Coalfield Combat Zone

Across the Appalachian coal fields there is a militancy that hasn't been seen in a decade. "Welcome to Beijing China, c/o Governor Li Peng" reads a sign on a lawn in Cleveland, Virginia near the baseball field where miners gather for picket duty. Convoys snake down toward Virginia from six states. Thousands of miners fill the "solidarity camps" that now dot Virginia's coal fields. They arrive to fill the picket convoys and the jails. Back in the unionized coal fields of West Virginia, squads of picketers—often armed, masked with bandanas and ski masks—have laid siege to nonunion mines. As we go to press, the entire unionized coal fields east of the Mississippi are out on a work stoppage that started three weeks ago as a wildcat in support of miners at Pittston. 42,000 striking coal miners confront state police, federal marshals and hired soldiers of fortune, and the coalfields are like a combat zone.

See page 15
A big move is being made by the powers-that-be to shut people up and shut people down in the face of the red, white and blue. The situation calls for political resistance from all quarters against this high-handed attempt by the government to dictate the terms of political protest. As soon as the Supreme Court ruled that, even according to the oppressors’ own laws, burning the American Flag was a prohibited form of political protest, the U.S. President and Congress called for a constitutional amendment to outlaw antipatriotic protest once again. This fascist flag amendment says: “The Congress and the States shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States of America.” This is a very dangerous move against the political rights of the people.

In the name of “the American people,” an ugly program of punishment and repression is being carried out and wrapped in the flag. But this flag amendment is not in the interest of the majority of people. It is a top-down move by desperate men, unsure of the future of their system in a world of trouble. They are desperate to reverse the verdicts of the 1960s and to reimpose the “my country right or wrong” mentality.

The voices of all the basic people need to be heard, loud and clear, against this flag amendment. Our class needs to unite with broader forces who know a N azi program when they see one. And those who think that this fascist amendment is not what the flag stands for need to come out and fight against it in unity with the oppressed. There is much at stake for the future.

“We live in a sick and dying empire that’s desperately clutching at its symbols.”

Joey Johnson, Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade

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Attention RW Readers: According to our publication schedule, the Revolutionary Worker will not publish an issue next week. Look for the RW again the first week of August.

Down with the Fascist Flag Amendment!
Stakes are going up. Attacks are coming down from the powers that be. The atmosphere is charged. Battle lines are being drawn and forces are lining up—on the people's side, not just on theirs.

In this situation, our Chairman Bob Avakian said our stand is:

FEAR NOTHING.
BE DOWN FOR THE WHOLE THING.
El Diario Fights the Power in Peru

The Peruvian government is facing a growing threat to its rule, especially from the people's war led by the Communist Party of Peru, Comrade Gonzalo. The army has ordered an assault by the combined armed forces against the revolutionary prisoners being held in three prisons in Lima. El Diario had been covering the struggle of the Lumaco and Lumalo, or Shining Path, by the media, and it is facing up with even more armed repression from the government and the people and revolutionary forces in the highlands of Peru. Two people were brutally killed by the Sinchis, an elite commando unit of the police. The government ordered an assault by the imperialist powers, the Peruvian rulers, and the Peruvian reactionaries have attacked this country's oppressed.

El Diario has become widely known for its consistent exposure of the Peruvian regime's repression against the peasantry in the countryside, the main base of support for the government's policies. The government has ordered the arrest of hundreds of people and the murders, and jailed or put in hospitals under constant police guard "for its consistent exposure of the Peruvian regime's repression against the peasantry in the countryside, and its last name, for example the often used Voice of the Andes, has been more than matched by the government and the reactionary press.

For years El Diario has played a big role in exposing the crimes of the Peruvian rulers. In 1983 eight journalists, including three from El Diario, were brutally killed by death squads linked to the ruling APRA party. The commission's report was given immediately. But the ferocity of these attacks on people and revolutionary and progressive organizations as well as for its serious and respected reports on the actions, leaders, and aims of the people's war led by the Communist Party of Peru. During strikes and demonstrations, protesters and their tanks have been seen holding up copies of El Diario. Large numbers of people come to rely on this paper to cut through the lies put out by the government and the reactionary press.

On March 8, when El Diario started publishing again after being forced to shut down by the government, the paper's editorial stated: "In these five months of suspension the reactionary and terrorist press has called us many names, for example the often used "Voice of the Andes." We know that this shows their inability to understand that while they practice a servile, even mercenary journalism, we take up and will always take up the pen in the service of the country's oppressed."

But now knowing that the Peruvian reactionaries have attacked this newspaper fiercely, intent on silencing it forever. But the ferocity of these attacks has been more than matched by the brave determination of the staff and supporters of El Diario.

