

## Godfather of CIA's Murder, Inc.

# The Bush File

In 1986 the country was rocked by revelations that the Reagan/Bush administration, in their drive to "roll back Communism" in Central America, was secretly delivering U.S. arms to Khomeini and running a drugs-for-guns operation to finance the cutthroat Nicaraguan contras. It looked like Reagan was down for the count, and Bush's hope of taking the White House likewise. Now, two years later, George Herbert Walker Bush is about to be inaugurated President of the United States.

How did this come to pass? In order to protect the imperial presidency, the

Republicans stonewalled and the Democrats covered up. Liberal Democrat Mario Cuomo said he was "praying that we never learn that he [Reagan] knew all about this." Walter Mondale "warned that the worst thing for the country and the party would be an all-out attack on the President" (*New York Times*, 27 November 1986). And in the recent election campaign you couldn't read the word "Contragate" on the lips of either candidate.

The Congressional "investigation" became a forum for contra terror starring  
*continued on page 7*



George Bush, former CIA director, at the center of murder and mayhem.  
*Der Spiegel*

# Homeless U.S.A.

As Ronald Reagan flew off to the West Coast for his Christmas holiday, he gave a "farewell interview" to David Brinkley, blithely claiming the homeless on the streets "make it their own choice for staying out there." But as frigid temperatures hit California last week six people died of the cold, and one homeless man was found dead in an avocado grove near Reagan's ranch in the Santa Ynez Mountains northwest of Los Angeles. Meanwhile, back in Washington a judge refused to open two of the city's shelters for the holidays, claiming he didn't have "enough evidence" that D.C.'s estimated 10,000 homeless needed the space!

In New York City, Edward Rutter was found dead on a bench in Tompkins Square Park, the scene last summer of a bloody cop riot against protesters. Many were objecting to the "gentrification" of the neighborhood that drove poor people out of affordable housing. One of his companions, Eliot Lopez, said the night before he had covered Rutter with blankets and brought him close to a fire he had built in a metal garbage can. During the night police came and kicked out the fire. The next morning Lopez woke up and found Rutter dead, one hand stretched toward the garbage can where the fire had been burning.

Six people have frozen to death so far this winter in NYC, and the worst weather hasn't even arrived yet. On the morning of December 18, the same day 20,000 demonstrators led by Jesse Jackson marched in the bitter cold to protest homelessness, police found the frozen body of a middle-aged black man, huddled against a wall on the Lower East Side.

As the bodies were being pulled off NYC's filthy, mean streets, the Centers for Disease Control announced that the number of people who have frozen to death per year has more than doubled in the past decade. In 1985, the last year for which the CDC had complete figures,

## Bush's "Kinder, Gentler" America



Couple in Chicago huddle in doorway against freezing cold.  
*Patricia Minter/Impact Visuals*

1,010 died from the cold, up from 427 in 1976. The reason? The vast explosion in homelessness under Reagan, the direct result of the savage austerity inflicted on workers and the poor, the willful abandonment of the inner cities, the collapse of whole sections of American industry.

America's rulers and their capitalist economy have created an entire surplus population, overwhelmingly black and minority, and dumped them literally to die in the streets. George Bush says he wants a "kinder, gentler" nation—but

cruelty, brutality and savage indifference toward the poor and homeless have been the hallmark of the Reagan-Bush years. In the last eight years the budget for federally-supported housing was slashed from \$30 billion to just \$7 billion. Now Bush has appointed right-wing economic nut Jack Kemp to be the nation's housing director. Perhaps he has plans to condo the sidewalks.

The Reagan gang, abetted by Democratic big city administrations, led the charge to cut welfare benefits. Over the past decade they purged the Social

Security disability rolls of over half a million people, including a substantial number of mentally ill with no means to care for themselves. And Democrats enthusiastically joined the Republicans in passing a grotesquely named "Family Security Act" this fall which will drive mainly black women with children into the streets. As we have written, "Genocide is what this new 'workfare' is all about!"

An estimated *three million* Americans are homeless today. They are  
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# Free All Victims of Apartheid Repression!

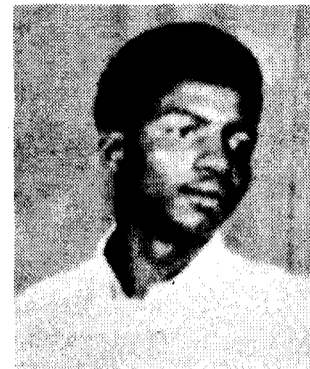
South Africa's white-supremacist rulers continue to tighten the screws on all internal dissent. After cynically suggesting that African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela would be released after 25 years in prison, the hated apartheid regime instead moved him to a secluded prison farm. In November the government shut down the liberal newspaper *The Weekly Mail*. On December 14 ten members of the African National Congress were sentenced to terms of 2 to 15 years. Charles Bester, an 18-year-old white pacifist who refused to enter the armed forces, was sent to prison for six years, and the End Conscription Campaign has been effectively banned.

On December 12, after two and a half years in detention, Moses Mayekiso was released on bail. Mayekiso, general secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, and four of his comrades face life imprisonment on

charges of treason, subversion and sedition for their roles as leaders of the Alexandra Action Committee—which organized the February 1986 revolt in the Alexandra township.

An effective trade-union organizer, Mayekiso has been a prime target of the vicious apartheid police state at whose hands he has suffered imprisonment and torture. Before their release Mayekiso and his comrades spent nine months in solitary. The Partisan Defense Committee and the sections of the international Spartacist tendency have joined demonstrations around the world calling for his freedom. This international defense campaign won Mayekiso's release—for now. Mass labor actions around the world must be continued and stepped up to keep him out of the dreaded apartheid dungeons.

In response to an international protest campaign, South Africa's president P.W. Botha granted a last-



AFP Photos  
**The Sharpeville Six: Therese Ramashamola, Oupa Diniso, Reid Mokoena, Duma Khumalo, Mojalefa Sefatsa and Francis Mokgesi.**

minute reprieve from execution to the Sharpeville Six on November 23. The Sharpeville Six—Mojalefa Sefatsa, Reid Mokoena, Oupa Diniso, Duma Khumalo, Francis Mokgesi and Therese Ramashamola—were convicted in 1985 by the state's use of a Nazi-like theory of "collective guilt" for "sharing a common purpose" with an enraged crowd of rent strikers who stoned and burned to death a hated collaborator of the white-supremacist regime in September 1984.

The same day they were spared the noose, the Sharpeville Six's application for a new trial was rejected by the Court of Appeals. That court rejected the recantation of key prosecution witnesses who testified they were beaten by the cops and forced to perjure themselves at trial. Initially sentenced to die for their opposition to apartheid, the Sharpeville Six remain in the hands of the state's bloody jailers with sentences ranging from 18 to 25 years.

While world attention focused on the Sharpeville Six reprieve, the apartheid hangman went about business as usual. Just one day later five more black and "coloured" (mixed-race) victims went to the gallows. As the *New York Times* (1 December 1988) reported, "Hangings Now Routine at Pretoria Prison." Together with the U.S., South Africa is among the few industrial powers which retain the death penalty. In both countries, capital punishment is the legacy of racial subjugation which denied to whole peoples fundamental rights, reducing man to a beast of burden. In 1987, some 164 people were put to death in South Africa and in 1988 another 115 were executed as of November 25. At present, 270 people remain on death row, most of them black. "Justice" Min-

ister Kobie H. Coetsee declared that 83 death row inmates face execution for "politically motivated crimes."

Many anti-apartheid activists never make it to court. In October recent cases of cop terror directed against black activists exploded in the South African press: one man "disappeared" in custody, another suffered a brain hemorrhage hours after arrest, and a third man was choked by a cop's boot applied to his neck.

\* \* \*

On December 8 the three-year trial of 19 anti-apartheid activists came to a close. Eleven leaders and supporters of the United Democratic Front (UDF) were convicted on charges of treason and terrorism, five of them sentenced to prison for terms ranging from 5 to 12 years. Six others received suspended sentences on condition that they not take part in any further political activities or talk to the press!

Behind the Delmas trial, named for the town where it began, is the government's determination to behead the UDF and the leadership of the township revolts which swept South Africa from 1984 to 1986. As the largest anti-apartheid organization still "legal," the UDF is already severely restricted under South Africa's emergency decrees. The trial was a crippling blow. General secretary Popo Molefe and publicity secretary Patrick Lekota, already held without bail for three years pending trial, were sentenced to 12 years. The court declared the UDF to be the internal wing of the outlawed African National Congress, a sure signal of its

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## Long Live the Memory of Luxemburg and Liebknecht!

Seventy years ago, on 15 January 1919, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were murdered by counterrevolutionary troops sent to suppress the Spartacus uprising of January 1919 in Berlin. In commemorating these heroic revolutionary leaders of the German proletariat with this statement by the International Labor Defense, founded by the Communist Party



LENIN

TROTSKY

in the 1920s, we rededicate ourselves to the cause for which they fought and died—the international socialist revolution.

The name and tradition of *Spartacus* is dear to the heart of every working class rebel in the world, and particularly to those of Germany. Spartacus is for them the standard of revolutionary courage against the perfidy, cowardice and betrayal of the bureaucratic leaders during the imperialist war, the banner borne by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and their comrades. Spartacus is for them the flag of struggle which led them in the January uprising in 1919 to a heroic attempt at the final victory of the oppressed. Spartacus is for them the ineradicable memory of those two peerless leaders who were foully murdered on January 15, 1919 by the drunken agents of reaction who worked with the connivance of the Social-democratic Scheidemanns and Noskes.

The portentous signs of new struggles and new victories of the working class, and the gathering of the clouds of another world imperialist war sharpen for all of us the immortal memories of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. They bring to mind a scene of Berlin's Spartacus days:

"All found with arms are shot dead. With hands raised the revolutionaries, beaten and spat upon by the soldiers, march to the barracks. Here they are placed against a wall and threatened for hours with death. A sixteen year old young corporal is ordered to shout, 'Long live Scheidemann.' With pale face he turns to his tormentors and calls, 'Long live Liebknecht!' A rifle shot, and he falls dead to the ground."

But above the crack of the rifle shots that wound and kill the fighters in the army of liberation rises the deathless cry: *Spartacus still lives!*

—"Spartacus," *Labor Defender* (February 1928)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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6 January 1989

# Richard S. Fraser



30 June 1913—27 November 1988

## MEMORIAL MEETING

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2:00-6:00 p.m.

Sheraton Town House  
Terrace Room, 2961 Wilshire Blvd.  
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LOS ANGELES

# Labor Notes Loves Company Cops

For years the venal AFL-CIO bureaucracy has been welcoming police "unions" into its ranks, both to pump up its sagging dues base and to underline its renunciation of class struggle. Yet many workers, especially blacks and other minorities, know by experience that the cops are not their union "brothers" and "sisters," but rather the armed agents of the bosses who should be expelled from the unions. Phony "leftists," tagging along after the bureaucrats, have generally avoided the subject, except perhaps for the political bandits of the Workers League, whose *Bulletin* years ago hailed an NYC police "strike" and claimed cops are part of the workers movement (a position they have never repudiated).

