



Clinton Targets Japan

From Cold War Ally to Trade War Enemy

MARCH 26—It's time "to go nuclear," declared one White House official. "If we put this relationship through a sufficiently protracted period of friction, I think they will sue for peace," said another. Talk of trade war, brinkmanship, threats and counter-threats between Washington and Tokyo are nothing new. But this time it's different.

For many years, economic conflicts between U.S. and Japanese imperialism were constrained by their Cold War alliance against the Soviet Union. No more. In Washington's view, Japan's

role in the "New World Order" is to buy more American goods...or else. As top U.S. trade honcho Mickey Kantor put it: "We're hoping for a clean break from the past here. The Japanese insist their markets are open. They are not. No more business as usual. We want results."

Results? They could get a rip-roaring trade war. The Clinton administration is rattling its economic sabers trying to intimidate the Japanese and Europeans into bailing out the U.S. \$115 billion *continued on page 10*



Clinton's secretary of state Warren Christopher in Tokyo to threaten Japan with trade war. Reuters

France: Revolt Over Sub-Minimum Wage

Government Reels Under Student/Worker Protests

MARCH 28—In the face of a massive revolt, French prime minister Edouard Balladur today backed off from his move to slash wages for young people. More than three weeks of protests that showed no sign of stopping forced him to "suspend" the measure. Day after day, tens and hundreds of thousands of high school, technical school and university students and young workers have taken to the streets throughout France. For youth already suffering 25 percent unemployment, the plan to introduce poverty-level wages was the last straw. A week ago, the labor minister compared this showdown to the World War I battle of Verdun, grotesquely vowing "they shall not pass." But braving vicious police repression, the militant youth have been rolling over the government lines, as did the victorious Air France workers last fall. Students vowed to stay on alert until the decree is definitively revoked. Protests continued today, and a new national mobilization is scheduled for March 31. Moreover, last Saturday, before the government's latest retreat, several teachers unions called for a new nationwide mobilization for April 7 with possible strike action.

This was at least the fourth time in the last five months that the *continued on page 8*



Franceschi/Vu

Government plan to slash wages for youth provokes mass protests: technical school students in Paris (above), youth battle cops in Lyon.



Reuters

Spectre of May '68 Haunts Ruling Class



Giuliani's Chilling Police State "Vision"

NYC: Budget Ax Over AIDS Services

After being elected mayor with a margin narrower than the racist backlash vote from Staten Island, Rudolph Giuliani has managed in record time to infuriate one sector after another of the poor, minority and working people of New York City. From cops invading a Black Muslim mosque to a frontal assault on city workers unions, and now a plot to

wipe out social service programs for people with AIDS, Giuliani has shown gleeful zeal in persecuting the weakest in society and those who perform the back-breaking labor required to make this center of world finance function.

The mayor's kneejerk response to just about any problem is to send in the NYPD. On March 17, he marched with

the top police brass in the St. Patrick's Day parade while more than 100 demonstrators were arrested for protesting the exclusion of the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization (ILGO) for the second year in a row. And when on March 22 an ACT UP demonstration of over 1,000 marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall denouncing the mayor's "malign neglect" of the AIDS epidemic, the cops arrested another 47. We demand: Drop all charges against the ILGO and ACT UP protesters!

Giuliani wants to do away with the city's Division of AIDS Services (DAS) and "privatize" its functions. DAS was set up in 1986 because people too ill to face the daunting city bureaucracy were dying before they could get the health and social services they needed. DAS was a way to sidestep the red tape and help ailing people by giving them a single caseworker to help with a myriad of services: medical care, home care, food stamps, housing, transportation, rent supplements, allowances, even help in arranging burial services or adoption or placement of orphaned children of people with AIDS.

Since that time, the agency's caseload has burgeoned from 617 the first year to nearly 16,000 poor people who are severely ill with HIV-related infections or have AIDS. Forty percent of DAS clients are black and 36 percent are Hispanic (*Newsday*, 28 March). The City Hall plan will throw AIDS patients out of their homes into the SRO hotels and shelters, where they will be susceptible to tuberculosis and other diseases.

Giuliani proposes to close the \$2.3 billion "budget gap" by axing \$1 billion from city workers' paychecks and the rest in service cuts. But it doesn't end there. He also wants to "privatize" city hospitals, and purge welfare rolls by requiring fingerprinting of recipients. This plan is a real beaut: not only will you be dropped from welfare if you refuse to be processed like a criminal, but all prints would be turned over to the police to check for "outstanding warrants"; anyone labeled by the cops as a "suspect" would lose all benefits! Those who somehow manage to make it through would be enslaved full-time collecting trash or fixing potholes, allowing the city to lay off more unionized workers.

Giuliani is a "law and order" zealot of the first order. Known in New York as the former U.S. attorney for Manhattan/Bronx, he was also head of the Criminal Justice Division of the Justice Department in Washington under Ed Meese in the early years of the Reagan administration. Meese, as we commented in an

article on the Iran/Contra affair, was a "cop's cop" who has a chemically pure fascist mentality" and "gets off on the idea of a police state for its own sake." In those terms, Giuliani is a prosecutor's prosecutor who thinks he's riding herd on a city populated by "perps" and "accomplices."

Like his mentor Meese, Giuliani truly believes in the inherent virtue of an authoritarian regime, as he spelled out at a March 16 "Crime in Our Cities" forum sponsored by the *New York Post*. Giuliani railed: "We need more protection, we need more police, we need more jails and prisons." Then he expounded on the meaning of freedom: "Freedom is about authority. Freedom is about the willingness of every single human being to cede to lawful authority a great deal of discretion about what you do." After an interruption from the audience, the mayor responded: "You have free speech so I can be heard."

Then, at a town hall meeting on Staten Island's lily-white South Shore, one of the few black people in the audience, George Carter, a construction worker, objected that "putting more cops on the street...that's not the answer in my community." Giuliani silenced Carter with a wave of his hand. "Life isn't easy," he coldly replied (*Newsday*, 23 March). "It isn't easy for poor people...and it isn't easy for rich people." We recall Anatole France's ironic comment: "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread."

Last week Giuliani had his staff put together a hit list of 10,000 names of city workers who would receive pink slips unless municipal unions agree to his voluntary "severance" package. But this is just the opening wedge: it is now confirmed that the mayor is looking to slash more than 30,000 jobs. But although city workers are mad as hell and looking for a way to fight against this onslaught, AFSCME District Council 37 head Stanley Hill meekly complains that Giuliani's "threat creates a very bad environment for negotiations."

The capitalist rulers want to force the working class to pay off the city's enormous debt. And if Republican Giuliani was the cops' candidate, the bankers and the *New York Times* preferred Democrat Dinkins, who assured Wall Street he could impose cuts: "They'll take it from me." Workers and blacks must break from the partner parties of capitalism and forge a workers party that would fight to stop all layoffs and cutbacks, cancel the debt and expropriate the banks without compensation. This is a struggle for a workers government which goes far beyond the confines of the Big Apple.

The big battalions of labor, marching at the head of all the oppressed and impoverished, could shut down the canyons of Wall Street and strike a blow against the two-bit would-be dictator Giuliani that would be heard around the country. ■

A Revolutionary Program for the Youth

The French government's plan to impose a sub-minimum wage for young workers provoked an explosive upsurge of social struggle by students and young workers, which has also received union support. Under decaying capitalism, working-class youth face a future of increasing immiseration and despair, often intensified by racial oppression. In the U.S., especially in the ghettos and barrios, they are victimized by rampant



TROTSKY



LENIN

racist cop terror, widespread joblessness and, increasingly, threats of ending up in a prison or a labor camp. At its founding conference in 1938, Leon Trotsky's Fourth International specifically addressed the oppression of youth, establishing a youth international with a program to mobilize their militancy in the struggle for proletarian power led by a revolutionary vanguard party.

Capitalism, whether it be authoritarian or liberal, admits the inability to bring the slightest relief to the misery and sufferings of working class youth. *The young want a trade*, and when (rarely enough!) it consents to give them one, it is only to chain them the better to a machine which tomorrow will stop and let them starve beside the very riches they have produced. *The young want to work*, to produce with their hands, to use their strength, and capitalism offers them the perspective of unemployment or of "the execution of work in conditions other than the normal conditions of production," according to the excellent hypocritical definition of labor camps by the League of Nations, or of armament production, which engenders destruction rather than improvement. *The young want to learn*, and the way to culture is barred to them. *The young want to live*, and the only future offered them is that of dying of hunger or rotting on the barbed wire of a new imperialist war. *The young want to create a new world*, and they are permitted only to maintain or to consolidate a rotting world that is falling to pieces. *The young want to know what tomorrow will be*, and capitalism's only reply to them is: "Today you've got to tighten your belt another notch; tomorrow, we'll see.... In any case, perhaps you're not going to have any tomorrow."...

The task of saving the unemployed youth from misery, despair, and fascist demagoguery, of working them back into production and thereby binding them closely to the working class, is a vital task for the future of the proletariat. Revolutionaries must struggle to force capitalism (a) to undertake to work the unemployed youth back into production through the organization of technical education and guidance; (b) to put the unemployed youth back immediately into productive activity; (c) to organize such work not according to semi-military methods but on the basis of regular wages: *Down with labor camps*, either voluntary or obligatory!...

The final disappearance of unemployment among the youth is closely linked to the disappearance of general unemployment. The struggle for raising the school age and for compulsory technical reeducation is closely linked with the struggle for the sliding-scale in wages and in working hours. The struggle to drag out of capitalism those reforms which aim at developing the class consciousness of working youth is closely linked with the struggle for workers' control of industry and factory committees. The struggle for public works is closely linked with the fight for the expropriation of monopolies, for the nationalization of credit, banks, and key industries. The struggle to smash back all efforts to militarize is closely linked to the struggle against the development of authoritarian state tendencies and against fascism, the struggle for the organization of workers' militias. It is within the framework of the transitional program of the Fourth International that the present program should be developed and applied. It is under the banner of the proletariat fighting for power that the Fourth International will win the demands of exploited youth.

—"Resolution on Youth," The International Conference of the Youth of the Fourth International (September 1938)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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New York City, March 22: Some 1,000 angry demonstrators march across Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall to protest Giuliani's plans to slash city services for AIDS patients.

The Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

The following is an edited talk by Carla Wilson of the Spartacist League at Columbia University in New York City on February 22.

We're here to give a class-struggle perspective on the fight for black freedom. Our Marxist perspective takes in the struggles of the past so that we can learn how to fight and win today. This is quite different from what passes for black history most of the time. During this month, we see places like McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken throwing up a kinte cloth decor, or Budweiser beer issuing posters on the kings and queens of Africa—and that's supposed to be some type of tribute to black Americans. Or there's the endless rebroadcasting of *Eyes on the Prize*. Now, this is a very useful documentary, but ultimately, it shows the fights for civil rights as an endless progression that culminates in electing black Democrats.

This is not what revolutionary fighters see as the goal of black struggle, or for that matter, any struggle today. Electing black Democrats means putting black faces in place of others to run this rotten, bankrupt capitalist society. What we want, and what we need, is a fight for revolution that sweeps away this system once and for all! Only then will we realize the promise of black freedom made through the glory of black soldiers fighting in the Union Army to smash chattel slavery in the Civil War. And we know that it will take revolutionary leadership to finish the tasks begun in the Civil War, a class fight that pits the wage slaves against the bosses' system. This is the program of black liberation through socialist revolution, revolutionary integrationism—the class-struggle road that must be fought for today.

Now the struggle for black freedom takes place not only within the American nation, but in an international context. With the collapse of Stalinism in East Europe, the rulers of this country have created a New World Disorder; and from Serbia to Somalia and Haiti, the White House seeks to reassert the role of the U.S. government as top cop of the world. This makes the U.S. ruling class even



Young Spartacus
Victimized NYC transit worker James Frazier, guest speaker at SL forum, describes continuing persecution by the state after nearly being killed by cops and fired by Transit Authority.

