

## Workers Strike, Contras Splinter, Sandinistas Backpedal

# Nicaragua in Turmoil

### Workers Need Bolshevik Leadership

With truce talks in Managua between the radical-nationalist Sandinista regime and Washington's contra mercenaries once again interrupted, Nicaragua is seething internally. As government negotiators offered increasingly dangerous concessions to the counterrevolutionary chiefs, who keep demanding more, thousands of Sandinista supporters demonstrated with signs demanding "death to the contras." Meanwhile, the Nicaraguan masses stagger under anti-working-class austerity which has slashed their miserable wages. Pushed to the wall, construction workers and mechanics have been on strike for the last two months. And as the Sandinista police crack down, the internal right wing and contra leadership—in collusion with opposition union leaders—are cynically posing as friends of the strikers.

*In the all-sided turmoil engulfing Nicaragua, a Bolshevik party is ever more urgently needed to crystallize the situation along class lines, fighting to complete the revolution by expropriating the bourgeoisie, and to extend it throughout Central America and beyond.*

The March 23 Sapoá cease-fire agreement, implementing the Esquipulas II

Outside U.S. embassy in Managua, Sandinista demonstrators denounce CIA-backed assassins, call for permanent cease-fire to end contra war.



"peace" pact engineered by the Democratic Party and Costa Rican president Arias, is an effort to undermine the limited gains of the Nicaraguan Revolution through negotiations, since Reagan's contras have lost on the battlefield. Contra official and former *La Prensa* editor Pedro Chamorro said as much on returning to Managua: "We came here to achieve at the conference table what we have not been able to achieve in the mountains" (*New York Times*, 17 April). Backed up by the \$48 million voted by the Democrat-controlled Congress, the contras want

all Sandinista military and civilian personnel to abandon the seven "cease-fire" zones! They are also demanding the right to receive "replacement" weapons and ammunition, and that Soviet military aid to the government be cut off.

The Reaganites in Washington are doing their best to sink the truce talks. Under the Sapoá accord, "humanitarian" aid to the contras is supposed to be delivered by a "neutral" party, so the White House picked AID (Agency for International Development), synonymous with CIA counterinsurgency programs from Vietnam to El Salvador.

AID has already resumed air drops to the mercenary camps along the Honduran border with Nicaragua. Even so, the military attempts at overthrowing the Sandinistas may have reached a dead end. "The bottom line is that the Contra war is over," said U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams in an off-the-record interview. "And perhaps the last service I will perform for the Contras will be to hand out green (US immigration) cards" (*Independent* [London], 9 April).

Meanwhile, the contra leadership is

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## Workers, Minorities Must Crush Le Pen in the Streets!

# Behind French Elections: Fascist Threat Mounts

As the results came in from the first round of the French presidential elections on April 24, millions in France and throughout Europe reacted in shock. Jean-Marie Le Pen—candidate of the fascist National Front, paratrooper-torturer from the dirty colonial war in Algeria, the man who reaped international infamy with his declaration that Hitler's gas chambers were only a historical "detail," the sinister inciter of anti-immigrant terror—had won over 14 percent of the vote. From Amiens in the north to Marseille in the south, in many cities, including the Paris region, Le Pen beat the candidates of the "respectable" bourgeois parties and more than dou-

bled the Communists' total, finishing second only to "socialist" François Mitterrand.

The second round, on May 8, pits President Mitterrand against Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, former disciple of de Gaulle. Although he came in ahead of Raymond Barre, the other major bourgeois candidate, the Gaullist Chirac received less than 20 percent. The score of the Communist Party (PCF), historically the party of the militant French proletariat, was catastrophic: 6.8 percent, its lowest since the 1920s, down by two-thirds from the last presidential elections. Mitterrand himself received only 34 percent. So while Chirac is bidding for

Le Pen's racist electorate, Mitterrand is trying to undercut the National Front by promising public spending to improve housing conditions in areas with high unemployment and immigrant population. Mitterrand will likely remain in the Elysée presidential palace, perhaps with a coalition of his Socialist Party (PS) and sections of Barre's UDF.

On May 1, Le Pen held a sinister anti-working-class provocation in Paris. Mixing May Day and Joan of Arc, the fascist leader wanted to review his troops under the watchwords of "fatherland" and "labor." Nearly 25,000 people marched, shouting "France for the French"—code words



French fascist Le Pen.

Gavin Smith

for attacks on immigrants. This fascist demonstration wasn't the massive outpouring that the National Front hoped for after its spectacular electoral breakthrough. Aside from a hard core of some 2,000 fascist thugs sporting

*continued on page 8*

# Geronimo Pratt Back Safe— Free Him Now!

On April 29, Geronimo Pratt finally arrived safely in San Quentin prison, more than two weeks after leaving the Metropolitan Correctional Center in New York. Pratt had come to New York to testify as a defense witness in the trial of Mutulu Shakur and Marilyn Buck (see "Geronimo Pratt Put in Chains," *WV* No. 451, 22 April). Pratt was kept chained and manacled all the way to New York, his very life endangered by being falsely branded a "prison escapee" as he was dragged through several prisons in the Deep South. In a lawsuit brought by the Partisan Defense Committee in New York, the government was forced to admit in court that Pratt is not a "prison escapee," and thereby he won a measure of protection on his return trip.

Even so, Pratt was kept in the federal

prison in El Reno, Oklahoma on the way back for nearly two weeks and subjected to a grueling 36-hour non-stop final leg from there. At El Reno, he was allowed into the general prison population for the first time in over a month, and then *again* placed in solitary confinement for the last five days of his stay. Upon learning that Pratt was back in "the hole," the PDC called news reporters and civil rights organizations urging them to call the prison to protest this latest abuse.

Until El Reno officials threw Pratt into solitary they treated him no better, and no worse, than other inmates—i.e., hideously! And that customarily abusive treatment of prisoners is getting worse. Reaganite privatization has given birth to private prisoner transport companies such as Interstate Extraditions, Inc. (IE), which turns a neat profit



WV Photo  
**Geronimo Pratt, America's foremost class-war prisoner.**

transporting prisoners and suspects not convicted of any crimes in a manner similar to the brutal way Pratt was brought to New York. IE packs prisoners wearing leg irons and handcuffs attached to a "belly chain" into a "stretch van" which drives cross-country. The van meanders to drop off and pick up new "passengers." There are no stops for sleep and prisoners are let out only for brief bathroom stops every three or four hours. Food is brought in three times a day and the tightly packed prisoners are denied access to showers or change of clothes.

American prisons are filthy, overcrowded, degrading and deadly dangerous. The largely black and Hispanic prison inmates constantly face the sadistic caprices of their racist jailers. This country's capitalist rulers' only answer to the swelling prison ranks is the speedup on death row. Even the minimal human rights permitted are rapidly diminishing. The Reagan Supreme Court, which last year endorsed the Jim Crow death penalty, is now threatening to bolster the wardens' censorship power over inmates' reading materials.

For those like Pratt who challenge this barbaric system, prison hell is even ten degrees hotter. The federal institutions at Lexington, Kentucky and Marion, Illinois have pilot projects designed for political opponents. For instance, women prisoners at Lexington are confined to subterranean cells under glaring bright lights 23 hours a day and kept under constant surveillance by TV camera. They are subjected to high-tech barbarism using "Clockwork Orange" behavior modification methods—including sensory deprivation. Officials restrict them to one 15-minute phone call with their lawyer each

week and one family visit per month. According to Susan Rosenberg, who describes herself as an anti-imperialist political prisoner, Lexington officials told her, "The only way you can get out is if you change your associations and affiliations."

The government hellhound is still on Geronimo Pratt's case. For 18 years Pratt has fought for his freedom and to expose the bloody crimes of COINTELPRO which murdered 38 of his Panther comrades and keeps him behind bars. The PDC learned from prison officials that Pratt's legal papers, seized more than one month earlier, had not been forwarded under federal seal as promised. Instead they were sent through the mails, and "lost"—just like the FBI "lost" the wiretap logs which prove that Pratt was 400 miles away from the site of the murder for which he was framed. Pratt's papers, the product of years of research on COINTELPRO, are vital to his exposure of the FBI vendetta against him. And this sleight of hand occurred as the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals threatens to throw out his appeal on a legal technicality.

Congressman Ronald Dellums has introduced a resolution calling for a Congressional investigation of COINTELPRO and the frame-up of Geronimo Pratt. The Dellums resolution also calls on the California governor and parole board to "take actions within their power to bring about the immediate release from prison of Elmer 'Geronimo' Pratt." The 1976 Senate Church Committee hearings exposed some of the crimes of COINTELPRO—but left its gangsters unpunished and its victims, like Pratt, behind bars. Geronimo needs your help now! Send your letters to Congressman Peter W. Rodino, Jr., Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, 2137 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515, and to your local Congressman urging them to support House Resolution No. 413.

Geronimo Pratt is America's foremost class-war prisoner. His freedom is vital to all who fight against racist capitalist oppression. It is now more urgent than ever for all leftists, trade unionists and civil rights activists to unite in the fight for Geronimo Pratt's freedom. As Geronimo wrote, "I earnestly call on everyone who actively supports my efforts to be free to come together, fight together and rally together to see justice done." Freedom now for Geronimo Pratt!

\* \* \*

Join our struggle to free Geronimo Pratt and all class-war prisoners. Become a sustaining contributor to the PDC. Send a donation of \$5 or more and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send \$1 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■



**TROTSKY**

## Return to Lenin's International!

*Ignace Reiss (Poretzky) was a veteran Polish-Jewish Communist who served in Soviet intelligence for 15 years, first in the Fourth Department of the Red Army, then for the Comintern supplying weapons to Republican Spain. Following the bloody Moscow purge trials in 1936 and in the face of Stalin's counterrevolutionary treachery in Spain, Reiss publicly broke with the Stalin regime and declared for Trotsky's Fourth International in the letter to the*

*Soviet CP Central Committee excerpted below. (See "Honor Ignace Reiss," page 7.) His body was found a few weeks later by a roadside in Switzerland. Stalin's assassins had rewarded Reiss for his loyalty to the world revolution with a bullet to the head.*

The day when international socialism will judge the crimes committed in the past ten years is not far off. Nothing will be forgotten and nothing will be forgiven. History is harsh....

The working class must defeat Stalin and Stalinism so that the U.S.S.R. and the international workers' movement do not succumb to fascism and counter-revolution. This mixture of the worst of opportunism, devoid of principles, and of lies and blood threatens to poison the world and the last forces of the working class.

What is needed today is a fight without mercy against Stalinism! The class struggle and not the popular front, workers' intervention in the Spanish revolution as opposed to the action of committees.

Down with the lie of socialism in one country! Return to Lenin's international! Neither the Second nor the Third International can carry out this historical mission. Corrupt and dislocated, all they can do is to prevent the working class from fighting. They can only be the policemen at the service of the bourgeoisie....

I cannot stand it any longer. I take my freedom of action. I return to Lenin, to his doctrine, to his acts.

I intend to devote my feeble forces to the cause of Lenin. I want to continue the fight, for only our victory—that of the proletarian revolution—will free humanity of capitalism and the U.S.S.R. of Stalinism.

Forward to new struggles! For the Fourth International!

—Ignace Reiss, "To the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R." (July 1937)



**LENIN**

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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**FBI Continues to Hound America's  
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"I earnestly call on everyone who actively supports my efforts to be free to come together, fight together and rally together to see justice done."

—Geronimo  
MCC-NY  
4/7/88

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

## In Memory of a Yugoslav Communist

We print below a letter from a sympathizer in Boston.

