On Sunday, February 11, African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela walked out of prison after twenty-seven years in apartheid jails. There was jubilant celebration among black people all around South Africa, and youths in Soweto danced the toi-toi. For many people, Mandela has been a symbol of the oppression of Azanian people in South Africa and the resistance against apartheid. And many correctly see his release as a step that the white government was forced to take because of the courageous struggle of the black masses. But the Azanian people still live under the bloody rule of apartheid—the South African security forces killed five black people just a day before Mandela's release and fired repeatedly into the crowds of people waiting for Mandela to speak in Cape Town Sunday. As we went to press, there were reports of several people killed and many wounded.

Mandela and the ANC are calling for negotiations with the government. But this program of negotiations and conciliation cannot lead to all-the-way liberation for the Azanian people. There are winds of change in South Africa—but where are they blowing?

See page 7
The following leaflet was put out by the RCP, New York Branch:

**JUSTICE FOR LUIS LIRANSO! JUSTICE FOR JOSE LUIS “RAISE” LEBRON! JUSTICE FOR ROBERT COLE! FIGHT THE POWER!**

This is the language of Apartheid New York. Pig bullets for the oppressed.

- January 27, Luis Liranso, a 17-year-old Dominican youth, shot dead by the police.
- January 31, Jose Luis “Raise” LEBRON, a 14-year-old youth, shot dead by the police.
- February 3, Robert Cole, a 13-year-old Black youth, shot dead by the police.
- Eight people murdered by the police since January 1.

It is an outrage that young Black and Latino lives are being snuffed out—by police in our own neighborhood and Bayside hustlers who you step out of it.

It is an outrage that the authorities try to justify these murders, saying cops have to shoot first and ask questions later because our neighborhoods are dangerous and drug-infested. LIES! The system has PUT US on the bottom, and is set on KEEPING US there. And the police ain’t nothing but murdering, brutalizing enforcement of this same system.

It is an outrage that the ones who stole Puerto Rico just shooting a 14-year-old Puerto Rican youth for supposedly taking $10.

It is an outrage for the system to talk about crack vials justifying murdering a 13-year-old Black youth. But that says a lot about what their war on drugs is all about: A WAR ON THE PEOPLE. And nobody, no matter how old—or young—is being spared by these pigs.

The straight-up truth is that this system has ALWAYS oppressed Black and Latino people—from the days of slavery and American Indian troops setting foot in the Caribbean and never leaving, to the days of killer cops, Howard Beach and Bayside hustlers. It’s time to Fight the Power.

The May 1st Manifesto of the RCP was right on the mark: “Take a cold stand, with cold revolutionary policies in command, and let them carry out their plans to pen us in, lock us up, hammer us down, and kill us off, while they’re putting up that front, telling that Big Lie that this is what we want!”

No peace for racists—in and out of uniform—anywhere! Neither in the streets, not in the schools, not on the job, not in any neighborhood. Speak up! Speak out! Act up now! Do it every day, everywhere!

“And more, while we’re battling them back, politically like that, we got to make this part of getting ready for The Time—and it can come soon—to wage revolutionary war!”

**JUSTICE FOR LUIS LIRANSO! JUSTICE FOR ROBERT COLE! FIGHT THE POWER!**

**INDICT THE COPS FOR MURDER—NO COVERUPS MURDERERS! MURDERERS! NO MORE! ASESINO! ASESINO! BASTA YA! REVOLUTION IS THE SOLUTION!**

Revolutionary Communist Party, U.S.A., New York Branch

Join the RCP—Get ready for revolution.
“We’re Not the Future for You!”

Youth Fight Back Against Police Murders in NYC

Outrage has erupted and spread in New York City in response to the brutal police murders of three youths in one week (see RIV No. 542). Especially in Bushwick, Brooklyn, in the neighborhood where the Jose Luis Lebron (“Base”) was murdered, youth have been fighting the power all week long.

Wednesday night Jose Luis Lebron, known as “Base” in the neighborhood, was gunned down in cold blood by a pig named Albergo. Youth told us that Albergo was always messing with them. A lot of youth witnessed the murder. One youth told us, “They shot. Once they missed, they shot again. They hit him in the neck and they shot again to hit him in the head or something. They did it on purpose. He shot twice. He knew that kid went down already and he shot again.” Another youth said, “I was walki...
Press Conference—Call to Action

We're Not the Future for You!

Continued from page 3

calling them. Youth gave the finger to the camera. When a city full of pigs came, young men would run up to it and taunted the police, charging hu, hu, but like an audience on Arsenic Hall. Chants rang out: "Hey, hey, men in blue, Bushwick posse fighting." People marched to the precinct.

It was surrounded by barricades and dozens of pigs. Speakers exposed the brutal murders by callign their victims "criminals." It is outrageous that they tell us to wait and trust in the system to investigate its hired killers. These outrages must be met by people pouring into the streets expressing their righteous rage, as thousands of speeches by you must make Bushwick posse's watching you."

"That's why we're out here today and that's why we're part of calling this Day of Outrage. And we call on everybody who isn't down with police executing our young people to be out there with us!"

Carl Dix, spokesperson for the RCP

We want to begin by announcing a Day of Outrage against police murder this Saturday, February 10. People will gather at Knickerbocker and DeSales at 1 p.m., and at the Harlem State Office Building at 1 p.m. and converge on 1 Police Plaza at 5 p.m. and demonstrate our outrage at this flood of police gunning down Black and Latin youth.

To those who ask why are we outraged, I say why aren't you outraged? You've been talking about 35 years of riots. You've been talking about the burning of the flag that these thugs over here wear on their shirts. . . . I say the reason this is right?. . . Don't put your hands in your pockets in Bushwick or they might shoot you.

We also don't buy the line that we should give the system time, let it investigate its own hired killers while we die. Or that we should wait for the new mayor and police chief to do something. I said straight up before the election that no one who won, who was in store for the people was more powerful than we. . . . So you better beware. We have been fighting for more depression for the homogeneous, and as a result, and that the way to deal with all this mess was to Fight the Powers. Fight every one of the attacks. We've got two murders on the people as part of getting us positioned to end this criminal system once and for all through revolution. That was when House was hung inside the wake last night said it all, "Today We Buy Jose Luis Lebron, Tomorrow We Buy the System Responsible for His Murder."

"That's why we're out here today and that's why we're part of calling this Day of Outrage. And we call on everybody who isn't down with police executing our young people to be out there with us!"

Crown Rapper J.C. (South Bronx)

Basically the way I see it, these recent killings are showing the public, namely the Blacks and Hispanics, that when they use their kind to get into a political position or their kind gets a certain sort of power, it shows them that just cause that happens doesn't mean that their kind's gonna look after their best interests. Once they get into the system they become corrupt. So that should tell us something that we can't get involved in those ways. We gotta change up, quick. We have the right to resist yet we don't have the right to defend ourselves especially when we are righteously in the right. Definitely.

Question: What do you think people should do if there's more murders?

First of all from what face that I have to show the powers, the police department and things of that nature in particular, that we do have control. And we're not gonna stand for this killing! At the same time we've killed our own people too. We have to learn to discipline ourselves first before we go out trying to discipline other people because the police department is an established organization. So as people we have to be established ourselves. We gotta have a common interest and that's for the people more than anything.

Wednesday, February 7. A press conference was held at Bushwick Park to announce a day of protest against police murder. The press conference was held by the Revolutionary Communist Party. The press statement said in part: "It is outrageous that they try to justify these murders by calling our young people 'criminals.' It is outrageous that they tell us to wait and trust in the system to investigate its hired killers. These outrages must be met by people pouring into the streets expressing their righteous rage, as thousands of speeches by you must make Bushwick posse's watching you."
that is no more. This is the 1990s. The kids is the future and what the police are doing, it's not right. For me they don't like—they have kids—if that happen to they kids. Maybe they have kids. If it happen to them, I think they have a heart, a conscience. They'll feel the same way we feel right now with the pain. For me it's like this has not happened. One moment he go upstairs, knock the door, everything that's what I think. The way that he think, the way that my other children think. They say don't worry mommy, he be back. I know he don't come back no more. It's hard. Sometimes people go upstairs and they forget and say, "Where's kids?" It's hard. I cry. And after I say sometimes, don't even talk about this. But I have to because I feel everything inside nobody gonna know what happened. And nobody gonna fight for them. That was my cousin, that boy. Maybe tomorrow it's my son, or your kid, anybody's kid can be tomorrow. We have to stop this. One way or another we have to stop all this killing young boys for nothing.