Now *Labor Notes*, issued by the remnant trade-union supporters of the defunct International Socialists, has

gone one step further into the bosses' swamp, if that's possible: their November issue has an article, "Guards Protest Job Loss, Wage Cuts at Chrysler," sympathetically reporting on a September demonstration in Michigan by hundreds of company "security" guards employed by Chrysler, Ford and GM, members of something called the "United Plant Guard Workers of America."

These are the thugs and spies who sign up with a particular boss to commit strikebreaking and other nefarious acts—the Pinkertons and their ilk, the lowest sort of cop. Back in 1937 at Ford they were known as Harry Bennett's "service" men, and when United Automobile Workers (UAW) organizers Walter Reuther and Richard Frankensteen showed up at the giant River Rouge plant to peacefully hand out leaf-

lets to workers, they were viciously assaulted by these company goons in what came to be known as the Battle of the Overpass. Reuther was beaten to the ground while Frankensteen, according to an eyewitness, was spread-eagled by four or five men as others "proceeded to kick him in the crotch and groin, and left kidney and around the head and also to gore him with their heels in the abdomen" (Irving Bernstein, *Turbulent Years* [1971]).

If the company goons aren't beating up UAW officials right now, it's not because the guards have changed their objective role but because the union tops have come to play the political role of company cops, giving up all pretense of fighting the company. Symbolic of this "cooperation" was then-UAW chief Doug Fraser's taking a seat on the

Chrysler board of directors in the early '80s in exchange for accepting massive layoffs.

So now Chrysler is imposing a little austerity on its police force, and the would-be bureaucrats of *Labor Notes*, following in the footsteps of their social-democratic political mentors at Solidarity House, are singing the praises of the supposedly downtrodden "security force" which in the words of *Labor Notes* "has protected the company's facilities from theft, fire, vandalism and even espionage during World War II, for well over a half of a century... it has built a record of dedication and loyalty to duty"! What's next—a Harry Bennett Scholarship Fund? American social democracy became a stinking corpse decades ago, but it seems the putrefaction continues. ■

## Letter

# Skinheads and Fascism

11/6/88

To the Editors,

In your Nov. 4 issue, you have an article entitled, "Skinheads: Psycho Killers on the Loose" (reprinted from the October 1988 "Workers Hammer," your British sister publication).

Towards the end of the article there's a damning indictment of a large segment of the West German Left, the Autonomen. "In West Germany today there is a large lumpenized milieu of the 'no future' generation—from squatters and Autonomen anarchists to the various skinhead gangs—in which the lines between left and right are totally blurred."

But you also have another piece in the same issue, "West German Unions, Radicals Stop Nazis" (taken from the Nov.-Dec. 1988 paper of your German comrades). It has a dramatically different view of the Autonomen. It states:

"But when the NPD/FAP/skinhead scum announced their October 15 provocation, they encountered mounting outrage and protest. Anti-fascist youth organizations, spearheaded by the anarchist Autonomen, mobilized across the country for a protest on the 15th at Friedberger Platz. Their clear intent was to stop the fascist rally which was to meet only 1,000 meters away at Merianplatz. They called in a leaflet for joining forces with a second anti-fascist protest called by the powerful West German trade-union federation, the DGB."

Obviously your British and German comrades don't exactly see eye-to-eye on who's a borderline stormtrooper and who isn't! So, which is it? Are the Autonomen a bunch of crazy, drug saturated, looters, purse-snatchers, etc., devoid of any genuine leftist principles, who could easily make the transition into becoming latter-day S.S. by the time the 1990's roll around?

Or are they (as I would maintain) a movement of hard anti-racist, anti-capitalist street fighters whose sincerity and commitment is just as great as any Communist (however flawed their ideology and tactics may be)? They damn sure can't be both. Where does W.V. stand on the question?

Tony Costello,  
San Francisco

*WV replies:* In one sense Tony Costello's letter is based on a simple confusion. We did not equate *Autonomen* anarchists with skinhead fascists. Rather we stated that the *Autonomen* and skinheads inhabit the same broad

lumpen milieu, which is politically highly fluid with groupings and individuals easily shifting from the extreme left to the extreme right.

Tony Costello insists that the *Autonomen* must be either devils or angels (he maintains the latter), either budding Nazi stormtroopers or sterling anti-fascist fighters. The reality is far more contradictory. They are one of the degeneration products of the German New Left, which hung on a lot longer than in the U.S. Today they can bring out several thousands against the fascists, police terror or Ronald Rea-

skins is pushing anti-Communist propaganda denouncing the pro-Moscow Stalinists for serving the "paymasters" and "bosses of Moscow and East Berlin." And in two recent demonstrations these "Redskins" have physically attacked our comrades of the *Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands*.

What are the skinheads? This loathsome phenomenon originated in Britain, the one Western country where a large fraction of white, lower-class youth is permanently lumpenized. The skinheads were distinguished from other currents of youth pop culture as a



Spartakist



Guardian [London]

So-called "Redskins" in Berlin, August 1988 (left). Hitlerite skinheads in Paris, May 1988 (right).

gan. Within the loose, heterogeneous *Autonomen* movement are to be found hatred for the bourgeois order and also a strong impulse toward violence and resurgent German nationalism. Thus the *Autonomen* shade into the Redskins, self-styled "left-wing" skinhead gangs.

A recent article in the *New Yorker* (28 November 1988) describes the *interpenetration* of *Autonomen* and Redskins in the Kreuzberg district of West Berlin. Brigitte Bitomsky recounts how a group of Redskins trashed the restaurant run by her and her husband Hartmut, a well-known left-wing filmmaker and critic. Suddenly 20 people broke in, "dressed like the British skinheads, in jeans and bomber jackets and fighting boots," and threw tables, chairs, lamps, glasses. When the attackers returned later for a "people's trial" of the Bitomskys, they asked for protection money.

Here you can see a continuum between petty criminality, Redskins and *Autonomen*. *Autonomen* insist to the point of violence that the Redskins are their comrades-in-arms. In West Berlin, the "front-line city" of the Cold War, the main activity of the ex-Maoist Red-

*cult of violence*. Punks may have grooved on rock music. But the skins were into busting heads. Long before they took up the Nazi salute and swastika, the skinheads were identified with promiscuous attacks on the public at large.

In the U.S., there have been some isolated groups of punks and "ska skins" who claim to be against the racist terror of the Nazi skinheads, but as a recent article in *Rolling Stone* (1 December 1988) reports, "in most places, ska skins are a diminished, barely visible contingent." At best they are some very mixed-up kids, and no matter what is going on inside their heads, by donning the characteristic skinhead uniform they naturally are taken for these *fascist killers*; and equally naturally, blacks and many others will respond with fear and loathing.

From California to West Berlin, the shaved head and "Doc Marten" boots have become symbols of a new generation of would-be Nazi stormtroopers. Nonetheless, out of extreme disorientation or outright cynicism, a number of left groups have sought to embrace a section of the skinheads. This has reached the point that in Britain the

conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue."

In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx refers to this layer as "scum, offal, refuse of all classes."

In some cases, from Chicago to Paris suburbs, there have been fights between fascist skinheads and "anti-racist" skinheads. Yet far from there being a sharp blood line between skinheads and supposed "hard anti-racist, anti-capitalist street fighters," their taste for gang clashes is a common political thread. Divorced from the organized labor movement and from productive work, the lumpen milieu is prone toward social nihilism. Fascist ideology, too, appeals to violent nihilism.

There is another link between the *Autonomen*, "Redskins" and fascist skinheads besides a shared lumpen lifestyle. That is resurgent nationalism directed against both the U.S. and Russia. A key slogan of European skinheads, both the out-and-out fascists and the "Redskins," is "Neither Washington Nor Moscow." German nationalism could well serve as a bridge between today's *Autonom* anarchist or Green pacifist and tomorrow's neo-Nazi. ■

# Militant University Workers Strike Sold Out

## Mexico: Break with Cárdenas Popular Front!

MEXICO CITY—On December 1, the new president of Mexico's crisis-ridden regime took office as more than 100 opposition deputies walked out of Congress in protest. Carlos Salinas de Gortari was hand-picked by his predecessor and imposed by the ruling PRI ("Institutional Revolutionary Party") in an election marked by some of the highest levels of fraud ever. For months, the country was racked by marches of hundreds of thousands proclaiming the victor to be Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the former PRI leader backed by a coalition of leftist and nationalist parties.

As Salinas donned the green, white and red presidential sash, the red and black banners that mean "strike" were flying at the country's premier educational institution, UNAM, the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Salinas is widely hated as the "Harvard Boy" technocrat known as "Charlie Cutback" for his role in slashing budgets to the bone and cutting real wages by more than 50 percent during the last six years. Real wages are now at the lowest level since 1940! And now the PRI government is demanding that unions accept a 10 percent limit on wage increases, less than *one-tenth* the inflation rate over the last year.

Millions of Mexican workers are fed up, looking for a way to fight back, and throughout the month of November their attention focused on the strike by the 25,000 members of STUNAM, the UNAM workers union. In the U.S. during campus strikes, all too often unions scab on each other, students cross picket lines and business goes on more or less as usual. At UNAM, with its 300,000 students, buildings were sealed shut or occupied by the strikers, the administration had to pack up and leave campus, and classes were shut down, although a few scab teachers tried to hold classes off campus.

Demanding a 50 percent wage hike, STUNAM went directly up against the government's wage controls. Strikers said: "10 por ciento—¡ni madre! ¡Abajo el tope salarial!" ("Ten percent—no way! Down with the wage limit!") A statement of support by electrical workers, auto workers, seamstresses and other unions declared that the STUNAM strike is "the most just protest

action which the workers of this country have carried out in recent years." On three different occasions, tens of thousands of strikers and their supporters marched to Mexico City's Zócalo square opposite the presidential palace.

The highly visible STUNAM strike could have been the spark detonating a *general working-class offensive* against starvation wages and government repression. Strikers and student sup-

tate to sell off state-owned industry. It was necessary to fight to bring these and other workers out in *joint strike action* for the common cause of labor. This poses the need for *elected strike committees* to take the struggle out of the hands of sellout union bureaucrats.

But this means *political struggle* to defeat the bourgeois government, which is hardlining its wage freeze in the interests of the capitalist class and

"October 2 will never be forgotten" with chants of "Cuauh-té-moc, Cuauh-té-moc," the 20th anniversary rally was made into a mockery with Muñoz Ledo sharing the platform with survivors of the massacre, as well as Rosario Ibarra, ex-presidential candidate of the fake-Trotskyist Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers Party) and spokesmen for the Morenoite Partido de los Trabajadores Zapatistas (PTZ—Zapatista Workers Party) and other leftists—*none* of whom denounced this revolting "unity" of *victims and executioners*.