Putting a Spotlight on the Crimes of the Rulers

For years El Diario has played a big role in exposing the crimes of the Peruvian rulers. In 1983 eight journalists were brutally killed by the Sinchis, an elite commando unit of the police. The government's reaction was given immediate. But this inability to understand that while they practiced a servile, even mercenary journalism, we take up and will always take up the pen in the service of the country's oppressed.

In 1988 El Diario published an important, unprecedented interview with the Chairman of the Communist Party of Peru, Comrade Gonzalo. The interview was conducted in Europe and Canada to denounce the Peruvian government's violent attacks against the people, and he was invited to a meeting of the 45th Conference of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. But because
of maneuvers by Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Panama, and the U.S., Arce Borja was not allowed to speak in the conference. These Latin American countries then supported a resolution by the Peruvian government "on the violation of human rights caused by armed groups exercising violence against democratic governments".

El Diario took the offensive and waged a campaign to raise $200,000 to buy its own printing equipment so that the paper could reappear. The slogan for the campaign was, "The Masses Are the Makers of History" and "We Must Rely on Our Own Forces." Relying on its broad support among the people, El Diario finally reopened on March 8, International Women's Day, of this year. An article in the March 8 issue pointed out: "It was the most impoverished sector of the population who most resolutely took up the struggle to reopen the paper... because it is the masses who are the makers of history, the bench of combat is once again with them."

El Diario is still being hounded and threadbare by the government and the reactionaries. On April 19, army troops tortured and killed an El Diario reporter in Tingo Maria. On June 12, 1989 El Diario was bombed once again, this time by unknown terrorists. (The former editor of the Chairman Gonzalo is investigating the calling card of the writer of the paper during Arce Borja's International Tour was arrested along with several others. The charges were under the provisions of Law 24953 and are still being considered.)

But the rulers of Peru have not been able to silence El Diario, and this newspaper continues to be a defiant opponent of the government and a strong voice for the oppressed people of Peru.
Walking out of the theater, Public Enemy's "Fight the Power" still in your ears, sweating from the heat of Spike Lee's Bed-Stuy summer, different images collide in the mind—the torment of Radio Raheem's murder, the rush of the people rising up against yet another pig murder, the plate glass shattering. Ha! Frank Sinatra's melting face in the fire.

The basic people, especially those who live by the millions in the barrios and ghettos, know the contradictions and the characters Spike Lee has put on the screen in Do the Right Thing. And it feels good to see and hear—for that rare time in the movies—"Hey, that's us up on the screen."

All the more so, since this presence is not welcomed by all...

A pissed-off reviewer for Time magazine says of Spike Lee: "He holds the film like a can of beer in a paper bag—the cool sip of salvation on a blistering day—until it is revealed as a Molotov cocktail." What do you know? This film is unnerving the respectable folks who worry about what the people have in their paper bags.

Radio Raheem and Buggin Out are totally recognizable to the oppressed—angry, proud youth holding on tight to the only thing they really have, their culture. And they're willing to fight the power to keep it. There are bitter tears in the theater when Radio Raheem is murdered by the cops.

His character is sketched beautifully—down to the 20 D batteries required to juice The Radio. His face before us full-screen, defying the orders to turn off his music, will not be soon forgotten by the people who have been ruled out of order by this system. Like many Black youth, he finds status in his gold knuckle rings, but there is something deeper—a searching for philosophy. The left hand says "HATE" and the right hand "LOVE." Raheem to Mookie: "STATIC! One hand is always fighting the other." He broadcasts the beat of Public Enemy. He is threatening to those who think that the Black and Latino youth are expendable. But the proletariat has no trouble seeing the potential for Radio Raheem to get down all the way with revolution.

Buggin Out, who in some quarters is considered angry "beyond reason," has a vision and intelligence that leaps out when confronted by the utter disregard for Black culture and Black people by the white people in the neighborhood. He can't abide the arrogant refusal of Sal to put pictures of Black people on the wall of his pizzeria. He is offended by the ignorance of Clifton, the yuppie homesteader in Larry Bird B-ball jersey, who says, "It's a free country, a man can live wherever he wants." Buggin Out comes back: "I ought to fuck you up for saying that shit around!"