Question: What do you think people need to do? What do you think it gonna stop this?

Action: We have to move and get action. The same way that the police treat us, we gonna do the police from now on. That's the way I feel. You see when he dead he was one part of me heart that he go with it. These day you only hear on the newspaper and the TV—Spanish or Black, Spanish or Black. You don't hear anybody else. Only you hear police say he go to the store and next they say, "Grasp." They're thinking he was on drugs. Well, he wasn't like that. And that's not right. The police, they hit at Spanish people and Black people. I don't know why they hire more policemen. For what? We don't need them. We don't need more policemen like that. For me, I don't need them. For me, I take care of my problems. I don't call policeman for nothing.

Two young women at the action in Bushwick on Saturday:

"Youth are here because they want a chance and they don't think what happened to Jose was right. They think that the purpose of this march is to show the police that we're not afraid and we stand up for ourselves." 

RIV: What happened the other night?

The guys were writing a piece for Jose. The cops came to stop it. So everybody started chasing the cops. They were actually running. Running from us. Running from teenagers that wanted to get their respect because the cops don't have no kind of respect. If you notice they all around thinking knowing that Jose got killed by a cop. If anything they should just mind their business and keep walking, not right.

"They think it's funny. That this is a joke. But to everybody out here today, this is a very serious matter. Because that day it was Jose, tomorrow it might be somebody else. He was only 14 year old. We knew him. Maybe he stole, or did what he did. But he didn't deserve to die or somethings. These cops got no right out here to be killing kids. These cops, they be killing more teenagers everyday."

RIV: Why do you think they're doing that?

"I don't know, maybe to stop the violence out here. Or to try to stop something. I think it's that they're so afraid of the neighborhood that they think that they have to do that." 

RIV: I think it's because they're afraid that people are sick of living this way and people are gonna start doing things like you did the other night.

"On the handball courts. They did a piece over on the handball courts and the next day they painted over it. That's not right. They did that to do a memory of him so nobody will forget. And they just went and erased it like as if it's nothing. And if you woulda been here Thursday, you shoulda seen all the teenagers that came here and were screaming at the cops. They even went to jail for him. So you know those are friends.

"I'm sorry it took Jose to make us realize what's really going on. They just keep on killing and killing and I'm telling you people are gonna get sick of it. And now nobody respects cops. Before everybody used to respect cops. Nobody out here is gonna respect cops. Nobody."

Two young women at the action in Bushwick on Saturday:

"Youth are here because they want a chance and they don't think what happened to Jose was right. They think that the purpose of this march is to show the police that we're not afraid and we stand up for ourselves."

RIV: Why did you come to the press conference today?

Maria: I came because I wanted to see if anything would happen to make a change about things. Because that's what we need to do. We need to change things. Like the system. The system is not working right. I feel it's really discombobulated, to tell you the truth.

Lisette: Well right now what you have to do is get together. And like she said, you're gonna have to fight the system. Because one way or the other somebody, you know, like three kids have gotten hurt within one week. And that's disgusting. We're gonna have to try our hardest to do is get together. And like she said, you're gonna have to fight the system. Because one way or the other somebody, you know, like three kids have gotten hurt within one week. And that's disgusting. We're gonna have to try our hardest

"He never bothered anybody. He wasn't a murderer. He mighta stole, but we were poor. We are poor. But that makes you, the men in blue, murderers..."

Youth at the shrine to fight the system. And like it says, Cops are pigs. That's the way I feel. They're killing us. God forbid if a ten-year-old is running around, the cops is running after him, he'll trip and they'll shoot him. And I have a ten-year-old brother. And it frightens me, very much. To know that they go around shooting kids. It's wrong. They have to consider that they can't kill us just because we frown. They have families that are suffering from a loss of a loved one. And that's really not right.

Maria: I feel that if we don't do something to the system, they're gonna end up doing something to us. Because if we don't fight them, they're gonna end up saying, oh, they do anything about this, they don't do anything about anything. They're gonna do anything about anything. They're not gonna do anything. They're not gonna stand up. I think we have to stand up because either we get them or they get us. Because I'll just show that they're weak.

Lisette: I'm afraid that I'll be walking down the street one day. I just pulled over by a cop once. It wasn't a pretty sight. Just because I was all dressed up they thought I was a drug dealer. And it's cops are here, they're supposed to be here to help us. I think that's what's a cop. They're here to mess us over and really screw us over. They're not helping us at all. Not even one bit.

Maria: I think they're scared that we're gonna take over. Because we wanna see something done. Because if nothing's done, it's just gonna continue and continue. So I think that what's happening with the cops is that they're scared that we're gonna take over. Because eventually that's what's gonna happen.

Lisette: We're gonna take over because we're sick and tired of seeing what's going on. And they're gonna get run out. Cause like she said, eventually, they know they're scared. That's why they're fighting us. They're scared to think, oh my god, what if they do take over. To me we have the power, we have the ability to take over. That's why we gotta stand up for what we believe in and stand up for our rights.
It seems every day another flag burning happens. Has it become contagious? Even fashionables! Students, teachers, and veterans burned flags to protest the U.S. invasion of Panama. When George Bush visited San Francisco hundreds of flags were burned, from flagpole-size to cartoon reproductions. Artists and cartoonists continue to use flag symbolism in every conceivable form of ridicule and expression. Even Ralph Lauren has created a S625 American flag designer-shirt.

The government is clearly worried. All this has happened since Congress passed the "Flag Protection Act of 1989" which made flag "Desecration" a crime punishable by a year in prison and a $1,000 fine. And they are pursuing two current test cases of this law with a vengeance. The defendants in both cases have filed Motions to Dismiss saying the law is unconstitutional.

Hearings on these motions are scheduled for February 14 in Seattle and February 21 in Washington, D.C. The D.C. case stems from a protest on the Capitol steps on October 29, three days after the Flag Act went into effect. Four people, including the notorious Supreme Court critic Joey Johnson, defied the law right up in front of Congress. The others were Dave Blalock of Vietnam Veterans Against the War Anti-Imperialist (VVAW-AI); Shawn Eichman, a revolutionary woman artist with Studio 5 & Redhill; and Victor Scott, whose photo-mentale "What Is The People's Flag? To Display Is U.S. Flag?" appeared in an art exhibit. None of them was charged - a blatant case of "selective non-prosecution," as attorney William Kunstler put it.

The Seattle case grew out of a demonstration at the Olympic torch lighting. Activists burned 100 American flags. Four people were charged under the Flag Law and also with "destruction of government property" (because a post office box was illegally burned as it was raised up the flagpole). All seven defendants are being represented by the Center for Constitutional Rights, who handled the Tobacco Million case last year. William Kunstler and David Cole will argue the Motions to Dismiss in court against the U.S. attorney and both the U.S. House and Senate. In an unusual move, the House and Senate filed amicus (friend of the court) briefs against the flagburners at the lower court level. They pulled out their big arguments, hoping to swing things in their favor at this stage of the case.

The government's main argument is that the flag must be protected "as an unalienable symbol of our Nation." But they face the same dilemma as with Joey Johnson's Supreme Court case: how to prevent criticism of the nation without looking like the dictatorship they are. Congress spent months going through contortions to come up with a "content neutral" law. That is, they tried to find a way to outlaw flag burning to "preserve the physical integrity of the flag" without making it look like they are suppressing dissent.

