League is fighting to forge a *class-struggle* opposition in the unions. Particularly in Minnesota, the only state to vote Democratic in '84, you can't build a fighting labor movement without a policy of independence from even the most liberal capitalist politicians. And to win a hard-fought strike like the present battle at Hormel's means taking on the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy down the line. That's a tall order, but already the fight in Austin has stirred up the ranks of American labor like nothing since the 1977-78 coal strike.

The bosses and their agents in the union movement are fighting with no holds barred. If the strikers and their supporters translate their determination into an audacious program to escalate the strike, they can mobilize millions of American workers. As the fate of the Hormel strike hangs in the balance, the eyes of labor are riveted on Austin. ■

## Oscar Mayer Workers for P-9

MADISON, Wisconsin—Many packinghouse workers, members of UFCW Local 538, proudly wear P-9 buttons as they enter the Oscar Mayer meatpacking plant and corporate headquarters here. They know what the stakes are in the battle of their Austin, Minnesota Local P-9 union brothers and sisters against Hormel's. So it's not surprising that recent issues of *WV*, headlined "Shut Down Hormel!" and "Hormel: Mobilize Labor—Drive Out National Guard!" were a big hit. One hundred nine issues of *WV* were sold at the Oscar Mayer plant and a local union meeting by Madison Spartacus Youth League members and University of Wisconsin students.

Last winter, Madison workers honored roving pickets from the Sherman, Texas Oscar Mayer plant on strike against a giveback contract. Local 538 members stayed out for

two days, until local president Harry Acker ordered workers to cross the picket lines (which he called "unguided missiles") or expect no union defense for anyone who was fired. This sabotage set up the Madison Oscar Mayer workers for a later company assault, when wages were slashed from \$10.69 to \$8.25 per hour. As in Austin, the UFCW International traitors and their local toadies are widely reviled. One woman worker who bought *WV* told her husband, also an Oscar Mayer worker, "It's a commie paper, it'll drive Harry [Acker] crazy."

For Madison students who have been studying the SL/SYL's Trotskyist program and participating in campus demonstrations, taking *WV* and its program to win the Hormel strike to Oscar Mayer workers has been a chance to take part in the fight for working-class power.