Black History Forum



Young Spartacus
Spartacist League speaker Carla Wilson addressing audience at Columbia University, New York, February 22.

more dangerous, more willing to bomb foreign capitals, to occupy small Third World countries and to assassinate anyone who defies them. Washington no longer even pretends that an intervention in Somalia has anything to do with famine relief for black African babies.

As the slaughter of hundreds of Somalis in the name of "humanitarian aid" has shown, the racist rulers of this country are willing to use a "human rights" rhetoric, for instance in places like Haiti, where gunboat diplomacy is bringing about greater immiseration for the Haitian masses. And now the U.S. is threatening more deployment of troops and air strikes in Bosnia. Cuba especially is now in the Yankee imperialists' cross hairs since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union has left the Cuban Revolution in peril. The so-called post-Cold War world looks very much as it did before World War I. Rival imperialists jockey for power amid an international recession, shoving "austerity" and "sacrifice" down the throats of the working class.

Labor-Centered Anti-Klan Mobilization in Springfield

On the Martin Luther King holiday weekend, the January 16th labor/black mobilization to stop the Ku Klux Klan in Springfield, Illinois, is a striking example of how the fight for black liberation today is integrally linked to the emancipation of the working class. What prevailed on that day was a labor-centered mobilization in defense of black people and all intended victims of the Klan. Now why do we stress the proletarian centrality of this demonstration? Because we know that a bunch of people getting into cars to go fight a mobilization of the Klan don't have the social weight that labor has in this society. Or as one Labor Black League supporter in this city said recently: "We know where the power is."

All of our previous anti-Klan mobilizations—in Chicago, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Atlanta—took place when the Klan had a green light, dur-

ing the Reagan/Bush years, with Democratic Party mayors running point to counter anti-racist protests against the fascists. This time around, our slogan "Break with the Democrats! Build a Workers Party!" found an echo even among black Democrats who know that with Clinton riding to power by kicking black people in the teeth, they're not even allowed on the back of the Democratic Party bus. These Democrats are caught in a contradiction: If they want to fight racism, they're in the wrong party, since it's abundantly clear that it won't happen with Clinton. He was central to the Democrats' strategy to go after the white racist vote, the so-called Reagan Democrats.

The old New Deal coalition of blacks and labor, forever used as voting fodder for the Democrats, has been shattered. Black workers in particular are extremely alienated and bitter about the Clinton regime. The Springfield mobilization gave a real taste of the power that can be mobilized by a workers party in the future, uniting the working class and

all the oppressed in struggle against their enemies.

The main enemy of our struggle is the bourgeoisie, which uses its state—the courts, the cops and the army—to keep us down and itself in power. The state's concerted effort to prevent the anti-Klan protests in Springfield are a real testimony to yuppie racist Clinton's America. In Memphis, where King was assassinated, Clinton railed to a group of black churchgoers that black people kill other black people "with reckless abandon." Under Clinton, the anti-crime slogans have replaced the call for a "war on drugs" as the linchpin of organized state terror. And along with Clinton are the black misleaders who make their living making apologies for the racist status quo. The outcry over "black on black" crime has been taken up by liberals such as Coretta Scott King and Jesse Jackson and by the sinister minister, Louis Farrakhan.

Clinton to Welfare Recipients: Let 'em Starve

Clinton has vowed to "end welfare as we know it." Fourteen million people—over three-quarters of them children—the majority desperately poor blacks and Hispanics for whom the current meager, sub-poverty welfare benefits guarantee a life of starvation and raw misery—now face getting cut off without a cent. This Clinton plan reveals the impulse toward genocide implicit in racist American capitalism. Once consigned to the industrial reserve army of labor, black people and a whole layer of society are not even given occasional employment, because there are no jobs anymore, like in the steel mills or auto plants. Democratic and Republican mayors alike have no program except killer cutbacks of basic social services and a vast increase of cops to shoot down minority youth.

Today, all wings of the bourgeoisie, from the liberal Democratic governor of New York, Mario Cuomo, to the right-wing Republicans, are pushing for more cops, more jails and more stringent gun control. Clinton is pushing for more "law and order" with an omnibus crime bill in Congress that has won backing from

continued on page 4



WV Photo
Springfield, Illinois, January 16: 500 demonstrators, braving arctic weather, turn out for labor/black mobilization against KKK provocation on M.L. King holiday weekend.

Black Freedom...

(continued from page 3)

black liberals and right-wing racists. Marching lockstep behind Clinton, a number of black elected officials and prominent black spokesmen have been key allies in this racist "law and order" campaign. Jesse Jackson has been on a "crusade," blaming black youth and black families for the violence that is rampant in the devastated inner-city ghettos. A few months ago, Calvin Butts of Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church blamed rap music for undermining the morals of black youth. D.C. mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly called for National Guard troops to patrol the district's ghettos. At a gathering for black men only at the Armory here, Farrakhan told a crowd of 10,000 that the morality problems of black males were causing rampant teen pregnancy and "black on black" crime and he preached a solution: self-help.

The call for "self-help" echoes the Reagan and Bush agenda for black America: it's profoundly reactionary and blames the victims, not the capitalist system that keeps producing new ones. Ministers like Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson and Louis Farrakhan are simply the most prominent modern-day black paternalists, or latter-day Booker T. Washingtons. They preach self-help as a strategy of "black capitalism." This is indeed a cruel hoax. It's a strategy that pits one layer of the oppressed against others, because any struggling capitalist necessarily is going to have to exploit someone. That's why the petty-bourgeois hustlers like to go after Korean or Arab store owners: These people want to make sure they have a monopoly to exploit "their" people. We say what's needed is class struggle, against the bourgeoisie, not a pitting of white against black or black against Korean. We do not need racial warfare. Exhortations to black youth to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps don't mean anything if you have no boots.

Farrakhan: Bad News for Black People

Amid the frustration with the increasing immiseration of black people, Farrakhan has gained appeal as an outspoken representative of black assertiveness. Farrakhan—who proclaimed Malcolm X "worthy of death" after Malcolm broke from the narrow separatism of Elijah Muhammad—pretends to claim the mantle of Malcolm X. In fact, his program of a separate black nation is only realizable through the triumph of fascism. And the Klan realizes he is on their side.

In Springfield, the KKKers praised Farrakhan as "a real leader for the black man." He is a notorious anti-Semite who called Hitler a great man, yet he is often defended by black people who recognize the white racist hypocrisy shown toward his anti-Semitic ravings. For instance, the Anti-Defamation League, which has spied on South African, Palestinian and American leftists in collusion with the

Somalia, Iraq: Unspeakable Imperialist Piggishness

On March 25, the last units of America's colonial invasion force withdrew from Somalia. As he boarded a helicopter in the capital of Mogadishu, U.S. commander Major General Thomas Montgomery "proudly" announced "that thousands of Somalis now alive owe their existence to U.S. troops." How grotesque! What led the U.S. to withdraw was not a successful conclusion to the "famine relief," but the outrage and retaliation its racist terror had provoked among all layers of the population.

From the moment U.S. troops were sent in with bipartisan backing in December 1992, we called for "U.S. Global Cops Out of Somalia!" We warned that Washington was "using the famine in Somalia to justify direct military intervention in Africa" (WV No. 565, 11 December 1992). And as the expeditionary force left, it underscored the haughty arrogance of this colonial intervention. The *New York Times* (28 March) reported, "The American troops destroyed much of what they could not take home, including boxes of food and bags of intravenous fluids in a country still plagued by disease and poverty." The U.S. message: "Let 'em starve."

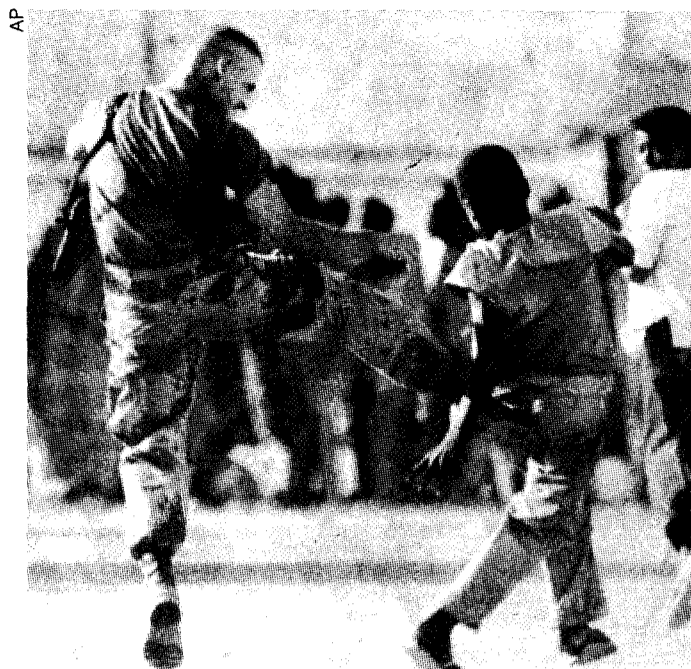
In early September, some 300 Somalis, mainly women and children, were massacred by cannon fire from U.S. Cobra helicopter gunships. When an elite U.S. Army Ranger hit squad got mauled in early October by outraged Somalis, American forces slaughtered and mutilated hundreds as they went in to retrieve the cornered squad. And this past January, U.S.

CIA, can in no way claim any kind of right to go after Farrakhan. The ADL has worked overtime to kill every anti-fascist mobilization against the Klan and Nazi skinheads, proving they are also the enemies of Jews. But let's make no mistake: Farrakhan is whipping up race war in New York just as Giuliani does, and Ed Koch did before him.

What black conservative leaders like Farrakhan represent is the failure of liberal "empowerment" schemes that took hold in the wake of the defeat of the civil rights movement. While the civil rights movement challenged white racist America and gave rise to a generation of radicals, it did not open a new period of black equality and advancement. The pacifist reformism of King's strategy led black people into the dead end of the Democratic Party. Only a handful of black petty bourgeois prospered, by accommodating themselves with the racist status quo.

Strategies put forward to "buy black" and organize separate nations for black Americans ignore the long, rich history of integrated struggle for black equality. In the absence of multiracial class struggles that would necessarily take up the

"Humanitarian" mission: U.S. Marine kicks Somali youth. Imperialists gloried in colonialist takeover of starving African country.



Marines fired indiscriminately into a crowd of hundreds waiting outside a food distribution center in Mogadishu, killing at least 16 people. This is the murderous face of U.S. imperialism.

Meanwhile, in Iraq, as we reported previously, the economic boycott dictated by Washington nearly four years ago has killed far more people—overwhelmingly young children—than the tens of thousands slaughtered by imperialist forces during the one-sided Persian Gulf War in early 1991. The UN estimates that child mortality has now reached an average of 230 children a day (84,000 a year).

A recent report in the *Irish Times* (25

March) describes the heartrending conditions facing the Iraqi population: "Babies are brought to hospital chronically malnourished and appallingly bloated. Doctors have dubbed them the 'sugar babies'—fed on sugared water because their weakened mothers cannot breast-feed them or afford powdered milk. The article notes: "Before 1991, malnutrition had been virtually eradicated.... Now stick-thin children are everywhere, begging."

To defend its interests, the American ruling class sows death and destruction wherever it goes. It will take workers revolution to sweep away the imperialist mass murderers.

fight against racism, there's a substitution of black racial solidarity for a real program, a sort of romantic nationalism that finds an outlet in discourse over black studies courses at universities like this, or debates for Afrocentric segregated schools for black males.

This is not in any way the militant black nationalism of the 1960s, best represented by the Black Panther Party. They stood defiantly against any illusions in American capitalism, seeing the struggles of the Vietnamese, Korean and Algerian revolutions as their own. The pseudo-nationalists and Afrocentrists have nothing to say about the conditions facing oppressed peoples—from South Africa to Somalia to Serbia—but instead indulge in backward-looking glorifications of a mythical African past. This is the program of the dashiki Democrats, who can only offer the illusory solace of cultural nationalism—what the Panthers called "pork chop nationalism."