February 21, 1988

Dear WV,

Your recent articles on Yugoslavia have been excellent and, as such, really disturbing to me. I have in mind to write a letter corroborating your point of view with my own personal observations. I have wanted to combine that letter with a memorial to my father, who died two years ago. My father, Ernest Weissmann, was a Yugoslav Communist and an internationalist for 70 years; starting when he was 12 in 1915 and going to his grave with a red star over his ashes. He knew the world before and after there was a Russian Revolution. He immediately recognized the voice of Lenin in the program of the international Spartacist tendency, and because of that he was won to Trotsky, as he came to understand Trotsky's program, as expressed by the iSt.

As his son, I had the privilege of knowing my father as a fighter and human being. He is gone now forever from the human stage, so it is up to me to convey to you—the fighters of this generation—fraternal greetings from one who fought for Communism his whole life, bowing to no enemy and seeking no compromise for himself, and who finally fell only before death, believing Trotsky was right.

He was a real Communist. He said—this man born to a poor, intellectual Jewish family in the anti-Semitic Austro-Hungarian Empire, this man who worked with Le Corbusier in the 1920s and helped introduce modern architecture to Yugoslavia—that the greatest satisfaction of his life was that when everyone said that it could not be done, that it was impossible to do, he and a small band of others fought for a revolution in Yugoslavia and won. (And he did understand the deep but incomplete nature of that victory in a visceral way.)

I once asked him if he was afraid of dying; he was in his late 70s, and he said, "No. My only regret is that I won't live to see the world revolution." I will never forget when he ended an argument with me about the Popular Front in France in 1936—which he had participated in—by saying, "You know, you're right." And I will never forget the day he looked up at me and said, some 50 years after the events of 1919, 1921 and 1923: "I still say, what we could have showed them if we'd won in Germany."

He said, a year before he died, that if he was 20 years younger (60) he would still be fighting and that the thing he felt worst about was leaving this world, with its terrible trials ahead, to the young. He never said it could be easy but he said the iSt could do it. My father was only one man but he represented a lifetime of dedication to the Communist movement, and his adoption of the Trotskyist program represents, in a small way, the power of the Trotskyist call for proletarian political revolution in defense of the gains already won in the overturning of capitalist property forms, and the insistence on the necessity of defending those gains through international revolution.

I'll never forget the conversation my father and I were having with two politically conscious workers in Yugoslavia, at least one of them a Party member, from the local shipyard. One of the men was wondering why the revolutionary ideals were being lost in one generation. My father started quoting Trotsky on the origin of the bureaucracy being scarcity=lines=policemen to keep or-

der. I guess he figured that being 79, he didn't have too much to lose. What was even more amazing was that these guys were saying, "That's exactly it, that's exactly right. Trotsky's right." Later in the conversation one of the guys turned to my father and said, "Your son, he's a communist, isn't he?" Then he turned to me and said, "It's hard to be a communist in America. It's easier here." Some people know a victory when they see one. Some people know there are gains to defend. These people will find the road to Trotskyism if the iSt can find the road to them.

My father was only loosely, and always somewhat uncomfortably, associated with the Yugoslav Stalinist bureaucracy once it settled into power, and was disgusted with the cynicism, wastefulness, anti-Semitism of some, and personal self-seeking of much of that bureaucracy. Still, he was a kind of maverick member of the bureaucracy, in that he was proud of the gains of the revolution and wanted to defend them and saw no decisive alternative way.

He had a history. He was not unrecognized in Yugoslavia. He was awarded the Order of Tito (which, I believe, is Yugoslavia's highest honor) for his work in the Yugoslav Communist Party in the two decades before World War II. The party was, of course, illegal, the work clandestine, and every day meant potential torture, imprisonment or death; a fate that befell many of my father's comrades and some of his friends. The Nazis knew my father well enough to have him on their list to be executed when they invaded the country. Among other things, he had written an article in the '30s exposing Hitler's highway building as the construction of invasion routes. The Order of Tito was also awarded for the work he did in the United States during and immediately after the war and for his contributions in the area of regional planning in postwar Yugoslavia.



Ernest Weissmann

Lujo Weissman

RRA (including some Americans), I believe, helped make the difference between life and death for many people in Eastern Europe in the years immediately following WW II. He once told me, "I never broke the rules; I just made sure they were followed." After his death, while looking through his papers, I came across a clipping from the *New York Times*, in which some Senator or Congressman was demanding to know how these locomotives that UNRRA had earmarked for Chiang Kai-shek had ended up in the hands of Marshal Tito. I guess Chiang Kai-shek had already gotten his quota for that year.

My father used to recite with glee the story of how he informed the partisan delegation in the U.S. that the U.S. Army was selling all these surplus jeeps dirt cheap in Italy. Yugoslavia had nothing at the time. I don't remember now if my father just informed the Yugoslavs or also told them to request UNRRA



Belgrade, December 1946: Locomotives obtained by Yugoslavia from UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration were vital to rehabilitate transport.

He was in the U.S. when the war broke out. This was one of his greatest regrets because it meant that he could not fight the fascists, arms in hand. Still, he did his part. Working in UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration), he battled the American component, to make sure that the matériel such as locomotives, supplies for basic industry, etc., got to Eastern Europe. This was, in my eyes, perhaps his greatest service to the workers of the world. His actions, along with other people of similar sympathies in UN-

dollars quickly, but I do know that the partisans bought the jeeps, marched a detachment of drivers over the border and drove all this surplus equipment back into Yugoslavia.

So I have seen, in Yugoslavia, evidence of the reality of the power of the Trotskyist program to address the needs of the proletariat in the degenerated and deformed workers states and its power to win a section of the bureaucracy to a program of proletarian political revolution based on the defense of socialized property forms. (I have also heard

Western-style social democracy openly advocated by one bureaucrat.) These are just individual stories, but about people who represent larger social forces, in just the same way each and every one of you is not only an individual but stands as a marker for the future mass party of a politically conscious working class. The sum of every fighter is the organization, and each fighter is a part of the experience and memory of a working class that can and is willing to take power in its own name.

It is this—that your work and your organization, to paraphrase Lenin, stands as the honor, the conscience and the power of the working class—that my father recognized. And it was the power of your actions and the power your program is capable of mobilizing, that finally at the end of his life, when he was deciding what was really important, won this man—whose life's work in the Communist movement amounted to something—away from fiddling with workers self-management as a poor substitute for workers democracy and away from a kind of economic autarky as an answer to the Western bankers who he hated, and back to the perspective that an international revolution could be won. He was not afraid at the end of his life to pick up that banner once again, once he was convinced that there was an organization that really understood what Marxism is supposed to be about and had the backbone to really fight for it.

I'd like to share with you one more story about my father. I came to the Spartacist League out of the orbit of Peter Sollenberger's Revolutionary Workers League (RWL). I broke with the RWL because I wouldn't cross a picket line they were crossing; because I wanted to fight the Klan and defend the Soviet Union, which they wouldn't. My father despised Peter Sollenberger and the RWL. When I asked him in later years what he thought of Peter he said, "I never liked that Peter for two reasons. First, he always knew the answer. He never had to think about anything and he seemed to always have to impress me with how much he knew. And I felt that he hated the Soviet Union." He pinned the Sollenbergerites to the wall in three sentences.

When I asked him at the very end of his life what he thought of the SL he said, "I think if any group will make a revolution it will be this one." I asked him why he thought that way. He said, "From the first time I saw their newspaper I knew this was a serious organization. But what really won me was Afghanistan. Because when I saw what this group had to say about Afghanistan I knew that this was a group that knew how to defend what has already been won."

One day, when we've won it all, when we can truly spare the next generation from the brutality of being born into a capitalist world, and can offer them beauty instead of hope, I would like to see a park for the children of humanity my father loved so much; and by his name, alongside of which he would insist be written "only one among many," I would like to see the words I laid on his casket at his cremation—along with three California poppies—the words of the *Internationale* and these from the pre-WWI German Social Democracy: "Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer/You'll find the red flag flying here." In this way the children of freedom will know the nature of the men and women who brought them to that place of joy.

Fraternally,  
Gordon Weissmann

# Madison: 700 March Against Frat Rats

## Stop the Attacks on Minority Students!

MADISON—On April 18 an integrated march of over 700 students protested a new wave of racist attacks here. Chanting "We've got to beat back the racist attacks!" the protesters marched from the University of Wisconsin Library Mall down Langdon Street, Madison's "fraternity row" and a stronghold of racist bigots. The Spartacus Youth Club built a militant contingent for the demonstration, leading chants and carrying placards stressing the need for a mobilization of students and labor to stop the racist attacks.

On April 25 a town meeting called by the liberal Minority Coalition demanded that "city, county and University officials... provide the leadership in combatting racism." In a grotesque farce, the program included speeches by the Dane County district attorney, the sheriff, and campus security chief Ralph Hansen—the chief enforcers of racist cop repression on and off campus. Recently a Hispanic youth was beaten by the police, called a "crazy spic" and found dead the next morning in a Madison jail cell. An arsonist, who set fire to a wooden statue of a black woman and child on Madison's south side, was discovered to be a former city cop who is also charged with spray-painting racist epithets around town. And Hansen's campus bullies get off on bashing minorities and leftist protesters—one cop gave a young woman student a black eye at an anti-CIA protest, another stopped a black youth, pulled a gun and said, "Okay n---r, why don't you run?"

As the Spartacus Youth Club spokesman stated at the meeting, "the cops, the courts, the administration are part of the capitalist state, they're on the other side." Obscenely, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) officially endorsed this town meeting whose purpose was to preach reliance on the police. These pseudo-socialists say cops—whose job is to break strikes and bust heads on behalf of racist "law and order"—are "workers." The ISO's *Socialist Worker* has hailed police "strikes" (Memphis 1978) and praised black cops for "step[ping] forward in the fight against racism" (Cincinnati 1979). While militant youth in the South African townships have been meting out retribution to the front men for the apartheid regime, the January *Socialist Worker* came out in support of a strike by black cops for higher wages!



Madison, April 18: Spartacus Youth Club joined large, integrated demonstration to protest racist attacks.

Against liberal and reformist illusions, the Spartacus Youth Club has put forward a class-struggle strategy to stop racist attacks. We reprint below a leaflet issued by the Madison SYC on April 23.

Racist attacks in Madison must be stopped! On April 8 white fraternity punks from Illinois, brought in by their Madison Acacia "brothers," terrorized African studies classes during midterms, assaulting a professor in one class and setting off stink bombs in another. Last week, a black woman student was jumped and choked by a 45-year-old thug, Gordon Chapman, who repeatedly shouted, "I want to kill all the n---s." Fortunately, the young woman has a black belt in karate. She was able to defend herself and taught this racist scum a lesson by throwing him to the ground and kicking him in the stomach. When she reported the assault, the cops warned her not to press charges—they ruled out racism as a motive and insisted the bully bigot was just "mentally ill" and forgot to take his pills that day! As the victim stated, "He's not crazy; he just doesn't like black people... What if it had been some other black woman who wasn't able to protect herself?" (*Capital Times*, 13 April).

On February 11, 23-year-old Rene Campos, a Hispanic student, was found dead in the Dane County Jail. Enough!

"I didn't come to UW to die for my B.A." read one woman's placard at the large, integrated protest march on April 18th. Students and labor must mobilize in militant action now, before anyone else gets hurt or killed. In racist America, where the capitalist rulers have been waging a class war against the working class and minorities, it's become "respectable" to spew racist filth, and emboldened scum translate their bigotry into the language of violence. Black students are tired of waiting for action from a university administration that repeatedly alibis racist violence as "an alcohol problem" or counsels moral suasion of Klan-inspired punks to promote "racial awareness"! As one fed-up Black Student Union member said, "If it takes being militant, then let us be militant!"