# WORKERS VANGUARD

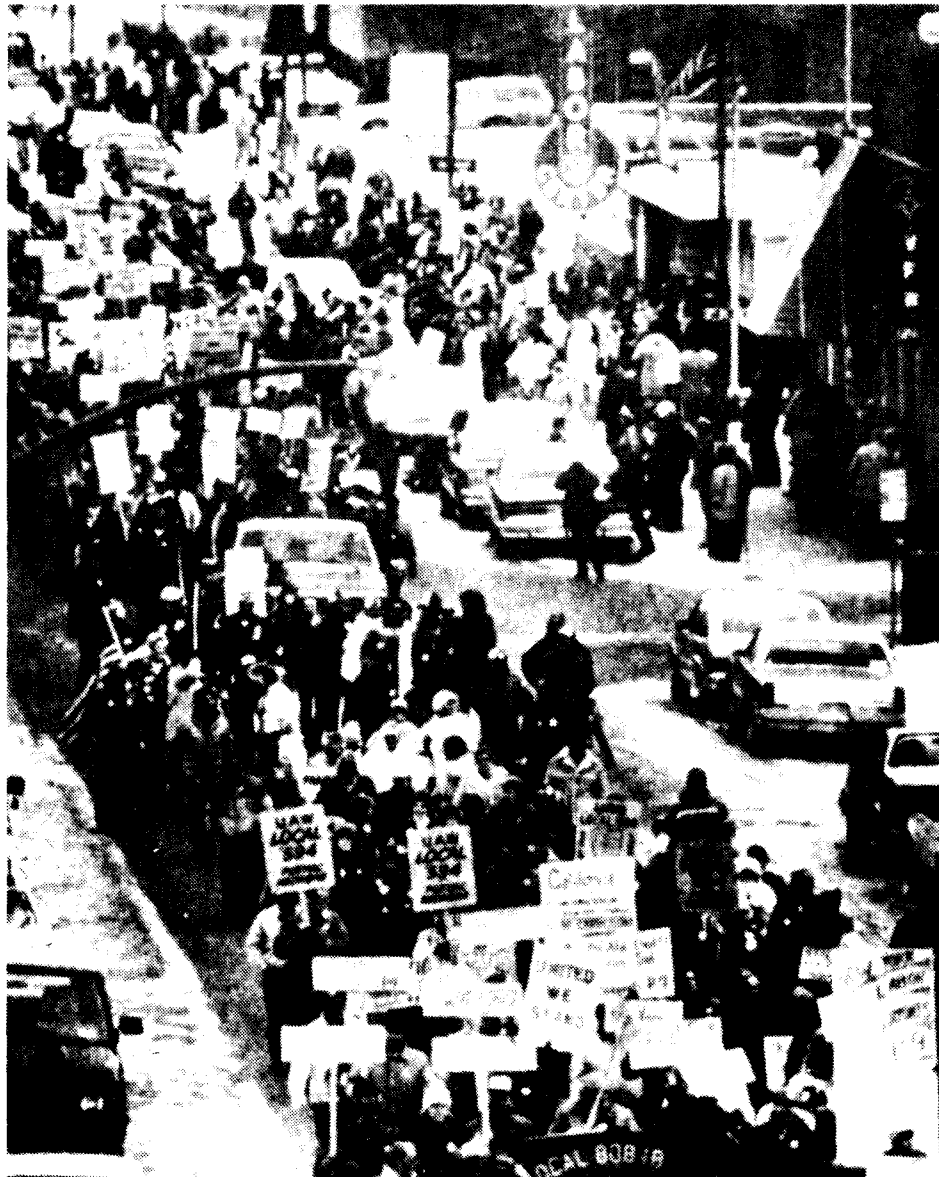
## AFL-CIO Chiefs Scab on Meatpackers

# Hormel Strike: A Fight For All Labor!

### Shut It Down!

AUSTIN, Minnesota—The determined fight of striking meatpackers here against the union-busting takeback drive by Geo. A. Hormel & Co. has inspired working people across the country. For more than six months the thousand strikers have held out against a hard-nosed company, its cops and courts. They're hanging tough in the face of pressure from a liberal Democratic governor who called out the National Guard. They've refused to knuckle under to arbitrators, mediators, "fact-finders" and every other ploy the bosses have thrown at them. Instead, Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) has revived class-struggle tactics from labor's arsenal. Roving pickets have pulled out hundreds of fellow Hormel workers to support the Austin strike. Today when many workers are fed up and willing to wage hard bitter strikes to stop more givebacks, P-9 has become a beacon for every union militant who wants to *fight to defeat* the war on labor in Reagan's America.

But while the Hormel strikers courageously faced an army of National Guard scabherders with three-foot clubs in the frozen eleven degree below zero Minnesota winter, the potbellied labor fakers of the AFL-CIO Executive Council were soaking up the sun around the pool in Bal Harbour, Florida, condemning "rogue" locals and worrying whether they would be hauled onto the carpet by Reagan's Organized Crime Commission. AFL-CIO chief Kirkland arrogantly *refused* to let P-9 president Jim Guyette and union consultant Ray Rogers speak to the council asking for support, while UFCW International



Austin, Minnesota, February 15: thousands of unionists from Midwest march in solidarity with Hormel strike.

traitors declared the strike is a "colossal failure"! What's a colossal failure is the labor traitors' whole giveback policy—and their backstabbing of the Hormel

strike is the shame of the labor movement. The P-9 meatpackers' heroic fight has sharply posed the question of the old miners' song: Which side are you on?

## No More PATCOs! Victory to P-9!

*At a meeting of Hormel strikers in Austin, Minnesota February 14, Chicago transit worker Kevin Quirk spoke to the crowd of 400 Local P-9 union members and their families. Brother Quirk concluded his remarks, to enthusiastic applause:*

The importance of this fight in Austin is this. In Reagan's America, they can bust the strike of Chicano workers in Morenci, Arizona against Phelps Dodge. They can bust a black workers strike like the one against Hess Oil in St.

Croix, Virgin Islands. And Reagan can attack black workers in Chicago. And even the attacks against PATCO were carried out with the veneer that these were government workers and national security was challenged. And he felt he could do it with impunity because these people supposedly didn't count. But now it's come to this. They're going after a group of mostly white workers right in Middle America, who thought they had a corner on the American dream. And they want to drive you into the ground just like everyone else.

Everybody knows that this union-busting started when Reagan got PATCO. But it's the DFL [Democratic] governor Perpich who's doing the strikebreaking today, every bit as viciously as Reagan. He's the one who has sent the Guard in to break your strike. Once again, it's going to take thousands of unionists streaming into Austin to drive out the strikebreaking National Guard. Shut down Hormel! Build massive picket lines that no one dares to cross! Guard out of Austin! Victory to the P-9 strike! ■

The opening shot in the capitalists' current union-busting drive was the smashing of the PATCO air controllers, prepared by Carter/Mondale and carried out by Reagan in 1981. This assault on a highly paid, white "labor elite" was a threat to all labor. But Reagan didn't destroy PATCO by himself: the AFL-CIO bureaucracy's refusal to shut down the airports, their scabherding of Machinists and Teamsters, was crucial. Since then, the bosses have gone after one "vulnerable" sector after another, from Chicano Phelps Dodge copper miners in Arizona to black Hess Oil workers in the Virgin Islands. They figure if they can stick it to white, Middle American workers at Hormel they can shaft anyone. But the shock waves from a *victory* in Austin could lift labor out of this cycle of defeats.

Despite the claims by "Lame" Kirkland and the business press that the strike is "lost," the Hormel strikers have galvanized enormous support in the meatpacking centers of the Midwest. In a real union town like Ottumwa, Iowa "picket lines mean don't cross": 450 Hormel workers of UFCW Local 431 have honored the P-9 roving pickets even though they've been fired for respecting this basic labor tradition. On February 8, some 2,000 workers marched in Ottumwa in support of the strike. A week later, a crowd of 3,000 marched through Austin in solidarity with P-9's fight. And at the FDL packing plant in Dubuque, over 400 workers honored the roving picket lines, shutting the plant down on February 18. Recently, shipments of scab Spam cans from struck can plants in St. Paul have been stopped on the road.

In Austin, the strikers have won substantial community support. Hundreds of high school students have mobilized to picket Hormel, shutting down the corporate headquarters briefly last Friday and sending a delegation to a state AFL-CIO meeting and the governor's office on Monday. One 15-year-old, the son of a striker, said, "We don't want this to be Hormel, Minn., or Scab City." But there is a real danger of Austin becoming Scab City—that the strike will become another Morenci, Arizona where militant copper strikers fought hard but alone, only to see their strike drag on for months and ultimately go down to defeat, as the union tops pushed a useless consumer boycott. At Hormel this impotent strategy is put forward in particular by the National Rank and File Against Concessions (NRFAC), a group of union local officials and their fake-socialist supporters.

A month ago, Hormel opened the Austin plant under the protection of the National Guard, called out by

*continued on page 10*