The legal problem for them is that the Supreme Court decision in Johnson upheld the right to use the flag in symbolic protest. George Bush and the U.S. Attorney's office proposed a constitutional amendment because they said there was no way a new law could get around that decision. The irony now is that they are arguing for the law even they said would be unconstitutional. In their reply brief to the flagburners' Motion to Dismiss, they try to have it both ways. On one hand they argue that the decision in the Johnson case should be overturned by upholding the new law. On the other hand they say it must be kept in place for a constitutional amendment if the law is struck down.

Meanwhile, flag desecrations continue - and the government has been responding in a variety of ways. Three states - Utah, Pennsylvania and Tennessee - have proposed "beat-up-a-flag" bills. They would lower the usual fines for assault to $1 if the assault is of a flag barcode. The FBI has been routinely questioning and threatening people who publicly burn flags in protest. Oberlin College students received phone calls from the FBI notifying them of an investigation, even though no charges have been filed. And in California a public school teacher and a Vietnam veteran have been investigated by the FBI. The teacher burned a flag at the beginning of each of his classes to make a point on the U.S. invasion of Panama - and the FBI subsequently questioned 150 of his students.

IT'S TIME TO STEP UP THE STRUGGLE. The Emergency Committee to Stop the Flag Amendment and Laws has called for people to come to Seattle and D.C. for the hearings, both inside and outside court. They have issued a new version of the Statement of Opposition denouncing the amendment and calling for its publication in a major newspaper (see box). The national office is at 189 Franklin Street, New York, NY 10013 - (212) 941-5474. The Seattle committee can be reached at (415) 267-6923.

"We Couldn't Let This Invasion Go By"

When the U.S. invaded Panama, students at Oberlin College in Ohio had already put out a call to demonstrate. Several students and friends were immediately on the phone to each other, planning what could be done to oppose the invasion once they got back to school. "We wanted to make the strongest symbolic statement we could," they said as they told the news organizations of the events that led to two of them being arrested and violating the federal flag protection law.

"We were determined to do something, even if it was just the two of us. There just wasn't enough resistance to the invasion." Dave Peterson, an Oberlin student, Paul Drayton, who is a non-student political activist, and a few others put out a flyer demanding: U.S. Troops Out of Panama and No Show Trial for Noriega. They called a protest for January 5 in front of the student center and notified local media. A few dozen people came, as the student body was still mostly on break. The invasion was denounced as being "for the glory of U.S. imperialism." The photographers were locked out, and the students immediately picked when a large flag and some lighter fluid appeared. The next day a full-color front-page photo appeared in the Elyria Chronicle Telegram.

Local police had not bothered to arrest the flagburners because no one had complained on the scene, but within days the activists had set off as the local papers printed thirty letters against the action. The local head of the Veterans for Peace Wars demanded that the flagburners be hung, and then backed off on that, saying prison would be enough for them.

Enter the federal authorities, who first visited the reporters and photographers and threatened them with higher fines and the FBI. Peterson and Drayton each received calls from the FBI wanting to "talk about" the action. According to the Center for Constitutional Rights, they are the fourth group of flagburners being investigated since the legislation went into effect.

The two activists and their friends are unrepentant. "I have absolutely no regrets," they both say. This result is much better than I ever thought," said Drayton. Both feel the action was very important in showing that there is opposition to U.S. moves, even though they have drawn fire from liberals on campus who think their protest should have been less flamboyant. "Don't be crying because Xanti-American. No, more of us have to do it."

The climate of fear, intimidation and coercion. We hold diverse views on civil liberties, constitutional rights and political dissent. Some of us consider patriotism a voluntary expression of nationalism. Others believe that patriotism in this country serves only to buttress oppression. Some of us find flag burning an offensive, while others think it can be a positive and powerful form of protest and rebellion. But all of us vehemently oppose the efforts of the flag amendment and laws to stifle dissent by imposing blindness on civil liberties, constitutional rights and political dissent.

The new "Flag Protection Act of 1989" has made it a crime to "muttate, deface, physically defile, burn, maintain on the floor or ground, or trample upon" the American flag. We are also threatened by a constitutional amendment banning "desecration" of the flag. If ratified, it would be the first amendment to protect the government from criticism.

These moves, coming from the highest levels of government, enshrine the flag as a sacred symbol and place it above criticism. In essence, the government would forbid us from challenging core elements of multinational and national identity. In compelling respect, the flag law and amendment seek to impose blind "my country right or wrong" patriotism and to exact untold psychological, moral and national humiliation. The direct effect is to narrow and dilute, with the force of punishment, the "acceptable" bounds of criticism, protest, and even artistic expression. The broader impact is to create a climate of fear, intimidation and coercion.
On Sunday, February 11, African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela walked out of Victor Verster Prison near Cape Town after twenty-seven years in apartheid jails. All around South Africa there was jubilant celebration among black people, and youths in the Soweto township of Johannesburg danced the traditional freedom dance.

Mandela was the most well-known of the tens of thousands of opponents of the apartheid regime who have been locked up as political prisoners. For many people in South Africa and around the world, Mandela and the imprisonment had become a symbol of oppression of the Azanian people and the struggle against apartheid. And many rightly see Mandela’s release as a step that the white South African government was forced to take to make concessions against the defiant and courageous struggle of the masses. And the ANC has insisted that this is a sign of the weakness of the apartheid rulers, and it shows that the ANC is not prepared to support the apartheid regime.

The South African rulers clearly cannot ride out the old way, and expectations of changes are in the air. On February 2 South African President F.W. de Klerk announced major shifts in government policy. The steps include: the legalization of the ANC and other banned political parties; the ending of repression, emergency regulations; the release of some political prisoners; and recognizing some political activists. Mandela and the ANC are calling for negotiations with the government for an end to apartheid and for “power-sharing.”

But the move toward negotiations by the de Klerk government and the ANC also raises big questions. The Azanian people still reside in the block of apartheid—just a day before Mandela’s release the police attacked celebration marches and killed five black people, and a street was burned at crowds of victims. South Africa is burned.

What is de Klerk Up To?

For three years beginning in 1984, a great upsurge rocked the apartheid regime. The white rulers came down with violent force, shooting down hundreds of black people and clamping down with the harsh emergency rule. By late 1987 the upsurge began to erode.

But the oppression that gave rise to the angry upsurge did not change at all. In the recent period there were sporadic signs of new waves of struggle among the masses. Just a few examples:

• The last year hundreds of residents of a rural township clashed with the police over water wells.
• A British cricket team now touring South Africa in defiance of international boycotts of the regime has been met with fierce protests.
• A few days after de Klerk’s announcement of the independence of the Transkei, a rebellion in Tembisa near Johannesburg rose up the following day.
• A British journalist later stated that the regime had used its police to intervene in the rebellion in Tembisa since the mid-80s.

Among other things, the youths were protesting the police, sovereignty and the black townships around the country around the region.

Facing the prospect of a new upsurge, the South African rulers are afraid that simply coming down with more police and army will not be enough to put out the fire. This time, they are trying a new tactic of negotiations in the hope of keeping a lid on the people’s anger. In return for admitting ANC to the negotiating table, de Klerk wants Mandela and other ANC leaders to tell the people to chill their struggle. By bringing open talks like Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, leader of the Zulu group Inkatha, into the negotiations, de Klerk is also maneuvering to limit ANC’s influence and bargaining position.

The U.S. godfathers of apartheid are backing this move—not because they support the Azanian people but because they want to see the survival of a pro-Western system of oppression in South Africa. They fear that the only alternative to negotiations with Mandela and the violent mass upsurge is the open talks like Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, leader of the Zulu group Inkatha, into the negotiations, de Klerk is also maneuvering to limit ANC’s influence and bargaining position.