So, how do we put an end to these racist attacks? What's necessary is a class-struggle program! The working class, under sustained attack from the bosses and the government, has a powerful objective interest in smashing these racist attacks. A fighting alliance of students with organized labor in Madison (e.g., the large AFSCME locals of workers on and off campus) could stop the racist frat rats from ever poking their snouts out of the sewers again. A one-day strike by students, the TAA, teachers, campus workers and other unionists to shut down the university would do more to change the racist climate on campus than a thousand token reforms proposed by the union-busting administration under the "Madison Plan." Part of the reason the Langdon St. thugs, the cops and other racist scum think they can act with impunity is that this university town is kept overwhelmingly white. Blacks are "missing persons" at this university—enrollment is down to a minuscule 1.6 percent! To undercut the race and class bias of

higher education the Spartacus Youth Club fights for open admissions with no tuition and a state-paid stipend for all! Education should be a right, not a privilege! Abolish the administration! For student/teacher/worker control of the university!

Now that anti-racist militants are talking about self-defense, the cops and the administration are working overtime to cool out and derail the protests. People must understand that the capitalist state, its cops, courts, university administrations, and front men are the enemies of leftist students, working people and all the oppressed. At the April 18th march, Eugene Parks, a protest leader and Madison's Affirmative Action officer, denounced "racial terrorism" in Madison...and called on the terrorist FBI to intervene! These are the bloody G-men who conspired in Klan attacks against freedom riders in the civil rights movement, helped plot the KKK/Nazi murder spree in Greensboro, and ran the government's dirty COINTELPRO campaign to murder, frame-up and destroy the Black Panther Party.

There are also a lot of illusions in  
*continued on page 11*



Young Spartacus

Verdell Hale (left), a black belt in karate, defended herself from racist thug. Student demo raised funds for Verdell's mother, Juana Jackson, to join her daughter in Madison.

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# Anti-Soviet Solidarność Perverts Memory of Jewish Martyrs

## Hail Warsaw Ghetto Fighters!

April 19 marked the 45th anniversary of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising against the Nazis. Fighters against racism and oppression around the world honor the memory of these heroic Jewish martyrs. But in Warsaw itself, the uprising was "commemorated" by a disgusting spectacle. While the Stalinist regime of General Jaruzelski staged an official ceremony whose primary purpose was to cement relations with Zionist Israel, Polish Solidarność organized a march on April 17 through what had been the Warsaw Ghetto. With every step they took, these Pilsudski-lovers trampled over the cause the Warsaw Ghetto fighters died for.

In its drive to restore capitalism to Poland, Solidarność openly embraces the vilest traditions of anti-Semitic Polish nationalism: its guiding spirit is the Catholic hierarchy, historic instigator of anti-Semitic pogroms; its banner, the eagle-and-cross of Polish reaction; its hero, Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, fascistic dictator of interwar Poland with its anti-Semitic *numerus clausus*. In December 1981 Solidarność—boosted by Reagan, bankrolled by the CIA, blessed by the Pope—almost achieved its aims with a counterrevolutionary bid for power. That this reactionary, clerical-nationalist outfit in the Polish deformed workers state could posture as the champion of Jewish anti-fascist struggle speaks volumes about the bankruptcy of the Stalinist regime.

The real purpose of Solidarność's rally was not to commemorate the anti-Nazi fighters but to pervert their memory into an attack on the Soviet Union. As the demonstrators unveiled a monument to two leaders of the Jewish Bund in Poland, Henryk Erlich and Viktor Alter, executed by Stalin in 1941, Dr. Marek Edelman, a surviving leader of the Ghetto uprising and now a supporter of Solidarność, called it a "symbol of the shame of inhuman totalitarianism all over the world." Stalin's murder of these two Jewish socialists—and countless other proletarian and anti-fascist militants—was a heinous crime. But to insinuate that this memorial had something to do with honoring the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising? This grotesque display was aimed at tarring the Soviet Union—which liberated Poland and the rest of East Europe from the Nazi jackboot—with the brush of Nazi barbarism. Solidarność leader Lech Walesa even tried to equate the anti-Nazi uprising with his own anti-Communist conspiracy by claiming that "the uprising of the Jewish fighters was perhaps the most Polish of all uprisings."

For years, the Zionists, whose butchery of Palestinian Arabs emulates the Nazi terror, have tried to claim a monopoly on this anti-Nazi uprising. Now Solidarność tries to paint it in the colors of Polish nationalism. Amid all this filthy hypocrisy, the most moving tribute came when several hundred Arab students laid a wreath at the Warsaw Ghetto monument on April 19 and denounced "the fascist methods used by the Zionists against the Palestinian nation." Many of the Warsaw Ghetto fighters were Communists and pro-socialist Zionists who saw their final act as part of the international struggle against Nazi tyranny and looked in particular to the Red Army as their ally and inspiration. In fact, this "most Polish" uprising was contemptuously repudiated at the time by the anti-Communist and anti-Semitic Polish Home Army, which Solidarność right-



Defiant fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto, rounded up by Hitler's savage SS.

Pantheon Books

ly sees as its own nationalist antecedent.

The Warsaw Ghetto uprising was the last heroic chapter of the fighting Jewish proletariat of Poland, whose deeply *internationalist* traditions produced a generation of committed revolutionaries (see "Memoirs of a Revolutionary Jewish Worker," *Spartacist* No. 41-42, Winter 1987-88). These were the traditions of the Poland of Rosa Luxemburg—the Jewish revolutionary who was active in the proletarian movements of Poland, Russia and Germany—the Poland of joint struggle by Jewish and Polish workers against tsarist Black Hundreds pogroms. Even under the Nazi occupation, numerous left-wing and socialist journals continued to be published and distributed within the Ghetto walls; others were smuggled in from the "Aryan side." One among these was *Czerwony Sztandar* (Red Flag), put out by the Jewish Trotskyist militants Shlomo Ehrlich and Stella Muhlstein.

### The Red Flag Flew Over the Warsaw Ghetto

In the framework of their hideous "final solution," the Nazis funneled Jews from all over East Europe into the

Warsaw Ghetto to await their ultimate destruction in death camps like Auschwitz. By the time the final liquidation of the Ghetto was decreed in early 1943, a population of some 500,000 had been reduced to a tenth of that through systematic starvation policies and deportations to the death camps. Militants in the Ghetto organized to meet the final Nazi onslaught with a resistance to the death. Under unspeakably adverse conditions, with little more than their bare hands and homemade petrol bombs as weapons, the Ghetto insurgents struck a blow against the Nazi tyrants within occupied East Europe, keeping the elite of Hitler's shock troops at bay for over a month until the Nazis literally reduced the Ghetto to a pile of rubble. Reuben Ainsztein's *The Warsaw Ghetto Revolt* (1979) and Ber Mark's *Uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto* (1975) provide graphic and well-documented accounts of this epic struggle and the proletarian traditions of East European Jewry which inspired it.

Organizing the resistance at first took the form of a *civil war* within the Ghetto against literally thousands of Jewish collaborators, corrupted or broken under the Nazi jackboot. The Nazi-

imposed Judenrat ("Council of Jewish Elders"), former factory owners turned into managers by their Nazi expropriators, the gangsters and Gestapo agents and the 2,000 Ghetto police had to be rooted out and crushed. With the exception of the Communists, the Ghetto organizations were also split along generational lines. The traditional Jewish organizations, both secular and religious, whose representatives sat on the Judenrat, preached collaboration and resignation in the vain illusion this would spare at least some Jews from the gas chambers and ovens. The fighters were recruited overwhelmingly from the youth, who only in the course of the revolt swept along their parents.

The main resistance group was the Jewish Fighting Organization (ZOB), initiated by "socialist"-Zionists like Hashomer Hatzair and Poale Zion together with the Polish Workers Party (PPR). Stalin had liquidated the Polish Communist Party in 1938, on charges of "Trotskyism," executing most of its leaders. After Hitler invaded Russia, he agreed to reconstitute it as the PPR, though the Stalinists had become discredited among the Polish proletariat, particularly following the Hitler-Stalin pact. The other significant force in the uprising was the Jewish Military Union (ZZW), formed by the right-wing Revisionist-Zionist youth group Betar, whose leader Menachem Begin fled the country in 1939. Begin became one of a very few Jews to join a Home Army unit in Palestine, on his way to becoming an anti-Arab terrorist.

The Jewish insurgents signaled the start of the uprising on April 19 by hoisting Polish, Jewish and red flags over the Ghetto. The arrogant Nazis, under SS Major General Stroop, believing their own *Übermensch* mythology, at first did not put their own units into operation against the Jewish fighters, relying on their Jewish police and Lithuanian and Ukrainian puppet troops. Day after day, despite their overwhelmingly superior firepower, the Nazis and their puppets were routed. On the fifth day, ZOB leader Mordecai Anielewicz wrote: "What we have experienced cannot be described in words. We are aware of one thing only: what has happened has exceeded all our dreams. The Germans twice ran from the ghetto..."

continued on page 6



Solidarność student protest hails fascistic dictator Pilsudski, marches under eagle-and-cross of anti-Semitic Polish nationalism.

Newsweek

# Warsaw Ghetto...

(continued from page 5)

After the first week of the uprising, a PPR report estimated that over 700 Germans—largely crack SS troops—had been killed in the fighting. On May Day, writes Ainsztein, those Ghetto fighters who still survived “held meetings at which they sang the Internationale in a gesture of supreme defiance of the Nazi New Order.”

And who came to the assistance of these isolated and courageous fighters? While the British RAF grotesquely refused to bomb the gas chambers of Auschwitz even as they carried out sorties a few miles away, the Red Army did what it could to assist the Jewish fighters. In response to a radioed appeal from the insurgents, the Soviets ordered bombing raids of Warsaw a day later to hamper the Nazis’ mopping-up operations in the Ghetto. Aside from a handful of courageous Polish liberals, the only organized support the Ghetto insurgents received from the outside came from the PPR and its People’s Guard militia. People’s Guard units on the “Aryan side” carried out a number of military actions in solidarity with the uprising, and the Jewish Communists inside the Ghetto kept Moscow closely informed of events. Notably, the heads of the national PPR and of the Warsaw People’s Guard outside the Ghetto were both Jews.

The nationalist Home Army not only refused to offer any practical or military assistance, but even pocketed most of the small quantity of arms airlifted for the Ghetto insurgents from Britain. One statistic tells the story: the Warsaw Area People’s Guard had some two dozen pistols in the period preceding the uprising, whereas the Warsaw Command of the Home Army had more than a thousand (as well as hundreds of light and heavy machine guns), yet the former volunteered more weapons to the Jewish insurgents. Home Army commander in chief General Rowecki contemptuously dismissed the ZOB as “Jews from various Communist groups.” The Polish nationalists explicitly ruled out any collaboration with Communists—and, in practice, with any Jews. The Bund representative to the Polish government-in-exile in London, Samuel Zygelboim, finally committed suicide in May 1943 in an anguished protest over the lack of assistance to the Polish Jews; he is not honored by Solidarność.

Nor, despite the Zionists’ subsequent attempts to claim the Warsaw Ghetto uprising as their own, were appeals to Western Zionist leaders much more successful. It is a well-documented fact that British and American Zionist leaders refused to campaign openly for allowing free entry to Jewish refugees from the Nazi terror, or for Allied military action against the extermination camps. In a January 1943 appeal to American Jewish leaders for assistance, the Polish Jews bitterly observed: “Brothers! The



Jewish Socialist Bund leader Henryk Erlich addresses May Day march in Warsaw, 1933.

survivors of the Jews in Poland live with the awareness that in the worst days of our history you have given us no aid. Respond. This is our last appeal to you.”