It is a measure of today's *misleadership* of labor and blacks that it took our small communist organization to launch a coast-to-coast protest campaign against Jim Crow racism at the nationwide Denny's restaurant chain last year. The national NAACP leadership was more interested in "integrating" Denny's corporate boardrooms to prettify American capitalism.

But we know that institutionalized racism has always been the bedrock of American capitalism. As chattel slaves, black Africans became the labor force with which the Southern planter aristocracy maintained economic and political dominance until the Civil War. From the early days of American capitalism, black people have been an integral part of class society, while forcibly segregated at the bottom of it. The vast majority of black people today are workers who must sell their labor power in order to secure the necessities of life from those who profit off them. Ultimately, the struggle for black liberation lies with the rest of the multiracial working class, to abolish capitalism and establish an egalitarian

socialist society.

However, the struggle of black people against racist oppression is not simply a working-class fight. As a group historically marked by skin color, blacks form what we consider a race-color caste, the most exploited layer of the working class, principally kept at the bottom because of racism. The routine of being the last-hired and first-fired applies an exceptional form of oppression, degradation and humiliation, requiring special forms of struggle. For instance, a few years back, Dwight Gooden was beaten up by Florida cops while tooling around in his Mercedes. The fact that he was a well-to-do black male galled the police even more: one of them tried to break his pitching arm. Wealth and social mobility are no protection from the glaring racist reality that American capitalism metes out.

Because of the experience of special oppression, black people gain a deep education and experience in the lessons of struggle and are among the most conscious and militant sections of the working class. Black workers will play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution as key leaders of the vanguard party. And without that leadership, there will be no revolution.

It will take a workers party to fight for a working-class revolution that will bring about black liberation in America. It took a second American revolution—the Civil War—to smash the chains of chattel slavery, but the promise of black freedom was denied. The forces that were mobilized in Springfield, Illinois to stop the KKK can be organized to open the road to a third American revolution that will make it possible for everyone to have a decent life. The Democrats and Republicans represent the bourgeoisie. We need a workers party, built on an internationalist perspective to struggle against racism and exploitation to lead toward the fight for power. That means a socialist revolution that will break the rule of the few and liberate many. Join us in building that party. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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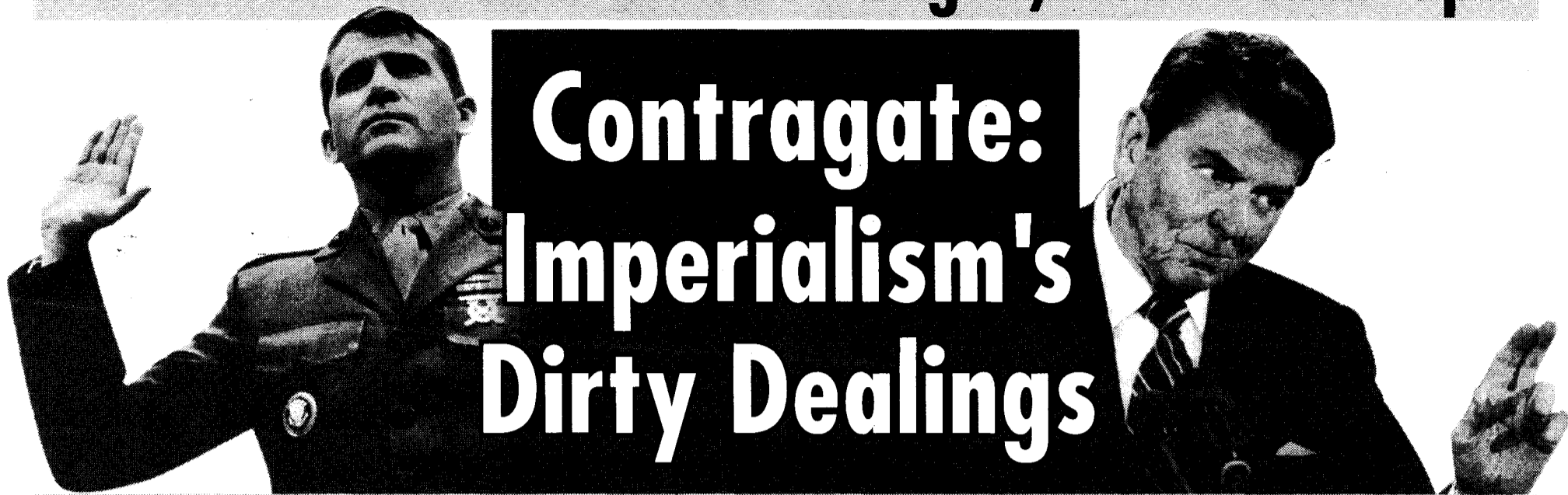
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How the Democrats Aided Reagan/Bush Cover-Up



Contragate: Imperialism's Dirty Dealings

Lie, Cheat, Steal: A Primer of Bourgeois Democracy

McNamee/Newsweek

Der Spiegel

"The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."

—Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)

Remember "Ollie" North? A few years back, then-president Ronald Reagan hailed this blustering liar and key conspirator in the Iran/contra affair as a "hero." Currently presenting himself as standard-bearer of the Reaganite right in a bid for the Republican nomination for a Virginia Senate seat, North contemptuously sneered that "most people don't give a rat's patootie" about Contragate. But on March 17, the former Marine lieutenant colonel was subjected to a public tongue-lashing by his old commander in chief. Reagan professed to be "pretty steamed" at North for daring to suggest that he had only been following Reagan's orders in illegally diverting funds to the Nicaraguan contras during the 1980s and then lying about it to Congress. Coincidentally, only a day later North's campaign plane crashed outside Winchester, Virginia, killing the pilot, after the fuel gauge mysteriously dropped from full to empty during a short hop lasting a few minutes.

A "blast from the past": When 82-year-old "independent counsel" Lawrence Walsh finally released his "final report" on the Iran/contra scandal in January, after more than seven years, it was met with a deafening silence. Noticeably bitter that his laborious efforts were stymied at every turn by uncooperative administrations, Walsh speaks in unusually blunt terms for a government report—so much so that key figures, including Reagan, tried to prevent its publication. Yet the press quickly shot down the report with a barrage of "ho hum, nothing new" commentaries, in

what one Walsh aide called "drive-by journalism." The Democrats did likewise, even as the Clinton administration reels under a Republican offensive targeting Bill and Hillary's sleazy financial shenanigans in the "Whitewater-gate" savings and loan affair. For that matter, the real purpose of Walsh's whole effort was to "close the book" on Contragate.

The entire capitalist ruling class wants to bury the Iran/contra affair, for it not only exposes the involvement of two presidents in criminal conspiracies but also provides a glimpse into the cynical inner workings of the whole apparatus of imperialist "democracy."

The disclosure in late 1986 that the Republican administration had erected an elaborate covert operation in order to run guns to the Nicaraguan contras in direct, explicit violation of not one but two Congressional bans—and paid for it through secret arms deals with the same Iranian ayatollahs Washington had demonized as "outlaw terrorists"—was a bombshell which rocked the Reagan presidency. From the imperial chief on down—including then vice president George Bush, CIA director William Casey and a host of Cabinet secretaries—leading administration officials were shown to be lying through their teeth. One "special investigation" followed another. The Democrat-controlled Congress, recalling the Watergate scandal which sent Nixon tumbling out of the Oval Office in 1974, claimed to be on the hunt for a "smoking shredder."

Yet after the smoke had cleared, virtually all the major culprits avoided spending even one day in jail. The final straw came when, weeks before leaving the White House, Bush on Christmas Eve 1992 issued a blanket pardon to former defense secretary Caspar Weinberger and five others—in some cases even before their cases had gone to trial. This also

had the effect of pardoning Bush himself, without a peep from Clinton or Congress. If the bourgeoisie were to enforce its own laws, all the Contragate principals would have ended up behind bars for years. Thus the feds have used draconian RICO "conspiracy" laws to lock up trade unionists and leftists without a shred of evidence. But if ever there were a "conspiracy to engage in criminal enterprises," the Contragate conspiracy involving drug-and-gun runners, Swiss bank accounts and outright murder was surely it. North & Co. even brazenly called their outfit the "Enterprise." And they went free. Why?

From the Reagan/Bush White House to the Democrats in Congress, the people who run this country have engaged in a massive cover-up of the Contragate scandal, because going after the conspirators would have rattled the underpinnings of the imperial presidency and because they shared the anti-Sovietism of Reagan's Central America policy. One and all, they refused to follow the myriad leads pointing to "contra in chief" Reagan. The Tower Commission put it all down to a "cabal of zealots" and concluded that Reagan "didn't know." The Congressional "investigation" conducted by the Democrats in 1987 left Reagan untouched and provided a platform for North. And now Walsh ludicrously asserts that "to the extent possible, the central Iran/contra crimes were vigorously prosecuted and the significant acts of obstruction were fully charged." Delusion? No. What the press portrays as an anti-climactic conclusion to the "investigation" was in fact the successful culmination of seven years of cover-up.

But, at a cost of over \$35 million, the Walsh report serves as a useful, if inadvertent, repudiation of the pabulum amply doled out in high school civics texts. Where liberals blather on about return-

ing to the constitutional ideal of a government based on "checks and balances," this one particularly well-documented affair provides an object lesson in the routine workings of the imperialist state. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin wrote in his book *The State and Revolution*: "the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another." The capitalist rulers did not use their own laws to bring the Contragate criminals to justice because those laws are designed solely to serve the class interests of the bourgeoisie.

Ollie Goes to Teheran

The outlines of the Contragate conspiracy are pretty much common knowledge by now. It included a wild and woolly cast of characters. The sordid affair reads like a script for a B-grade spy spoof featuring Chevy Chase and Dan Ackroyd. It all blew open in October 1986, when the Nicaraguan Sandinistas shot down a plane, owned by the CIA "proprietary" Southern Air Transport, which was carrying weapons and ammo for the contra cutthroats. Instead of taking the poison pill provided him for such occasions, captured CIA merc Eugene Hasenfus spilled his guts in a public press conference in Managua. Around the same time, students in Iran distributed millions of leaflets revealing a visit to Teheran that May by Reagan aides North and Robert McFarlane. Reportedly using Irish passports, they came bearing not only a planeload of arms for the Islamic fundamentalist regime but also a Christian Bible personally inscribed by Reagan, a set of pearl-handled pistols and a chocolate cake from a Tel Aviv bakery (delivered during the fast of Ramadan)! This story was then picked up by a small Lebanese weekly.

Cut to the White House. As frenzied
continued on page 6



Carlos Durán

Left: Nicaraguan Sandinistas' capture of CIA mercenary Eugene Hasenfus in October 1986 blew open Contragate scandal. Right: CIA terrorists bomb vital oil depot in Corinto, Nicaragua in 1983.



Contragate...

(continued from page 5)

Reagan staffers began their "damage control" operation. Attorney General Edwin Meese launched an "internal investigation" which turned up the now infamous "diversion" memo revealing that \$12 million in "residual funds"—otherwise known as profits—from the deal with Khomeini had been funneled to the contras. The release of the "diversion" memo was itself a diversion, aimed at deflecting attention from Reagan's central role in the conspiracy. And while Meese's sleuths were supposedly turning the place inside out looking for documents, right in the White House basement North and his secretary Fawn Hall were busy feeding the shredder and smuggling other files out under her blouse.

Flashback to the 1980 U.S. presidential elections. Reagan seized on the "hostage issue" to denounce Democratic incumbent Jimmy Carter's softness on the Iranian regime. Yet the Iranian mullahs didn't release the hostages until the day Reagan was inaugurated. The new administration vowed to stop the "spread of Communism" by drowning in blood the leftist insurgency in El Salvador and ousting the Sandinista regime in Managua through a terror campaign using the CIA's contras, murderous remnants of the deposed Somoza dictatorship.