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The changes in policy announced by de Klerk have clear limits. De Klerk made no changes in the main aspects of apartheid. He said that activists who were jailed just for belonging to a banned political organization will be freed but that those charged with “common crimes” will remain in prison. This means that thousands of activists put in jail under pretenses like “ arson” and “terrorism” will still be behind bars. And government officials are indicating that the police will eventually come down too hard on those who do not jump onto the negotiations train. The emergency rule is still in effect, and the government still has firm control of the police and other repressive machinery against the people.

The de Klerk government may have to make some changes in laws, open up some government positions to forces like the ANC, or make some other concessions. But the South African rulers also hope to regain the initiative and strengthen their hand. They say that any change in laws will depend on the black people totally giving up armed struggle. They have no intention of allowing any fundamental change in the South African system of oppression.

What Way Forward for the Azanian People?

There are dangers in the winds of change in South Africa, but also opportunities for revolutionaries. Not everyone is going along with the ANC program. There are other groups in the political arena against the South African government, like the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania and the Pan African Congress. The ANC raises the demand “one man, one vote,” but there are other thinkers who want to see the liberation of the Azanian people but because they want to see the survival of a pro-Western system of oppression in South Africa and even saw it in their interest to give military aid to the ANC. But as part of the “new thinking” by Gorbachev, the Soviets have cut back on such aid and are openly telling the Azanian people NOT to take up arms against the oppressor. For more on Soviet moves in South Africa, see “Gorbachev’s New Thinking at Work in South Africa” in last week’s RW. And the South African rulers have seized on this Soviet shift and changed their own tactics toward the ANC in an effort to save their system and their privileges.

Mandela and the ANC have made it clear they do not want a violent, mass struggle against the apartheid system. What would it mean if their negotiations with the racist powers that-be led to some “settlement”? Some laws might be changed and some black faces might be brought into the government, but the white settler colonialists would still have overwhelming political, economic, and military power. To ANC leaders, the South African rulers, and the U.S. and Soviet imperialists all might find such a result to be in their interest in various ways. But it will not be in the interest of the masses of Azanian people.

Does Mandela and the ANC Stand for Thoroughgoing Revolution?

Nelson Mandela and the ANC still claim that they have not given up the “option” of armed struggle. But number one: ANC’s armed struggle is not a real people’s war that relies on and mobilizes the masses for seizing revolutionary power. It consists of sporadic sabotage attacks against rural power pylons by isolated units infiltrating South Africa from the outside. Number two: The ANC has always seen this non-revolutionary armed struggle as a pressure tactic to put for a negotiated settlement and power-sharing with the white rulers.

Recent developments in the world have pushed the ANC even further down the road of negotiations with apartheid. The Soviet imperialists used to pretend that they were big supporters of national liberation in South Africa and even saw in their interest to give military aid to the ANC. But as part of the “new thinking” by Gorbachev, the Soviets have cut back on such aid and are openly telling the Azanian people NOT to take up arms against the oppressor. For more on Soviet moves in South Africa, see “Gorbachev’s New Thinking at Work in South Africa” in last week’s RW. And the South African rulers have seized on this Soviet shift and changed their own tactics toward the ANC in an effort to save their system and their privileges.

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Does Mandela and the ANC Stand for Thoroughgoing Revolution?

Nelson Mandela and the ANC still claim that they have not given up the “option” of armed struggle. But number one: ANC’s armed struggle is not a real people’s war that relies on and mobilizes the masses for seizing revolutionary power. It consists of sporadic sabotage attacks against rural power pylons by isolated units infiltrating South Africa from the outside. Number two: The ANC has always seen this non-revolutionary armed struggle as a pressure tactic to put for a negotiated settlement and power-sharing with the white rulers.

Recent developments in the world have pushed the ANC even further down the road of negotiations with apartheid. The Soviet imperialists used to pretend that they were big supporters of national liberation in South Africa and even saw in their interest to give military aid to the ANC. But as part of the “new thinking” by Gorbachev, the Soviets have cut back on such aid and are openly telling the Azanian people NOT to take up arms against the oppressor. For more on Soviet moves in South Africa, see “Gorbachev’s New Thinking at Work in South Africa” in last week’s RW. And the South African rulers have seized on this Soviet shift and changed their own tactics toward the ANC in an effort to save their system and their privileges.

Mandela and the ANC have made it clear they do not want a violent, mass struggle against the apartheid system. What would it mean if their negotiations with the racist powers that-be led to some “settlement”? Some laws might be changed and some black faces might be brought into the government, but the white settler colonialists would still have overwhelming political, economic, and military power. To ANC leaders, the South African rulers, and the U.S. and Soviet imperialists all might find such a result to be in their interest in various ways. But it will not be in the interest of the masses of Azanian people.

What Way Forward for the Azanian People?

There are dangers in the winds of change in South Africa, but also opportunities for revolutionaries. Not everyone is going along with the ANC program. There are other groups in the political arena against the South African government, like the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania and the Pan African Congress. The ANC raises the demand “one man, one vote,” but there are reports that PAC’s slogan of “one settler, one bullet” is gaining in popularity. There are many young “comrades” in trenches across South Africa who know that there can be no coalition with the apartheid beast. Even within the ANC there are growing voices of protest—especially among younger members—against the open moves to negotiate with Mandela and other leaders.

Such discontent is sharpening up as negotiations proceed. Even among the people who are now misled by the talk of “peace,” raised expectations of real changes could turn quickly and violently into disappointment and anger. The ANC’s reformist and non-revolutionary policies is now even more out in the open—a chance to put forward the alternative of revolutionary armed struggle.

Some people say that armed struggle against the apartheid regime, especially without the backing of a big power like the Soviet Union, is impossible and that negotiations and reform is the only “realistic” way. But this road can only lead to a dead-end trap for the oppressed people. Going back to ANC’s old strategy cannot lead to all-the-way revolutionary change either.

What is needed in South Africa is a real people’s war, a righteous war to take power from the oppressors by force of arms and waged on the basis of reliance on the strength and initiative of the masses. And there needs to be revolutionary leadership based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and with a program which brings forward the black people in revolutionary struggle. Such a people’s war will be a mighty force that can knock down the fortress of apartheid to its very foundations.
For BLACK HISTORY MONTH
From the Special Magazine Section of the RW

THE COLD TRUTH ABOUT SLAVERY

NUMBER ONE: The USA is and always has been a white supremacist society. White supremacy is the practice and belief that white people are superior to all others and that non-white peoples are inferior. This belief is supported by powers-that-be and the mouths they hire. This is the way it is today, and the system we now live under—this system of capitalism, exploitation, oppression, and plunder worldwide—may not be so long, after all. This system cannot be ended and create something far better in its place.

COLD TRUTH, LIBERATING TRUTH cuts deep into the real facts. We use knowledge of the past to shape the future: a future that does belong to us. "Nothing" but who shall be all—if we dare to see it that way.

We are reprinting a section of this magazine for BLACK HISTORY MONTH, which was first published in the Spring 1991 issue of Revolution.

Racism: Open and Underhanded

Today one of the most common—and underhanded—forms of white chauvinism (racism) is to admit—with a little arm-twisting or even upfront and willingly—that Black people's situation is one of being far worse off than whites but then to blame Black people themselves for this situation. Looked at in terms of Black people's overall experience in America, what this amounts to is the dirty trick of admitting that in the past Black people were subjected to oppression and discrimination in this country but claiming now that this is no longer the case.

"They have been given their chance to 'make it' and they have failed—so it must be their own fault and it just shows that they are inferior." So this racist argument goes.

This same kind of argument has been used to put down Black people—to add insult to the injury of slavery and other forms of oppression—all throughout their history in America. At any given point in this history, the oppressors and those who side with them have tried to deny that there is anything unjust in the treatment of Black people at the time, while perhaps admitting that there was some injustice in the past.

"Always the blame is put on Black people for their depressed condition. And always this is a lie—camouflage that covers for the whole economic and political system in the USA and those who run it, the ones who are in fact to blame.