Tina is a fighter. She is introduced with boxing gloves, a combative dancer. But she is trapped. She has chains to break. As Spike Lee has done before, he gives a frank and unromantic view of the reality of relations between men and women. Tina is righteously mad at her situation. She has to order a pizza to get Mookie over to the house to see her and her baby. She is tired of being treated like all she's there for is sex. And she is on Mookie's case. At the end of the story, it is clear that whatever else happened in the riot that night, her situa-

Photos from "Do the Right Thing."
Mookie is confronted by the pull to hold onto what he got, even though by anyone’s measure, including his own, it’s just a chump-change job with a lot of aggravation. Spike Lee writes about his character: “The future might be too scary for kids like Mookie, so they don’t think about it. They live for the present moment, because there is nothing they feel they can do about the future. What I’m really talking about is a feeling of helplessness, that who you are and what effect you can have on things is absolutely nil, zero, jack shit, nada.” Mookie’s weakness is money. He is always counting it, he’s got, even though by anyone’s measure, including his own, it affords him. Like many white Americans, his racist views are only slightly below the surface of his gruff, paternalistic attitude. “I never had no trouble with dese people... They grew up on my food.” Sal’s son Pino is seen as the fault of Black people. His younger brother Vito sees all this ugliness and tries to rise above it, making friends with Mookie, but he is also pulled back by the patriarchal ties that bind him to his father and brother. Pino lets his ugly dehumanizing view of Black people hang out, but Sal does much damage. When push comes to shove, he calls Radio Raheem a “nigger.” He is quick to reach for the baseball bat behind the counter of his pizzeria. And it brings destruction... and ultimately death.

Sal’s attack on Radio Raheem is ugly and brutal. And when the cops come it goes to another level: A PUBLIC EXECUTION goes down. Radio Raheem is dragged away and thrown into the police car and the force colliding in society bring Mookie to stand with the masses in the street. Spike Lee has delivered a killing portrayal. He confronts the systematic devaluation of Black life in America. And he celebrates the joy of the people who will not tolerate this situation... who will resist. The future is part of a system of white supremacy, backed up by force and the sinister powers—a story of how the oppression of Black people and the ideas of white supremacy, racism, are backed by force and how the people rise against it.

Just as in real life in places like Bed-Stuy, the police appear with sinister regularity in this film. They prowl and swagger through the neighborhood. It’s an occupying army, in the looks of the corner men you can see an undeclared war starting to break out. The police are enemies of the people.

Sal is a man holding on to the outpost of property and the privilege that being a white man in America affords him. Like many white Americans, his racist views are only slightly below the surface of his gruff, paternalistic attitude. “I never had no trouble with dese people... They grew up on my food.” Sal’s son Pino is so full of the racist outlook of the slavemaster that he is incapable of admitting that his favorite Black performer is “really Black.” All that is wrong with his life is seen as the fault of Black people. His younger brother Vito sees all this ugliness and tries to rise above it, making friends with Mookie, but he is also pulled back by the patriarchal ties that bind him to his father and brother. Pino lets his ugly dehumanizing view of Black people hang out, but Sal does much damage. When push comes to shove, he calls Radio Raheem a “nigger.” He is quick to reach for the baseball bat behind the counter of his pizzeria. And it brings destruction... and ultimately death.

This portrayal of the pig police is a real strength of Do the Right Thing. It tells it like it is. The racism of a white pizza parlor owner is not just oppressive ideas—it is part of a system of white supremacy, backed up by armed men and the POWER of the state. This is central in America the lives of Black people are valued less than anyone else. And in all the controversy over Do the Right Thing, this has come out over and over again. But it’s a two-sided thing, because the movie is embedding those who want to turn this situation upside down.

Let’s Stop Stuttering

Smiley. He’s a kind of an oracle who appears in the film at every key turning point. With his copy of Malcolm X constantly playing on his pocket cassette, he takes on the bigot Pino. He joins with Radio Raheem and Buggin in the boycott of Sal’s. He lights the fire in the pizzeria after the riot begins. He celebrates what the people have done, placing his photo of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King on the wall, smiling for the first time ever.

Throughout the film, Smiley’s photo cards foreshadow the new famous pairing of quotes by Martin Luther King and Malcolm X’s view of the use of violence to combat
Mama, Mama 'day's a wolf at 'da door!
My Mama say, "what you come up here for?"

Mama, he say he come to save us from thugs,
He say he part of the gov 'menls war on drugs.

My Mama say is you 'da same wolf what brought us to 'dese shores,
And destroyed our families; turned our sista's into whores.

Mama, he say yeah, hut he aint lak'he use ta be,
Now he really care 'bout us colored peoples and our family.

Mama, he say Nancy Reagan sent him to tell us: "jes'say no."
He say the gov'ment's truly concerned 'bout our welfare, Mama say, iz 'datso?!

My Mama say was you 'da one'no-knocked'ctivi Willie's bead in '71?
Mama, he .say he had to; cutjt Willie might ah hail ah gun.

My Mama say how come everytime you have a war on some'n we the usualics?
She say the war on communist aggression left Daddy dead 'cross the seas.
The war on poverty left us mo'poorer and dependent on crumbs from you,
So jes' what is 'dis 'war on drugs' 'sposecl to do ?