The scene shifts to the jungles of Nicaragua. Contra forces were being chewed up by Sandinista units. With the "Vietnam syndrome" still potent less than a decade after the humiliating defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, and acknowledging that the contras were los-

for another \$10 million.

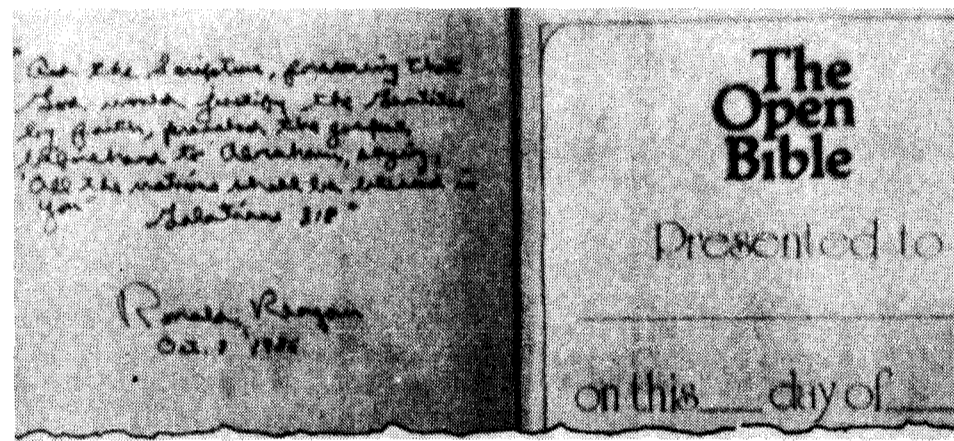
The camera closes in on a hotel room, where North is meeting with a shady Iranian arms dealer named Manucher Ghorbanifar. Arranging missile sales for which Teheran shelled out \$30 million in 1986 alone—at vastly inflated prices (the U.S. was paid \$12 million)—North & Co. "diverted" the leftover money to the contras. This was the joint operation which North named the "Enterprise." According to Walsh's report, which detailed the Contragate money trail, Secord got a hefty cut of \$3.6 million and something under \$3 million went to Hakim, so that after "expenses" and "overhead" costs what was left over for the contras was barely over \$4 million. It was all in the hallowed tradition of American free enterprise, exemplified by the Milo Minderbinder character in Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, who leased American bombers and pilots to the Germans to bomb U.S. positions. With his Boy Scout grin, North later bragged to Congress that it was a "neat idea."

From Watergate to Contragate

In three volumes and 2,500 pages, Walsh's report exhaustively documents the outright lying, stealing and dirty dealing which marked the Contragate affair, baldly stating that "high-ranking Administration officials violated laws and executive orders in the Iran/contra matter." Walsh's summary reads like a bill of indictment:

"—the sales of arms to Iran contravened United States Government policy and may have violated the Arms Export Control Act

"—the provision and coordination of support to the contras violated the Boland Amendment ban on aid to military activities in Nicaragua;



Reagan Bible delivered by North to Ayatollah Khomeini to bless sale of American missiles to Iran.

ers, in 1982 the Democrats in Congress passed the first Boland Amendment banning any direct U.S. attempt to overthrow the Sandinista regime. So the CIA instead staged an arms-length operation using non-American operatives, who a year later blew up oil depots in Corinto and in January 1984 mined Nicaraguan harbors—without getting the requisite prior approval from Congressional "oversight" committees. That October, Congress passed another Boland Amendment, cutting off all military aid—"direct or indirect"—to the contras. But Reagan told then national security adviser McFarlane to hold the contras together "body and soul."

Enter Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, an obscure staff member of the National Security Council (NSC). Working with "retired" Air Force general Richard Secord and his "business partner" Albert Hakim, North opened up Swiss bank accounts in the name of dummy companies, which were lent CIA "assets" for a "private" operation to run a guerrilla war, buy and sell weapons and, by the bye, run drugs into the U.S. "Patriotic" reactionaries like Adolph Coors and Nelson Bunker Hunt kicked in contributions in exchange for a private audience with the president. "Third-party" funding for what Reagan called his "freedom fighters" also came from such pillars of "democracy" as the slaveholding Saudi royal family, which alone contributed \$32 million, and the Sultan of Brunei, who was lined up

"—the policies behind both the Iran and contra operations were fully reviewed and developed at the highest levels of the Reagan Administration...

"—the Iran operations were carried out with the knowledge of, among others, President Ronald Reagan, Vice President George Bush, Secretary of State George P. Shultz, Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger, Director of Central Intelligence William J. Casey, and national security advisers Robert C. McFarlane and John M. Poindexter...

"—following the revelation of these operations in October and November 1986, Reagan Administration officials deliberately deceived the Congress and the public about the level and extent of official knowledge of and support for these operations."

So what came of all these accusations? Nada, nothing, zip. Reagan was allowed to serve out his two years and retire on full pension. Bush was elected president in a campaign based on virulent racist demagoguery, and then unleashed a bloody invasion against Panama and the horrendous slaughter in the Persian Gulf. Weinberger became chairman of Wall Street's elite *Forbes* magazine. Poindexter and North got a couple of slaps on the wrist—and even those convictions were rapidly overturned. North went on to rake in millions in "speaking fees" as an unrepentant "patriot." (As for North's red-white-and-blond secretary, Fawn Hall got married to a hanger-on of the psychedelic '60s rock group, the Doors.)

Walsh observes that Congress bought the absurd line of a "runaway conspiracy of subordinate officers" in order



McNamee/Newsweek

Congressional Democrats' "Investigation" of Contragate was cover-up city.

to avoid "the unpleasant confrontation with a powerful President." Yet the "independent counsel" incredibly claims there was "no credible evidence that President Reagan violated any criminal statute"! At a January press conference, Walsh conceded that Reagan's impeachment "certainly should have been considered." There were plenty of comparisons made at the time to Nixon's Watergate conspiracy, when impeachment proceedings were initiated. But this time around, no section of the ruling class wanted to even consider impeaching Reagan. Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd declared, "This is my President. He's in trouble. And I don't want to see the Presidency damaged."

Watergate came in the midst of the losing imperialist war in Vietnam which split the U.S. bourgeoisie and had driven Nixon's Democratic predecessor Lyndon Johnson from the Oval Office as well. In the minds of America's rulers, the image of a helicopter hustling a discredited President Nixon from the White House lawn in 1974 was indelibly superimposed on the image of another copter a year later carrying the last Americans in Vietnam scrambling from the roof of the U.S. embassy in Saigon to escape the victorious troops of North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front. Moreover, Nixon's Watergate conspiracy had been directed against his Democratic Party opponents, not "Communist surrogates" in Central America. Even then, "Tricky Dick" was merely pressured into resigning.

But the ruling class was united around Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive. The Democrats more or less agreed with the contra war policy, wanting only to distance themselves in public. Indeed, the month that Hasenfus was captured, Congress resumed regular aid to the contras to the tune of \$100 million.

No Aberration

In introducing his detailed account of the Contragate affair, *A Very Thin Line* (1991), liberal historian Theodore Draper observes: "Rarely, if ever, have we been given such an opportunity to learn just how our government really works." This is likely true, albeit not in the sense Draper intends. Since the Democrats had no intention of impeaching Reagan, no matter what, they struck a deal allowing for a host of hearings, commissions, investigations and reports—more than 50,000 pages' worth altogether—to air the bourgeoisie's dirty laundry, so long as no conclusions were drawn or measures taken. But if the Contragate revelations were more extensive than what comes out about most government scandals, they are still only the tip of the iceberg in revealing the normal workings of imperialist "democracy."

At first liberals tried to go along with the Reagan line that the scandal was the result of a "rogue" operation by an NSC staff member and the president "didn't know," but this quickly became unten-

able. Newer explanations depict the Iran/contra affair as an unusual deviation from the normally pristine workings of American "democracy," in which the "will of the people" allegedly rules and power-grabbing government officials are foiled by constitutional restraints. Peter Kornbluh and Malcolm Byrne, who edited *The Iran-Contra Scandal: The Declassified History* (1993), argue that "the most important lesson the [Walsh] report teaches is that our political system of checks and balances is fallible and in urgent need of reform" (*New York Times*, 19 January).

Draper likewise points to "a long process of presidential aggrandizement, congressional fecklessness, and judicial connivance" which "has put the Constitution in danger," noting that "uncontrolled covert operations" amounted to "government by junta or cabal." The Reagan administration's dirty dealings "were made possible by a breakdown in the American system of government," Draper concludes on the last page of his book, lecturing like a powerless schoolmaster that the "lesson" should be "learned."

John Canham-Clyne (a writer for the social-democratic *In These Times*) spouts a similar theme, observing that the conspiracies represented "the functioning of a national security system that has displaced the constitutional republic"—as if there were in the past some golden era of "commitment to democratic accountability" (*World Policy Journal*, Fall 1992). He traces the origins of this evil to the post-World War II growth of the U.S. "national security state," which "has for the most part replaced constitutional checks and balances and public accountability." He sagely suggests that covert action "should be outlawed," lamenting that the mythical "spirit of Nuremberg"—that unlawful or immoral orders are not to be obeyed—has "withered." But even while the U.S. and its imperialist allies were prosecuting a handful of the most prominent Nazi war

continued on page 9



Fidel Castro, target of dozens of CIA assassination attempts in U.S.' not-so-secret war against Cuba.

CIA: The Colombian Connections

Among the many cover-ups in the numerous official "investigations" of the Reagan/Bush Contragate scandal was the prominent role of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Latin American drug trade. "It is clear that there is a networking of drug trafficking through the *contras*," said Senator John Kerry at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing in 1986, "and it goes right up to...[*contra* leaders] Mario Calero, Adolfo Calero [and] Enrique Bermúdez." He added that "we can produce specific law enforcement officials who will tell you that they have been

Southern Command bases in Panama." The DEA supplied phone monitoring equipment to recognize Escobar's voice and pinpoint his location.

The drug kingpin is dead, the Medellín cartel officially "smashed," and suddenly the media discovers the Cali cartel. But while Washington made Escobar and the other Medellín "kingpins" the targets of its "war on drugs," their competitors from Cali enjoy a cozy relation with the Colombian and U.S. governments. A couple of years ago, prominent NYC journalist Manuel de Dios Unanue, former editor of the leading

Nicaraguan Sandinistas. At the same time, Vice President Bush was placed in charge of a South Florida Task Force, which "consolidated the alliance between ex-CIA director Bush and the ex-CIA Cubans of Miami, who had suffered great losses at the hands of the Medellín cartel" during the Miami cocaine wars of 1979-81.

From the beginning of Washington's decade-long war on Sandinista Nicaragua, South American drug traffickers played a major role in financing a surrogate counterrevolutionary army (the *contras*) based in Costa Rica and Hon-

Panama, a major drug transshipment center, to pick up cocaine or marijuana."