### Break with the Cardenista Popular Front!

To win strikes, to defend its most basic interests in the face of the savage starvation-wage offensive of the ruling class, the working class must *break with the bourgeoisie*; it must break from the Cardenista popular front. But the Mexican fake-left seeks only to "deepen" its subordination to Cárdenas. The Partido Mexicano Socialista (Mexican

Mexico's National University workers take on IMF-ordered austerity.



porters who raised funds in the streets and subways encountered widespread sympathy among workers, the poor and sections of the middle class. But apart from the token 24-hour shutdown of universities around the country, the STUNAM strike remained isolated and thereby condemned to defeat. Even the most complete campus shutdown does not hit the bourgeoisie's profits. To win, the strike had to be *extended*—not only to all the country's campuses, but above all to *strategic* sections of the combative Mexican working class.

Transport workers can bring Mexico City, the world's largest metropolis, to a grinding halt. The powerful electrical workers union, which can pull the switch on the entire country, was negotiating its contract at the same time. Sugar workers and telegraph workers struck briefly against the wage limits. Copper miners and airline workers are facing wholesale liquidation of their jobs as Salinas follows Wall Street's dic-

the bloodsucking bankers' cartel, the International Monetary Fund. It means taking on the corporatist structure of arbitration and conciliation boards that shackle the unions, institutionalized class collaboration unchallenged by the trade-union bureaucracy, both pro-government and "independent." But from the beginning, the STUNAM leadership insisted, "Our strike is not political.... We aren't suffering from *strikitis*." Virtually from the first day of the strike, the bureaucrats sabotaged the action, trying and finally succeeding in calling it off.

And above all, it means breaking with the Cardenista popular front which has subordinated the left and the workers movement, including STUNAM and other "independent" unions. After a series of powerful strikes against austerity in 1987, a bourgeois populist opposition was launched by ex-PRI politico Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas to divert the workers' struggles into the dead end of electoralism. When Aeroméxico workers were forced to strike during the presidential campaign, they were left hanging in the wind by the rest of the "independent" unions which threw their energies into the Cárdenas campaign. And while he was featured speaker at a STUNAM strike rally at the Zócalo in mid-November, three days later Cárdenas called for "reconciliation" (*concertación*) with the government to solve Mexico's problems.

The role of the popular front is precisely to *prevent* the massive outbreak of class struggle. This "people's unity" of exploiters and exploited has led to some truly obscene spectacles. October 2, 1988 was the 20th anniversary of the infamous Tlatelolco Massacre of protesting students by the PRI regime of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz. After the massacre, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo—then PRI party chief, now Cárdenas' right-hand man—made a name for himself denouncing the students for "adventurist voluntarism" while praising the butcher Díaz Ordaz and his defense of "order."

As the crowd alternated chants of

Socialist Party)—formed last year by the ex-Communist Party with sundry other nationalists and reformists—is preparing to dissolve into Cárdenas' new Party of the Democratic Revolution. During the strike it faithfully echoed the STUNAM leaders' rantings against "splitters" within the union who sought to oppose the union tops' escalating efforts to liquidate the strike.

Despite the McCarthyite redbaiting by UNAM rector Jorge Carpizo, who ranted that the strike was the result of a PRT plot, the Mexican section of E. Mandel's "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" is far from a group of flaming reds. Reeling from a financial crisis brought on by the loss of its parliamentary fraction and thus its government subsidy, the PRT seeks to "win democracy" through "deepening its alliance with the Cárdenas popular front." This includes seeking *joint candidates* with the Cardenistas, i.e., openly and formally integrating into the popular front. During the STUNAM strike, a PRT leaflet pushed "student power" illusions pushed by Cárdenas' pet student leaders (who include prominent ex-members of the PRT).

Meanwhile, the PTZ, trained in capitulation to bourgeois populism by their deceased mentor, Argentine adventurer Nahuel Moreno, prostrated itself before Cárdenas. In a 16 November 1988 leaflet it begged "the Cardenistas, who have been carrying out important mobilizations since July 6," the date of the presidential elections, to turn these mobilizations to support STUNAM and place them "at the service of all the struggles against the government, the bosses and their partners in the IMF" as well as to push for an increase in university budgets!

While the PTZ claims to be Trotskyist, it tells the workers to ask the *bourgeois* popular front to win strikes and "serve" the working people! This is the opposite of the policy Trotsky fought for during the 1930s, in Spain and France, when he pounded home the need to break the workers from the

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# U.S. Squeezes Israeli Ally

## Playing the Palestinian Card?

Less than a month after the Reagan administration literally slammed the door on Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat, refusing to allow him into the U.S. to address the United Nations, Washington agreed to hold direct talks with the PLO. While Arafat and various Arab regimes crowded over their "historic victory" in getting a nod from the world's foremost imperialist war criminals, Israel responded with undisguised (and unsurprising) bitterness. Even as an American envoy and PLO representatives were holding their first meeting in Carthage, Tunisia, on December 16, Israeli troops in the West Bank village of Nablus were aiming high-velocity bullets at the heads of Palestinians attending the funeral of a youth killed by the army. By the end of the day, eight more lay dead or dying. That was Israel's comment on the U.S.-PLO "dialogue."

Reagan, Shultz and Bush claim that the U.S. finally agreed to meet with the PLO simply because Arafat met Washington's longstanding conditions that the PLO renounce "terrorism," recognize Zionist Israel and accept UN resolutions 242 and 338, guaranteeing Israel "secure borders" in exchange for withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. But there is nothing substantively new in the PLO's stance. For years, more or less since 1974 when it adopted the call for a mini-state in the Occupied Territories, the PLO has effectively accepted the existence of Zionist Israel.

At the November Palestine National Council meeting in Algiers, Arafat dotted the i's and crossed the t's, capping a yearlong diplomatic offensive aimed at capitalizing on international sympathy for the *intifada*—the Palestinian uprising in the Occupied Territories—as a means of pressuring the U.S. to put the squeeze on its Israeli ally. Even then, the Americans forced Arafat to crawl before acquiescing. Shultz's first response to the Algiers declaration was to refuse Arafat a visa to enter the U.S. Then a meeting was organized in Stockholm between Arafat and a delegation of American Jews—notably including a spokesman for the International Network of Children of Holo-

comma for comma. Harassed by imperialist press sharks to not only renounce violence but acquiesce to a demilitarized "state" while nothing is ever demanded of the berserk Zionist state terrorists, even the pliant Arafat finally got fed up: "Why do you demand something of me and not the Israelis? The Israelis are allowed to be afraid of us, but I am not

point. Fortress Israel is still central to American designs to forge an anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" in the Near East, and any American administration intent on breaking with Israel would have to contend with the sizable and potent Zionist lobby in the U.S. But the yearlong Palestinian uprising in the Occupied Territories has brought to a



Yasir Arafat meets with representatives of American Jewish groups in Stockholm in December.

allowed to be afraid of them?"

Likud prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, echoed by "Labor" leader Shimon Peres, denounced the American decision and insisted: "We are not ready and will never be ready to talk to the P.L.O." After nearly two months of internecine bickering over the formation of a new government, Shamir argued that another coalition with Labor had become necessary "to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state." The new Labor-Likud coalition is committed to expanding the number of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and hardlining against American pressure to begin negotiat-

head American frustration with Israel's intransigence, as well as polarizing Israeli society and, even more so, American Jews. The American rulers are concerned that the Near East could blow up in their faces.

The Israelis have dismissed every admonition by their senior partners in Washington to scale down the gratuitous level of their brutality in the Occupied Territories and cease being an obstacle to an accommodation with America's anti-Soviet client states among the Arab regimes, arrogantly assuming that the U.S. has no alternative but to continue supporting the

Mideast" in the *New York Times* (19 December 1988) warned that if the Israelis refuse to "face up to the idea that some type of Palestinian homeland has to be established in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip," they "run the risk of alienating the United States and a significant section of American Jewry." But, it noted soberly, the Israelis "may find the hard choices set before them so overwhelming that they will dig in their heels and man the barricades."

Days later, Pan Am Flight 103 exploded in the skies above Scotland, killing all 259 people aboard, apparently the target of a powerful, sophisticated bomb. The London to New York flight was packed with American passengers, reportedly including the CIA's Lebanon station chief, as well as a Swedish UN official. It was subsequently revealed that the U.S. embassy in Helsinki had received an anonymous tip days earlier warning of a bomb attack by the shadowy "Abu Nidal" against a Pan Am flight originating, as 103 did, in Frankfurt. The FBI dismissed the Helsinki tip as a "hoax" and likewise dismissed a handful of calls claiming responsibility. Yet Bush and Reagan are vowing to wreak vengeance, and a second carrier group centered on the USS *Teddy Roosevelt* (The Big Stick) has been dispatched to join the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

American "terrorism expert" George Carver of the Center for Strategic and International Studies observed that the perpetrators may choose anonymity in order "to point the finger of suspicion and blame toward someone else" (CBS-TV News, 29 December 1988). *Cui bono*—who benefits? The PLO has made repeated warnings recently that the Mossad (Israeli intelligence) might try a provocation aimed at disrupting any possibility of a rapprochement with the U.S. Needless to say, the Mossad is now pointing the finger of suspicion and blame at various Palestinian groups, including Ahmad Jibril's PFLP-General Command, based in Syria, which the Israelis have long targeted for another war. The London *Guardian* (23 December 1988) conspicuously concluded a piece on possible suspects by observing, "The remaining candidate for the atrocity from the Middle East could, the PLO fear, be Mossad..."

To be sure, the Israelis have a good chance of facing down the current American diplomatic opening toward the PLO through a combination of American Zionist pressure and terrorist provocations aimed at discrediting the PLO. But, as we noted in our article, "Palestinian Uprising—A Year of Defiance" (*WV* No. 466, 2 December 1988): "It is certainly not out of the question that U.S. imperialism could do a turnaround in the Near East if it saw that as a road to achieving a more stable anti-Soviet consensus with the bourgeois Arab regimes." It was only after the 1967 Arab-Israel war that the U.S. took on the role of chief imperialist quartermaster for the Zionist regime—before that it was France.

Impressionistic leftists to the contrary, Israel is not simply a puppet of the U.S. The Israeli bourgeoisie has its own, expansionist, national agenda and it has the military wherewithal to pursue it, or failing that, to take the region and possibly the world down with it in a nuclear holocaust. Even if a more flexible government came to power in Jerusalem, any attempt to pull out of the Occupied Territories would likely ignite a civil war within Israel. On the other hand, the game of musical chairs played out in

*continued on page 8*



Israeli "Labor" Party's Shimon Peres (left) and Likud's Yitzhak Shamir lead coalition regime of Zionist terror against Palestinians.



caust Survivors—where Arafat reiterated his acceptance of the American conditions, again to no avail.