My Mama say where 'dese so-called Black leaders been?
She say if any of 'nem supportin' your schemes we need some new Black leaders 'den.

My Mama say she jes' wanna be right & correct,
She say ain't you the same wolf that 'sponsible for the demise of Malcom X.

You buttin' ah thousand Mama, you know dis wolf better 'den he know his self.
Mama, say no thank you, you can sell 'dat stuff somewheres else.

See, Mama got big books what tells everything you did,
'Den you come talkin' 'bout savin' somebody, Mama say who you tryin' to kid?!

Mama say you jes' tryin' to repress us for the next step of genocide.
She say it ah be a cold summer in New Orleans 'fore she believe any more ah your lies

Anyway, you Ma ugliest wolf I ever did see.
Got red, white, & blue eyes and blood drippin' from your teeth.

In one hand you got ah cross, in 'da other you got 'da flag
'N' uh stench comin' from your soul 'dat would make ah maggot gag.

Mama, Mama 'dis wolf got the Bill of Rights 'n'the Constitution trampled under his feet.
And everwery he steps 'dey's blood all over the street.

My Mama say you always talkin' 'bout constitutional rights,
But you always tryin' to destroy 'dem by the 'dawn's early light.

My Mama say revolution is 'da only thing she buyin' now
'Say if you don't git out our door she got a .38 'dat ah show you how!
My Mama say stop tryin' to run these games 'n'leave poor peoples alone.
No you can't come in cause my Mama say, SHE AIN'T HOME!

KENNETH CARROLL
p.s. the war on drugs is the war on you!

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Kenneth Carroll is a poet/activist, resident of Washington, D.C. and editor of Omnoule, a graphic literary magazine.
The "War on Drugs" promotes a general social atmosphere of fear, calls for suspended rights, and targets the victims as the source of the problem. It is a climate that seeks to justify a quarantine of the inner city by ever increasing police build-ups. In calling for a national conference against the "War on Drugs," we are fully aware of the serious danger of drugs, which is precisely why we call for both truthful education about drugs and serious alternatives to dependency. Among us we have diverse views on long-term solutions. But we ALL agree that the major focus of this current "War on Drugs" is not about keeping drugs out, but about keeping people down. For there to be any real solution to the problem of drugs, there must first be an end to these attacks on the people.

Now is the time to end complicity with their phony "War on Drugs." Now is the time to come together to expose the "War on Drugs" for what it really is. Now is the time to organize to defeat these attacks on the people.

No more evictions! No more "jump-out squads"! No more mandatory drug testing! Money for serious treatment and help! Amnesty for youthful offenders! End the racist barriers to decent lives for our youth!

No more apartheid control on housing projects! No new drug laws! No more mandatory drug testing! Money for serious treatment and help! Amnesty for youthful offenders! End the racist barriers to decent lives for our youth!

A partial list of speakers for the July 27-29 conference:

- Ama Asantua
- Carl Dix
- Dera Tompkins
- Linda Fullerton
- Aminifu Harvey
- C. Clark Kissinger
- Jesse McDade
- Douglas McVay
- Edith Mirante
- Edmondo Morales
- Travis Morales
- Dr. Abdur Aziz Muhammad
- Dera Tompkins
- Carletta Hewitt
- Dora Tompkins
- Michael Zinzun
- Edith Mirante
- Ambrose Lane
- Jonathan Smith, Esq.
- Rev. Ron Swisher
- Jesse McDade
- Kevin Zeese, Esq.

A NATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST THE OUTRAGES OF THE "WAR ON DRUGS"

JULY 27, 28, & 29, 1989 at the First Congregational Church
10th & G Streets, NW
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(at the Metro Center subway stop)

ENDDOED BY:
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- D.C. Chapter, National Lawyers Guild
- International Council of African Women
- JoAnn Aron, Managing Editor, The Black Scholar
- Mark Anderson, Washington Post
- Rev. Louis Chase, Lynwood United Methodist Church
- Bobby Karega Dukis, Community Activist, Washington, D.C.
- Williams Kuriloff, Esq., New York, NY
- Ambrose Lane, Host, "We Ourselves," WPFW, Washington, DC
- Jesse McDade, Host, "The Spear," WPFW, Washington, DC
- Richard Njokwi, Dept. Chair, African American Studies, Berkeley, CA
- Cecile Hendra, San Francisco, CA
- Jonathan Smith, Esq., Washington, DC
- Ron Swisher, Richmond, CA
- Kevin Zeese, Esq., Alexandria, VA

The conference will be held at the First Congregational Church, 10th & G Streets, NW. Washington. Registration for all three days is $20.