Let's cut through their boring—and lying—"history" and deal with the real story. In doing this we will see that the forms of discrimination and oppression may have changed at different times in the history of this country, but one thing has remained the same right down to today: Black people have been continually subjected to discrimination and oppression under this system. In looking at this we can get a much truer picture of the problem and thus a much clearer understanding of the solution.

Slavery and Capitalism

Everybody knows that Black people did not "come to this country seeking a better life." They were kidnapped from their homes in Africa, dragged in chains, and loaded onto slave ships—treated not like human beings but like things, commodities to be traded and used to enrich others. Tens of millions of these enslaved Africans died before even reaching America, so terrible were the conditions on the slave ships. Those who survived the trip and were then sold to plantation owners were treated like pieces of machinery. Slaveowners commonly referred to the slaves as "talking tools." That is how Black people were treated for the first 250 years of their experience in America.

Bob Avakian, the Chairman of our Party, has pointed out that the reality of the USA has always been that the government protects the property of white people, particularly wealthy plantation owners. And the political leaders of the time—the "founding fathers" of the USA—defended slavery and upheld its practices.
The United States is a racist country. It is a country where we—all of us who have been counted as "us"—are treated differently. This is the way it has been all through the history of the country, and this is the way it will stay long as the imperialist imperialism, this system of capitalist imperialism, this system of—this is in effect and rules over us. But that not go on forever, and there is a way to take its place.

So knocking down lies and bringing out the wires that are on the present and point the way to—— all of us who have been counted as "us" and to seize it and know how to seize it. This week marks the birthday of the black History month.

interests of the slave owners against the slaves. This is true of "the father of his country," George Washington, who was himself a slave owner, and is true of the men who wrote the Declaration of Independence and The Constitution of the United States—men like Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and John Rutledge. Just as it's kept, the Declaration of Independence condemned the King of England for encouraging slave revolts and rebellions by "in- and outlaws滑雪 in wild fact alone, pointed out the real deal on people like Jefferson who had the nerve to write in that Declaration that "all men are created equal," men wore into his civilization that Black people only counted for three-fifths of a human being.

So many of these white overlords the enslavement and the even the extermination of non-European peoples was "natural" that they didn't even disguise what they were doing. For example, the French political philosopher Montesquieu greatly influenced the writers of the U.S. Constitution. Along with what he wrote about politics and law, Montesquieu had this to say:

"If I had to justify our right to enslave Negroes, this is what I would say. Since the peoples of Europe have exterminated those of America, they have exterminated those of Africa in order to use them to raise cotton, as a vast empire of land in America."

"Sugar would be too expensive if it wasn't harvested by slaves."

"It is inconceivable that God, who is a very wise being, could have played a soul, especially a good soul, in an all-black body..."

"It is impossible that these people are men; because if we thought of them as men, one would begin to think that we ourselves are not Christians."

Here again we see that the African peoples, and the native peoples in North America, were treated as something less than human—as though they were "beasts" or "savages" who never had reached and never could reach the "high level of civilization" of the Europeans. The fact that, both in Africa and in North America, there were highly developed societies and cultures long before European came to dominate these places—these basic truths were denied and "written out of history" by the European conquerors and enslavers.

New Forms of Oppression Under Capitalism

Even though slavery was finally ended, after almost 250 years, Black people were still subjected to vicious forms of oppression—and still blamed for their own oppression condition. First of all, Black people's own major and heroic role in fighting against slavery is denied or downgraded by the "official histories." The facts are that there were over 200 slave revolts, including the more famous ones led by Nat Turner in Virginia and John Brown in South Carolina, as well as other revolts that were covered up and "written out of history" by the slave owners. And even after slavery was ended, Black people were allowed to mass Black people flooded into the northern "factory" system and fought courageously and with great sacrifice on the frontline—despite the efforts of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and a whole set of laws and codes—all working to chain them in new ways to the plantation system.

To order copies of the magazine COLD TRUTH, LIBERATING TRUTH for your friends, school, or study group, see the back page of this newspaper.
February 4, Chicago. A typical Sunday afternoon at the Harold Ickes Housing Project on Chicago's South Side: A youth races across the playground, darting into another building. Sirens sound out of the silence as reinforcements from the Chicago Police Department pull up in a blue-and-white. The security guards, tired of the chase, grab another youth—any youth—and slam him up against the wall.

This is daily life in Chicago's housing projects. Under the cover of the War on Drugs, these projects have been turned into prisons with an occupying army of vicious security guards.

On January 15, Martin Luther King Day, members of "Fight the Power" took over a vacant apartment in the Ickes Housing Project and put forward the program: "Open All Empty Apartments in Public Housing for People Without Homes!" Since this defiant action the pigs, determined to prevent any further outbreaks of rebellion, are coming down even harder on the people.

"Teens speak bitterly of police cars tearing the lanes between buildings, breaking up gatherings of people with a vicious stop-and-search policy. A woman who filed charges against the authorities for shooting her son was visited and threatened by pig-waving pigs.

After the January 15 takeover, the CHA (Chicago Housing Authority) sent a "New Year's greeting" to tenants in the projects. It reaffirmed the CHAs eviction policy: Eviction after three months of no payment of rent, eviction for failure to verify income, and eviction for "antisocial behavior" (which is just a catchall for whatever excuse the CHA wants to use to evict people they consider "troublemakers").

These actions by the authorities are meant to send a message to people that they better "shut up" and forget about fighting against the repressive conditions in the projects. But right in the midst of all this, Fight the Power struck again, challenging the police state atmosphere with another takeover.

Sunday, February 4. As a banner unfurled from the seventh-floor window of a vacant apartment, the voice of FTP blasted out: "We the former prisoners of CHA, at the start of Black History Month, once again proclaim our freedom from concentration camps to round up and jail our people. This is your struggle! What you do will make a difference. Help liberate these apartments, so that we will draw a line to show that we refuse to be treated like animals!"

No to New La Migra Border Roundups!

No to New La Migra Border Roundups!

Just two weeks ago the Immigration and Naturalization Service said that budget constraints were forcing them to release people from detention centers near the border. Now the INS has just announced stepped-up efforts to round up and imprison Central American immigrants who try and cross the border.

INS officials say this new policy will be similar to what they did a year ago when a tent city was erected in Bayview, Texas. And as many as 6,000 immigrants were imprisoned at one time.

The INS has been detained from 800 to over a thousand people a month at the border. And the concentration camp that is already in place in Bayview can hold up to 2,500 people. INS officials now say the population of these centers could go up to 30,000.

Eleven million dollars from the INS budget is being set aside to finance the expansion of these INS concentration camps near the border. And according to the INS, more emergency funds will be available later. These new repressive measures will also include more INS pigs. INS officials promised that as many as 500 additional border patrol agents will be available.

Last November La Resistencia initiated a "Call to Action," launching a Campaign to Shut Down INS Concentration Camps. As this Call said: "The government has made it clear that they are prepared for more clampdowns in the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas in the face of new waves of refugees who are running for their lives from U.S.-supplied bombs, bullets, and torture in Central America. Contingency plans are in place to send hundreds of Border Patrol agents to the Rio Grande by opening vacant apartments for the homeless. This new policy is part of the government's efforts to keep Central Americans from crossing the border. The government is utilizing the pretext that it is "preserving order" in this area to bring in more troops, deportations, and injustices.

They say that the government is seeking to "draw a line" to keep out refugees. But what they really mean is to keep out the powerful and the rich who create the conditions that force refugees from their homes.

They say that they want to "protect the integrity of the United States" and prevent the "spread of our culture." But what they really mean is to make sure the rich get their way and that the poor and the powerless are kept down.

They say that they want to "preserve the democratic process." But what they really mean is to make sure that the rich and the powerful get their way and that the poor and the powerless are kept down.

They say that they want to "preserve the American way of life." But what they really mean is to make sure that the rich and the powerful get their way and that the poor and the powerless are kept down.