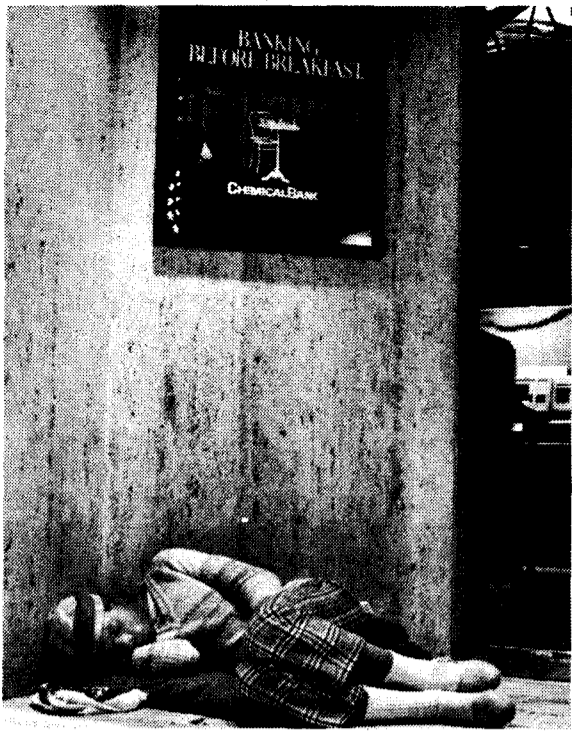
Finally, a day after his speech to the special UN session in Geneva, following feverish negotiations between the State Department and the PLO with the Swedes acting as intermediaries, Arafat read a statement literally dictated by the U.S.—in English—word for word,

ing. The basis of the coalition, Peres emphasized, is "no negotiations with the P.L.O." Even the staunchly pro-Zionist *New York Times* (21 December 1988) could not hide its exasperation: "The world has turned, but not Israel's leadership."

Has U.S. imperialism decided to play the Palestinian card and jilt its Israeli junior partners? Certainly not at this

Zionist madmen in Jerusalem. When the Israelis chose the first anniversary of the uprising on December 9 as the occasion for a massive ground incursion deep inside Lebanon, Secretary of State George Shultz snapped, "I would have thought that, by this time, the Israelis would have learned their lesson about putting troops well inside of Lebanon."

An article titled "Reality Time in



Christmas in NYC: homeless sleep in Grand Central Station (left). Spartacists at December 18 rally for the homeless which brought out 20,000.



## Homeless...

(continued from page 1)

everywhere: sleeping on steam vents next to Washington, D.C.'s huge imperial bureaucratic warrens; hiding in steam tunnels and underground catacombs in New York's Grand Central and Penn stations; camping out in cars in shopping centers and wooded areas in the suburbs. The U.S. Conference of Mayors recently estimated that as many as 22 percent of the homeless nationwide had jobs, while in some cities, like San Antonio, more than half the homeless work. In America today thousands of young families are living in rusting cars, bathing their children in public park fountains, or fighting off mice and rats from their babies' cots in the big cities' inhuman shelters.

### NYC: You Can't Live Here Anymore

This acute crisis has reached its height in New York City, where the contradictions of this rotting capitalist system and its housing crisis are most extreme. America's rulers, from Reagan to NYC's despicable Ed Koch, claim the homeless are simply crazies or alcoholics who are on the streets because they want to be. The bourgeoisie's only "policy" is to try to get them out of the sight of tourists and executives. The *New York Times* headlined a Christmas day editorial "At Least Help the Homeless Off the Street," complaining that "As the homeless proliferate in public, they threaten quality of life for everyone. Citizens are entitled to minimal decency on the streets." For the haughty *Times*, which yearns for the days when you had to own property to vote, the homeless aren't citizens.

The reason for homelessness is stark and simple: people can't afford a place to live. Between 1970 and 1982, New York City lost 87 percent of its low-rent SRO (single room occupancy) hotel rooms. Whole neighborhoods of low-income housing were razed or burnt to clear the way for "gentrification." Today, there is no affordable housing in NYC; studio apartments start at \$700 a month, and even yuppies are reduced to living on friends' couches. Episcopalian Bishop Paul Moore Jr. called NYC the "Calcutta of the West."

It all comes together in the subways, where several thousand sleep at night and plead daily for money. Many are frighteningly thin and weak. Many subway riders respond sympathetically. But NYC's sadistic mayor Koch launched a campaign against "panhandling" last June, telling businessmen to "just say no" and "if you feel guilty, see a priest." Meanwhile, dozens of homeless have camped out in the park surrounding Koch's office in City Hall for months. His response has been periodic police sweeps to dump their possessions on the sidewalk.

When the mayor (who has promised a

"kinder, gentler" Koch in '89) found out that some of the families in NYC's dirty, dangerous shelters actually had managed to find jobs, he incredibly proposed charging them *rent*, as much as \$215 per month! It would build character, the arrogant racist mayor said, piously whining, "there is nothing free in this world" (*New York Times*, 7 December 1988). Except for the real estate barons who run New York, that is—the NYC government gave "condo king" Donald Trump a hefty gift of over \$6 million in tax abatements to build his pleasure palace Trump Tower.

In a November 25 demonstration at Trump Tower, ACT-UP militants chanted, "Housing for people with AIDS! Not towers with maids!" and pointed out that \$6 million could have rehabilitated some 1,200 city-owned apartments. Meanwhile, landlords are "warehousing" thousands of apartments, keeping them empty for condo conversion; the welfare hotels that have milked the city for decades now too are moving welfare families out of the remaining SRO rooms. And when demonstrators protested this cruel "warehousing," the cops dragged off 43 of them. We say: Expropriate the real estate barons! Homeless should seize Trump City!

### From Protest to Power

For many of the "working poor" today, the slide into homelessness is

only one paycheck, one accident, one apartment fire, one farm mortgage foreclosure away. But for the American black population, segregated at the bottom of the economy, the situation is even more desperate. Most black youth have never held a job, and have no chance of finding one. And now, an ominous report issued by the National Center for Health Statistics reports that for the first time in this century, black life expectancy has fallen, two years in a row.

For the black population, it's gone beyond a fight for basic rights—it's a battle for *survival*. To succeed, this struggle must confront—and destroy—the capitalist system which is at the root of their hideous oppression. The open and shameful spectacle of countless thousands of Americans reduced to begging on the streets has generated a growing number of protests. Vigils and symbolic civil disobedience, led by veteran liberal protesters like Dr. Benjamin Spock, are proliferating. Yet pious appeals to the capitalists and their loyal petty despots in office will not remove the shameful scandal of homelessness.

In Miami, where the homeless are to be swept off the streets to make the Orange Bowl parade look good on TV, homeless activist Brother Paul Johnson related an incident that cuts to the heart of capitalist greed. "I was at a very fancy cocktail party—wealthy, wealthy people—and they thought I was just

wonderful.... One woman asked me, What would I do if I could change any law or could take just one big step to help the homeless? I said I would raise the minimum wage to \$5. She wouldn't talk to me; she said at \$5 she couldn't afford her maid" (*New York Times*, 19 December 1988).

Of course, it's going to take a lot more than even a modestly decent step like raising the minimum wage to resolve the homeless crisis, and to overcome the deadly drive toward genocide for blacks. Food, shelter, clothing are rather more than human rights—they're necessities for life! But to get even that today, what's posed is a fight for power, to wrest control of this economy and this society from the hands of the capitalists who are driving us into the ground. The working people who built this nation have the power to seize the productive wealth we created and that has been expropriated from us. As we wrote after the stock market crash (*WV* No. 439, 30 October 1987):

"You can solve a lot of problems with 'domestic cash transfers'—make life livable for blacks, Hispanics, jobless, homeless, welfare mothers, drug users, etc. And we communists intend to do so. But you have to first smash the power of the bourgeoisie. For that you need to build a workers party, one that doesn't 'respect' the property values of the bourgeoisie, a party that says to the exploited and oppressed: we want more, we want all of it, it ought to be ours, so take it." ■

## Defend Black Bus Driver Beaten by Cops!

### Muni Workers Turn Out for Greg Wiggins



SAN FRANCISCO—About 30 people, including 19 Muni bus drivers, came out to support Greg Wiggins (center, with cane) at his December 21 court hearing at the SF Hall of Justice, and held an impromptu rally afterwards. Wiggins, a black bus driver, was brutally beaten while on duty last October by SF cops shouting racist epithets, and was badly injured in the back, hip, neck and throat. The

lying cops then charged *him* with battery on an officer, resisting arrest and more. Muni drivers are outraged by this racist thug attack and frame-up and are mobilizing to pack the courtroom with union members at Greg's upcoming hearings, January 5 and 12, and at the trial scheduled for January 27. All out to defend Greg Wiggins! Drop the charges now!

WV Photo

# Bush File...

(continued from page 1)

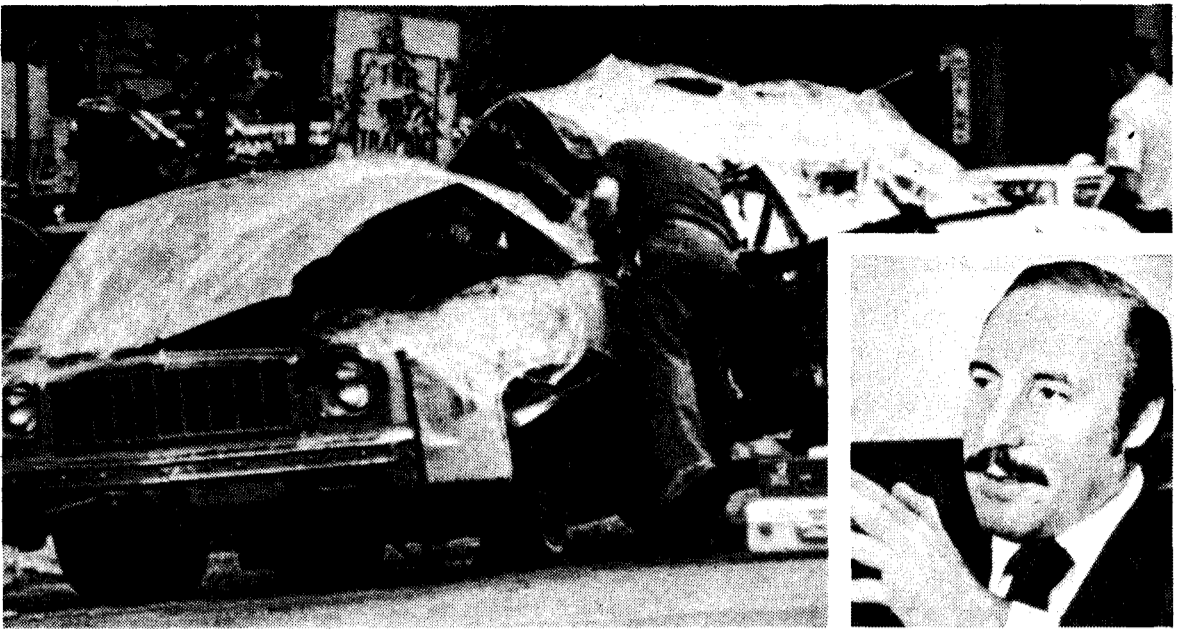
anti-communist psychopath Oliver North. And a year later, all the Democrats could say about Bush's role was "Where was George?" Later they whined that the election was "dirty"—but they didn't go after the dirt. They took a few pokes over drugs and the Noriega connection (a popular bumper sticker in California read, "Bush and Noriega—A Crack Team"). But they steered well clear of the secret armies, the contras' mass murder—the kind of stuff that made Bush's day, every day.