Write: Counterattack Conference, P.O. Box 73852, Washington, DC 20056
Phone: 202-230-4908
Drug Czar Calls for Cutting Off Heads

From the San Francisco Chronicle June 16, 1989:

Drug Czar Talks About Beheading Convicted Dealers

Reuters Washington

William Bennett, federal drug policy coordinator, said last night that he had no moral qualms about beheading convicted drug dealers.

"Morally, I don't have any problem with (beheadings) at all," Bennett said when asked on the CNN's "Larry King Live" call-in television show.

Bennett said the idea of beheading was "morally plausible" but legally difficult.

"I mean, ask most Americans: if they saw somebody out on the street selling drugs to their kid, what they would feel morally justified in doing—to tear them limb from limb.

"There's no moral problem there. I used to teach ethics—trust me," he said.

To the RW from a prisoner:

Dear Readers,

The slavemasters of this system have just issued another warning!! So-called Drug Czar, but internationally known mobster, Bennett, has again exposed what this system has in mind for the masses...again, under the pretense of this system's so-called war on drugs, the masters have shown their true nature...They've raided our neighborhoods, kicked in our doors, frisked our people, locked us up, or just straight-up gunned us down. Or in other words...they've used this same pretense to dish out straight-up fascist terror towards us!! Now, comes their most recent plan...In an interview this past week, scumbag, mobster, and flunkie of this system's miseducational program, Bennett, issued a misstatement that claimed in an around-about-way, that drug dealers and/or users should be beheaded on sight!! And this, as we know, has nothing to do with clean'n up this systematic pollution. And in reality, it's just another repressive, barbaric tactic and plan of the slavemasters, in their attempts to intimidate, further enslave, and keep us down!! For as we know, the only real solution to all this pollution lies in the armed struggle and revolutionary overhaul of this whole, despairs-filled, unjust, racist, cop-eat-cop, parasitic, imperialist system!! It's wake up time in Amerikkkkk!!

Resist Repression! Long Live Marxel-Leninist-Mao Tsetung Thought!!

PS. Stay strong, get prepared, and stay conscious!

Yours truly, Doc

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A QUESTION OF POWER:
How Revolutionary China Got Rid of Drugs
by C. Clark Kissinger
REVOLUTIONARY WORKER REPRINT
Women Must Have the Right to Choose—
No Forced Reproduction—
No Forced Sterilization!

Women are NOT Incubators!
Fetuses are NOT Children!
Abortion is NOT Murder!

Outlawing Abortion was—and is—a Nazi Program!
Break the Chains! Unleash the Fury of Women
As a Mighty Force for Revolution!

The Supreme Court ruled that states can ban abortion in hospitals and clinics that receive state funding. States can now require women who want an abortion to have expensive viability tests at 20 weeks of pregnancy. And the Court did not strike down the reactionary language in the Missouri law that says “life begins at conception.” These rulings represent a major assault on Roe v. Wade which legalized abortion. The Court challenged the “trimester” structure established by Roe v. Wade, which said states could not restrict abortions in the first two trimesters of pregnancy, Thus the court has opened the door for even more restrictions on a woman’s right to determine the course of her own pregnancy.

All women will be victimized by this decision. And poor women, many of whom are of the oppressed nationalities, will bear the brunt of this vicious attack. These are women who depend on public hospitals for abortions or who can’t afford expensive “viability” tests. These are women who even before this ruling were denied federal funds for abortion and will be most affected by the flood of reactionary, restrictive state laws that are sure to be enacted and enforced now. An attack on AWP women’s ability to decide when and if she will bear a child is an attack on ALL women.

The stakes are high in this battle for abortion rights. There are lives in the balance, and part of the outline of the future will be drawn as the sides take shape and size. We have to strengthen our opposition in the face of this attack, create new and bold ways to politically take on the government and their foot soldiers. We cannot go on the defensive, sound a retreat and fall back to lobbying individual state legislatures. We must unite to go straight up against them and in their face!

What kind of society is this where women are assaulted, our lives threatened from the highest levels of government? The kind that needs to be gotten rid of through revolution at the first possible moment. That’s what kind of society.

Mary Lou Greenberg, Revolutionary Communist Party

Women are NOT Incubators!
Fetuses are NOT Children!
Abortion is NOT Murder!

Outlawing Abortion was—and is—a Nazi Program!

Resolution at the Clinic Doors

We received the following correspondence from a high school student about a pro-choice demonstration at a Chicago clinic against “Operation Rescue.”

We got to the clinic at 8:00 a.m. We were welcomed by chants of “Pro-Life, Your Name’s a Lie. You Don’t Care If Women Die.” When I heard that, a smile came to my face, but it was quickly wiped off by the sight of “pro-lifers” in front of the clinic door. “No fucking way they can do that,” I said to my friend. She looked at me with sympathy in her eyes.