Among the handful of Jewish insurgents who survived, many tried to join the Home Army out of a desire to continue fighting the Nazis. Thousands of Jewish partisans did fight, either individually or in all-Jewish units, alongside the Red Army or in Red partisan units. But the Home Army would have nothing to do with them; Jewish partisan units were even attacked and annihilated by the Home Army. Bor-Komorowski, who replaced Rowecki as head of the Home Army, was openly sympathetic to the fascistic NSZ, the so-called National Armed Forces.

When the Home Army finally moved into action against the Nazis with the 1944 Warsaw uprising, it did so to preempt and prevent the Red Army’s liberation of the city. Even so, a veteran of the pro-Communist Polish People’s Army estimated that some 2,000 Jews—one in every 15 combatants—took part in the 1944 uprising, most by hiding their Jewish identities. For many, the only reward they received for their valor against the Nazis was to be shot in the back by a Polish nationalist once they were revealed to be Jews. And this continued after the war, as thousands of Jewish survivors and refugees returning from the Soviet Union were massacred in pogroms by right-wing nationalists embittered over the Soviet liberation. Among them was one of the leaders of the 1943 Sobibor death camp revolt, Leon Felhendler.

Apologists for Solidarność have devoted endless attention to the abortive 1944 Warsaw uprising, falsely claiming that the advancing Soviet army refused to assist it against the Nazis. And how was this anti-Soviet slander first given currency? According to Ainsztein, by the Polish fascists of the NSZ, who “probably killed more Jews than Germans during the uprising”:

“Many of the Polish Nazis were former officers and as such were given command of Home Army units, where they did their best to intensify anti-Jewish

hatreds by telling their men that the reason why the Red Army had stopped on the eastern bank of the Vistula was because it was commanded by Jews responsible for the Katyn massacre, who now wanted to take revenge on the Poles for the Warsaw ghetto.”

For a fuller treatment, see “The Warsaw Uprising of 1944” (*WV* No. 294, 4 December 1981).

But, Zionist accounts to the contrary, the Polish population was not one anti-Semitic mass. Emmanuel Ringelblum, the noted chronicler of the Warsaw Ghetto, observed in his *Polish-Jewish Relations During the Second World War* (written shortly before his murder by the Nazis in 1944) that while



Polish people greet Red Army in 1945. Six hundred thousand Soviet soldiers died to liberate Poland from Nazi tyranny.

the Polish middle class embraced anti-Semitism “in toto,” this was not the case with the workers, “who had long before the war grasped the class aspect of anti-Semitism, the power-tool of the native bourgeoisie, and during the war they redoubled their efforts to fight anti-Semitism.” Thousands of Jews were hidden, at the risk of death, and Christian workers in Warsaw often raised a signal to warn of Nazi raids into the Ghetto.

## Under the Banner of Internationalism

The legacy of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising lies not with the reactionary nationalists of Solidarność, nor for that matter with the Zionist butchers, nor with the nationalist Stalinists. With its perspective of “socialism in one country,” Stalinism is driven to ape the most reactionary aspects of bourgeois nationalism. Thus in 1968 the Polish Stalinist regime orchestrated an anti-Semitic purge which drove out many of the remaining Jews, including heroic Soviet WW II spy Leopold Trepper.

The Warsaw Ghetto revolt was in essence internationalist, as it could only be, and not simply because the combatants saw themselves as and consciously fought to be the spark for a generalized

uprising throughout occupied Poland. The Jews of East Europe were a people who had no nation, who in the most literal sense found their banner in the red flag of international socialist revolution and their salvation in the October Revolution. Not even the Nazi horror could crush the ideals which had impelled the Jewish proletarians of Poland into the ranks of the revolutionary movement. The Jewish Trotskyists who emblazoned under the masthead of their Ghetto publication, “Workers of All Countries, Unite!”, expressed the proletarian-internationalist program which alone could put an end to the barbarism unleashed by capitalism in its decay. Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, *Czerwony Sztandar* (July 1941) declared:

“The first workers state is fighting for its existence. The fate of the Russian Revolution and, in the most immediate sense, the fate of the international revolution weigh in the balance. The workers of the whole world follow with bated breath the course of the greatest class war in the world, and their hearts and souls are with the Red Army....

“The war of the Soviet Union against Hitler is the war of the international proletariat; it is our war.”

They concluded: “Long live the Red Army! Long live the Russian Revolution! Long live the international revolution!”

Stalin’s nationalist crimes notwithstanding, the Soviet Union’s entry into the war against Nazi Germany excited and inspired the masses of the Warsaw Ghetto, whose most militant elements even ceased working in Nazi slave labor factories inside the Ghetto, to express their solidarity with the Soviet war effort. The 7 June 1942 issue of Hasho-

mer Hatzair’s Ghetto journal, *Der Oifbroi* (Ferment), stated:

“The heroic struggle of the Red Army is inspiring all the peoples oppressed by the Nazis in their struggle for liberation.... The Jewish masses have not yet rid themselves of their distrust of their own fighting capabilities and given up the hope of salvation coming from outside. Such a state of mind must not last at a time when from the fjords of Norway to the suburbs of Paris, from the mountains of Serbia to the factories of Czechoslovakia, the liberation army is consolidating and growing. Within the limited possibilities of the ghettos we must prepare the ground for a revolutionary Jewish deed. From Jewish pain and sufferings there must grow up the strength that together with all the revolutionary forces in Europe and the backing of the Red Army will rise to fight against Nazi slavery.”

The Red Army did liberate Poland from Nazi slavery—as well as from the native pogromists whom Solidarność idolizes—and 600,000 Soviet soldiers died for that cause. Today Poland is still a workers state, albeit so bureaucratically deformed that the Stalinist regime drove the mass of the Polish proletariat into the arms of clericalist reaction more than 30 years after the liquidation of capitalism. Only in a revolutionary-internationalist Poland will the heroic martyrs of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt receive the honor due them. ■

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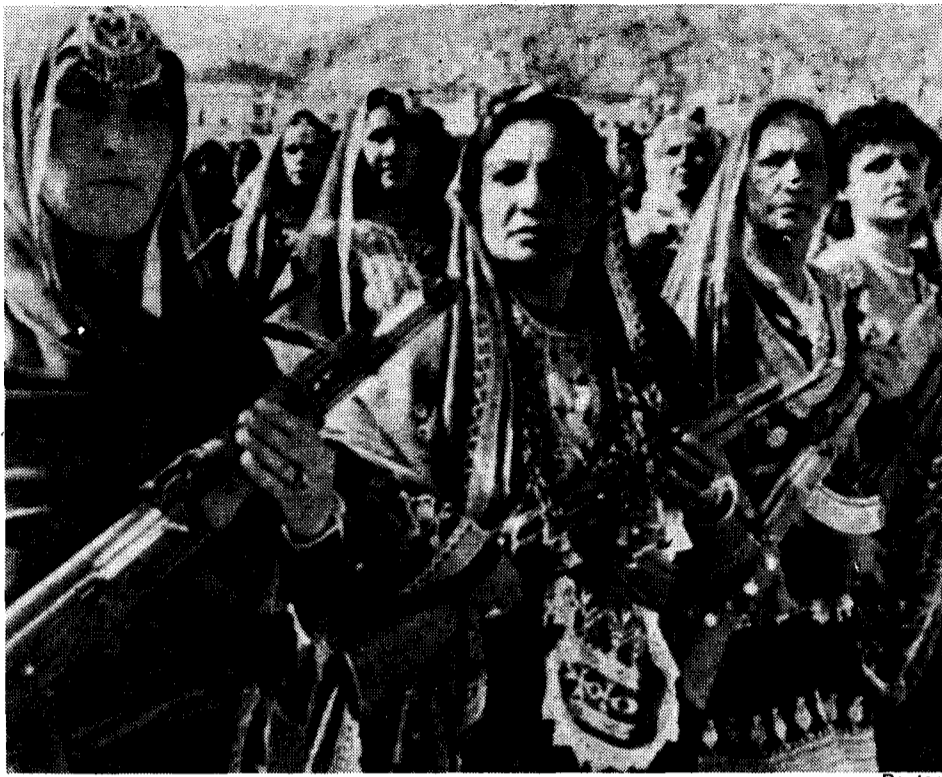
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# As Soviets Pull Out, Islamic Fanatics Threaten Bloodbath

## Afghan Women Fight for Their Lives

On May 15, Soviet troops are scheduled to begin their withdrawal from Afghanistan. The fanatical Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* have wasted no time in giving a taste of the bloodbath they intend to unleash upon the Afghan population once the Red Army is no longer there to defend elementary social progress. On April 27, a truck loaded with explosives blew up in a crowded street in Kabul, killing a 12-year-old girl and five other people. The bomb was situated to strike people returning from a youth festival in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the "April revolution" which installed the Afghan reform regime. On April 10, several days before the signing of the withdrawal agreement, a passenger plane was shot down by a U.S.-supplied missile, killing all 29 aboard, including eight women and two children. Rebel leader Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, described even by his American sponsors as a "scary fascist," seized this moment to announce they would "show the world that without the consent of the *mujaheddin*, no agreement can be consummated."

These CIA-backed "freedom fighters" will not be satisfied until they have extinguished the last remnants of the short-lived freedoms the Afghan peoples have enjoyed. And their prime target will certainly be the hundreds of thousands of women who under the protection of the Red Army liberated themselves to some extent from fundamentalist slavery. A recent article by Marc Kaufman in the *Philadelphia*



Afghan women armed with Soviet AK-47s march on tenth anniversary of "April Revolution" in Kabul. Reuters

*Inquirer* (26 April), piercing the American bourgeoisie's veil of lies over what an anti-Communist victory will mean, described how "the specter of a *mujaheddin* reign of terror against women" is widely perceived in Kabul.

From the start this war has posed not only defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state against U.S. imperialism

but the defense of the most basic rights of women. As Kaufman noted:

"When asked why they had left Afghanistan for the refugee camps, many Afghans in Pakistan don't talk about the bombing or land reform, or even the suppression of Islam.

"What they did not like, those Afghans said recently, was that the communists in Kabul wanted to send their daughters to school."

And those young women who did seize the opportunity for an education are now, in the most literal sense, faced with a fight for their lives. One such woman interviewed explained:

"Without the revolution, what would I be?" said the handsome young woman, who has a college degree from Bulgaria, a good job with the Red Crescent, and the freedom to wear lipstick, a skirt and even high heels.

"I would be staying at home, and maybe only going out with the veil—like my mother did," she said. "And for marriage, I could be bought like so much property.

"This is why so many Afghan women are with this revolution, and why we will fight so hard to defend it'....

"They will try to put us back in *chaderie* [the head-to-toe veil]—we know this," Mina Fahim said of the *mujaheddin*.

"Like in Iran with Khomeini but maybe worse, because we would resist. For us, *chaderie* is impossible," she said with a shudder."

Afghan women will resist, arms in hand. Among the contingents in the April 27 demonstrations was one of determined-looking women armed with AK-47s. Now they are about to be abandoned by the Red Army, in which they saw their salvation. Gorbachev's vain attempt to conciliate U.S. imperialism consigns Afghan women to a horrible bloodbath, and it will only embolden the murderous *mujahedin* to launch attacks across the Soviet border. Defense of the Soviet Union and elementary human decency require that the Red Army mop up the mullah-led reactionaries. ■

## Refuting Assassins' Slanders Honor Ignace Reiss

We print below a letter to the editor of the *New York Times Book Review* responding to a scurrilous slander of Ignace Reiss, a Communist murdered by Stalin's NKVD in 1937. Similarly, a recent piece on Trotsky in the *Times* (16 November 1987) echoed the Stalinist Big Lie with the disingenuous claim that "it was never proved that Stalin ordered Trotsky's assassination."