While North has subpoenaed Bush and Reagan to testify, the cover-up held through the elections. They managed to sell the hands-on vice president, former Director of Central Intelligence, member of the National Security Council, as a figurehead who was "out of the loop" while Reagan was out to lunch. But if the Tower Commission and Congressional Democrats looked all around the loop and couldn't find him, it was because *George Bush was at the center of it all*. Bush ran the Iran/Contra operation with an "old boys network" of CIA murderers, thieves and big-time drug-runners.

## Bush's Baby

In 1984 when the Boland Amendment cut off Congressional money for military supplies to the contras, a whole

**Former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier (inset), assassinated in car-bombing in Washington, D.C., 1976 (right). Bush, then CIA director, has Letelier's blood on his hands.**



Wheeler/Washington Post

Lawrence McIntosh

got Che Guevara in Bolivia and who still wears Guevara's watch. Jonathan Kwitny outlines the setup:

"Rodriguez ran the arms depot [in El Salvador], at times talking almost daily with Gregg and meeting at least three times with Bush.... When the Administration decided to expand its already illegal war against Nicaragua by secretly opening a southern front in Costa Rica, it used [Dan] Quayle's office. Quayle's staff aide, Rob Owen, put North in touch with another Hoosier, John Hull, who owned vast lands in northern Costa Rica. Hull's property, with six airstrips, became the secret Contra arms depot and staging base...."

—Los Angeles Times, 4 November 1988

Watson, Donald Gregg's assistant in the vice president's office. Bush was the first to know, *because it was Bush's baby*.

Leslie Cockburn, in her well-researched book *Out of Control* (1987) which details a lot of the Conragate scandal that the media and politicians buried, showed just where the buck stopped:

"Bush's active involvement with the covert operation in Central America is more easily understood in the light of the Byzantine White House covert organization chart. North, for example, served on the Inter-Departmental Group on Terrorism and on the Terrorist Incident Working Group, both of which reported to the Crisis Pro-

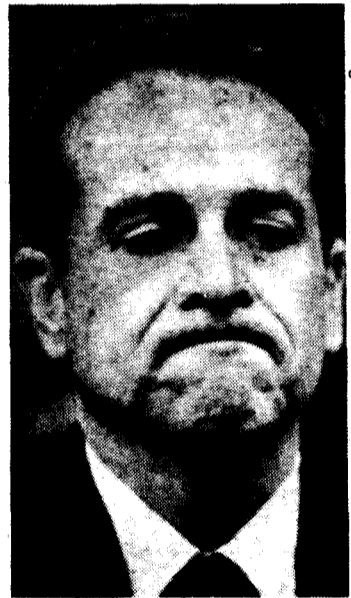
gan, but you better believe that they reported to "Poppy" Bush!

## Letelier's Blood on Bush's Hands

It was from his stint as CIA director in 1976 that Bush had the connections to preside over all this. His 350-day term is generally portrayed as lackluster, his time occupied with smoothing down ruffled feathers on Capitol Hill following the 1975 Church Committee report on CIA skulduggery. He "restored Agency morale" by keeping Congress from snooping into illegal CIA domestic operations under the cover of the Drug Enforcement Agency, shielding assets who had lied about ITT's conniving with the CIA to prevent Salvador Allende from taking office in Chile, covering up for the MKULTRA program in which the CIA tested out LSD on unknowing subjects, etc. But this is small change. For notwithstanding the "ban" on assassinations, The Company was still deep into the business of murder and mayhem.

On 21 September 1976 Orlando Letelier, former Chilean ambassador to the U.S. and the key figure holding together the opposition to the Pinochet dictatorship, was assassinated by a car bomb on Embassy Row in Washington. The bombing was carried out by fascist American bomb expert Michael Townley working with Cuban gusano terrorists in the pay of Chilean butcher Pinochet's secret police organization, DINA. The CIA vultures were up to their gizzards in this bloody murder on the streets of the U.S. capital. As CIA director, Bush was informed that a DINA hit squad was on its way, and again when they entered the U.S. (see "George Bush and the Letelier Assassination," *WV* No. 261, 25 July 1980). After the "hit," Bush stonewalled Congress while the CIA tried to cover the assassins' tracks with the story that Letelier was killed by leftists looking for a martyr.

continued on page 8



Washington Post

**Tight-lipped gusano assassin and contra supplymaster Felix Rodriguez (left). When mercenary Hasenfus was shot down over Nicaragua in 1986, blowing drugs-for-guns operation, Rodriguez called Bush's office.**



Carlos Durán

private operation went into action *run out of Bush's office*. Former CIA Director Bush hired as his security adviser veteran CIA officer Donald Gregg, who had worked on "Operation Phoenix" in Vietnam, the now infamous assassination program which murdered 60,000 people labeled "Viet Cong." Gregg brought in an old CIA friend, Felix Rodriguez, a gusano veteran of the Bay of Pigs fiasco who was part of the hunter-killer squad that

To locate Bush in this loop, just look what happened when it blew up. In 1986 veteran CIA pilot Eugene Hasenfus was shot down over Nicaragua by Sandinista soldiers. If these contra aid missions failed, everybody was supposed to end up dead. But Hasenfus had rigged himself a parachute, and when he was captured he started spilling the beans. From San Salvador, Felix Rodriguez called Washington with the news. Who did he call? Colonel Samuel

Planning Group and the Special Situations Group, both of which in turn shared the same chairman: Vice President George Bush."

"Out of the loop"? After the election it was reported that "As Vice President, Mr. Bush was briefed by the C.I.A. each morning" (*New York Times*, 13 November 1988). Lt. Col. North, Adm. Poindexter & Co. claimed they didn't bother to report "details" of their elaborate Iran/Contra operation to Rea-

# Racist "Justice" Shafts James Brown

In a glaring example of racist American "justice," popular black singer James Brown was sentenced to a *six-year stretch* in a South Carolina prison for a traffic violation—refusing to stop his car for some cracker cops in rural Georgia! Brown's real "crime" in the eyes of his jailers is that he is black and famous. Brown is a reactionary promoter of the "American dream," but his case shows it's still the same old American nightmare for blacks, no matter how rich and well connected, in this deeply racist society.

On September 24, Brown was driving on a rural Georgia road when the cops ordered him over. Scared for his life, Brown hit the accelerator and sped away. There ensued a chase involving between 10 and 14 squad cars ending when cops shot out his tires outside North Augusta, South Carolina.

Brown told the court of his love for the flag and the racist guardians of capitalist law and order: "I respect police. Without them we have nothing." This was no idle plea for leniency. Brown is a notorious promoter of

"black capitalism" and of some of the most reactionary forces in American society. Widely despised by black militants after 1968 when he went on TV to side with the cops against ghetto rebellions following the assassination of M.L. King, Brown went on to support reactionary politicians from Nixon to Reagan. He was also the godfather who funded admitted FBI fink Al Sharpton's National Youth Movement.

But even as he promotes the "American dream," the "godfather of soul" knows that in racist America it's not safe for a black man stopped on a rural road in the heart of the Old Confederacy. Brown apologized to the court and told them, "I was scared to death. I went to Vietnam and I wasn't that frightened." And he was right.

Remember Loyal Garner, who was picked up by cops one year ago for allegedly driving while intoxicated and beaten to death in an East Texas jail.

Brown has had more than his share of run-ins with his beloved cops—seven arrests in the past year and a half, including charges of assaulting his wife. And he certainly deserves the enmity of many of us. But it is an outrage for the capitalist state to throw him into a Southern prison hell for six years for having the good sense to run for his life. Were it Johnny Cash who'd been stopped that night he'd be singing at The Grand Ole Opry next weekend. For James Brown, who 20 years ago sang, "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag," and for the millions of black Americans, it's the same old bag of racist American "justice."

## Bush File...

(continued from page 7)

The Letelier killing was no isolated case. Bush was confirmed as Director of Central Intelligence on 27-January 1976, and gusano terrorists soon began an orgy of terrorism that ran through the duration of Bush's term as DCI. In April, the Cuban embassy in Lisbon was bombed. In June, the Cuban mission to the UN in New York was bombed. In August, two Cuban officials were kidnapped in Buenos Aires. That same month a Cuban airliner was bombed on the ground in Lisbon. And on October 6, three weeks after the Letelier assassination, a bomb blew up a Cuban jetliner in the air after it left Barbados, killing 73 innocent people. The gusano bombers were directly linked to the murder of Letelier:

"After CORU took credit for the October 1976 bombing of a Cubana Airlines jet, which killed all 73 passengers aboard, Venezuelan authorities arrested Posada and Bosch for plotting the deed. In Posada's papers were found a map of Washington, D.C. with the work route of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier, murdered in September 1976 by Cuban exiles working for the Chilean secret police, DINA."

—Jonathan Marshall, Peter Scott, Jane Hunter, *The Iran Contra Connection* (1987)

"Posada" is the same Luis Posada Carriles who emerges ten years later as a deputy to Bush's man Felix Rodriguez in the Nicaraguan contra supply operation. Posada was an old pal of Rodriguez from a 1959-60 CIA anti-Castro assassination operation. In fact, Rodriguez thought so highly of Posada's services that he managed to spring him from a Venezuelan jail where he was serving time for the '76 airplane bombing.

### Old Boys Network Goes Private

Bush's "watch" at the CIA came just after U.S. imperialism had been whipped on the battlefield in Indochina and the "Vietnam syndrome" was most intense. Evidence of widespread CIA covert action atrocities, domestic spying and "dirty tricks" like Watergate was cascading. After the Church Committee hearings led to a ban on official assassination, The Company was desperate to find a way to keep covert actions going. The solution was to go private.

"It was in this period that the network began to set up its own proprietaries, as private companies owned by the CIA are called. Some of these were to become famous when the Iran-contra scandal finally burst on America. They included the Stanford Technology Corp. and Energy Resources. Others, such as CSF Investments Ltd, were specifically Central American in their orientation."

—Cockburn, *Out of Control*

Stanford Technology was run by Richard Secord and Albert Hakim; CSF was a money-laundering operation in the Cayman Islands set up by Theodore Shackley, Thomas Clines, Secord, Hakim and Edmund Wilson. A Contragate rogues' gallery.