“The pigs are just standing there. THEY CAN’T DO THAT,” I went on. We passed a young pro-lifer who read my “Clinic Defense” sign on my chest and yelled out, “What’s better, life or death?” The only man with an untreated around and yelled back, “What’s better, a dump of cells or a woman’s life?” The smile returned to my face.

Two hours later, the pigs started taking action. They moved the pro-lifers from the door, along with the five brave pro-choice who were in between them and the door. In those two hours I came in contact with five very scared, very angry, and very impatient women who had appointments. One Black woman asked me how to get in. I had to tell her sadly that we couldn’t do anything until the pigs moved the pro-lifers. I saw her once after that, looking at her watch and then the door. After that, she was gone.

The time was coming close to “escort” the women into the building. The cops had just finished moving the last of the pro-lifers. We had made two circles (an inner and an outer) and the women were in the middle. The pro-lifers started screaming, “Don’t kill your baby,” and other idiotic things of that sort. That’s when one woman broke down. “It’s hard enough to make this decision and then come here and be terrorized by these people,” she said through her tears. There was nothing I could say.

She was right. She should not have to go through this shit! The woman standing next to her (who was also going to have an abortion) had tears streaming down her face, but her face showed no expression. They were holding hands. Rightly, it was time. We locked arms. They pulled the sheet over their faces, their boyfriends went to the front of the circle and we started walking. I remember hands groping at us, seeing their boyfriends faces harden and the one hot tear run down my face. I remember thinking, never should anyone, anywhere, have to go through this. Never should a woman have to take this treatment for making a decision that has to do with her body.

We got through the revolving doors and into the elevators. I hit the 7th floor button and up we went. Everyone got off except for myself and my friend. The women turned to us with red swollen eyes. “Thank you,” they said. “I’ll never let this happen again,” I said. “Never again.” A painful smile appeared on their faces and they hurried and walked into the clinic.
The oppressors keep trying to put the clampdown on New York City's Tompkins Square Park. And they keep getting hit with the people's anger. In July a new park rule went into effect that forbids tents and such from being put up in the park. But when the authorities moved to enforce this rule in Tompkins Square Park, they set off a major battle.

On July 5 the police and the Parks Department personnel moved in en masse, sealing off the park and dismantling anything and everything that looked like someone might sleep under it. They rammed through what little the homeless possession—of wood, boxes—and tore it all in the dirt like so much trash. It touched off street demonstrations, flag burnings, and a wild night of street protest. A banner raised in the night's heated air read: "Tompkins Square/Tiananmen Square—the oppressors keep trying to put the clampdown. And one banner put up amidst the tents read, "Revolution is the Hope of the Hopeless." The police began to charge into the park. A city university student whose summer vacation has been unlike any before said, "We formed a human barricade around here, we—everybody—homeless, squatters, anarchists, Marxists, we had RCYB here, and several other people... Before I saw cops I saw cameras and news reporters in my face, so I think the police and the press. They physically pushed through and broke through on that side. They took tents down. And ten minutes later we just rebuilt them again." He added, "I think the police used the press. They made it harder for people to stand by and watch."

Each time the people put up the plastic sheeting, the police would charge and increasingly unpredictable summer nights. For some, living here is an act of political protest—squatters take over abandoned buildings and collectively

According to the New York Daily News a police riot-control training session in Brooklyn during June got a "little too realistic." The training exercise involved seventy cops from the Brooklyn North Task Force, a mobile patrol unit that is shifted to different precincts, and sixty plainclothes cops from Brooklyn South. The Brooklyn North cops were playing the role of uniformed cops while the Brooklyn South group was playing the role of a crowd.

The Daily News reported:

"The riot training was supposed to teach the cops how to deal with crowds. It was instigated as a result of the Tompkins Square Park riots last August in which untrained and undersupervised young cops overreacted, brutalizing several innocent civilians."

"Police were giving out few details on whether last night's mock exercise was a Tompkins Square replay, or how and why the cops battled each other, or how they got hurt, but a police spokesman chalked it up to the realistic training involved."

"He said the cops at the riot-training session, reportedly in a Brooklyn armory, took their training a little too seriously."}

"One of the cops involved said later, "I don't know what gave it a little too serious tone. I just saw the last night's bag, too.""

"The longer they did it then we would give up and forget about it. No. The longer they did it it made us stronger."

"This is a neighborhood out of the rulers' control. And it's getting more un..."
rebel in defiance of the rules of private property. It's where what's different and unorthodox isn't only tolerated, it's wanted and expected. And the more the authorities try to bring this place under control, the more it gets out of control.

Last summer the city's efforts to enforce a 1 a.m. curfew led to a police riot.

Up went the tents in bold defiance of the rulers' clampdown. And one banner put up amidst the tents read, "Revolution Is the Hope of the Hopeless."