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Strikes Again
Counterattack

The RW received the following letter:

Dear RW,

On January 11, guards at the Laredo, Texas INS Processing Center, which is run by the Corrections Corp. of America (CCA), went in with riot gear, handcuffs, and tear gas to break up a hunger strike by fifty detainees, almost all Haitians.

We learned of this when Fr. Gerard Jean-Juste of the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami called La Resistencia in Houston. He had a conference call up with a Haitian detainee in Laredo. As he spoke in Creole, Fr. Jean-Juste translated. The group of fifty, including a few Cubans and Jamaicans, had been on a hunger strike for three days, demanding freedom and justice, transfer back to Miami, better treatment, and no discrimination. He said they were ready to die there and they were close to suicide.

Fr. Jean-Juste said, "They are crying for help. They are desperate. There is a desperate situation going on over there. It would be good to attract the attention of the authorities in Texas before a massacre takes place over there." As we spoke, the guards moved in, with all their riot gear. Throughout the conversation we could hear a very tumultuous situation with chants and hollering. As the guards moved in, the Haitian brother said, "We're going to die! We're going to die! We're going to die! We're going to die!"

We thought the United States was a big-power country. How come we are suffering so much without justice? . . . We are in a country where democracy (unintelligible). We must be able to speak out. How come we cannot speak out? We cannot find justice.

Shortly thereafter the brother on the phone had to put it down and leave as the guards approached. For several minutes we continued to hear a loud tacker and shouts. Then someone hung up the phone.

In response to a call from La Resistencia the local Pacifica station in Houston investigated this incident that day. They reported that seventeen had been taken to the Webb County jail but the authorities refused to say on what charges. A spokesperson from CCA said that the seventeen were the leaders and bragged that after they were taken away others in the detention center ended their hunger strike and ate. He also claimed that the guards went in because of complaints from other Haitians who wanted to eat!

An Amnesty International activist in the Laredo area later reported that stories appeared in the Laredo papers that the Haitians were beaten in the Webb County Jail. Afterwards four were reportedly sent to Miami and the remainder returned to the CCA.

La Resistencia has renamed the Corrections Corporation of America "Concentration Camps of America." CCA also operates the INS detention center in Houston. Laredo is about 200 miles north of the Rio Grande river from Brownsville on the Mexico-U.S. border in the middle of nowhere. At the height of the clampdown nearly a year ago in the Rio Grande Valley, many immigrants were sent to Laredo. Estimates are that up to 500 were held there. One activist there described immigrants sent there as falling off into a black hole.

People were determined to get the message out even after the pigs stopped the press conference, and several people talked to the press. Two people spoke from FTP, including the person arrested in the takeover. Some homeless brothers from the shelters reaffirmed their determination to occupy some of the 6,000 vacant CAA apartments. And they were joined by a callout of women from a locked-down building in another housing project. These women spoke bitterly about the brutality, arbitrary power, and "John Wayne" attitudes of the CAA guards, especially toward the women.

INS Attacks Hunger Strike in Laredo, Texas

A Cry for Freedom from Our Haitian Brothers

Some homeless people on the FTP takeover.

"These apartments is laying up there with no one in them, beat up, tore down. Okay, on Sunday when we was out there protestin' about the apartments, I met this lady and she told me this one apartment had been burnt up for two years, and they had one of the homeless people in there that was willing to paint the apartment, fix it up. . . . Then the security came and put them out. And I don't feel that was right.

"You have to wait so long to get into these apartments and when you out there crying, you're gettin' lower, your mind is gettin' weaker, you just start not caring. Next thing you know you's in jail and the Man is saying, 'You's a criminal, you's a criminal'—when this guy might have a good education and a trade behind him but what beat him down is the streets."

"I feel we should all stick together and get off the streets. And we can get off the streets if we all stick together and go and take apartments. If it takes two weeks, three weeks to fix them up, paint 'em, we'll do it. Whatever it takes, I'm for it. Even if it's jail, I'm for it.

"I just want to stress that they think all the street people out there are against each other, and they not. We're together all the way and we will fight. I feel it will stimulate us all in some kind of way so that we will have more pride in ourselves. Maybe some of the people that's homeless that I be around can get their lives together. Yeah, this is somethin' for me. I'm gonna leave all these drugs alone. I'm gonna go with this movement. It would encourage everyone to be more uprisin'."

As he spoke in Creole, Fr. Jean-Juste said, "They are crying out there. We are crying out there. We cannot find justice."

Yeah, this is somethin' for me. I'm gonna leave all these drugs and we will fight. I feel it will stimulate us all in some kind of way so that we will have more pride in ourselves. Maybe some of the people that's homeless that I be around can get their lives together. Yeah, this is somethin' for me. I'm gonna leave all these drugs alone. I'm gonna go with this movement. It would encourage everyone to be more uprisin'."

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The 250-member central committee of the ruling Soviet party held a major three-day meeting last week. The bitter speeches and debate showed deep divisions at the very top of Soviet society. At the same time, this committee reached agreement on major structural changes in Soviet politics.

They said that the national constitution should be rewritten so that their party (the CPSU) will no longer have a built-in legal right to rule society. This means that they agree to let other parties form legally and compete for power in local and national elections.

They called for a move to a presidential system similar to France or the United States—where major power would be given to a strong executive president. In the past, the central figure in the Soviet government was the General Secretary of the ruling CPSU. This is a move toward concentrating decision-making power in the government structure, not in the top bodies of the ruling party.

They approved a proposal to replace the party’s ruling Politburo—currently eleven members—with a larger presidium that would include the heads of the party organizations in the fifteen republics. This will weaken the party’s top grouping, helping to shift power to the government and the presidency. The central committee also said they hoped this would encourage the party structures of minority republics to stay within the CPSU, instead of pulling out like the Lithuanian CP has done.

Number One: No Reactionaries Are About to Give Up Power Peacefully

The day after the Central Committee vote on multiple parties, the New York Times wrote: “It’s hard to overstate the significance of yesterday’s dramatic events in Moscow. This is truly a third Russian Revolution.”

USSR Events in the Soviet Union are not a revolution. Chairman Bob Avakian says: “A revolution is when the rulers of a state and the groups in society they represent are forcibly overthrown and new rulers and new groups in society are put in place.” That kind of change was not proposed last week by the Soviet central committee. Reactionary pigs don’t overthrow themselves.

The national parliament may renew their constitution, and there may be some new parties and some national elections. But the Soviet state bourgeoisie that controls the CPSU is not about to give up its real monopoly of power: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The changes are not intended to fundamentally undermine the state power of the Soviet imperialist bourgeoisie.

The current reforms involve concentrating greater power in a strong man figure. One member of the Soviet central committee said: “We all agreed the country needs a president who will be able to solve problems quickly. His functions will be to handle such cases as earthquakes, armed clashes, matters of war and peace. There should be a man who will keep his finger on the button.”

In fact, these changes are even designed to strengthen the particular ruling clique headed by Mikhail Gorbachev. The party body approved a suggestion by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev to give major new power to President Mikhail Gorbachev.

And, of course, there was no discussion of disbanding the Soviet army, the secret police, or any of the other reactionary instruments of state violence.

One speaker at the central committee meeting pointed out that imitating Western-style democracy does not mean abandoning dictatorship over the people. He said: “If you want to have a new system, a new society, that is a conceivable, for it inevitably grows into sociopolitical chaos. This point is well understood by the Western leaders who so fervently praise us. At home they act brutally and decisively when even the slightest threat emerges to their state or class interests. And in doing so, Bush and Thatcher don’t pay attention to what others think of them. Panama, the suppression of the strike movement in England and much, much more provide illustration of this.”

Number Two: This Is Not a “Major Move Away from Leninism”

Chairman Bob Avakian says: “The so-called ‘demise of communism’ is really just revolution becoming more openly being carried out.”

In 1956 a decisive counterrevolutionary change happened in the Soviet Union when the midnight revolution of Nov. 15, 1990 brought to power. Since then, the CPSU has been like the reactionary political party in a group of biggest exploiters running a representative state apparatus and an imperialist empire.