In 1976, Bush's associate DDO (Deputy Director of Operations), No. 2 in covert ops, was Theodore Shackley; Thomas Clines was his sidekick. Back in 1962-65, Shackley was head of CIA operations in Miami where he ran raids into Cuba. In 1966-68, Shackley was CIA chief of station in Laos; in 1969-72 he moved to Saigon, also as station chief. Among his aides were Felix Rodriguez and Donald Gregg. Running cross-border operations into North Vietnam at this time was ex-CIA officer General John Singlaub; his director of air support in Laos was Harry Aderholt, whose successor was Richard Secord; a gung ho Marine officer leading one of his "special operations" teams was Oliver North; and way down at the bottom of the totem pole, working as a cargo handler for the CIA's Air America drugs-and-guns operation, was one Eugene Hasenfus. In 1972-73, Shackley ran the "destabilization" of Chile out of CIA headquarters in Langley.

So the gang that brought you Contragate was the same bunch of wild and crazy guys who "lost" Vietnam, bungled the Bay of Pigs and ravaged Chile. And George Herbert Walker Bush was and is their benefactor, first as CIA director, then as vice president, and now as commander in chief of U.S. imperialism. The Democrats didn't nail Reagan and Bush on the Iran/Contra affair because these covert operations are the stock in trade of the declining American empire in its desperate worldwide crusade for counterrevolution. The network Bush brought into play are the hit men for imperialism in its death agony, and it will take world socialist revolution to put this Company out of business for good. ■

## Israel...

(continued from page 5)

forming the latest cabinet reflects widespread turmoil at the base of Israeli Jewish society. Moreover, in his first act as finance minister, Peres is pushing massive "austerity" measures, which will produce thousands of layoffs and slash food subsidies.

The *Jerusalem Post* international edition (31 December 1988) reports that "tens of thousands" turned out for a Peace Now rally in Tel Aviv on December 24 to demand talks with the PLO, a position supported by over half the Israeli population, according to a new survey. This protest, blacked out by the American press, is the largest since Israel's disastrous Lebanon invasion in 1982. At the same time, half the population is in favor of forcible expulsion of the Palestinians from the Occupied Territories. Israeli Jews are desperately grasping at *anything* that looks like a way out of the permanent state of war.

As for the Palestinian people, any illusion that the American imperialist gendarme, the butcher of Indochina, can act as their savior is suicidal. Palestinian nationalists would do well to

recall that when the U.S. went into Lebanon in 1982, it did so to supervise the disarming and departure of PLO fighters on the eve of the Sabra and Shatila massacre. Whatever may come out of the latest U.S.-PLO gambit, it will not and cannot lead to national justice for the Palestinian people. At best, were a Palestinian mini-state to emerge in the Occupied Territories, it would be nothing more than a bantustan under Israeli and/or Jordanian suzerainty.

What lies behind the decades of conflict and horror is that two peoples lay claim to one land—and it is not simply the West Bank, but all of what is currently Israel and Jordan. A just solution is impossible under capitalism, which pits one nation against another; it requires the overthrow of the cutthroat gangs who today rule in Jerusalem and Amman, in Cairo and Baghdad. Israel out of the Occupied Territories! U.S. out of the Near East! For the right of self-determination of the Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab nations in a socialist federation of the Near East! *The only way to end Zionist terror and provide a just solution to the seething cauldron of nationalist conflicts in the Near East is through proletarian revolution throughout the region.* ■



Haolam Hazeq

Tens of thousands of Israelis demonstrate in Tel Aviv, December 24, demanding negotiations with the PLO.

## PDC Notes...

(continued from page 2)

being formally outlawed itself in the near future.

As in the case of the Sharpeville Six, the Delmas trial represents the state's stepped-up proscriptions and prosecutions for thought crimes. To send Molefe, Lekota and four others to jail, the court ruled that under South African law "terrorism" includes a wide

range of nonviolent activities, and that "one can commit high treason without violence." Judge van Dijkhorst cited one UDF statement calling for scrapping apartheid as "an unequivocal declaration of war on the state."

The fight to free the Delmas frame-up victims and all anti-apartheid activists must be taken up in mass international workers protests. On January 2 the PDC sent a protest to the South African embassy calling for:

"...the immediate release of these five UDF leaders. Free Nelson Mandela, the

Sharpeville Six and all imprisoned victims of apartheid repression. Drop the charges against Moses Mayekiso!"

\* \* \*

The Partisan Defense Committee would like to thank all of you who made this year's Holiday Appeal for the class-war prisoners a big success. With fundraising parties in New York, Chicago and the San Francisco Bay Area we raised over \$5,000 for holiday gifts for the prisoners and our program of monthly stipends for the year to come.

One special feature of each benefit was the first screenings of the Spartacist video on the November 5 Mobilization documenting the successful PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization which drove the KKK out of Philly. The video contains historical footage of the Greensboro Massacre, the bombing of Philly MOVE, and the labor/black mobilizations in Detroit, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. which kept the fascists off the streets. At the benefits, participants presented eyewitness accounts of the demonstration and political and legal battles which preceded it.

PDC sustainers and members of the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League were instrumental in building this year's holiday appeal. Two hundred people came to the New York party at the Hudson

Guild in Manhattan. Wadiya Abu-Jamal, wife of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, came up from Philadelphia and briefly told the crowd of her husband's fight to live. The Bay Area party in the Firehouse at Fort Mason Center overlooking Alcatraz drew 100 people.

In Chicago 100 people turned out. Cassandra Seay's mother Callie Bryant gave an update on their lawsuit against the Chicago cops who invaded Seay's home, beat her and then tried to frame her up on assault charges in July 1987. With the support of her transit union local and brothers and sisters who packed the courtroom, Seay beat back the racist frame-up. Many of those who came to the benefits sent personal cards with holiday greetings to the class-war prisoners.

We look forward to the continued support of *WV* readers in the coming year. We want your help to build a class-struggle defense organization the workers movement sees as its own—one that can mobilize masses of workers around the globe in defense of all victims of capitalist repression. Become a monthly sustaining contributor. 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. ■

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## Letter From Puerto Rico

# Electrical Workers Play Hardball

As the bourgeois colonial parties of Puerto Rico were fighting over election year spoils last fall, San Juan got a taste of working-class power with a one-day strike and 10,000-strong mass march in the island's capital called by the militant electrical workers union, UTIER. Approved at a mass meeting of the union's membership in August and its date kept secret, the September 28 walk-out caught the government bosses off guard. Teachers and health workers joined the march, and UTIER threatened a general strike by all government employees. While denying that the numerous blackouts that covered the southern and western areas and parts of metropolitan San Juan had anything to do with the strike, one week later the Electrical Authority (AEE) caved in and granted the union's demands.

The conflict originated with the firing of 502 electrical workers by former governor Carlos Romero Barceló, of the pro-statehood New Progressive Party (PNP), in 1982. The union had already won their reinstatement in 1984-85. Now they wanted *full* back pay and ironclad guarantees against layoffs. After an all-night bargaining session, on October 7 the government-owned utility agreed to pay \$15-18 million in lost pay, including for surviving spouses and descendants, while recognizing that under the contract "no employee, union or non-union, can be laid off," and that this clause "will not be subject to any change or negotiation." *El Mundo* (8 October 1988) screamed, "AEE Surrenders to UTIER." And when the company threatened to pass the cost on to consumers through higher rates, the union nixed it.

Coming in the context of massive giveback contracts and layoffs throughout the U.S., the victory by the electrical workers in the Caribbean island colony carries a significant message to American workers. Labor played hardball, and won. The electrical workers have a history of combative union struggle going back to their 118-day strike of 1977-78. UTIER rightly considers itself the "trunk of the most worthy tree, the working class." It recognizes the need for action against racist attacks, and endorsed the November 5 Mobilization to Stop the KKK in Philadelphia, initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee. In Puerto Rico as on the mainland, what's needed to defend the interests of labor is an all-sided *political*



Fernández/El Nuevo Día

Thousands of striking UTIER electrical workers show their muscle in September 28 march past the colonial capitol.

program of class struggle and a fight for a revolutionary workers party.

In the recent elections, bourgeois-nationalist candidate Rubén Berríos of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) appealed to UTIER and other unions for support. The PIP was also supported by a Patriotic Socialist Front including the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), *Pensamiento Crítico* magazine, the Taller de Formación Política (Political Education Workshop) and others. This is a small-scale "popular front" to tie workers and ostensible socialists to the coattails of the *independentista* petty bourgeoisie which aspires to rule Puerto Rico on behalf of Yankee imperialism. Despite the "patriotic" pretensions of this front, the PIP launched a New Strategy of playing down the independence question (stating the island's "status is not at issue"), and its coattails were exceedingly short (5 percent of the vote).

For Puerto Rico, enslaved to Yankee imperialism for the last 90 years, a low-wage haven and ecological dumping ground for American industry, used as a springboard for military domination of the Caribbean, even the most militant "bread and butter" trade unionism cannot win the day without revolutionary leadership. It will take a class-struggle

workers party to lead the fight for an independent socialist Puerto Rico in the context of revolutionary struggle throughout the Caribbean and in the heart of the U.S., where more than a million and a half Puerto Ricans can play a vital role.

We reprint below translated excerpts of a letter to *Workers Vanguard* from a correspondent who attended the September 28 UTIER march, giving a flavor of the militancy and determination of the Puerto Rican electrical workers.

When we formed up to march, we stretched out over three to four long blocks—easily 10,000 people. The speaker said that it was the biggest march in the history of the UTIER.

At the capitol, UTIERistas shouted demands for justice and insults to the politicians. It was very emotional to see the police formed up to defend the steps where a few politicians were standing around while that great torrent of workers blew their whistles—a deafening noise. The whistles come from a campaign which the government launched urging citizens to blow whistles when someone throws garbage into the street, not in the garbage cans. I was very pleased to see this human torrent blowing their whistles in front of the capitol, in front of the bourgeois garbage, the garbage politicians.

Then we continued down the avenue and passed by the headquarters of the PPD [Popular Democratic Party, aligned with the U.S. Democrats]—currently in office. There were whistles once again and even more gross insults by the workers against the politicians. We entered Old San Juan. You could see workers and secretaries leaning out of the windows of government offices, watching and visibly supporting the march. They were supporting the most combative union in Puerto Rico, the one they would like to have to defend themselves from their government employers.

We entered the narrow streets of the Old City—slogans, whistles, thousands of workers from all corners of Puerto Rico, going to speak with the tsar in his fortress, to demand employment security under the threat of a strike. The government wasn't there to witness this, not even the mayor showed up.

When we went past the plaza in front of City Hall, once again whistles and insults against the other colonial party

[PNP, historically allied with the U.S. Republicans]. They brought out the shock forces, the cossacks, in their little white van. The same cops who seemed so menacing at the [August 28] nationalist demonstration now seemed afraid before the torrent of workers coming from all over the island on battle footing. You could see in their eyes their fear of so many defiant workers. They seemed like cockroaches in a chicken dance.

The march was forced to stop only 50 meters from the Fortaleza because the governor's guard had closed the doors of the fortress. They set up a speakers platform and read messages of solidarity from other unions. They chanted, they threatened. The workers demanded another strike of 48 hours—the union's got to get some respect.