And as the cops indiscriminately beat anyone and everyone in the East Village last summer, they made more enemies. Every time they went into Tompkins Square Park, they have the public on their side that rioted to their every move. They are compelled to attack and try to stop what's going on in Tompkins Square Park, hence the escalating situation.

This summer when the Parks Department passed new rules aimed at driving homeless from city parks throughout the city, scores of homeless headed for Tompkins Square Park. The New York Times reported that over the three weeks before the new park rules went into effect, the number of people living in the park grew from 20 to 200. The Times also said that the number of structures in Tompkins Square built by homeless jumped from six to thirty-five. And the homeless have sharpened the atmosphere with a "nothing to lose" edge. When people defined the new park rules, rebuilding the tents and shanties, some homeless people in the park vocalized that read: "What are they afraid of? Homelessness is a problem their system can't solve!" and "Homelessness reveals the true colors of the system at home."

"The city attacked a section of people they thought were helpless as homeless. They found out it wasn't true."

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The city attracted a section of people they thought were helpless as homeless. They found out it wasn't true.

When a protest was recently held outside the Public Commissioner's brownstone in the wealthiest Upper East Side, a lot of well-dressed, gold card-carrying people were there, but not a single person of color. A New York Times editorial spoke against the city's efforts to keep homeless people out of the park: "Our system is adding to the sparks and stirrings of revolution - to mobilize and defeat the oppressors' attacks and politically take power."

For ail those who hate the madness of the Rich Thing and envy the people who live in plastic when they can afford rent and even more upper-class people live in plastic, these are nothing but lies and distortions. Revolutionary graffiti hits the walls of the South Bronx that says, "Revolution Is the Hope of the Hopeless." Washington Square Park witnesses a forgetful attack by skinheads. Two racist attacks go down with bands of racist whites burning up their Black brothers and sisters. The Right Thing opens and movie reviewer Rex Reed blurts out on TV how he's problems with the film. The Rich Thing is a fashion show instead this summer. And Tompkins Square Park is a battle zone in this, turning the city's temperature up even higher.

For those who hate the madness of this system and want to get an end to it, this is an excellent situation to politically maximize preparations for proletarian revolution, to mobilize and defeat the oppressors' attacks and politically take power. The city attacked a section of people they thought were helpless as homeless. They found out it wasn't true.

The city attacked a section of people they thought were helpless as homeless. They found out it wasn't true.
The Right Thing About “Do the Right Thing”

Continued from page 7

The Right Thing About “Do the Right Thing”

At a time when major rebellions of the Black masses have been the exception—with Miami keeping the tradition alive—Do the Right Thing has brought burning and unresolved questions to the front of the cultural arena, and everyone is compelled to confront them. These are questions which the Black rebellions of the '60s placed so powerfully on the agenda twenty years ago: what will it take to end the oppression of Black people in America?

Who’s Afraid of Who?

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Coalfield Combat Zone

Continued from page 1

Dana, Virginia—Westward through Virginia, gentle farmhands suddenly give way to the steep, narrow valleys of coal country. From the moment we left the tour-line, it was obvious that whole counties here are gripped in a grim and bitter struggle. This is a combat zone where ceaseless demands of Pittston Coal Company are backed up by virtual martial law. Mining throughout this area has been blocked by armies of state police, federal marshals and mercenaries, hired by the coal companies. Fifteen miles up into the mountains, the forest road suddenly filled with police patrols and guardposts. Again and again you drive up on a scene where pigs have stopped some miner's truck by the side of the road. Miners in their camouflage fatigues are simply thrown up against the squad cars, frisked, handcuffed, and dragged to jail. At this point there have been well over 2,000 arrests, most near the entrances to the mine property. Each morning, slow-moving convoys of pickup trucks, crammed with miners, harass and block the scab coal trucks that rumble out of side roads. At mine entrances and other strategic spots, schacks are manned by tense pickets who stare down the hired mercenaries imported by Pittston.

One morning, standing among the pickets, those of us who watched the state police and federal marshals arrest man after man from a crowd that closed the main coal-hauling road. Federal judges have decreed that traffic violations in this coal field are now federal crimes. As each driver was arrested, another miner slid over into his seat and the picket truck rejoined the illegal convoy. One miner has now been sentenced to three months in federal prison for driving slowly on a public road.

Even open sympathy with the miners is dangerous. A Catholic nun was stopped Wednesday, July 12 for driving her miner's truck by the side of the road. Miners in their camouflage fatigues are simply thrown up against the squad cars, frisked, handcuffed, and dragged to jail. At this point there have been well over 2,000 arrests, most near the entrances to the mine property. Each morning, slow-moving convoys of pickup trucks, crammed with miners, harass and block the scab coal trucks that rumble out of side roads. At mine entrances and other strategic spots, schacks are manned by tense pickets who stare down the hired mercenaries imported by Pittston.