The decision of the CPSU central committee to support multi-party elections is not an “abandonment of Leninism and the dictatorship of the proletariat.” The current rulers of the Soviet Union are revisionists who have never in their careers supported genuine Leninism or the dictatorship of the proletariat—so how can they abandon these things? The problem facing the Soviet Union today is not “finally getting rid of Leninism.” The problem is that there doesn’t seem to be a new Lenin or Mao Tse-tung on the scene. More than anything else the masses of people there need a new revolutionary communist party based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism—capable of leading the complex political and military struggle to make a new revolution.

Adopting Western-Style Structures in Order to Legitimize the System

So, what are the rulers of the Soviet Union up to? Gorbachev is walking the rat’s cape.

The ruling class of the Soviet Union wants to make changes in the way their state-capitalist society is organized and ruled. There is profound economic crisis bordering on collapse. There is widespread disgust with the old political slogans, the old political figures, the old political structures.

So the rulers soviets want to adopt new slogans, new structures, and bring forward a generation of new political figures “untainted” by failure. Permitting many parties and carrying out some elections is a way of doing this.

As Chairman Bob Avakian has written: “When we are in a single centralized election process in which all elections are controlled by the bourgeoisie, are not the means through which basic decisions are made in any case and are really for the primary purpose of legitimizing the system and the policies and action of the ruling class, giving them the mantle of a ‘popular mandate’ and of channeling, confining and controlling the political activities of masses of people.”

This exactly what Gorbachev and Co. hope the introduction of “multi-party elections” will do. Gorbachev wants to be an opponent of discredited political processes. He wants to use political pluralism (multi-party democracy with elected officials) as a safety valve to defuse discontent and as a mechanism to rechannel social conflicts into safe political and social arenas (“safe,” that is, for the overall system). And he is trying to unleash sections of the people to knock down the old governing structures.

The ruling party has been a major instrument used by those who rule Soviet society. But as that society’s crisis has deepened, the party apparatus has also emerged as an obstacle to reform. For example, local party committees stubbornly maintain tight control over local economic affairs, while Gorbachev wants factory managers to buy and sell more strictly according to the self-interest of their units. By weakening the power of the party as the “leading force in society” especially at the lower levels, and by using local elections to break up old power cliques at the local level, Gorbachev hopes to break up major legacies that are holding back his economic programs.
Changes to System

One "Tainted" Reactionary Ruling Party Wants to Turn Itself Into an "Untainted" Reactionary Ruling Party

Permitting other parties does not mean that Gorbachev intends to hand over power to those parties. Gorbachev wants to hold the core of the current CPSU together in a cleaned-up party, perhaps with a new name and a new ideological ideology. Gorbachev's spokesman Gerasimov "certainly believes" that the party can adjust to the new structures and survive in power. "There are countries where one party may stay in power for years. In Sweden, Social Democrats want to hold the core of the current CPSU together in a cleaned-up party, and survive in power." His hope is that legalized pluralism might end with a strengthened ruling party.

Other scenarios are possible: The CPSU is deeply divided from top to bottom. And it is widely discredited among the population in its current form. The party could split into several different bourgeois parties—all with their roots deep within the nomenklatura (the government/party elite). Such currents already operate within the CPSU and could quickly emerge as reactionary bourgeois parties competing within new elections: a West European-style social democratic party, a Thatcher/Bush-style Christian-democratic "free enterprise" party, and a semi-fascist, Russian-chauvinist "Black Hundreds" party. Under the social-imperialists, the Soviet people had to live under whatever pig the ruling class picked. Now they're going to find themselves in front of some ballot box. How many—20? 25? Why? Because they were good enough to keep power. So his hope is that the party will be in power for 20 or 30 more years."

Dozens of small, unfamiliar, squabbling opposition parties are forming in central Russia. In the periphery of minority Soviet republics, the major opposition parties are "popular fronts" whose programs are often national secession. On such a fragmented chaotic landscape, Gorbachev hopes his "reformed" CPSU might appear to be the only viable political force capable of holding the country together. His hope is that legalized pluralism might end with a strengthened ruling party.

Western reporters seem stunned to discover that the Soviet people are very unimpressed with the promise of such Western-style changes. They say that the masses just say that they see the same old force behind these reforms. And they say they "don't believe in words and slogans any more"—they want real-life visible changes in their lives.

Complex political turmoil is creating many different movements, some which seem to have a more "grassroots" character. There are ecological/green movements throughout the Soviet Union. And there are strikes among coal miners and other workers. But so far none of these movements seem to have a radical, revolutionary thrust of overthrowing the old order and moving toward genuine commmunist through radical ruptures in society. And there are major efforts underway to "scrounge" them under the control of the powerful remnants that are jelling within the ruling party.

The Future Is Still Unwritten

On one hand, top-down changes in the political structure will not mean liberation for the people. But, at the same time, it is heavy when a reactionary ruling class is forced to change its forms of rule. And it is especially heavy for the whole world when that ruling class heads one of the world's two war dooms. A ruling class only goes through gambles and changes like that when a crisis threatens the most basic foundations of their society. When a crisis is that deep, many things become possible.

On Sunday, February 5 perhaps 100,000 people marched through the streets of Moscow demanding change. They had been called out by reform forces, including some loosely allied with Gorbachev. The highly unusual mass demonstration was a way of putting pressure on opponents of reform—it was done to set a mood at the central committee meeting that opened the next day.

Flags of the old Tsarist dynasty and modern Baltic nationalist movements competed with black flags of anarchism. Some people chanted "Gorbachev, we're with you!" Other chants included: "Down with the KGB!" "Down with the Politburo!" "Nomenklatura, Remember Romania!"—a reference to the execution of Ceausescu in Romania.

The current crisis forces ruling-class factions to mobilize sections of the people in hopes of ramming their programs through opposition. And this lets many germs out of old bottles.

Check out the special pull-out section of the RW:

Why Gorbachev Needs To Remake An Empire &
Why The Masses Need To Make A Revolution

Available at Revolution Books stores and outlets and from your local RW distributor.
Sue Warren: Long-Time Friend of the Chinese Revolution

A memorial meeting in New York City January 13 honored a long-time friend of the Chinese revolution, Susan Warren Frank, who died on October 20, 1989. Sue contributed greatly to popularizing revolutionary China and was founding chairperson of the U.S.-China People's Association in New York in 1971. Many of those who had been active in the Association with her attended the memorial and paid tribute to her life and work.

Sue was active in progressive theater in the 1930s in New York and appeared in the Group Theater's production of Clifford Odets' depression-era play, "Waiting for Lefty." In the 1940s she began working with the Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy, and from then on her life was inseparably linked with China's revolution. She went to China for the first time in 1959, where she worked for the English-language edition of Peking Review. She spent a year and a half there, working and traveling extensively.

She worked as an editor and writer with Maud Russell on Far East Reporter, which was an important journal that reported on developments in China and one of the few sources of accurate information about China at that time. Several articles Sue wrote for it were cited as "subversive" evidence by the U.S. Government when it called Maud Russell to testify before the Senate Internal Security subcommittee in 1956.

Along with writing many articles and pamphlets herself, Sue assisted William Hinton in preparing the manuscript of his book Fan Zhong. This book, a vivid account of land reform and social transformation in the Chinese countryside, introduced many people in the 1960s to China for the first time and influenced many in a revolutionary direction.

Sue was concerned not just with China but the struggles of people everywhere to liberate themselves from oppression. She wrote pamphlets and articles about the Philippines, Palestine, Kampuchea, and elsewhere, exposing the role of the U.S. and Soviet imperialists and popularizing struggles for self-determination and national liberation.

When film showings and forums were held in 1986-87 to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Sue assisted the New York Commemoration Committee with advice and suggestions. She felt the Cultural Revolution represented a great contribution to and development of Marxism, and that Deng Xiaoping and Company had reversed the historic revolutionary achievements of Mao and the Chinese people and restored capitalism.