[UTIER president José] Valentín spoke against Romero and Cuchín [PPD governor Hernández Colón] and in favor of Rubén Berríos, the leftist demagogue, the populist caudillo of the Second International, the reformist, the fraud, the self-proclaimed leader of the nationalist masses. The same guy who a few days earlier had proclaimed in the press that there were too many public employees—what is that supposed to mean? The same Rubén whose partner-in-fraud, Noriega [PIP senatorial candidate], has been promoted by Baltazar Corrada del Río, San Juan's mayor and candidate for governor of the bourgeois colonial party, the PNP (annexationist)—for the job of Secretary of Justice if the PNP wins the election. The PNP/PIP alliance, the "left" and the right against the center. ■

## Mexico...

(continued from page 4)

"People's Front" tying them to their class enemy. Rather than seeking to build a Bolshevik-Leninist vanguard party on the program of *political independence* of the proletariat, to lead the struggle for socialist revolution, the Morenoites act as a pressure group on the popular front in the name of a bogus "democratic revolution." No wonder the PTZ leadership seeks to seal its membership off from the Trotskyist politics of the international Spartacist tendency.

On December 2, after 32 days on strike, the STUNAM tops held a "referendum" to ram through a "settlement" accepting the university's original 10 percent raise (that is, a real wage cut). In a stormy meeting—amid threats against oppositionists and charges of vote fraud—the bureaucrats announced they had a majority for their sellout deal. This strike was not smashed by the

bosses; it was betrayed from within by the popular-frontist union bureaucracy. This was a betrayal not only of the university workers, but of the millions who face continued hunger and poverty if the working class does not smash the bourgeoisie's starvation offensive. While STUNAM oppositionists voted to continue the strike, there was no genuine alternative revolutionary leadership to lead the struggle to victory.

This crisis of leadership, which cripples the entire Mexican proletariat—economically powerful but politically disarmed—can be resolved only through building an authentically Trotskyist vanguard party. The key is breaking with the bourgeois politics of popular-frontism which spell defeat for the working class. The fate of the Mexican and North American workers is inextricably intertwined. The need for an *internationalist* leadership of labor has never been more urgent. For a Trotskyist party in Mexico, section of a reformed Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution! ■

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# Iran Executions...

(continued from page 12)

*Independent* reported on 6 December 1988 that "The British-based Committee for the Defence of the Iranian People's Rights said at the weekend that there were indications that more than 1,000 people had been executed since Iran signed a cease-fire with Iraq in August." This report follows a "claim by the opposition Mujahedin organisation that the death toll may be as high as 5,000."

An Amnesty International news release on December 13 stated that it "has now received more than 300 names of prisoners executed in recent weeks and months, and fears that the real total could amount to thousands. Many of the victims were members of, or sympathizers with, the PMOI [Mujahedin]; many others were members of secular leftist groups such as the Rahe Kargar, factions of the Organization of People's Fedaiyan, and the Tudeh Party.... A large number of those executed had been imprisoned for several years, and had been tortured, some having suffered similar treatment during the rule of the Shah." Those killed include some who were held for years without trial



Liberation Gazette

Photo smuggled out of Iran shows murdered Iranian political prisoner, whose shallow grave was dug up by wild animals.

and others who had been sentenced for distributing leaflets and "disturbing the peace" at political rallies in 1980-81.

The newspaper of the Communist Party of Britain, the *Morning Star* (1 December 1988), blazoned across its front page "Iran Executes Communist Leadership." The paper reported, "At least 40 members of the Tudeh Party of Iran are known to have been shot in the past three weeks, as have leading members of the Iranian People's Fedaiyan (Majority)." The article added that "in Evin, the main prison, there are rumours of mass killings, even the dynamiting of those jailed." Among those killed were four Tudeh political bureau members including party

deputy leader Farajollah Mitani, Manoucher Behzadi, editor of the party's organ *Nameh Mardom*, Hossein Jodat and Ismail Zolqadr, as well as six central committee members and some 30 leading members of the party's clandestine organization.

Earlier, the *Tudeh News* (26 October and 23 November 1988) reported that political prisoners had been executed, especially Tudeh members as well as Fedayeen and Mujahedin supporters, after "having endured years of barbaric torture." According to their families, the battered bodies of prisoners were buried in mass graves, some "so shallow that stray dogs can reach the bodies and tear them apart." A November 25 "State-

ment of the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran" began, "We are reaching out for your help," and listed names of those executed, including Hassan Jalali, member of the executive board of the Association of Trade and Labor Unions of Tehran and Vicinity, and more than a dozen others.

A November 30 report of the representative in Europe of the Fedayeen Majority states: "The massacre of political prisoners has taken place in the prisons of Tehran, Isfahan, Kerman, Khoram Abad, Gilan, Mazandaran, Hamendan, Gachsaran, Oromieh, Tabriz" and other cities. "Three hundred political prisoners have been buried in two mass graves in Khaavaraan cemetery (in east Tehran)... In addition to daily execution of groups of political prisoners in Evin, a large number of them were murdered in a deliberate explosion and destruction of an auditorium where they had been assembled."

And a 21 September 1988 statement of the Kurdistan Organisation of the Communist Party of Iran (Komala) said of the criminal mass executions of the "Islamic Republic": "These turbaned dictators are looking for victory in the city streets and in prison cells to make up for their defeat in the war fronts of Iran and Iraq. They are trying desperately to extend their onerous life through terror and intimidation by setting up execution squads."

## Fake-Lefts Hailed Khomeini

When the mullahs came to power in Iran in February 1979, the ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was quick to inform his leftist cheerleaders exactly what they had coming. He branded Marxists as "satanic elements, worse than the shah" and further warned: "I won't tolerate anyone who is anti-Islamic. We will crush them." And the jailings, torture and executions began. The bloody shah's prisons which had been briefly emptied filled up again. From the start, the international Spartacist tendency uniquely warned of the bloodbath awaiting trade unionists, Kurds and other minorities, women who rejected the veil, leftists and all opponents of the feudalistic theocracy in Iran.

Where the rest of the left boosted Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution," repudiating not only proletarian socialism but even the legacy of the bourgeois revolutions of the 18th century, we fought for a revolutionary perspective: "Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran!" Khomeini's program was no secret to anybody: the mullah-led mobilizations against the shah resounded with screams of "Death or the veil!" and "Death to Communists!" Yet the U.S. Communist Party grotesquely hailed Khomeini's views on women as "egalitarian, humane and democratic" (*Daily World*, 6 April 1979). Jack Barnes' Socialist Workers Party (SWP) proclaimed "Victory in Iran" (*Militant*, 23 February 1979). David North's Workers League (WL) raved, "Long Live the Iranian Revolution!" (*Bulletin*, 16 February 1979). And so on, ad nauseam.

On the question of Iran, the feuding wings of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat closed ranks. American SWPer and self-styled feminist Cindy Jaquith came back from the ayatollahs' Teheran to exclaim how the head-to-toe *chador* (veil) had become a "symbol of resistance" to the shah. At the same time, Brian Grogan of the centrist International Marxist Group in Britain was proudly displaying his pocket-sized "Khomeini card" and rhapsodizing how the mullahs'

"anti-imperialism" was so spellbinding that he couldn't help but join Islamic fundamentalists in crying out "Allah Akbar!" (god is great!) at a demonstration to greet the returning ayatollah.

In contrast, the Spartacist League organized a speaking tour by Fatima Khalil, a Middle Eastern communist woman of Muslim origin, to sound the alarm over the impending bloodbath. Denouncing the SL for this as "Provocateurs Against Trotskyism and

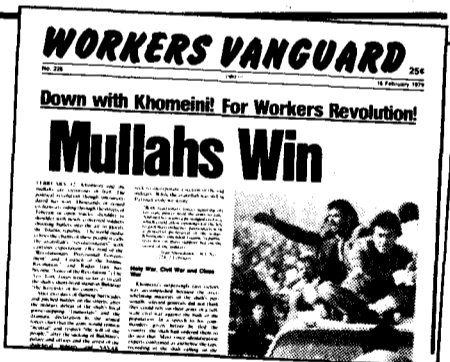
ing that Khomeini had "betrayed" the revolution. Thus the Marxist-Leninist Party claims that the "revolution settled accounts with the hated Shah and shook one of the main props of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East.... Unfortunately, however, the revolution was cut short. The Islamic clergy came out on top..." (*Workers' Advocate*, 1 March 1988). But Khomeini was on top from Day One, because the left fell in behind the mullahs even before they seized power, instead of

up the reactionary border war into a fight against American imperialism even after the whole world learned in the Iran/Contragate affair that Washington had armed Iran to the teeth!

But no one outdoes the now deceased political adventurer Nahuel Moreno and his followers in twisting and crawling for the ayatollahs. Moreno's Argentine PST proclaimed the mullahs' victory as "among the great revolutions of this century" (*Opción*, April 1979). The Morenoites not only supported clerical reaction in Iran but condemned the Soviets' intervention against CIA-armed, mullah-led cutthroats in Afghanistan as a "criminal action," and looked forward to the "possibility of extending the Iranian revolution within the borders of the USSR" (*Avanzata Proletaria*, 12 January 1980). Now Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan poses the prospect of a bloodbath by Islamic fundamentalists.

Today, even as Iranian political prisoners are being slaughtered in the thousands by the Khomeini regime, Moreno's successors in the Argentine MAS sent a delegation to the Iranian embassy in Buenos Aires to express solidarity with the mullahs against Iraq's "war of aggression against Iran," gloating that: "The presence of the MAS delegation... was especially acknowledged by the Iranian ambassador" (*Solidaridad Socialista*, 8 November 1988). From their support to the junta in the Falklands/Malvinas war to the Iran-Iraq war, the Morenoites positively groove on being in bed with anti-working-class executioners.

The frenzy of the left illustrated its utter bankruptcy in the face of Khomeini's murderous repression. Even as the slaughter in Iran wipes out a generation of militants, doubtless the most anyone will hear from the leftist Khomeini worshippers will be an embarrassed silence. We stated in our article "Why They Supported Islamic Reaction" (*WV* No. 229, 13 April 1979): "Every unveiled woman who is beaten, every petty malefactor who is flogged, every worker militant who is tortured by an Islamic SAVAK will be right to curse all of those who helped bring to power their new tormentor."



February 1979: who told the truth? Pseudo-socialists hailed Khomeini's victory, Spartacists called for workers revolution.

the Iranian Revolution," the *Bulletin* (1 May 1979) declared that Khomeini had "won an honored place in the history of the world revolution." Our call, "No to the Veil! For Workers Revolution to Defeat Islamic Reaction!" got the whirling dervishes of the WL so worked up that they screeched: "If the antics of the Spartacist [sic] were directly orchestrated by the FBI and the CIA, they could not be more provocative." Funny how these hirelings, who had sold their services (for hard cash!) to various colonels and sheiks in the name of the "Arab Revolution," are quick to cop-bait.