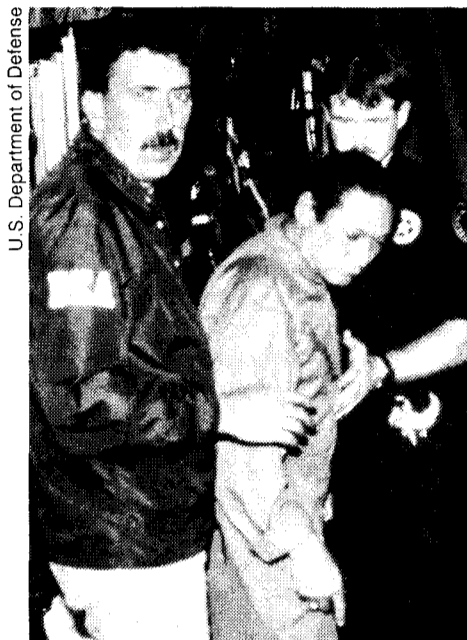
The CIA's role as a major player in the international narcotics trade has a long and sordid history. Its predecessor, the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) worked with the Sicilian Mafia against the Italian Communists after World War II. The "French connection" grew out of ties between U.S. intelligence and Marseille gangsters who brutally smashed left-wing dock strikers. During the Vietnam War, CIA "proprietary" like Air America, Vietnam Air Transport and Southern Air Transport flew opium crops grown in Laos by a CIA-organized "secret army" of Meo (Hmong) tribesmen. Over a decade later, the CIA was up to its neck in opium again, as it moved in to support the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* cutthroats in Afghanistan against Soviet forces. In *The Politics of Heroin* (Lawrence Hill Books, 1991), Alfred W. McCoy summarized:

"Over the past twenty years, the CIA has moved from local transport of raw opium in the remote mountains of Laos to apparent complicity in the bulk transport of pure cocaine directly into the United States or the mass manufacture of heroin for the U.S. market. Finally, America's drug epidemics have been fueled by narcotics supplied from areas of major CIA operations, while periods of reduced heroin use coincide with the absence of CIA activity.... The CIA's protected covert action assets have included Marseille's Corsican criminals, Nationalist Chinese opium warlords, the Thai military's opium overlord, Laotian heroin merchants, Afghan heroin manufacturers, and Pakistan's leading drug lords."

The bipartisan "war on drugs" by America's rulers has nothing to do with stopping drug and gun trafficking—shutting down "The Company" (the CIA) would take care of much of that. Rather it is a flimsy façade for U.S. imperialism to act as cops of the world and to ride roughshod through the ghettos and barrios of America. This ruling class isn't going to "clean up" the dope trade—from the CIA to cops on the beat, they



Left: Corpse of Medellín cartel chief Pablo Escobar, gunned down in U.S.' "war on drugs." American falling out with former CIA "asset" Manuel Noriega precipitated 1989 invasion of Panama.



U.S. Department of Defense

called off drug trafficking investigations because the CIA is involved or because it would threaten national security."

This and the long prior record of U.S. government use of drug smugglers in its "war on Communism" was outlined in a special issue of *CovertAction* (Summer 1987) on "The CIA and Drugs." But it's not just history. Last November, the CBS-TV program *60 Minutes* revealed that the CIA, in a series of shipments in 1990, brought into the U.S. more than 3,000 pounds of almost pure cocaine from Venezuela, a ton of which was then sold on the streets. No criminal charges were ever brought against the organizers of this government-sponsored multimillion-dollar deal, even while the courts and prisons are filled to overflowing with black and Hispanic youth busted on minor drug charges.

Then, in early December, the media was filled with news of the spectacular killing of drug kingpin Pablo Escobar in Medellín, Colombia, the climax of a years-long American campaign against the Medellín cartel. A breathless account in *Newsweek* (13 December 1993) detailed the massive involvement of various U.S. agencies in Escobar's assassination. A CIA-run "Tactical Analysis Team" provided intelligence, the "National Security Agency diverted spy satellites into orbits over Colombia, and the search for Escobar was joined by U.S. C-130 reconnaissance planes from

Hispanic daily *El Diario-La Prensa*, was executed by Colombian drug traffickers for writing exposés on the Cali cartel. On March 10, a federal district court jury in Brooklyn convicted a Colombian teenager of being the hitman. But the *New York Times* (13 March) reported: "The cartel leader who United States authorities say issued the order to kill Mr. de Dios, Jose Santacruz Londono, has not been charged.... Prosecutors in the case refused to say why no charges have been filed against Mr. Santacruz...."

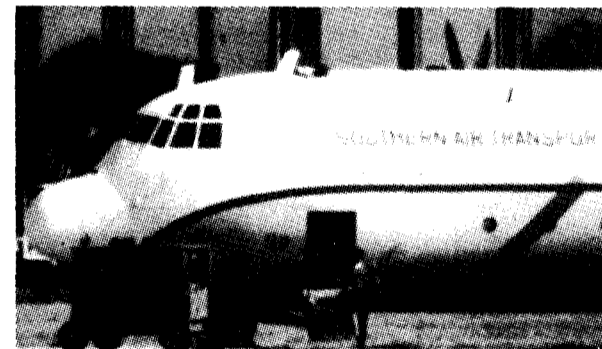
The reason isn't hard to find. A number of Cali godfathers are currently negotiating with the Colombian government the terms for "surrender": no prison (instead, house arrest in their mansions), no confessions, the government has to prove any charges, and these pillars of society in the Cauca Valley get to keep their wealth!

In *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies and the CIA in Central America* (University of California Press, 1991), Pete Dale Scott and Jonathan Marshall write: "In 1980, when Reagan was elected, the DEA considered the Cali traffickers more important than those in Medellín." However, in mounting a crusade against Communism in Central America, Reagan's new CIA director William Casey sought to establish a "narcoterrorist" conspiracy linking the Medellín cartel to Colombian leftist guerrillas and the

duras. One of the first connections was through Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega, a U.S. spy agency "asset" going back 30 years and a business partner of the Medellín cartel. But when Contragate blew into the open, Noriega became an open embarrassment to the CIA. So in 1989 Bush launched his bloody invasion, killing 3,000 defenseless Panamanian civilians just to get Noriega into a Miami jail. Yet the drug trafficking and Panamanian banks' money launder-



Sue Mullin



Cancellare/Picture Group

Right-wing American millionaire John Hull provided his Costa Rican farm as a staging area for *contra*/CIA "Enterprise." CIA "proprietary," Southern Air Transport, shipped guns to *contras*, carried back drugs.

ing escalated under the U.S.-installed Endara regime, and as mass poverty deepens Noriega's party is poised to win upcoming elections.

The *contra*/CIA drug connection extended a lot further than Noriega. In 1982-83, right-wing American millionaire John Hull turned his ranch in Costa Rica into a CIA staging area and supply base for *contra* forces just over the border in southern Nicaragua who, one *contra* later admitted, were "directly involved in the trans-shipment of large quantities of Colombian cocaine from the airstrips on John Hull's farm." Profits from the operation were used to buy military equipment, ammunition and explosives for the anti-Sandinista terror campaign. On the *contras*' northern front, the *New York Times* (20 January 1987) reported: "After dropping arms in El Salvador, rather than returning to the United States in empty cargo planes, the pilots stopped on occasion in

are some of the biggest suppliers!—and certainly won't do away with the oppressive conditions of poverty which feed the gang wars and massive drug addiction. As we wrote in our article "Drug Witchhunt" (WV No. 410, 29 August 1986):

"Black parents are anguished at the sight of their teenage children's lives wasting away. But the cause is not the particular form that escapism takes in this period, but the vicious cycle of joblessness, drugs and crime, promising a future of despair for a generation of ghetto youth. What kind of life is it where the 'alternatives' are welfare, jail, or the army?"

We Marxists fight the anti-drug witch-hunt and call for the decriminalization of drugs, which would also take the huge profits and consequently much of the violence out of the trade. But the biggest merchants of death are the capitalist rulers and their CIA Murder, Inc. It will take a socialist revolution to put them out of business. ■

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LOS ANGELES

France...

(continued from page 1)

right-wing cabinet has been forced to retreat in the face of mass protest. Following its backdown over plans to lay off thousands of state airline workers in October, in January Balladur abandoned a law to aid private schools on the eve of a million-strong march in Paris, and in February he gave way before angry fishermen. The government keeps trying to push through its reactionary program, seeking to entice student leaders into consultations to produce a "new system" of youth wages. But with the regime reeling, now is the time for the working class, oppressed ethnic minorities and youth to strike back hard at their common enemy.

Balladur is rightly afraid of a "new May '68"—a replay of the worker/student rebellion that led some months later, in 1969, to the downfall of his former boss, General de Gaulle. It's certainly high time to bring down the two-headed regime of conservative prime minister Balladur and "Socialist" president Mitterrand. But the ruling class seeks to take back tomorrow what it is forced to grant today under the blows of the class struggle. Indeed, the single minimum wage was achieved by the powerful general strike of May 1968, which swept away two-tier pay scales. Today, Balladur's sub-minimum wage specifically targets working-class youth, and students in the technical schools are in the vanguard of the protests. It's necessary to mobilize forces aiming to



Over 100,000 marched in union-called protest in Paris, March 12. French rulers fear another May '68 upsurge as powerful workers movement joins youth in revolt against reactionary wage-gouging plans.

demonstrated in some 40 cities and towns throughout the country. In Paris, several thousand riot cops provocatively surrounded the marchers, trapping them before giving the order to disperse, thus provoking clashes. In Lyon, where the student demonstration of 30,000 was reportedly the biggest ever, demonstrators added to their slogans against the sub-minimum wage a new demand: down with the police state. In Nantes there was a pitched battle between youth throwing rocks and cops firing tear gas. The "forces of order" ran out of ammunition and had to be resupplied from Rennes.

Things have gotten so bad that the PS-led police "trade union" declared early

broad youth radicalization largely due to the Vietnam War. However, illusions in the possibility of achieving important changes in capitalist society have worn very thin. "We have no future," said one young demonstrator. With the bleak prospects that capitalist society has in store for them, French youth are receiving some hard lessons in the class struggle from the batons of the hated riot police. But what's urgently necessary is to forge an internationalist vanguard party, as the Ligue Trotskyste is seeking to do, that can win the best fighters and most conscious elements to the fight for socialist revolution.

We print below an excerpted translation of the article published in *Le Bolchévique* No. 127 (March-April 1994).

Youth and Workers in the Streets Against the Youth Minimum Wage

For a May '68 That Goes All The Way!

For a Workers Government!

MARCH 18—Some 300,000 people throughout the country expressed their legitimate anger six days ago against the government's "Entry-Level Professional Contract" (CIP), a sub-minimum wage for youth. Yesterday, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators again took to the streets to protest the sub-minimum wage for youth. Workers, but especially young students from university and high schools, formed impressive and combative contingents of ethnically integrated suburban youth, including many young women of the "second generation" (born in France of immigrant parents, predominantly North African). "The minimum wage is nothing. Less than the minimum wage is less than nothing!" chanted a contingent in the March 12 demonstration in Paris. The government claims that the CIP will provide the youth with training—"training" for superexploitation! But the present revolt, which goes well beyond this reactionary measure, expresses the anger of youth against this capitalist society that superexploits, oppresses and excludes them.

Since its retreat last fall when the Air France workers strike threatened to spread, the government has gone from retreat to "compromise," from slap in the face to humiliation. The destabilized government has intensified its vicious anti-immigrant policy, benefiting from the racist consensus of all the political parties, including the PCF and the PS. And it has increased its racist provocations. One of the latest examples is the well-publicized announcement of "unprecedented" collaboration between the Health Ministry and Interior Ministry in the fight against drug addiction and AIDS. In other words, they're turning over drug users and people with AIDS to police repression!

The reformist PS and PCF leaders claim to offer the youth and the workers an alternative to the reactionary policies of the right. But they were in the government not so long ago, and under their leadership the unemployment rate just

kept rising. As the Socialist prime minister Laurent Fabius confessed in 1986, the role of the reformist leaders of the workers movement was to do the "dirty work" for the capitalists.

At the same time several ghetto neighborhoods, subjected to poverty and racist terror, are in revolt. *Libération* (16 March) quotes Malek, a student in a technical college who lives in one of these neighborhoods in the suburbs: "They talked of integration, but when there were school trips to England we could not go. No visa. The only possibility for us was success in school, but even that they have taken away from us." The bourgeoisie once again sees the spectre of '68, a powerful explosion of class struggle in which the workers and youth join in struggle, in particular the children of African and North African immigrants, who are brutally oppressed by this capitalist racist society.