At the memorial gathering, Mary Lou Greenberg, spokesperson for the RPC New York Branch, spoke of Sue's life and work:

"I met Sue for the first time in October 1971 in Beijing. A number of Americans of different political views and walks of life had been invited to come to China, to see firsthand the new society being created, and to participate in the festivities celebrating China's National Day. It was an exciting time to be there, and I think everyone was thrilled and many rather astonished at what they saw. This was, after all, during the Cultural Revolution, a time when China was being slandered and vilified in the Western press."

"Of course, Sue had been in China before, living and traveling extensively in the early '60s. For those of us just beginning to really understand what a revolutionary society could be, China was a leap to another world. And it was a great pleasure to meet long-time friends of the Chinese people, like Sue, who helped us with our education."

"But Sue did not look at China through the eyes of a 'China watcher' or 'China expert'—although she certainly was an expert. Rather, she took up its cause because she felt the Cultural Revolution represented a great contribution to and development of Marxism, and that Deng Xiaoping and Company had reversed the historic revolutionary achievements of Mao and the Chinese people and restored capitalism."

"Sue was appalled by the massacre in Tiananmen Square last June and had earlier come to the conclusion that the present Chinese regime was in the process of completely dismantling the revolutionary China she had known and loved. But despite very serious setbacks of this kind, she never wavered in her belief in the necessity and possibility for fundamental social, economic, and political change—in China and elsewhere."

"She believed passionately, as Mao put it, that ultimately it is the people and the people alone who are the motive force in the making of world history. And as she wrote in China's Role in the UN, paraphrasing Mao, 'Though the road will be neither short nor straight, for the peoples of the world, the future is bright.'"

"Sue Warren Frank contributed with all her being toward the achievement of that bright future."

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DOWN WITH THE DRUG LORD BUSH'S COLOMBIA SUMMIT!
SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN PERU!
WAR ON DRUGS IS A WAR ON THE PEOPLE!

When George Bush travels to Cartagena, Colombia in mid-February, the U.S. media will be turned up full blast with stories about how this marks new cooperation in the so-called "War on Drugs." Polls will be published telling us what we're supposed to think. And what is that? We're to think that any U.S. intervention in Latin American countries, whether in Panama or in the Andean countries of Peru, Bolivia, or Colombia is fine, necessary, and justified in the name of "combating drugs."

But the truth is that this Drug Lord's Summit is the height of hypocrisy and political cowardice on the part of the U.S. administration and marks a new dangerous step in escalating U.S. military intervention in the Andes. This is not about fighting drugs. The "War on Drugs" is about war on the people. From the beginning the "International Component" of the War on Drugs has been a pretext for allowing the U.S. to dominate whole countries and regions throughout what the agitprop calls its "backyard." If the U.S. openly declared its real intentions of invading the Andes and putting down the revolution in Peru, or anywhere else in Latin America for that matter, they would be met with considerable opposition. Instead they are trying to carry out their escalating attacks under the cover of the "War on Drugs." The Cartagena "Drug Lord's Summit" will mean a further leap in these attacks.

Today in Peru, the U.S. already has DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) agents and mercenary pilots flying helicopter missions. The U.S. is sending more anti-drug troops and has built a Vietnam War-style firebase which has an airstrip longer than the one at Lima International Airport. The advancement of the Peruvian Revolution led by the CPP (Communist Party of Peru, or Sendero Luminoso in the press) has everything to do with why it is a major focus of the U.S. so-called war on drugs. The revolution in Peru poses a serious challenge to imperialism and is taking place in an already volatile region of the world. A recent Washington Post article did not even pretend that the troops were in Peru fighting drugs but said, "U.S. Special Forces would be deployed to secure areas to train the Peruvian Military in its war against Sendero Luminoso guerrillas." Already the Peruvian military bombed several villages dropping napalm from helicopter gunships on the people. The Peruvian people have risen up to fight for their liberation and already more than one-third of Peru has been liberated. Revolutionary base areas have been established in the most strategic sections of Peru with literally hundreds of People's Committees transforming all aspects of daily life. For the first time, workers, peasants, and progressive people rule. The revolution has captured the imagination of the Peruvian masses who are consciously fighting to seize nationwide political power from the hands of imperialism.

The U.S. and Peruvian governments claim that the CPP and its revolutionary army are involved in and/or benefit from the drug trade and deserve to be attacked. But the TRUTH is that the governments of Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia are the ones hooked on drug money and backed by the U.S. government, the biggest drug trafficker in the world. By contrast, the revolutionaries protect the interests of the peasants against U.S. armed forces, the Peruvian army, local landlords and drug barons, and their thugs, all of whom continually rob the peasants of their land and belongings. The peasants are encouraged by the CPP to plant potatoes and food crops, encouraging self-reliance instead of depending on imperialist-dominated coca cultivation. Without seizing countrywide state power, it is impossible for the revolution to eliminate coca production fully and the system which breeds it.

In Panama, the U.S. has tried to justify its invasion and occupation and Yankee bullying tactics in part by saying that they were going after Manuel Noriega because he is a drug trafficker and that this was part of the "War on Drugs." The main point of this invasion was to serve as a demonstration of American military might to intimidate the peoples of this region which the U.S. has long called its "backyard" and to prepare politically and militarily for even greater crimes. This invasion is a stepping stone for more intervention in Central and South America where the U.S. empire faces an increasingly unstable situation which includes the mood and revolutionary potential of the masses of people due to U.S. exploitation and domination in this region.

These U.S. moves cannot be allowed to happen unopposed. The people in the U.S. MUST must this U.S.-sponsored Drug Lord's Summit with the widest and strongest political protest and outrage. We call on all people who are opposed to U.S. intervention to join this demonstration and to continue to find ways to protest and expose these vicious and dangerous moves. With all their lies tell about a new era of peace in the world, they have carried out three military interventions in December 1989 alone: El Salvador, the Philippines and Panama. We must give them no peace to carry out these attacks.

The U.S. poses as a democratic land of the free yet they have been censoring Luis Arce Borja, Peruvian Editor/Director of El Dario newspaper published in Lima. Since July 1989, Arce has been trying to get a visa to speak in the U.S. What are the imperialists trying to cover up? Why won't they let Arce Borja speak? Mr. Arce Borja in a November statement says the following:

"The visa denial takes place within an international political context marked by military preparations by the U.S. government to openly intervene in Latin America, primarily Peru, Colombia, and Panama. Military intervention that is being justified by the war on drugs. It is the responsibility of journalists who are on the inside to expose these preparations by the U.S. government to openly intervene in Latin America through what it arrogantly calls its "backyard.""

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March & Rally: Feb. 17, Sat. 2 p.m.
Gather at 24th & Mission Street, San Francisco, and march to the Army Recruitment Center on Market Street.

To contact the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, call: (415) 845-2206 ext. 101 (messages only)
Anyone who is serious and honest knows that the enslavement and exploitation of Black people has been a big part of building up the wealth and power that the rulers of this country have in their hands - wealth and power that these suckers use to further exploit and oppress people here and all over the world. And anyone who is honest and serious knows that for revolution to have a chance in this country - a revolution to do away with all this oppression and exploitation and to change society from bottom to top - Black people must and will play a big part in this revolution.

COLD TRUTH, LIBERATING TRUTH gets into it deeper, knocking down lies and bringing out the real facts. We use knowledge of the past to shine a light on the present and point the way toward the future: a future that does belong to us - all of us who have been counted as "nothing" but who shall be all - if we dare to seize it and know how to seize it. Getting it fully clear on how and why Black people have been enslaved, discriminated against, oppressed, and exploited throughout the history of the USA, right down to today, and how all that can finally be ended - this is a key part of knowing and daring. It has everything to do with emancipation that is all-the-way and real, not a sham or half-way deal, not only for Black people but for all exploited and oppressed people, not just in the USA but worldwide.

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