As the flagship organ of U.S. imperialism, the *New York Times* has a long record of retailing anti-communist "disinformation," going right back to the hoary slander that Lenin and Trotsky were German agents (see illustration). During the infamous Moscow Trials in the late 1930s, its Moscow correspondent Walter Duranty dutifully parroted Stalin's deadly lies that the Old

Bolsheviks were a pack of Nazi spies. Whether drawn from tsarist or Stalinist arsenals, for the *Times* any anti-Bolshevik lie is deemed "fit to print."

Readers are also referred to Theodore Draper's informative article in the 14 April *New York Review of Books*.

SPARTACIST PUBLISHING  
COMPANY

28 March 1988

*New York Times Book Review*

To the Editor:

Your recent exchange on "Stalin's Killerati" (March 6) contains a gross historical falsehood that must not remain unanswered. A letter by Vadim Kondratiev described Ignace Reiss as "a K.G.B. defector who was selling important military intelligence in 1938 to the highest bidder, which happened to be Nazi Germany." In slandering Reiss as a Nazi spy, Kondratiev is retailing in a new form the universally discredited Stalinist lie that Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition (as well as the entire generation of Old Bolsheviks) were all agents of Hitler and the Mikado.

Contrary to the utterly unsupported claim of Vadim Kondratiev, the son of one of the NKVD assassins of Reiss, Ignace Reiss lived and died fighting for communism and to defend the Soviet Union. For a truthful account of the life and struggle of Ignace Reiss, see the memoirs of his widow, Elisabeth Poret-



Vladimir Kibalchich  
Stalin murdered Ignace Reiss, heroic Soviet spy who embraced Trotsky's Fourth International.

sky, *Our Own People* (University of Michigan Press, 1970). He personified that tendency within the Soviet apparatus which sought to restore the authentic traditions of the October Revolution, traditions betrayed by the usurping Stalinist bureaucracy.

A Galician communist won to Bolshevism in 1919, Ignace Reiss joined Soviet intelligence in 1922. He was finally driven to break with Stalinism and to join with Trotsky when the frame-ups of the first Moscow Trial and the execution of the Old Bolsheviks, together with the Kremlin's strangling of proletarian revolution in Spain, convinced him that Stalin's counterrevolutionary policy threatened the survival of the USSR. For this Reiss was assassinated by the NKVD near Lausanne, Switzerland on 4 September 1937

(despite Kondratiev's claim he was selling secrets to the Nazis in 1938).

It was not Reiss and the courageous Russian Left Oppositionists who aided Hitler's cause and endangered the gains of the October Revolution of 1917—centrally the collectivized property forms. It was Stalin who beheaded the Red Army, murdering Marshal Tukhachevsky and the cream of the Soviet officer corps on the eve of Hitler's invasion (they too were falsely accused of being German spies). Ignace Reiss eloquently expressed his views in an open letter "To the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.," dated 17 July 1937, written a few weeks before his execution by Stalin's assassins:

"The working class must defeat Stalin and Stalinism so that the U.S.S.R. and the international workers' movement do not succumb to fascism and counter-revolution....

"I intend to devote my feeble forces to the cause of Lenin. I want to continue the fight, for only our victory—that of the proletarian revolution—will free humanity of capitalism and the U.S.S.R. of Stalinism.

"Forward to new struggles! For the Fourth International!"

Historical justice to the memory of this devoted communist demands this correction.

Very truly yours,  
James Robertson  
President

cc: Leon Trotsky Museum, Coyoacán, Mexico  
Institute for Social History, Amsterdam  
Prometheus Research Library, New York  
Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee, Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow  
Cahiers Léon Trotsky, Paris  
*Revolutionary History*, London

15 September 1918

The New York Times

DOCUMENTS PROVE  
LENINE AND TROTSKY  
HIRED BY GERMANS

Communications Between Berlin and Bolshevik Government Given Out by Creel.

# France...

(continued from page 1)

military haircuts, former paratroopers and lumpen elements, the mass of the ranks was made up of provincial shopkeepers. Yet the fact that it could take place on the international proletarian holiday is an outrage only possible due to the treachery of the PCF/PS misleaders who dissipated the anti-fascist anger instead of sweeping away Le Pen's provocation.

The traditional May Day march of trade unionists and immigrants—which took place in two contingents, one under the banner of the Communist-led CGT labor federation and the other called by the social-democratic CFDT and FEN (teachers union)—was considerably more important, both numerically and socially. But the reformist bureaucrats deliberately held a passive protest march. If a solidly organized united-front mobilization of the same 70,000 or 100,000 workers had been called for the same place as the National Front demonstration, the fascist parade would not have come off. A massive and disciplined squad of marshals (and the CGT knows how to organize one) would have stopped the fascists cold. The pro-Le Pen shopkeeper getting off his bus would have decided to go see the Eiffel Tower or the Folies Bergères instead!

bourgeois layers to forge ahead in his strategic plan of organizing his heterogeneous voters into assault troops against the workers organizations and immigrants. His voters, Le Pen told the May Day crowd, are "a vanguard that must now be organized." This is an open call for brownshirts. Le Pen's election meeting in Marseille before the first round featured a precision jump by five paratroopers into the middle of the stadium to kick off the meeting. French paratrooper units have long been noted as the shock troops of the extreme right wing, ever since the abortive generals' coup against de Gaulle in 1961 which aimed at preventing the "loss" of Algeria.

With the exception of Le Pen's campaign, it had been one of the most vacuous presidential campaigns in French historical memory. There was nothing to debate: Mitterrand's campaign has not a trace of "socialism," and Mitterrand/Chirac/Barre are united around an anti-Soviet, anti-working-class, anti-immigrant consensus. Mitterrand's record of savage capitalist austerity and his role as Reagan's Cold War European lieutenant during the 1981-86 popular front, and the ensuing two years of "cohabitation" with Chirac, disarmed his rightist opponents. The Communist Party, meanwhile, has abdicated any pretense of organizing working-class opposition to the massive unemployment and anti-union offensive that have



Patrick Artinian

Flag-waving chauvinist mob cheers fascist Le Pen's electoral success.

many of the "red belt" workers suburbs around Paris, attest to that. But the electoral house of mirrors is no true gauge of the potential for class struggle. In the winter of 1986-87 student protests, more than a million strong, with a heavy anti-racist component, turned back the government's attempt at accentuating the class bias of the university system. This victory was followed by a hard-fought wildcat strike of railway workers, which posed the necessity of a general strike.

But without revolutionary leadership, the militant French workers' will to fight was criminally frittered away. The history of the past two decades—from 1968 on—has been one of derauling, sabotaging and suppressing class struggle in the service of class collaboration. In contrast to the reformists and their fake-Trotskyist tails, the Ligue Trotskyiste de France has stood out for its proletarian opposition to popular-frontism. In a long article on the Le Pen campaign, the Munich *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (20 April) noted the LTF's stand: "Left-wing extremists distributed their newspaper, *Le Bolchévick*. You can't fight unemployment, racism and fascism with Mitterrand and [PCF candidate] Lajoine, the headline read, 'they're the ones that got us into this shit.' And in passing *Le Bolchévick* accuses Gorbachev of squandering Afghanistan." The article referred to from the LTF newspaper declared:

"It is the governments of class collaboration, the anti-worker, anti-immigrant and anti-Soviet popular front in which they participated and which they supported since 1981, which paved the way for the right bent on revenge and for the fascists... And if today these same leaders are blocking the mass workers mobilizations urgently needed to drive Le Pen's scum back into their rat holes, if they display such shameful prostration and passivity in the face of fascist provocations, it's because their one and only objective is to replay '81."

—*Le Bolchévick* No. 82, April 1988

As a result of the Mitterrand popular front, which put the cost of the capital-

Boccon-Gibod/Keystone

increased under governments of both the right and "left." So the fascists moved in.

Bourgeois commentators have concluded that the National Front has replaced the PCF as the party of the disgruntled elements in French society. It is true that the poison of racism has seeped into backward sections of the working class, rendered desperate by massive unemployment—Le Pen's score in Lorraine, where the coal and steel industries have been gutted by the capitalist crisis, and his victory over the PCF in



On the barricades: struggles by militant workers (above) and students against Mitterrand/Chirac's racist austerity and anti-immigrant attacks.



Cochin/Keystone



Le Bolchévick

Ligue Trotskyiste/Tribune Communiste contingent at January 27 protest in Paris against Le Pen. Banner reads: "Le Pen—Enough is Enough! For Worker/Immigrant Mobilizations to Crush the Fascists! Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrants!"

In the face of Le Pen's May Day provocation, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France issued an urgent appeal for a united-front worker/immigrant mobilization to stop the fascists. The 27 April LTF leaflet declared:

"The working class has the social power to prevent the fascists from demonstrating on May 1st and to crush them. Hundreds of thousands of workers are needed, solidly organized to occupy the terrain where the fascists plan to parade. But there's not a moment to lose. Already on January 27, united-front demonstrations took place at the call of the PCF (which, however, buried this initiative soon after) in which the Ligue Trotskyiste participated; tens of thousands of workers and anti-fascists rallied across France to cry out 'Le Pen: Enough!' Today we must go to a higher level. Working-class and democratic organizations, both political and trade-union, have the duty to organize, starting now, a determined and massive united-front action, rallying youth, women, immigrants, Jews, homosexuals, etc. in the streets on this day around the workers battalions, mainly organized by the CGT, to stop the fascists."

What's needed is "an agreement for combat, not a so-called 'action' of parliamentary pressure in order to re-elect Mitterrand 'against the right and far right.'" The felt need for united anti-fascist action must not be prostituted in the service of a new popular front!

## Crush the Fascist Threat!

Unfortunately, the impunity Le Pen enjoyed on May 1st can only embolden this leader of reactionary petty-

ist crisis onto the backs of the workers, France has become the European country with a mass fascist movement. And the fight to crush the National Front has an importance extending beyond the borders of France. Le Pen's success emboldens fascist rats to crawl out of their holes elsewhere. In West Germany, for example, the neo-Nazi FAP announced plans to hold a May Day rally outside Rheinhausen, where the threatened closure of the Krupp steel plant has sparked massive workers' protests throughout the Ruhr region. Yet while the fascists mount provocations from West Berlin to Bremen to the Ruhr, the reformist Social Democracy does its best to turn May Day rallies into apolitical beer festivals.

## Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky!

Le Pen's results inspire a real fear, but for a number of left and labor organizations this fear is transformed into panic. And this panic is used to "justify" their call for workers to vote for Mitterrand on the second round. The Communist Party leadership exhorts all those who are "anti-Chirac and anti-Le Pen to block their path on May 8." Former PCF leader and pro-Mitterrand "renovator" Pierre Juquin, now supported by the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), says "don't do the work of ChiPen-LeRac." Arlette Laguiller, perennial candidate of Lutte Ouvrière (LO), is competing with the fascists for votes on a program of populist anti-Sovietism. Le Pen & Co. are trying to "push politics in a reactionary direction," so "we need another vote, a vote which is a counterweight" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 26 March).