The present occupant of Matignon [the prime minister's residence], who incidentally was an adviser to Prime Minister Pompidou during the pre-revolutionary situation of May 1968, has nightmares about a new May '68, but simultaneously he seems to be doing his best to provoke an alliance between workers and youth. At the same time that he came out with his sub-minimum wage for youth, he announced a new "restructuring" plan for Air France with more than 5,000 layoffs—the previous plan, hastily withdrawn in the face of the strikers' militancy, projected "only" 4,000 layoffs.

Balladur and Interior Minister Pasqua are trying to set workers and students against each other—and to split the youth—on an openly racist basis, presenting the multiethnic youth of the suburbs as a bunch of "wreckers." Pasqua is calling for a new "anti-wrecker" law, that is, an emergency measure punishing the "crime" of participating in a "violent" demonstration. And he has unleashed his cops against young demonstrators as brutally as in 1986 when his cops beat up the students fighting against the Loi Devaquet [restricting access to university education], killing Malik Oussékine. Several dozen students were arrested after yesterday's police provocations. The workers movement must mobilize to demand that they be freed and that the charges be immediately dropped.

The government was careful not to disclose the number of jobs its "CIP" is supposed to create. And for good reason! Today the capitalist world is plunged into the deepest recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The various imperialist bourgeoisies are engaged in a merciless trade war to divide up markets and spheres of influence, a war that has been exacerbated by the victories of capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe and the USSR. To stay "competitive" with their rivals in the "European Union" and the Americans and Japanese, West European capitalists must drastically lower wages and dismantle what remains of the "welfare state" established during the Cold War to convince workers of the "superiority" of capitalism over the collectivized economies of the Soviet bloc. The offensive against the working class goes hand in hand with a strengthening of the legal arsenal reinforcing the segregation of immigrants as well as with a wave of fascist and racist terror.

The youth who are demonstrating against Balladur's sub-minimum wage want a job, a decent wage, housing, in other words, decent living conditions. They hate injustice and racial discrimination in any way, shape or form. The workers movement must struggle today for an immediate end to layoffs and for massive hiring in all sectors. Down with the youth minimum wage! Equal pay for equal work! For a massive wage increase! We need training programs and preferential hiring for youth of immigrant origin, who are imprisoned in ghetto neighborhoods in the suburbs. For the right to a stipend set according to workers' wages for



March 18, Lyon: Hated riot police attack young protesters.

sweep away the whole rotting capitalist system of deepening immiseration and escalating anti-immigrant racism.

We print below excerpts from an article by our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France. In the ten days since its publication, the protest movement of French students and workers continued to develop explosively. Even small cities saw demonstrations of tens of thousands of people. The government, hoping to cut the movement short, stepped up police repression. Police warnings have been posted in high schools threatening demonstrators with sentences of up to seven years in prison. In Paris alone, there were over 300 arrests on the evening of the March 25 demo, and dozens of protesters were sentenced on the spot by the "justice" system.

The regime also played the racist card in a cynical effort to divide the demonstrators. In Lyon, two Algerian teenagers arrested during a demonstration were summarily expelled from the country. When a judge ruled that they had been deprived of their rights and ordered that all measures be taken to return them to France, the prefect arrogantly declared that the judge had no jurisdiction. But this move backfired, as student demonstrators angrily proclaimed, "Return our comrades!"

Last Friday, March 25, was the fifth day of national mobilization in barely one month. More than 200,000 people

this month (after facing a violent uprising by desperate French fishermen):

"When those without work, without income, without training, without help, without homes, without a future, without illusions, without hope, without a haven, without a union, without a party, have had enough of being lulled with promises without basis and without a future, when nothing is left but leap into the void, then the police will be called in..."

—*Le Monde*, 2 March

Significantly, the student mobilizations have taken place largely outside the control of the mass reformist Socialist (PS) and Communist (PCF) parties. But the strength of the protests has forced the leaders of the main trade-union federations to go along. On March 12, 100,000 marched in Paris at the call of Communist-led CGT, and five days later some tens of thousands came out in a demo of the Socialist-led CFDT, FO and FEN. The landslide victory of the conservative parties in last year's parliamentary elections reflected massive revulsion against 12 years of Mitterrand popular-front government of unemployment and austerity. Still, there is precious little popular support for the program of the present right-wing government which has had to back off in the face of massive opposition each time it has tried to implement its platform.

Talk of "a new '68" is on everyone's lips. The consciousness of the French students is quite different today from what it was in 1968, when there was a

youth who pursue their studies.

Impose trade-union control of hiring and use this weapon to end racist discrimination, which excludes the sons and daughters of immigrants in many key industrial sectors. *Abolish the racist Pasqua decrees! Full citizenship rights for immigrant workers and their families!* The workers movement must fight for a *sliding scale of wages*, that will ensure an automatic wage increase to match inflation. We also need a sliding scale of *working hours*—divide the available work among all workers without any cut in pay.

The reformist leaders of the working class will reject such demands as "utopian"; demands such as a right to health care, a decent retirement pension, quality education for all are no less "utopian." In reality, they are only "utopian" if they are placed in the framework of what the capitalists would tolerate from a new "government of the left," to which they would again turn over management of their economy and their state, within the strict confines of bourgeois parliamentarism.

For us Trotskyists, the question is not whether this is "possible" or "impossible" in the framework of decaying capitalism. Within this framework no systematic social reform is possible; any gain won in struggle will necessarily be challenged. (The fact that the victory of the Air France workers last fall is today called into question by the new government plan illustrates this.) The question for us is what is necessary today in order to preserve the proletariat, and along with it the vast majority of the population, from decay and ruin. It is necessary to wage an uncompromising struggle for these demands not in the framework of bourgeois parliamentarism—which means above all respect for capitalist property—but with the weapons of class struggle: mass demonstrations and strikes, as well as factory occupations.

Last spring, when Pasqua imposed a state of siege on the 18th Arrondissement (district) of Paris to crush the youth revolt that broke out after the racist murder of Makome M'Bowole in a police station,

we called for battalions of workers to converge on this immigrant neighborhood in order to defend it, while insisting that the government's aim was to "step up police repression and violence in the name of racist 'security'.... Anti-immigrant terror is the spearhead of the offensive against all workers" (*Le Bolchévique* No. 124, July-August 1993). Since then, the Mitterrand-Balladur government has indeed unleashed its police dogs against the workers in struggle, from Air France to the miners to the Sud-Marine workers, but also against the youth.

We warn: the government's policy is leading sooner or later to a bloody provocation. It is the duty of the workers movement to defend the youth and all the oppressed. We must form *picket lines* to protect striking factories, and form *worker/immigrant self-defense committees* to protect demonstrations and immigrant neighborhoods against police and fascist attacks.

Workers must also set up real combat organizations, from *strike committees* and *factory committees* to *workers councils (soviets)*, in which the workers and their allies democratically determine their strategy and tactics and select a new leadership, forged in the fire of class struggle. On the basis of such mobilizations and organs of workers power, the workers will pose before all classes of society the question of the revolutionary overthrow of the dictatorship of capital by a new power, that of the exploited and the oppressed—the question of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In contrast, the reformist leaders of the workers movement are desperately seeking to defuse the explosive character of the mobilization against the youth minimum wage. Thus they hope to turn the March 17 mobilization into a one-day affair, and they haven't even called for a strike by all workers. The "perspective" put forward by the PCF is...to vote for PCF candidates in the March 20 district elections! The fact that Robert Hue has been made National Secretary of the PCF is highly symbolic. Having organized in 1981 a campaign against a Moroccan

San Jose: Police Target Clinic Defenders

SAN JOSE, California—Over the past two weeks, the San Jose police, working hand in glove with Operation Rescue bigots, have escalated their attacks on abortion clinics. In the eight days following Spartacus Youth Club member Anna Owens' arrest on a trumped-up "battery" charge on March 5 (see "Defend Abortion—Stop O.R.!" *WV* No. 596, 18 March), two more clinic defenders were arrested.

On March 12, Mike Steiner, a supporter of the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights (BACORR-South), was arrested and charged with "disturbing the peace" and "blocking pedestrian traffic." Steiner was attempting to drown out the incantations of an Operation Rescue member who was harassing a client entering a clinic. At a press conference held by BACORR on March 25, Steiner said: "I was manhandled, bruised, choked, my arms were twisted. The officer said I was resisting, even though I was not."

The next day, Steve Smith, a supporter of NWROC (National Women's

en's Rights Organizing Coalition), was arrested protesting at a church in San Jose where Operation Rescue honcho Keith Tucci was speaking. Smith has outrageously been charged with "felony assault with a deadly weapon" for allegedly ripping up pages of a Bible.

Smarting from their defeats last summer during their "Cities of Refuge" anti-abortion campaign, O.R. has stripped away its phony "outreach to the community" façade and launched repeated unsuccessful guerrilla raids on clinics in the Bay Area in the last month. At the March 25 press conference, an SL spokesman said:

"We need massive defense of clinics, not reliance on the Democratic Party. The racist cops and courts are *enemies* of labor, women and minorities. These women-hating, anti-gay bigots of O.R. must be stopped! The Spartacist League calls for women's liberation through socialist revolution—to begin building a society where free, safe abortion on demand and free, quality medical care for all are the reality. Drop all charges against the abortion clinic defenders!"

family denounced as "drug dealers" in his town of Montigny-lès-Cormeilles, which he continues to brag about, he is a forerunner of the anti-immigrant offensive unleashed in the name of "fighting drugs." This racist campaign—whose infamous symbol is the bulldozers of Vitry (where a Communist mayor tore down an immigrant workers' hostel)—was the PCF leadership's entrance fee into Mitterrand's government.

Today, in a situation of rising class struggle against a weakened government, which piles one reactionary provocation atop another, the reformist bu-

reaucrats are doing their best to build a new class collaborationist coalition (like the Union of the Left or the Popular Front in the '30s) in order to stifle these struggles. As we wrote in the last issue of *Le Bolchévique* concerning the present struggles in Europe:

"The need for socialist revolution is placed in front of the European workers movement. For class-conscious workers the question is not just 'will there be another 1968?' but how to achieve a May '68 that goes all the way, to the taking of power. The key is building Trotskyist parties forged on a transitional program leading to workers revolution." ■

Contragate...

(continued from page 6)

criminals at Nuremberg, their secret services were busily secreting many more Nazis to safety via the "rat line," to be used in future covert operations against the "Communist menace."

All of this liberal hogwash is a cover-up at the most fundamental level. To maintain its *class dictatorship*, the bourgeoisie *routinely* lies to the masses and carries out endless conspiracies, often in violation of its own laws and "democratic" principles. This is all the more true for a major imperialist power like the U.S., which seeks to *rule the world*. Policies which the U.S. bourgeoisie deems to be in its interests are carried out regardless of "legality" or the "popular will." As we noted in our article, "Watergate—Reagagate" (*WV* No. 423, 6 March 1987): "The presidency has always represented institutional bonapartism, a power rising above the elected lawmakers." We added: "The executive branch has been the principal arm of U.S. imperialism in the continual exercise of every kind of mass rapine, butchery and war."

As Draper himself notes, as far back as 1918 the great "democrat" Woodrow Wilson "secretly" dispatched 7,000 troops to Vladivostok to link up with Czech units and the White counterrevolutionaries fighting to overthrow the Bolshevik government of Lenin and Trotsky. Wilson got around Congress by financing the American expeditionary force through the Russian embassy in Washington, which remained under the control of an ambassador left over from

the deposed Provisional Government:

"Thus, by the fall of 1918, the administration controlled a functioning procurement and disbursal agency for which it did not have to account either to Congress or to the public. Ostensibly independent, the embassy acted only with the concurrence of the United States government in supplying and arming *both* the Czechs and the White armies."

—Robert J. Maddox, *The Unknown War with Russia*, 1977

The U.S. armed intervention continued until it was driven out by advancing Bolshevik forces in March 1920.