As the warnings of the Spartacist tendency became horrible fact on the front pages of newspapers around the world, most of the opportunists staged some form of retreat, generally argu-

posing the program of workers revolution as the alternative to the bloody shah and to Khomeini's program of Islamic reaction.

Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain and its American affiliate, the International Socialist Organization (ISO), swung back and forth not once, but repetitively, defending "the achievements of the Iranian revolution" at the start of Khomeini's war with Iraq (*Socialist Worker*, November 1980); later denouncing the Iranian left's "fatal support for the mullahs at the outbreak of the war" (*Socialist Worker*, October 1987); and then a few months later insisting that there was "no choice but to support the Khomeini regime against the U.S. and its allies" (*Socialist Worker*, February 1988). The Cliffite ISO tried to dress

From Moscow, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (21 December 1988) reported on the "Massacre in Iran," interviewing Iranian exile Bizhan Ekrami, who told of "an actual genocide" that was killing "the best sons of Iran." Ekrami had a typed list of 147 names of activists, members of the intelligentsia and cultural figures, only a small fraction of those killed. "Iran is in mourning," he said. There have also been protests in Iran in the midst of this reign of terror. *Die Wahrheit* (30 December 1988), the organ of the Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin, reports that, according to information from the Mujahedin, "a large number of relatives of executed oppositionists held a sitdown strike in front of the Ministry of Justice in Teheran on Tuesday to protest mass executions in Iran."

And in New York, the "Committee in Solidarity with the People of Iran" (CISPI) published gruesome pictures of bodies thrown into the "Graveyard of the Damned" in Teheran. "There are also reports that all political prisoners in the city of Hamadan have been executed by firing squads." "The true dimensions of the crimes that are being committed behind the prison walls of the Islamic Republic are still unknown.... These reports indicate that as many as 10,000 political prisoners have been executed within this past month alone." In mid-December, representatives of the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee joined protests at the United



Peter Jordan

**Iran-Iraq war: eight years of carnage, one million dead.**

Nations and in Washington against the Iranian slaughter. It is urgent that worldwide protest be mounted now!

### War and Revolution

In sheer number of victims, the bloodbath in Iran ranks on a par with the mass murder following the counterrevolutionary 1973 Pinochet coup in Chile. In Iran today we are witnessing a calculated program of extermination to head off a social explosion in the wake of a protracted, reactionary war. According to the London *Independent*, Rahe Kargar has information that "the executions were part of a concerted policy to annihilate the left so that it would not be able in future to exploit the popular dissent.... It said there was a two-stage plan to review the cases of all political prisoners by the 10th anniversary of the revolution next February. In the first phase, 1,000 prisoners who had yet to be sentenced were summarily tried and sen-

**Fatima Khalil speaking during 1979 Spartacist tour of U.S. Meetings were defended by workers defense guards against Islamic fanatics' attacks.**

WV Photo



tenced to death. In the second phase political prisoners sentenced to jail terms were retried and executed if they failed to recant."

From the beginning of the mullahs' theocratic rule, torture and execution have been standard fare. Soon after Evin prison disgorged thousands of political prisoners from the torture chambers of the shah's secret police, the SAVAK, it began filling again with the victims of the Islamic dictatorship. Kurds and Baluchis fighting for self-determination, followers of the Bahai religion, women who refused to wear the veil, homosexuals, leftists, were stoned to death, hanged, or shot by firing squads. A report on the condition of political prisoners in Iran by CISPI stated: "As the execution of virgin women is not allowed by Islam, young girls are systematically raped in prison before their execution...."

It is doubly tragic that many of those who are today being executed had joined the mullah-led upsurge against the bloody shah in 1978-79. The Tudeh, the historic leadership of Iran's working class, delivered its base into Khomeini's service. It betrayed promising proletarian actions, including strikes by the predominantly Arab (non-Farsi-speaking) oil workers of the south, leading them into the arms of Islamic reaction. At the time the international Spartacist tendency stood alone in proclaiming, "Down with the Shah, Down with the Mullahs! For Workers Revolution in Iran!" A year later the bulk of the Iranian left, having hailed Khomeini as an "anti-imperialist" liberator, supported their "own" ruling class in the Iran-Iraq war. Even as the ayatollah's thugs threw leftists back into the same prisons where they had languished under the shah, as the regime persecuted women, homosexuals, ethnic minorities and workers, Tudeh and the Fedayeen Majority (along with the pseudo-Trotskyist HKE and HKS) rallied to the cry of defense of the fatherland.

The squalid slaughter of the reactionary Iran-Iraq war—in which the working masses of neither country had any stake in the victory of their "own" rulers—dragged on for eight years and took over one million lives. It recalled the horrible imperialist carnage of World War I. From the very outset of the war, the international Spartacist tendency took the Leninist position of *revolutionary defeatism* on both sides, demanding, "Down with the colonels! Down with the ayatollahs! Turn the guns the other way!"

"But war is also the mother of revolution. And the Iraqi-Iranian conflict lays bare their real 'border problem': the oppressed nationalities that are divided by the artificial border separating Iran and Iraq, especially the Kurds and the ethnic Arabs who compose a majority of Khuzistan.... This war and the position of revolutionary defeatism will be an acid test for a revolutionary regroupment."

—"Iran/Iraq Blood Feud,"  
WV No. 265, 3 October 1980

We recognized that a defeat for either side would open revolutionary possibilities for the proletariat. War-weariness was growing, and at one point, the American Communist Party's *People's Daily World* (27 June 1987) reported that a group of factory workers in Iran was circulating an appeal "to expose the 'war-mongering and anti-worker nature' of the Khomeini regime, and to struggle against the war by preventing recruitment, financial and material aid to the fronts, and refusing to work in arms factories." Indeed, having vowed a "holy war" for Allah—and having failed to win it—Khomeini has now unleashed a pre-emptive reign of terror against the peoples of Iran.

But in keeping with their subordination to Khomeini at the crucial time when the hated shah's rule was decomposing, none of the major left tendencies in Iran adopted a perspective of struggling to transform the reactionary nationalist war into civil war against the Ba'athist colonels and the Persian Shi'ite ruling caste. At best, as the war dragged on some took a "pro-peace" neutralist posture. Now as the guns fall silent on the Basra-Abadan front, in Teheran they are belching fire against "infidels," creating a "peace" of the graveyards. In postwar Iran, with the questions of Khomeini's successor and the financial reconstruction of the war-ravaged country posed, the executioner's ax is falling on leftists, Kurds and even dissident mullahs.

The imperialist powers for the most part took a low profile in the Iran-Iraq war, playing off both sides against each other. In the interest of anti-Soviet warmongering, Reagan alternately armed the Iranians with U.S.

missiles, then (after that blew up in the Iran/Conragate scandal) engaged in repeated bloody confrontations, including the wanton massacre of 290 passengers aboard an Iranian Airbus last July. Certainly, the presence of a trigger-happy U.S. war fleet in the Persian Gulf constituted a threat to interdict Iran's export of oil, without which the war could not have been fought. Iran's rulers have made repeated initiatives to normalize relations with Washington, the former "great Satan." Now these fanatical anti-Communists believe they can murder every leftist in the country and gain favor with the White House. And they're right. The *New York Times* (2 January) reported: "American officials and Western diplomats said the executions would not hinder a move toward better relations."

With the Iranian working masses bled and exhausted by the war, outbreaks of popular protest are a genuine threat to the bloodsoaked rulers. But in the absence of an authentic Leninist party, this opportunity to organize the masses has so far been squandered. A horrible price in human life is instead being exacted against the left in Khomeini's prison hellholes. Only when the toiling masses of Iran and Iraq have communist vanguard parties forged in irreconcilable hostility to their "own" reactionary rulers can the massacres and repression be ended. It will take workers revolution to open the prison doors, to free the victims of Islamic reaction, liberate oppressed nationalities and stop the vicious cycle of bloodletting once and for all.

**Sound the alarm! International mass protests are urgently needed now to stop the slaughter of Iranian leftists! ■**

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## ALERT! Mass Executions of Leftists

# BLOODY HORROR IN KHOMEINI'S IRAN

Reports coming out of Iran point to a mammoth new wave of executions of leftist political prisoners now taking place in Khomeini's jails. Already, an estimated 1,000 to 5,000 have been hanged or lined up before the firing squads of the Islamic dictatorship and dumped in mass graves. In some provincial cities, the entire prison population has reportedly been massacred. Virtually every imprisoned leader of Iran's pro-Moscow Tudeh Party has been executed, and supporters of the People's Mujahedin, the Revolutionary Workers Organization of Iran (Rahe Kargar), Iranian People's Fedayeen (Majority) and the Fedayeen Minority are said to have been killed in the thousands. It is now feared that the wholesale physical annihilation of political prisoners is planned by next month's tenth anniversary of the mullahs' February 1979 seizure of power.

Following the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war last August, the ayatollahs' regime in Teheran has turned the jails into killing fields for all those it sees as political opponents. Meanwhile, the ruling generals in Iraq launched a "scorched earth" drive against Iraqi Kurdistan, razing three-quarters of the Kurdish villages and sending tens of thousands of Kurds fleeing over the border into Turkey, where the army has been waging a brutal war against Kurdish guerrillas. In Iran, Khomeini inaugurated his Islamic "revolution" by killing more than 10,000 Kurds, and in August unleashed a massacre of thousands of Iraq-allied Mujahedin troops inside Iranian Kurdistan. As we wrote in October:

"The so-called 'cease-fire' negotiated by the United Nations may not have ended the savage and senseless war between Iraq and Iran. But it has given these two



Condemned to die: Teheran regime has thousands scheduled for execution.

Reza/Sipa

self-proclaimed 'revolutionary' regimes the respite to concentrate their forces on what they do best: massacring their own peoples."

—WV No. 462, 7 October 1988

The international workers movement must raise an urgent cry of outrage against these unspeakable crimes being committed against opponents of the mullahs' dictatorship! The bloodbath in Iran is part and parcel of Teheran's efforts to "mend bridges" with

Western imperialists, who are perfectly willing to see Iranian leftists slaughtered. Thousands of militants have already been killed and thousands more are marked for execution. They are already being held incommunicado; all family visits have been cut off. The left, labor movement and all supporters of democratic rights must mobilize internationally to bring worldwide attention to the mass slaughter now going on, demanding an immediate halt to the

executions and freedom for the victims of Khomeini's terror in Iran!

### Firing Squads Mow Down Leftists

While the killings have reportedly been going on in secret since August, the magnitude and chilling horror of the massacre is now evident from the repeated accounts coming from every left group in Iran. The London

*continued on page 10*

# Stop the Executions in Iran!

## Free All Victims of Khomeini's Terror!

January 11 at 5 p.m.  
General Konsulat Islamische Republik Iran  
Abteistrasse 25  
**HAMBURG**

January 11  
For more information contact the  
Ligue Trotskyiste de France at 42 08 01 49  
**PARIS**

January 13 at 4 p.m.  
Algerian Embassy (Iranian Interest Section)  
2209 Wisconsin Ave. NW  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.**