All these reformists who are urging workers to fall in behind Mitterrand "forget" rather conveniently that after the 1936 Popular Front came the bonapartist dictator Pétain; after Allende, Pinochet. So too the anti-working-class, anti-immigrant and anti-Soviet policy of the 1981 popular front paved the way



# Teamster Revolt Over Contract

## Feds Hands Off the Union!

Workers in the largest and most powerful union in America, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), are rebelling against the IBT tops' proposed national contract. Nearly 200,000 Teamsters are currently voting by mail ballot on the National Master Freight Agreement (NMFA), which will set standards for an additional 300,000 workers in the 1.7-million-strong IBT. Truck drivers and warehouse workers, embittered by years of givebacks, are being joined by scores of local and regional officials, riled over the International union tops' concessions and their deals gutting "supplementals" covering

Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. IBT International president Jackie Presser is under indictment by the feds for payroll padding. His defense is that he did it on the FBI's instructions while he was their informer! Presser, on the ropes and dying of cancer, has lost his grip, and the union is in danger of returning to the federation of local and regional fiefdoms that existed before Jimmy Hoffa welded together the union's power through the first national over-the-road contract.

The capitalist state launched its 30-year vendetta against Hoffa and the Teamsters not because of bureaucratic

for the fascists. To want to repeat 1981—while an anti-immigrant consensus unites the social democrats and bourgeois politicians and the fascists draw strength from the instability of the regime—is criminally to lead the workers to a much more serious defeat than the electoral victory of the right in March 1986. In contrast to the LO/LCR pseudo-Trotskyists, the Ligue Trotskyiste proclaimed: "We didn't call for a vote to Mitterrand in '81, and we won't do it in '88 either."

Authentic Trotskyism may get a hearing from Communist militants fed up with their party's criminal passivity. The PCF says it "harbors no illusions" (*L'Humanité*, 28 April) that a Mitterrand victory will benefit the working class ("on the contrary," Marchais adds cynically), while it calls for voting Mitterrand to stop the right. But many of its ranks may not follow this road to defeat. On May Day, as they marched past a local PS headquarters, CGT militants chanted, "Mitterrand, betrayal." PCF supporters who seek to break from the infernal cycle of popular fronts alternating with open reaction should study the example of Tribune Communiste, a group which came out of the pro-Soviet "anti-opportunist" milieu in and around the PCF, and fused with the Ligue Trotskyiste this February.

An important step in Tribune Communiste's evolution toward genuine Leninism was taken when they refused to vote for the PCF in the legislative elections of June 1981, opposing the Communist Party's entry into the Mitterrand popular front. And in their resolution this year which served as a basis for the fusion with the Ligue Trotskyiste, Tribune Communiste wrote:

"In 1988 it is not possible to back Lajoinie's candidacy with a vote, since he is running, all by himself, as the candidate of a popular front that the PS is in no hurry to form—waiting for the PCF leadership to come over once more."

—"From the Illusory Transformation of the PCF to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky," *Le Bolchévik* No. 81, March 1988

On the eve of the fusion, Tribune Communiste participated together with the LTF in the anti-fascist demonstration called by the PCF on January 27. The joint contingent marched under the slogans of "Worker/Immigrant Mobilizations to Smash the Fascists" and "Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrants."

As Leon Trotsky underlined in his famous pamphlet *Whither France?* written after the fascist-bonapartist-royalist march in February 1934, the key to crushing the fascists is "Not a Program of Passivity But a Program of Revolution":

"...if opposition to further aggravation of the situation of the masses under capitalism is still possible, no real improvement of their situation is conceivable without a revolutionary invasion of the right of capitalist property...."

"The social crisis in its political expression is the crisis of power. The old master of society is bankrupt. A new master is needed."

"If the revolutionary proletariat does not take power, Fascism will inevitably take it!"

Only by accomplishing its historic mission, by taking state power with a workers government which will expropriate the bourgeoisie and undertake the socialist reconstruction of society, can the proletariat crush the fascist scum once and for all. And for that, as in all working-class struggles, the leadership of a Leninist vanguard party is indispensable. Such a party must be a tribune of the people, championing the cause of all the oppressed. It must also squarely oppose the anti-Soviet war drive and uphold the banner of unconditional military defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states. This party will be the section of a reformed Fourth International, regrouping genuine communists behind the Leninist-Trotskyist program of world socialist revolution. ■



Teamster power: supporters of Greyhound strike on flatbed trucks, Philadelphia, 1983.

local working conditions. The IBT ranks must tear up this giveback deal and reverse the capitalist onslaught through hard labor struggle. And that means taking head-on the bosses' government, with its strikebreaking injunctions and union-busting "trusteeships." *For an industrywide trucking strike!*

When the contract was presented to a gathering of 277 local union leaders in Chicago on April 7, it provoked a 40 percent "no" vote from this usually obedient crowd. At membership meetings across the country the following week, scores of locals came out against the agreement. Twelve hundred members of Local 299 in Detroit unanimously gave it the "thumbs down," and Local 728 members in Atlanta shouted down the son of the International secretary-treasurer (*Labor Notes*, May 1988). On April 18, a thousand Teamsters, members of Local 707 in New York and New Jersey, reported to union halls instead of freight terminals in a job action to protest the contract. Under the straitjacket of the IBT bureaucracy, a two-thirds majority is required to defeat the contract.

The three-year deal offers a paltry 35 cents per hour (2 percent) yearly raise, while continuing all the concessions wrenched from the Teamster ranks in previous agreements (elimination of COLA, a two-tier pay scale, and the use of low-wage part-time "casual" workers—now about 10 percent of the workforce). Fed up with the bankruptcies and massive layoffs in the decade since trucking deregulation, Teamsters want to defend their jobs. But under the proposed NMFA, the companies will have a free hand to continue "double-breasting"—setting up non-union subsidiaries—which has bled the union of 120,000 jobs.

All hell is breaking loose in the Teamsters over this freight contract because the bureaucratic cement is cracking at the top. The corrupt gang at Ed Meese's "Justice" Department is trying to dismantle this powerful union using the blatantly unconstitutional Racketeer

corruption, of course, but in order to break the power of this national transportation union at the core of American labor. The feds' war on the Teamsters has gotten plenty of help from careerists seeking to ride RICO indictments and court suits into union office. The opposition Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) beat Reagan and Meese to the draw by filing their own RICO suit against the union in December 1986! The TDU, which doesn't even call for a strike, works hand in glove with Reagan and Meese's Justice Department to increase the subordination of the labor movement to the capitalist state. The labor movement must demand: *Government hands off the Teamsters!*

The Reagan regime is discredited, its loser contras on the ropes, its anti-Soviet provocateurs facing multiple in-

dictments and endless investigations. This necessarily affects their war on labor and blacks at home, providing openings for the Teamsters to strike back at the exploiters who are out to squeeze even more of workers' blood in concessions. Teamster ranks see the IBT tops in disarray, and less able to police the union for the trucking magnates. Here's a chance to fight back, to take back the givebacks and break the government's plot to put the union in chains. The NMFA must remain intact. A solid national strike must necessarily be a strike to organize the non-union terminals and warehouses!

To win, the working class must base itself squarely on its own power, independent of the capitalist agencies and courts and their front men in the labor movement. Having endorsed the Republicans in 1980 and 1984, Presser & Co. have few friends left in Washington now that Reagan/Meese have jilted them. So the Teamsters rejoin the AFL-CIO, whose bureaucrats and their "militant" hangers-on preach trust in the "friend of labor" Democrats—whether Dukakis or Jackson—in order to throttle class struggle. Teamsters: don't forget it was the Kennedy boys who railroaded Hoffa in order to break the national contract. *Both* the partner parties of capitalism are out to gut the unions with the Landrum-Griffith and Taft-Hartley slave labor laws. To win, Teamsters must break the straitjacket of these anti-labor laws and use the class-struggle tactics that built the unions: mass picket lines and secondary boycotts (hot-cargoing). As we wrote in the special *Workers Vanguard* supplement, "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win" (*WV* No. 349, 2 March 1984):

"But 'secondary boycotts' are 'illegal,' say the union tops from coast to coast. Unions themselves were once branded as 'illegal criminal conspiracies.' The entire history of the American labor movement is one long string of laws broken and court injunctions defied. Otherwise there would be no labor movement."

These are the lessons of the victorious, hard-fought Minneapolis Teamsters general strike of 1934, which was led by the revolutionary Trotskyists and laid the basis for the over-the-road organizing drives which transformed the IBT into a powerful industrial union. To win, this is the kind of a class-struggle leadership that must be forged, to lead labor and all the oppressed in a fight for a workers government that will end the boom-bust cycle of the capitalist profit system for good. ■

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# Nicaragua...

(continued from page 1)

fracturing. During the negotiations longtime CIA operative Adolfo Calero and former Somozaist National Guard colonel Enrique Bermúdez have fallen out. Bermúdez fired the contra commanders who signed the Sapoá agreement, whereupon Calero tried to pull a coup to oust the military chief. The cease-fire poses a big problem for the contra tops: their mercenary peasant army could dissolve without the pressure of war and the promise of endless dollars. One contra official said, "Who knows how long we can hold together and keep up the morale of our troops" (*New York Times*, 26 April). As Sandinista troops in the field began meeting with nearby contra units, orders went out from contra HQ in Tegucigalpa to stop the fraternization. But in several cases the meetings have continued.

While the Sandinista leadership rolled out the red carpet for the contras, the Nicaraguan masses were in the

a bureaucratically deformed workers state, is moving toward reconsolidating a capitalist state (see "Sandinista-Contra Pact: Revolution in Grave Danger," *WV* No. 450, 8 April).

In recent weeks the FSLN has made one concession after another to the bourgeoisie while forcing the working class to the wall. The current labor battles are the result of a sweeping pro-capitalist economic "shock treatment" launched by Ortega on February 14. Overnight the Nicaraguan currency, the córdoba, was devalued by 3,000 percent; the government exchanged old córdobas for new ones at the rate of 1,000 to one. Given the astronomical inflation, monetary reform was inevitable. But along with it, Ortega decreed a series of measures favoring businessmen and gutting Nicaraguan workers' budgets. Almost all subsidies for food and basic goods were eliminated, government spending was cut by 10 percent, wage differentials were increased for higher-paid professional employees... and capitalists' export earnings will now be paid at international market

out of the "national reconciliation" talks, protesting Sandinista "intransigence" in resolving the strikes.

On May Day, Daniel Ortega denounced the strikers, saying, "These workers are fighting against the revolution instead of the imperialism of the United States and the contras." "They are led," he said, "by people who have a counterrevolutionary program... pseudo-leaders who receive money from the C.I.A." A relative of a striker countered, "They say this is a political strike, but the real cause is that we can't live on what they want to pay." With these totally counterposed accounts, what is the truth? And what should be the policy of proletarian revolutionaries?

The strike clearly began as an economic struggle, forced by the FSLN's drastic anti-worker economic policies. When the strikes broke out in late February, the government made no attempt to bargain and simply fired everyone. And the wages are truly impossible. A *New York Times* (14 April) article reported the comments of a construction assistant who earns 26 córdos

Yet the strikers certainly do not see themselves as counterrevolutionaries. Indeed, as the *New York Times* (14 April) reported: "The construction workers' union hall is decorated by portraits of Lenin and other Marxist heroes," and both unions sport the traditional communist symbol, the hammer and sickle. SCAAS is known for leading a hard-fought building workers strike against Somoza following the 1972 earthquake, while CAUS once led the largest and most militant factory in the country, now called FABRITEX, where they continue to have support and which has one of the highest percentages of workers who have joined the militias and fought the contras at the front. In fact, most of Managua's industries have a strong presence of ostensibly socialist opposition unions.