There are endless such stories of "secret" wars and plots to which Congress turned a blind eye. Indeed, until the 1992 Persian Gulf slaughter, the last war Congress had officially authorized was World War II! Stung by U.S. imperialism's debacle in Vietnam, at the height of the Watergate furor in 1973 Congress passed the War Powers Resolution. But this supposed Congressional veto over presidential military adventures was observed only in the breach for years. And the only reason Bush allowed Congress to vote on the invasion of Iraq was that he had been assured beforehand that he would have overwhelming support.

And what of the "fourth estate," the supposed watchdogs in the "free press" idolized in such movies as *All the President's Men* of Watergate fame? When *New York Times* correspondent Tad Szulc filed a story on the eve of the Bay of Pigs invasion reporting preparations for an imminent landing on Cuba, his editors spiked it to avoid being "responsible for grave interference with national policy" (Arthur Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*). Likewise, *Miami Herald* owner John S. Knight "withheld sto-

ries about the Guatemala and Florida training camps at the request of the highest level of the United States Government" (David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, *The Invisible Government*).

In his polemical defense of soviet power against social democrat Karl Kautsky, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918), Lenin exposed the fundamental lie at the root of capitalist "democracy":

"Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the 'democracy' of the capitalists and the thousands of *real* limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into *wage-slaves*. It is precisely this contradiction that is opening the eyes of the people to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism....

"Take foreign policy. In no bourgeois state, not even in the most democratic, is it conducted openly. The people are deceived everywhere, and in democratic France, Switzerland, America and Britain this is done on an incomparably wider scale and in an incomparably subtler manner than in other countries. The Soviet government has torn the veil of mystery from foreign policy in a revolutionary manner."

When he assumed the post of commissar of foreign affairs after the October Revolution, Trotsky immediately ordered the publication of all the secret treaties concluded by the tsar and the bourgeois Provisional Government. "We are carrying out the undertaking which we made when our party was in opposition," he explained in a 22 November 1917 statement, noting:

"Secret diplomacy is a necessary tool for a propertied minority which is compelled to deceive the majority in order to subject it to its interests.... The Russian people, and the peoples of Europe and the whole

world, should learn the truth about the plans forged in secret by the financiers and industrialists together with their parliamentary and diplomatic agents."

The Bolsheviks put their words into practice during the 1918 Brest-Litovsk peace talks with imperial Germany, refusing to play the game of secret deals papered over with democratic language. Trotsky and the rest of the Bolshevik delegation appealed over the heads of the Kaiser's representatives at the conference table to the German workers to rise up in revolution.

The Russian October Revolution swept away the old order, with its secret treaties and intrigues, its carnage and oppression. Today it will take a workers revolution in the heartland of U.S. imperialism to drive out the warmakers who threaten the incineration of the entire planet in their quest to dominate the world. ■

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Trade War...

(continued from page 1)

trade deficit. Right now the only important country the U.S. is running a trade surplus with is its backyard neo-colony Mexico. Japanese and German imperialism are rankling at the jawboning and strong-arming from the White House. And if they retaliate, there could be hell to pay.

Under the headline "Trade War? Unlikely, But Shifting Relations Do Increase the Risk," the *Wall Street Journal* (18 February) wrote: "The U.S.-Japan trade conflict—should it spiral out of control—would be the first showdown between the economic superpowers in the post-Cold War era." Indeed, with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, increasing conflict between these two economic "superpowers" is inevitable.

Through ruthless retrenchment and a 20 percent cut in the real wages of the American working class over the past generation, U.S. industrialists have radically slashed their labor costs. Based on market foreign-exchange rates, unit labor costs in the U.S. are now half as much as in Japan. However, America's "leaner and meaner" companies have not been able to translate lower costs into higher export volume. And without that they cannot grow fat again.

At the same time, Japan Inc. is mired in the worst economic slump in 40 years, which is beginning to crack the vaunted "lifetime employment" of the major companies. Thus Japan's corporate bosses are in no position or mood to further cut back output in order to accommodate a larger volume of imports from the U.S.

We are now seeing a rising tide of economic nationalism on both sides of the Pacific as the American and Japanese ruling classes seek to divert popular discontent over the economy by blaming their imperialist rivals. On the eve of last month's Washington meeting between Clinton and Japanese prime minister Morihiro Hosokawa, one White House official gleefully exclaimed, "We gain credibility with the public the more we slam Hosokawa." So that's exactly what Clinton did, and the economic "summit" ended in threats of trade war.

In the immediate aftermath, Washington revived its "nuclear weapon" for trade war. This is "Super 301," a law passed by the Democratic Congress in the late '80s to pressure the Bush administration into "getting tough" with Japan by authorizing such punitive measures as 100 percent tariffs. This provoked a strong response from America's capitalist rivals, and not only Japan. Leon Brittan, commissioner of external affairs for the European Union (formerly the Common Market), warned the U.S. about violating its trade agreements. Indian economist Jagdish Baghwati, who now teaches at Columbia University, stated, "Nothing unites the world against the United States as much as 301."

This sharp escalation of the trade war was cheered on by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which has been in the forefront of red-white-and-blue Japan-bashing. While American employers have been

February meeting in Washington between Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and Clinton ended in hostile stand-off.



Economist

slashing jobs left and right in the middle of an economic upturn (over 100,000 job cuts in January alone), the union tops meeting in their plush Bal Harbour, Florida retreat hailed Clinton's "tough" talk and blamed Japan for having "weakened our country's industrial base" (*AFL-CIO News*, 7 March). The protectionist poison spewed out by the labor fakers sets American and Japanese workers against each other while lining the bosses' pockets.

On the other side of the Pacific, America-bashing is now in vogue. "All of us have come to hate America," said business journalist Toshiaki Ohno. "The role of Japanese consumers isn't to boost profits at American companies" (*Los Angeles Times*, 14 March). On returning from Washington, Hosokawa was applauded by bourgeois opinion-makers for standing up to Clinton. "The Japan That Said 'No,'" was the headline in the right-wing *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the country's largest circulation daily newspaper. This was a play on the title of a best-selling book of a few years ago co-authored by the head of Sony and a right-wing politician, which urged that Japan take a harder line in defending its national interests against America.

Now the mood of "Japan first" economic nationalism is starting to flow down from corporate boardrooms and newspaper editorial offices into the streets. The Tokyo headquarters of Motorola was recently spray-painted with slogans such as "Anti-America" and "Crush the product-pushing U.S. imperialists"! This is the language of a popular mobilization for war, not just trade war.

Japan: Popular Frontism and Economic Depression

During the Cold War, Japan Inc. was a one-party state. The bourgeois Liberal Democratic Party, supported by U.S. imperialism, ruled the country from the mid-1950s onward. The party's fractious factions were held together by massive corruption ("money politics") as well as mutual hostility to the Soviet Union and the Japanese working class. Japan's rulers—in this respect fully backed by Washington—were determined to prevent the reformist Socialist Party, which adopted a pacifistic posture toward the Cold War, from sharing governmental power.

Just as the fall of the Soviet Union has led to the fracturing of the U.S.-Japan alliance, so it has led to the breakup of the Liberal Democratic Party. Major sections of the Japanese ruling class, who favored a more nationalist economic policy, split from the parent party. Since last summer the government has been a right-wing popular front of these new bourgeois parties and the reformist Socialists.

Thus the Japanese ruling class finds itself in political disarray at a time when it is also facing a major economic downturn. Industrial production has fallen 12 percent since 1991. In the past the "lifetime employment" policy of major Japanese firms was sustained by the wide-

spread use of part-time workers and subcontracting. Now, however, 40 percent of all Japanese firms, including the largest, have announced plans to reduce their workforces. This along with downward pressure on wages could provoke big labor struggles in the next period.

Japan Inc. is thus facing demands to accept more U.S. imports at the very moment it can least afford to do so. In years past, Washington's calls for "opening" the Japanese market were largely diplomatic posturing to justify protectionist measures against Japanese imports in the American market. Given

ers, distributors and trading companies. Hence Japanese capitalism can effectively restrict imports of manufactured goods through informal business understandings without recourse to tariffs, quotas, government subsidies and other protectionist mechanisms used in West Europe and North America. Only 6 percent of manufactured goods consumed in Japan are produced abroad, compared to 15 percent for the U.S. and Germany.

The American ruling class is not really interested in opening the Japanese market to "free" trade. What the Fortune 500 bosses want is that Japan provide a guaranteed market for American exports regardless of relative profitability from the Japanese standpoint. Thus, Clinton is demanding that Tokyo accept minimum import quotas from the U.S. For example, Japanese auto makers would be required to increase their purchases of auto parts from U.S. manufacturers by 20 percent a year for the next four years.

The new U.S. trade strategy is exemplified by Motorola. In 1989, Washington pressured Tokyo into opening up its market for cellular phones. The IDO corporation, the Japanese firm given the license to market Motorola's phones, had already invested heavily in relay stations for a rival technology developed by Nippon Telephone & Telegraph (NTT). As a result, 300,000 IDO customers in the key Tokyo-Nagoya region have NTT phones, while only 10,000 have Motorola's. When Motorola demanded that IDO purchase 225,000 of its phones,



Devastated Tokyo after American firebombing in 1945. Economic conflict between U.S. and Japan in 1930s led to World War II in the Pacific.

their generally higher prices and poorer quality, U.S. manufacturers would not have sold much more in Japan even in the absence of trade barriers.

However, two decades of relentless downsizing, speedup, wage-gouging and union-busting has restored the international competitiveness of American industry (though with a smaller manufacturing base). By 1990, productivity in U.S. factories was higher than in Germany in all major industrial sectors and higher than in Japan in light industry (e.g., food processing) as well as in computers and consumer electronics. Furthermore, wages and benefits are now lower in the U.S. (\$16.70 an hour last year) than in Japan (\$19.30 an hour at market foreign-exchange rates).

Yet in 1993 the U.S. ran a \$60 billion trade deficit with Japan, the largest in five years. Part—but only part—of the reason is the economic depression, which necessarily reduces Japanese demand for imports as well as domestically produced goods. More fundamentally, the Japanese economy is run by a group of tightly knit complexes (the *keiretsu*) which combine manufactur-

regardless of whether the Japanese firm has customers for them or not, IDO boss Takeo Tsukada replied, "That is like burglary" (*Wall Street Journal*, 22 February). IDO eventually agreed to build 160 relay stations geared to Motorola's phones.

The Clinton regime believes the U.S. has both the right and, more importantly, the power to dictate the business plans of Japan Inc. In reviving "Super 301," Clinton has in effect ripped up the global trade agreement he signed just a few months ago under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The GATT treaty, hailed as a big victory for "free" trade, was supposed to prohibit unilateral actions such as the use of Super 301. Now Tokyo's top trade official, Yoshiro Sakamoto, threatens: "Should the U.S. take that sort of action, in theory I think we should retaliate."

Trade Wars and Shooting Wars

Americans may not see any connection between trade war and the real kind, but that connection is seared with the

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BOSTON

Teamsters...

(continued from page 12)

bosses must be accompanied by a fight to drive the feds and their agents out of the union!

Carey became president in December 1991 in a government-run election. This result of the intervention by the capitalist state was hailed by a host of fake-socialist groups, foremost among them the press agents for the TDU, *Against the Current* and *Labor Notes*. A year ago, Carey engineered the first official break with the NMFA, a "two-tier" agreement with Northwest Transport Services that Carey intends to be a "model" (*Journal of Commerce*, 3 February 1993). Needless to say, there wasn't a peep of protest from his loyal supporters in the TDU. Nor did they oppose Carey's massive givebacks imposed on Teamster flight attendants at Northwest Airlines.

When Carey negotiated a new UPS contract that maintained the huge pay gap between full- and part-time workers, the social-democratic *In These Times* (16 October 1993) hailed him for "Delivering the Goods." The Communist Party declared that Carey "has given leadership to re-orienting the IBT... on the side of social progress: Support of Clinton/Gore in '92" (*People's Weekly World*, 18 September 1993).