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In southwestern Virginia, any sign of resistance is being made illegal. The reality of wage slavery in America—the property relations, the armed power of the state, the hypocrisy and injustice—is confronting the miners at every turn.

The Return of the Gun-Thug Army

Meanwhile, the coal companies' private army has been conducting a secret war of violence and dirty tricks. Vance Security is known to hire ex-Green Berets and Soldiers of Fortune types. Vance's armed men in bullet-proof vests pull up at isolated homes in the night-time to terrorize wives while their husbands are on picket duty. Booby-traps are planted in the driveways of known miners.

This week those thugs are busy building military blockhouses at key points on Pittston property in clear preparation for armed exchanges.

On the surface this is a contract strike. After an industry-wide mine agreement was negotiated in late 1987, the Pittston Coal Company refused to sign it. They broke with the forty-year-old industry pattern and demanded new, extreme concessions from the miners. After negotiations stalled for over a year, 1,500 Pittston miners in Virginia finally struck this spring, on April 5. One miner, said the Pittston spokesman, William Byrne, was pitiful to realize how these people...A showdown has been visibly building across the whole Appalachian coal fields for years now. This year it finally broke out. And the lush valleys of southwestern Virginia produced the spark.

Militancy has flared across the Appalachian coal fields in a way that hasn't been seen in a decade. Convoys have snaked down toward Virginia from six states. Thousands of miners have filled the "solidarity camps" that now dot the counties here, those stretchers filled the halls. It's like a credit card that expires. Such remarks coldly reveal Pittston's goal: They're not just demanding concessions from the miners. They want a new order in which the miners are broken and the company's will is law. And the government is backing them up.

A Cold-Blooded Message

Last spring the coal contract ran out, Pittston cut off medical benefits for many hundreds of widows, disabled miners, and pensioners. One West Virginia miner explained to the RW the deep symbolic importance of these medical benefits: "I remember just after World War 2, when we first won our medical cards. Squads of six miners drove up into the hills and back to shacks in forgotten places and we gathered up all the disabled and older people who had suffered without medical attention, without medicine. We brought many of them down in stretchers...In the foothills here, those stretchers filled the halls. It was guided to realize how these people had been suffering." Then in 1988, forty full years later, Pittston Coal Company simply cut off all medical benefits, something no other coal company has done, even during the most bitter of the last two generations. A Pittston spokesman, William Byrne, was asked to justify this move and he simply said: "It's like a credit card that expires." Theirs expired." Such remarks coldly reveal Pittston's goal: They're not just demanding concessions from the miners. They want a new order in which the miners are broken and the company's will is law. And the government is backing them up.

A Battle Yet To Come

A cold-blooded message. The day that the old contract ran out, Pittston cut off medical benefits for many hundreds of widows, disabled miners, and pensioners. One West Virginia miner explained to the RW the deep symbolic importance of these medical benefits: "I remember just after World War 2, when we first won our medical cards. Squads of six miners drove up into the hills and back to shacks in forgotten places and we gathered up all the disabled and older people who had suffered without medical attention, without medicine. We brought many of them down in stretchers...In the foothills here, those stretchers filled the halls. It was guided to realize how these people had been suffering." Then in 1988, forty full years later, Pittston Coal Company simply cut off all medical benefits, something no other coal company has done, even during the most bitter of the last two generations. A Pittston spokesman, William Byrne, was asked to justify this move and he simply said: "It's like a credit card that expires." Theirs expired." Such remarks coldly reveal Pittston's goal: They're not just demanding concessions from the miners. They want a new order in which the miners are broken and the company's will is law. And the government is backing them up.

Mobs picked at Mine 5, 4 in Virginia. UMW strikers at the Pittston Virginia Plant.

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In southwestern Virginia, any sign of resistance is being made illegal. The reality of wage slavery in America—the property relations, the armed power of the state, the hypocrisy and injustice—is confronting the miners at every turn.

The situation is very tense and the scattered gun fights and explosions could escalate into a full-scale shooting war at almost any time. These events have been suppressed or distorted by the bourgeois media. Clearly the plan of the companies and the authorities is to overwhelm these determined miners and their families with the sheer weight of force and violence of the courts, police, and gun thugs. And clearly, the determined resistance of these miners and their families is a major development that deserves the attention of the oppressed revolutionary people.

During the past week, the RW team dodged state police and gun thugs to explore this struggle. We interviewed dozens of men and women, often in the noise of confrontations and directly under the eyes of Pittston's hired violence. In the next issue of the RW we will write more about events here and about their broader significance.
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