## Lessons of October: Bolshevik Party Is Key

Sandinista Nicaragua has been brutally battered by years of Yankee imperialist aggression, both by the bloody contra terrorists who have killed tens of thousands and by Reagan's trade embargo which has sought to strangle the economy. Having endured so much, so long, it is natural that war-weariness has spread in Nicaragua. This can drive backward workers into the arms of reaction. We have recalled the example of Kronstadt, where sailors mutinied in 1921 against the Soviet regime (see "Finish Off the Contras—Complete the Revolution!" *WV* No. 445, 29 January). At that time also, hard-pressed urban workers led by the Mensheviks were striking for basic economic necessities. Lenin, Trotsky and the rest of the Bolshevik leadership tried to negotiate with the sailors, but finally the mutiny had to be put down by the Red Army.

The PSN and PCN are politically similar in many ways to the Russian Mensheviks. They are hardline reformists, ardent believers in "two-stage" revolution who opposed as "adventurist" the 1979 insurrection which toppled Somoza. The Mensheviks, too, led sections of the working class, such as the railway workers who opposed the October Revolution and sabotaged its defense. *But the Sandinistas are no Bolsheviks*—far from it. The Kronstadt sailors, many of whom came from rural backgrounds, objected to the Bolsheviks' policies of War Communism, seeking free markets for peasant producers. "War Sandinism," in contrast, has been marked by hefty dollar subsidies for "patriotic" capitalists and increasingly impossible conditions for the workers. And now the Sandinistas have decreed a "free market" austerity rivaling anything the IMF bankers' cartel has ordered, as they prepare to bring back the contra capitalists.

The current Nicaraguan strikes are not Kronstadt but closer to the El Teniente strike in Allende's Chile. In May-June of 1973, workers at the country's largest mine fought against the "Popular Unity" government to retain their sliding scale of wages, a protection against inflation. Allende, like Ortega, accused the strikers of being "economistic." Yet while the popular-front left denounced the El Teniente strikers, we Trotskyists called to defend their strike. Eventually, however, as Allende's "pop-



New York Times



Reuters

March 3—Nicaraguan masses demonstrate against *La Prensa*, mouthpiece for capitalist reaction. Contra kingpin Calero (center) whoops it up with *La Prensa* publisher Violeta Chamorro.

streets. Dozens of demonstrations assembled to call for unconditional surrender by the contra killers. While the imperialist media have been bellowing about "censorship" of the voice of the internal contras, *La Prensa*, because it wants more (Soviet-supplied) newsprint, and the government caved in by supplying it, Sandinista youth gathered outside the CIA mouthpiece chanting, "Give back to the people the paper you used to defame the people" (*La Repubblica* [Rome], 17 April). Pressured by the Sandinista ranks, Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega vowed to a crowd of 20,000 that if peace talks fail, "we shall continue fighting until we totally annihilate the Contras." And on May Day, Ortega declared:

"What we are discussing is how the mercenary forces, who are already defeated, can lay down their weapons.

"They should be grateful that we are not offering them the guillotine or the firing squad, which is what they deserve."

—*New York Times*, 2 May

Militant declarations notwithstanding, in negotiating a treacherous "peace" fraud the Sandinistas are paving the way for counterrevolution.

## Showdown Over Strikes

Despite all the vituperation from the Reagan White House against "Sandino-Communism," the Sandinistas have never sought to establish a collectivized economy, the basis of a workers state. While the FSLN smashed the capitalist state of the Somoza dynasty installed by the U.S. Marines, the guerrillas in power vowed to follow a utopian pipe dream of "mixed economy, political pluralism and nonalignment." But this didn't placate the Reaganauts, who wanted an easy "win" in Central America for their anti-Soviet war drive. For more than eight years, the fate of the Nicaraguan Revolution has hung in the balance. Now with the defeat of Washington's contra terrorists, we have warned that the petty-bourgeois bonapartist FSLN regime, rather than following the "Cuban road" to

rates! One U.S.-educated "technocrat" who helped design the program said:

"This is a reaffirmation of the view that socialist central planning is not viable in this country. The logic of these measures is a greater reliance on market signals."

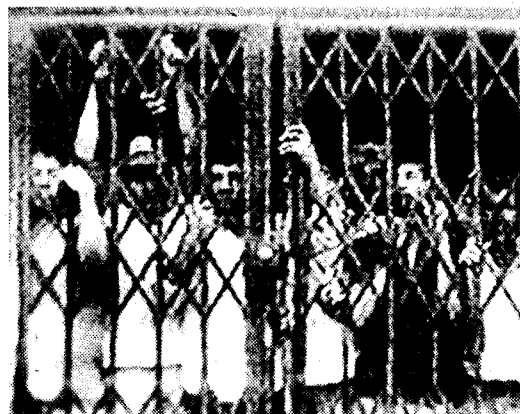
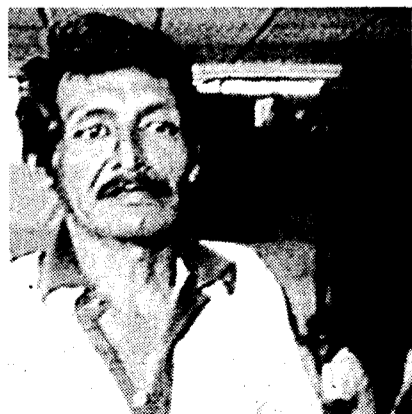
—*Washington Post*, 5 March

The impact on the Nicaraguan masses has been devastating. While wages were increased, prices have risen faster. Mainstays of the Nicaraguan diet like rice, beans and corn have virtually disappeared from the markets as producers and speculators hold on to them rather than sell them at government-controlled prices. The working class faces an impossible situation. An auto mechanic, a skilled worker toward the upper end of the new 15-step wage scale, makes 1,700 córdobas per month (about US\$45 currently). Yet even according to government estimates it takes at least 2,300 córdobas (and more likely double that) just to feed a family of four. Unskilled workers may earn as little as 500 córdobas per month! Simply to survive workers must find some *bisnes* in the black market, which continues to flourish despite government efforts to suppress it.

The catastrophic collapse of the workers' standard of living resulting from the economic reform soon touched off strikes by 3,000 construction workers and 1,200 auto mechanics, as well as (more briefly) by restaurant workers, truck drivers and sugar plantation workers. The striking construction workers are demanding 200 percent wage increases and the limitation of the workday to eight hours. The Sandinistas responded by declaring the strikes illegal and firing the workers, while the pro-government CST labor federation has organized scabs to take their places. Tensions have run high as Sandinista militants and unionists have squared off in street confrontations. Last week 38 construction workers went on a hunger strike to press for their demands. And then the right-wing opposition walked

bas a day (while a worker's lunch costs 30 córdobas, a pack of cigarettes costs 39 and an inexpensive pair of shoes goes for at least 400): "It's a question of starving on strike or starving on the job. You absolutely cannot live on that salary." There have also been walkouts in workplaces controlled by Sandinista unions: eight in January alone.

On the other hand, the union leaders are cooperating with right-wing reaction. The strikers are organized in the SCAAS construction workers union, affiliated with the pro-Moscow Socialists (PSN), and the CAUS union of the Communist Party (PCN). SCAAS and CAUS, in turn, are part of an opposition labor umbrella group which includes the CUS union that is indeed on the Washington payroll, via the American Institute for Free Labor Development, a "labor" front for the CIA set up by the AFL-CIO and U.S. businessmen. According to the *Wall Street Journal* (31 December 1985), "AIFLD funnels about \$60,000 a year to the CUS from funds it receives from the National Endowment for Democracy," set up to launder U.S. government dollars. And both PCN and PSN are part of a 14-party alliance opposed to the Sandinistas which includes all the right-wing parties.



SIN-TV/WV Photos

Construction workers and mechanics on hunger strike for a living wage at union hall in Managua. Reformist union leaders display the hammer and sickle, but ally with the bourgeoisie.

ular" government drove the strikers into the abyss, the CIA's coup plotters seized the opportunity. A miners' march on Santiago was taken over by the ultrarightist National Party and turned into a counterrevolutionary political mobilization. (For more about the El Teniente strike, see "Defend Chilean Miners' Strike," *WV* No. 23, 22 June 1973; and "How *The Battle of Chile* Disarms the Workers," *WV* No. 202, 21 April 1978.)

In Nicaragua today, Ortega has denounced the strikers as having "no class consciousness" for struggling to feed and clothe their children while the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie receives subsidies and the Sandinista comandantes shop at Managua's "dollar stores." The workers have sacrificed plenty, but where's the social revolution? The workers' demands are a legitimate defense against the FSLN's economic "reforms" which are aimed at securing capitalist property relations. The right-wing opposition, which seeks untrammelled capitalist exploitation, has seized upon the strikes as a club against the Sandinistas. A genuine communist leadership would seek to take control of the struggle away from the reformist traitors who are leading the workers into the arms of Reagan's contras.

A Leninist-Trotskyist party would fight for workers control of the factories, for expropriation of the bourgeoisie, for a workers and peasants government—and oppose the sellout of the revolution in the phony "peace" talks with the contras. It would fight to defend, complete and extend the *Nicaraguan Revolution!*

Located in an area considered by the Yankee imperialists to be their "backyard," Sandinista Nicaragua has been battered by an unrelenting onslaught from the colossus to the north, combining bloody contra terror and economic strangulation. Reagan wouldn't leave them alone yet Washington feared to send the 82nd Airborne into another Third World military adventure. So the Nicaraguan Revolution has been stuck in midstream—it is now becoming unstuck. As decisive days approach in Managua, the experience of the Russian October Revolution becomes all the more vital. In September 1917, following the defeat of Kornilov's attempted counterrevolutionary putsch and as economic collapse threatened, Lenin wrote his famous pamphlet, *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*:

"Control, supervision and accounting are the prime requisites for combating catastrophe and famine. This is indisputable and universally recognised. And it is just what is *not being done* from fear of encroaching on the supremacy of the landowners and capitalists...."

"In point of fact, the whole question of control boils down to who controls whom, i.e., which class is in control and which is being controlled. In our country, in republican Russia, with the help of the 'authorised bodies' of supposedly revolutionary democracy, it is the landowners and capitalists who are still recognised to be, and still are, the controllers. The inevitable result is the capitalist robbery that arouses universal indignation among the people, and the economic chaos that is being artificially kept up by the capitalists. We must resolutely and irrevocably, not fearing to break with the old, not fearing boldly to build the new, pass to control over the landowners and capitalists by the workers and peasants."

How this was to be done was spelled out in an article he wrote that same day, which concludes: "Power to the Soviets means the complete transfer of the country's administration and economic control into the hands of the workers and peasants, to whom *nobody* would dare offer resistance and who, through practice, through their own experience, *would soon learn* how to distribute the land, products and grain properly" ("One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution," September 1917). That step was taken with the October Revolution, whose program remains today the guiding light for proletarian revolution throughout the world. ■

## Abortion Rights...

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the cops were following the lead they got straight from the White House. What's needed to keep the clinics open is a massive mobilization of labor, together with women and minorities, to run these bible-thumping bigots out of town.

Death is written all over the "right to life" crusaders. They seek to drive working-class and poor women back to the rusty coat hangers and back alleys. In December 1986, a bomb so powerful it would have blown away the Margaret Sanger clinic in midtown Manhattan was defused at the last moment. While the fundamentalist fanatics look to Reagan, the liberal feminist groups are bound up with the Democratic Party. But it was Jimmy Carter who passed the Hyde Amendment that wiped out abortions for poor women.