A Carey/TDU campaign to raise union dues by 25 percent went down to defeat in a referendum this month. Teamsters aren't buying the bureaucrats' claims that the union is broke and needs the money to fund strike pay and organizing. In 1992, Carey and his General Executive Board (with a majority of TDUs) gave \$4.3 million to the Democrats. And the bureaucrats in the IBT's Marble Palace in Washington have used another \$40 million in union cash to pay the feds' "costs," including the \$385-an-hour legal bills of Frederick Lacey, one of the overseers.

The vicious, corrupt gang of exploiters known as the capitalist class has never been interested in cleaning up corruption in the labor movement. The state used RICO on the Teamsters for the same reason the PATCO strike was outlawed and the slave-labor Taft-Hartley law was enacted—to smash the power of the unions. They want to return to the days when it was a criminal conspiracy to even belong to a union.

heat of nuclear fission into the memory of the Japanese. With the onset of the Great Depression in the early 1930s, trade barriers were erected everywhere against the Japanese "trade menace," as it was then called. Most damaging to the Japanese was the prohibitive Smoot-Hawley tariff in the U.S. and protectionism in the Asian colonies of the European imperialist powers (British India, French Indochina). So Japanese imperialism was pushed into creating its own "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," a euphemism for the brutal military occupation and colonial exploitation of Korea, Manchuria and China.

To counter Japanese moves in the Far East, American and British imperialism first resorted to economic warfare. In July 1941 (five months before Pearl Harbor), the U.S., British and Dutch embargoed Japan's oil supplies, without which it could not survive. U.S. imperialism thus provoked Japan into war, and then ended it with one of the most cold-blooded atrocities in modern times: dropping the first nuclear weapons on the defenseless populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The postwar U.S. military occupation imposed on Japan a "pacifist" constitution which stated that "land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained." However, increasing economic tensions between the U.S. and Japan since the late 1970s

Clinton/Reno Frame-Up of UMWA Strikers Labor: Defend Logan County Miners!

On May 2 in Charleston, West Virginia, eight members of the United Mine Workers (UMWA) will go on trial in a massive frame-up by Clinton's Justice Department. Seven of the Logan County miners face 25 years in prison on bogus charges of "conspiracy to interfere with interstate commerce" for allegedly throwing rocks at scab vehicles at the Arch Mineral Ruffner mine near Yolyn last July. They're trying to railroad the eighth miner, Jerry Dale Lowe, in connection with the death of a scab contractor at the mine: he is threatened with 50 years and a \$1 million fine.

This is a blatant union-busting prosecution. In addition to Lowe, who is a strike captain and chairman of UMWA Local 5958's mine safety committee, the miners include the local president Earnest Woods, strike captain Frederick Dexter Carver, miners Daynor Adkins, Curtis Browning, Jerry May, Larry Ray Perry and Luther Shell. The victims of this frame-up have been members of the union for between 20 and 30 years.

The state of West Virginia spent months investigating pickets from the Arch mine, and came up with nothing.

Last month Carey called a walkout at UPS, when the company announced it was more than doubling the weight limit on packages to 150 pounds. The venal gang of "old guard" bureaucrats bowed to a federal court injunction against the walkout and organized massive scabbing on the strike. Carey folded the strike after ten hours, with no more protection for workers than when it began. Of course, that didn't stop Carey's reformist cheerleaders like Socialist Action or the International Socialist Organization from proclaiming that "the new leadership has passed its first big test" (*Socialist Action*, March 1994) and that Carey knew "how to take on courts and bosses" (*Socialist Worker*, February 1994).

Now Carey has moved against his bureaucratic opponents. On March 21, as it became clear that the dues increase was going down to defeat, he retaliated by sending in goons and account-

ants to seize control of four regional conference offices in simultaneous raids around the country. Carey says he will move to abolish these fiefdoms for his opponents next month. But in the infighting in the Teamster bureaucracy—the pro-government Carey and TDU vs. the "reward your friends" business unionists like R.V. Durham—both wings serve the capitalists and their political parties.

Back in the 1930s, it was the revolutionary leadership of the Minneapolis Teamsters which laid the basis for the industrial union power of the modern Teamsters. Building on the victorious Minneapolis Teamster strikes of 1934, they waged a campaign to organize the over-the-road drivers throughout the Midwest, using the powerful tactic of secondary boycotts ("hot-cargoing"). In drawing the lessons of those battles for young communists, James P. Cannon,

International Executive Board member Howard Green told *WV* that the miners are "going against unlimited resources of this government," and the feds are threatening fund-raising efforts with "racketeering" laws. A leaflet

from UMWA Region II (covering key Districts 17, 28, 29 and 31) calls for financial assistance for the "Arch 8": "The members indicted are longtime UMWA members whose only 'crime' is that of being decent, hard-working people." But the UMWA International in Washington has knifed the Arch 8. After wearing down the union ranks in a ten-month-long "selective strike," union president Richard Trumka folded the strike in December, specifically abandoning strikers facing federal charges—the Logan miners.

There must be a fight inside the union to bring out a massive outpouring of solidarity in their defense. UMWA locals in West Virginia should declare a "memorial day" on May 2 and turn out in the thousands. Every union in the Charleston area must mobilize to demand: Drop the charges against the Logan County miners!

* * *

Funds for the miners' defense should be sent to: Region II Defense Fund, 4500 MacCorkle Ave., S.E., Charleston, WV 25304. Earmark for "Ruffner miners."

the founder of American Trotskyism, emphasized:

"All modern strikes require political direction.... The old fashioned trade union movement, which used to deal with the bosses without governmental interference, belongs in the museum. The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn.... The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups."

—*The History of American Trotskyism* (1944)

It will take the rebirth of that kind of class-struggle leadership in the labor movement to drive out the pro-capitalist labor traitors of all stripes, and unchain the power of labor, blacks and all the oppressed in a fight for a workers party and a workers government. ■

markets and spheres of exploitation have led to world war. The last time, U.S. imperialism developed and used nuclear weapons of unprecedented mass destruction. Today these weapons are capable of destroying civilization and even anni-

hilating humanity itself. As the rulers seek to inflame American and Japanese workers against each other, we have to overthrow the rapacious capitalist system they represent before they destroy us. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Feds and Finks Out of the Union!

Strike to Defend Teamster Jobs!

MARCH 28—The trucking companies are out to shred the National Master Freight Agreement (NMFA), the national contract with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Salivating over the \$7.50 hourly differential in wages and benefits between union and non-union trucking jobs, Trucking Management Inc. (TMI), the bosses' negotiating committee, is demanding wholesale givebacks in wages, work rules and working conditions. Last week, 120,000 IBT members covered by the agreement voted 93 percent in favor of authorizing a strike when the contract expires on March 31.

Union truck drivers have taken a terrible beating, as their wages, adjusted for inflation, have fallen almost 30 percent between 1977 and 1992. Since 1978, 45 percent of Teamster jobs at general freight haulers have disappeared, while non-union trucking jobs have doubled. The practice of "double-breasting," the creation of non-union subsidiaries by unionized firms, has grown rapidly in the last decade, as the employers have responded to deregulation with slashing attacks on the working class.

Double-breasting "could ignite the most explosive contract negotiations in years," wrote the *Kansas City Business Journal* (26 November 1993). Coupled with the bosses' increasing demands to

use "intermodal service"—shifting long-haul freight to the railroads—tens of thousands of additional Teamster jobs are at stake. The Big Three trucking carriers—Consolidated Freightways, Yellow Freight and Roadway—control some 75 percent of the industry. Their non-union subsidiaries are spreading like wildfire—

CF's Con-Way Transportation Services now covers 90 percent of the country. In a reversal of the way the Teamsters' power was extended from the union stronghold in the Midwest in the 1930s, the bosses are now rolling back the union in the South.

The NMFA has long been a target of the bosses and their government—it was Jimmy Hoffa's ability to "tie the nation up in knots" with a national trucking strike that lay behind Robert Kennedy's vendetta against the Teamster president. To fight the trucking bosses' offensive, it will take the same sharp class-struggle tactics used by the Trotskyists in the 1930s that built the Teamsters into a powerful industrial union.

But the regime of IBT president Ron Carey was installed by the capitalist courts and Labor Department. As a result of the feds' "racketeering" suit against the union, which was abetted by the "reform" Teamsters for a Democratic Union, the Teamsters union is under the thumb of a government review board which includes William Webster, the former head of the CIA and FBI who is on the board of both the union-busting Pinkerton detective agency and Anheuser-Busch, a huge Teamster employer! The battle against the trucking

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Atlanta, February 7: Teamsters walkout at UPS against hazardous work conditions was aborted after only ten hours by president Ron Carey.

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Birmingham Clinic Defenders Foil Anti-Abortion Bigots

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—"Operation Rescue," the sinister anti-abortion thugs, have descended on this city for a week of provocations against abortion clinics from March 25 to April 2. On Saturday, March 26, some 200 O.R. bigots showed up at Summit Medical Center, one of four clinics they've targeted here.

O.R. might have expected a warm reception in the "Bible Belt," but they were met by 150 abortion rights supporters who successfully defended every entrance and kept the clinic open. Every woman with an appointment got in. At the call of the Emergency Coalition for Choice, led primarily by the Socialist Workers Party, abortion rights supporters came from around Alabama, Atlanta, New Orleans and Los Angeles. The Atlanta Spartacist League actively participated in the clinic defense.

In the Deep South, "right to life" bigotry overlaps with racist Ku Klux Klan terror. Last March, Dr. David Gunn, who courageously traveled the South providing abortion services, was assassinated in Pensacola, Florida by "Rescue America" member Michael Griffin, whose leader was "former" KKK terrorist John Burt. In targeting Birmingham, the O.R. thugs hope to wipe out one of the few areas in the South where working-class and poor women, black and white, can get abortion services. The fight for wom-



Spartacists at clinic defense, Birmingham, March 26: "Defend the clinics, take a stand, free abortion on demand!"

WV Photo

en's and black rights should be linked to the powerful unions of the heavily industrial Birmingham/Bessemer area.

Present in Birmingham for the anti-abortion campaign is Keith Tucci, an Operation Rescue leader who claims the "god-given right" to "destroy" abortion doctors. The reactionary O.R. mobs are obscenely trying to drape themselves in the mantle of the civil rights movement.

In Birmingham they made a special effort to enlist black ministers to their racist anti-woman cause. Particularly repulsive on Saturday was the photo op they staged, with a black O.R. supporter kneeling in prayer before the clinic defenders.

Spartacist League signs exposed this racist lie. SL placards read "1960s: KKK Bombed Birmingham Black Churches. 1990s: Anti-Abortion Terrorists Bomb

the Clinics," and "Honor Fighters for Black and Women's Freedom: Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, the Grimké Sisters." As socialists, we recall the tradition of these great women who fought chattel slavery. Today, in racist capitalist America, working-class and poor black women are triply oppressed.

Clinic defenders took up our chants of "Operation Rescue—Hitler would have loved you!" and "Defend the clinics, take a stand, free abortion on demand!" Many expressed militant opposition to the O.R. siege, despite the push by organizers, mainly the reformist Socialist Workers Party, to get defenders to pledge to a "Nonviolence Code." Such a pledge is dangerous folly, especially in light of threatened skinhead and Klan participation in the O.R. provocation.

A pledge of "nonviolence" means reliance on the capitalist cops—the same racist Birmingham cops who rioted against black youth marching on Martin Luther King Day. But the SWP's newspaper, the *Militant*, didn't deem the January 15 cop riot worthy of mention, not even when 200 black students came from around the South on March 4 to protest the cop assault.

In league with their bourgeois partners in the Feminist Majority Foundation, the SWP in practice limits its demands to simply calling to "Keep Abortion Safe and Legal." What does "safe and legal" mean when abortion facilities are few and far between, clinics are terrorized, parental consent and waiting period laws are imposed, funding is denied for poor women? The Spartacist League signs called for free abortion on demand, and for free, quality health care for all. No reliance on capitalist courts or cops! Women's liberation through socialist revolution! ■