The attack on abortion rights is the spearhead of the Reaganites' all-sided onslaught against democratic rights, from the Supreme Court bigots in their black robes with their anti-"sodomy" laws, to the racist terrorists in blue uniforms or white sheets. Spartacist placards at the April 29 march called for "Government Out of the Bedrooms!" "Down with All Laws Against Pornography, Sodomy, Drugs!" "Reagan/Democrats Target Gays, Immigrants, Blacks—Down with the AIDS Witch-hunt," and "For the Separation of Church and State." Warning of the terrible bloodbath now looming in Afghanistan, a sign read, "Afghan Women Fight for Their Lives Against CIA-Backed Mullah Reaction!"

The "Pro-Choice" activists and city councilmen are calling for stepped-up



Bill Baird addresses April 29 rally with photo of 1979 firebomb attack by "right to life" terrorists on his Hempstead, Long Island clinic.

police protection for the clinics. That the rampaging racists of the NYPD will not protect women was shown by their aid to the clinic blockaders—just the week before, the cops shot two Hispanic women in Upper Manhattan!

Long Island clinic owner and courageous longtime abortion rights activist Bill Baird recalled what happened in December 1985 when "right to life" bigots led by Nassau County D.A. Dennis Dillon and Bishop McCann massed outside his clinic. After a bomb threat was reported, cops with police dogs walked in on his patients, terrorizing women in the recovery rooms. Yet Baird is calling for federal marshals to escort women into the clinics!

Baird makes the analogy to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, claiming that "When blacks were deprived of

## NYPD...

(continued from page 12)

in El Barrio, so now she is dead.

Just after noon that same day, four plainclothes cops (with ten more outside in uniform) stormed an apartment in the Inwood section of Manhattan. They said they had a tip they would find two kilos of cocaine inside. What they found was Mercedes Pérez, 22 years old and pregnant. After she fled terrified into her bedroom, the cops said she reached for her gun. Five shots were fired and police sergeant John McCormick died. Mercedes was shot twice in the stomach and arm. She gave birth by Caesarean section while being treated at the hospital for her wounds. The police immediately labeled Pérez a "cop killer" and screamed for blood.

Koch's black police commissioner Benjamin Ward raved, "She shot a cop. She should be taken out and executed. Kill them all and let God sort them out." And those were *orders*. The mayor called for the death penalty. Not until almost 24 hours later was it announced that the cop was killed by a bullet from a .38 calibre Smith & Wesson police pistol. But when it turned out the cop-killer

was a cop, Koch demanded Mercedes Pérez be charged with murder anyway, under a law which states that if a killing takes place during a criminal act, the criminal can be charged with murder. Just what was that criminal act, exactly? Going for a gun after strange men break down the door? As for drugs, no "controlled substances" were found in the apartment.

No matter to the arrogant racist pig Koch who as the enforcer of capitalist "law and order" proclaims his "right" to kill—he wants his cops to pull the trigger and his courts to pull the switch. Koch and Ward have had their problems lately after the mayor's virulently racist outbursts against Jesse Jackson made life uncomfortable for the black police commissioner (who says his wife is a Jackson supporter). So now they patch things up by gunning people down. Mercedes Pérez, Juan Rodriguez, Eleanor Bumpurs—the list of black and Hispanic New Yorkers gunned down in their homes by the police goes on. And the shooting of Lydia Ferraro chillingly recalls last year's killing of black Muslim street vendor Nicolas Bartlett, surrounded by cops and shot down on the busiest street in Harlem. This racist NYPD murder rampage must be stopped!

their constitutional and civil rights to enter school buildings, the United States government recognized their responsibility and escorted...people inside these buildings." Actually, FBI agents rode along while KKK killers gunned down Viola Liuzzo, and KKK church-bombers who killed four little black girls in Birmingham were aided by FBI "informants." And to call today on Ed Meese—the sworn enemy of blacks, women, labor—to protect the clinics is grotesque. As the Spartacist contingent at the demonstration chanted, "Down with Reagan! Down with Meese! Down with government sex police!"

At a press briefing at Planned Parenthood April 26, clinic operators announced that they have been checking to make sure that "we have whatever materials and tools would be necessary to thwart attempts to blockade our doors and windows." "Project Defend" has been training escorts in "non-confrontational tactics" to guide clinic patients through the mobs. "Refuse and Resist" is calling to "UnWelcome 'Operation Rescue' at Their Hotels!" All of this misses the point: what's needed is to bring out real social power capable of driving out the bigots and backing down the state.

Labor must be mobilized to defend abortion rights. During the Reagan years, the Spartacist League has become known for our fight to mobilize the muscle of the workers movement to champion the cause of blacks, women and all the oppressed against this murderous capitalist reaction. Labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations to stop racist terror are urgently needed in Reagan's America and Koch's New York. As the Spartacist banner at the April 29 demonstration proclaimed: "For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!" ■

"Twenty years after" the '68 ghetto riots, professors and pundits solemnly declare what everybody knows—that racist cop terror still stalks black America. And the green light comes straight from the top. In Britain, "Iron Lady" Maggie Thatcher gets re-elected by running a dirty little war in the Falkland/Malvinas islands. "Rambo" Reagan props up his polls by invading the tiny black island of Grenada. Now Ed Koch wants to get a fifth term by unleashing a racist war against the black and Latin population of New York. He figures he can neutralize the black politicians by calling it a "war on drugs."

Across the country, speedup on death row, cop executions on the streets: blacks and Latins in America are under siege. That siege is carried out by the black overseers of the inner cities like Ben Ward. And Jesse Jackson longs to be Washington's drug czar, carrying out Nancy Reagan's witchhunt and channeling black anger to the voting booth to pull the lever for the racist Democratic Party. Desperately needed is a revolutionary workers party which champions the struggles of the oppressed populations, mobilizing the power of the workers movement in a struggle for socialist revolution—the only road to black emancipation. ■

## Madison...

(continued from page 4)

black Democrat Jesse Jackson who has made whistle stops at black student protests, like last fall's building takeover in Ann Arbor, to defuse them. From busing for school desegregation to self-defense against racist attacks, to repealing the death penalty, Jackson has deep-sixed or opposed every effort at black struggle. Jackson tells black students: "You cannot serve the age of those that sat in, you cannot serve the age of those who rode the flaming buses..." But you can vote Democrat—and as Malcolm X said: A vote for the Democrats is a vote for the Dixiecrats.

The rising tide of racist attacks against blacks, Hispanics, gays and Jews on campuses across the country is a direct result of government policy of a Klan-endorsed President and the contra Congress. Democrats and Republicans alike carry out war against labor and blacks in this country as the domestic counterpart to their anti-Soviet war drive. The sanctimonious drug witch-hunt by the ruling class which runs the contras who run the world drug trade has turned the already miserable ghettos and barrios of this country into "occupied territories" held by the racist cops. The twin parties of capital have launched an all-out assault on union rights and every social gain won since the Civil War and civil rights movement. How is this reflected on the cam-

pus? Sections of the frenzied petty bourgeoisie who've been force-fed "Rambomania" lash out against minorities on the "home front"—as scapegoats for the rot of American capitalism which threatens their own economic position.

The source of racist attacks is the system that keeps black people permanently segregated at the bottom of the economy and exploits all the working people through wage slavery. The Spartacus Youth Club fights to link students to the power of the integrated, organized working class, to build a multi-racial vanguard party to fight for a workers government that will open the road to black freedom. *Finish the Civil War! Black liberation through socialist revolution!* ■

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## NYC Abortion Clinics Under Siege

# Labor Must Defend Abortion Rights!

Fanatical Moral Majority bigots have invaded New York City, "the abortion capital of the eastern United States," in a weeklong campaign to blockade the clinics and intimidate, harass and terrorize women. Having failed to make abortion illegal and with Reagan on the way out, "Operation Rescue" reflects the increasing desperation of the religious ultraright. In response, on Friday, April 29, a demonstration of 1,000 people to "Defend Women's Right to Abortion" and "Stop Terrorist Attacks!" marched down Fifth Avenue from St. Patrick's Cathedral (pulpit of the anti-abortion bully Cardinal O'Connor) to the "Right to Life" office. A Spartacist contingent, the largest and most dynamic in the march, attracted support with signs saying "Labor Must Defend Abortion Clinics" and chants of "Defend the Clinics, Take a Stand, Free Abortion on Demand!"

But on the first two days of their campaign, 500-600 of these fundamentalist bigots have succeeded in closing down two abortion facilities, in Manhattan and Queens, a defeat for defenders of women's rights. On Monday, May 2, the bigots massed in front of the office of Dr. Herbert Schwarz, a private practitioner on the Upper East Side. On Tuesday, the Queens Women's Medical Office in Elmhurst was shut down, as hundreds of anti-abortion fanatics were



Spartacist League contingent in April 29 protest against attacks on abortion clinics.

permitted to sit in, blockading the entrance, while the tiny group of abortion rights activists was sealed off by the cops behind police barricades. The reactionaries have been aided and abetted by the NYC police, who

removed handfuls of pro-abortion demonstrators defending the clinic doorways and installed the blockaders in their place. Unlike the cops' normal M.O., the anti-abortionists are gently carried out on stretchers one by one in

an operation calculated to ensure the clinics remain blockaded for hours.

While spokesmen for the Pro-Choice Coalition complained that the police were not respecting a court injunction, *continued on page 11*

# Racist NYPD Guns Down Women

## Koch, Ward Whip Up Killer Cops

They really are Koch's killer cops. The New York police are a murder machine that takes its orders from City Hall.

Month after month Ed Koch has been whipping up a racist frenzy that gets expressed in deadly attacks on minorities from Howard Beach to Bensonhurst. The mayor's latest tirades against Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign were an incitement to racist terror in this city on edge. So in short order, on Wednesday, April 27 the New York police shot down two Hispanic women. Lydia Ferraro died in a hail of bullets, trapped in her car surrounded by cops. Mercedes Pérez was shot twice in her own home by a squad of narcs, forcing her to give birth to a baby two months prematurely. She now faces the prospect of life in jail, or if Koch had his way, the state would kill her, finishing the job the killer cops began.

It was 1:40 a.m. in El Barrio (Spanish Harlem) when the cops said Lydia Ferraro ran a red light. The cops got on the radio, and within moments *nine squad cars—18 cops*—were chasing her through the streets. They hemmed her in near the Metro-North railroad overpass at 124th and Park and encircled the car. "Watch out, she's reaching for it," one cop said, and they pumped 13 bul-

lets into the car. A witness told the *Daily News* (30 April) he saw the cops handcuff Ferraro as she lay bleeding in the car and "dragged her out a door until her body slammed on the ground":

"I saw the woman drive around the block with the cops behind her. She looked terrified. She was riding around on three flat tires (shot out by cops)... "They pulled the car over... One cop shot. Boom. She panicked. It looked like she tried to lay down. Then she sat up. Everybody started shooting. One cop stood on the hood of a patrol car and fired twice through her windshield." "The man said cops threw open the car doors and handcuffed Ferraro. "One cop yelled, "Drag that bitch out of the car." Another cop looked under the seat and said, "No gun!"

It was a cop execution on the streets of New York. After the killing comes the lies. There were "questions"—like "what Mrs. Ferraro was doing in East Harlem between 1 and 2 a.m." For the cops, the only reason a light-skinned woman could be in Harlem at night was to buy drugs. But there were no drugs in the car, either. Her husband said she was visiting friends, whom she saw frequently. Lydia Ferraro, 32, born in Venezuela, lived with her husband and 11-year-old daughter in New Jersey. She had friends

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Florescu/Newsday



Lydia Ferraro was executed in her car by NYPD for running a red light in East Harlem.

Newsday