



REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

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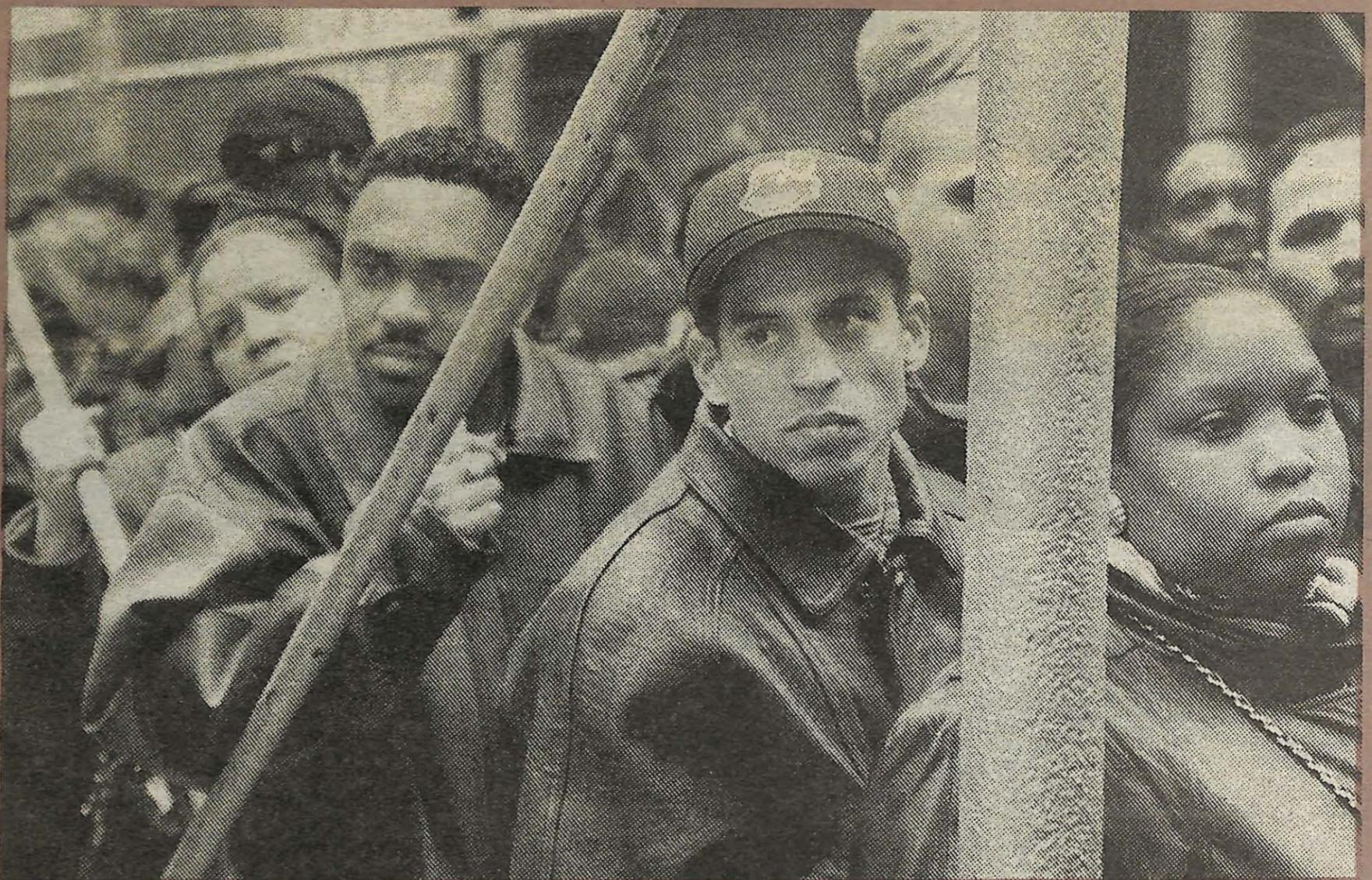
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WELFARE, WORKFARE, AND WAGE SLAVERY

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As of April 6, 1997 Chairman Gonzalo (Abimael Guzmán) has been held in isolation for...

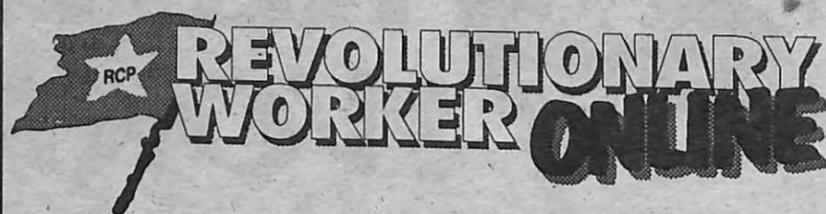
4 Years 174 Days

In October 1992, Chairman Gonzalo—leader of the Maoist Communist Party of Peru—was sentenced to life imprisonment by hooded military judges of the U.S.-backed regime in Peru. The fascist regime in Peru is holding this revolutionary leader of the Peruvian people under very brutal conditions in an underground concrete dungeon at a naval base. He is being denied visits by lawyers, doctors

and relatives and deprived of proper medical care and reading materials. Peru's President Fujimori has publicly threatened to execute Chairman Gonzalo and boasted of applying psychological torture on him. And a new Constitution, made official last year, reinstates the death penalty which could be used against Chairman Gonzalo and other revolutionary prisoners. The Peruvian regime must be prevented from killing Chairman Gonzalo through the death penalty or by other means.

Fujimori has repeatedly claimed that Chairman Gonzalo has made a call for negotiations from prison. In this situation, what possible excuse can Fujimori now offer for continuing to deny Comrade Gonzalo independent contact with lawyers, doctors and friendly and neutral visitors from outside the prison in a way that meets the basic international standards for treatment of political prisoners and prisoners of war? It is vitally important for people in Peru and around the world to hear what Chairman Gonzalo's views are from Chairman Gonzalo himself—directly and unimpeded. This heightens the urgency of the fight to create an international political climate which compels the Peruvian government to grant access to Comrade Gonzalo by his legal representatives and other friends who can meet and talk directly with him.

**Support the People's War in Peru!
Support the Communist Party of Peru!
Defend the Life of Chairman Gonzalo,
Fight to Break the Isolation!**



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Three Main Points

by Bob Avakian
Chairman of the RCP, USA

What do we in the Revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

1) The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation—here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.

2) Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.

3) Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world. Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning.

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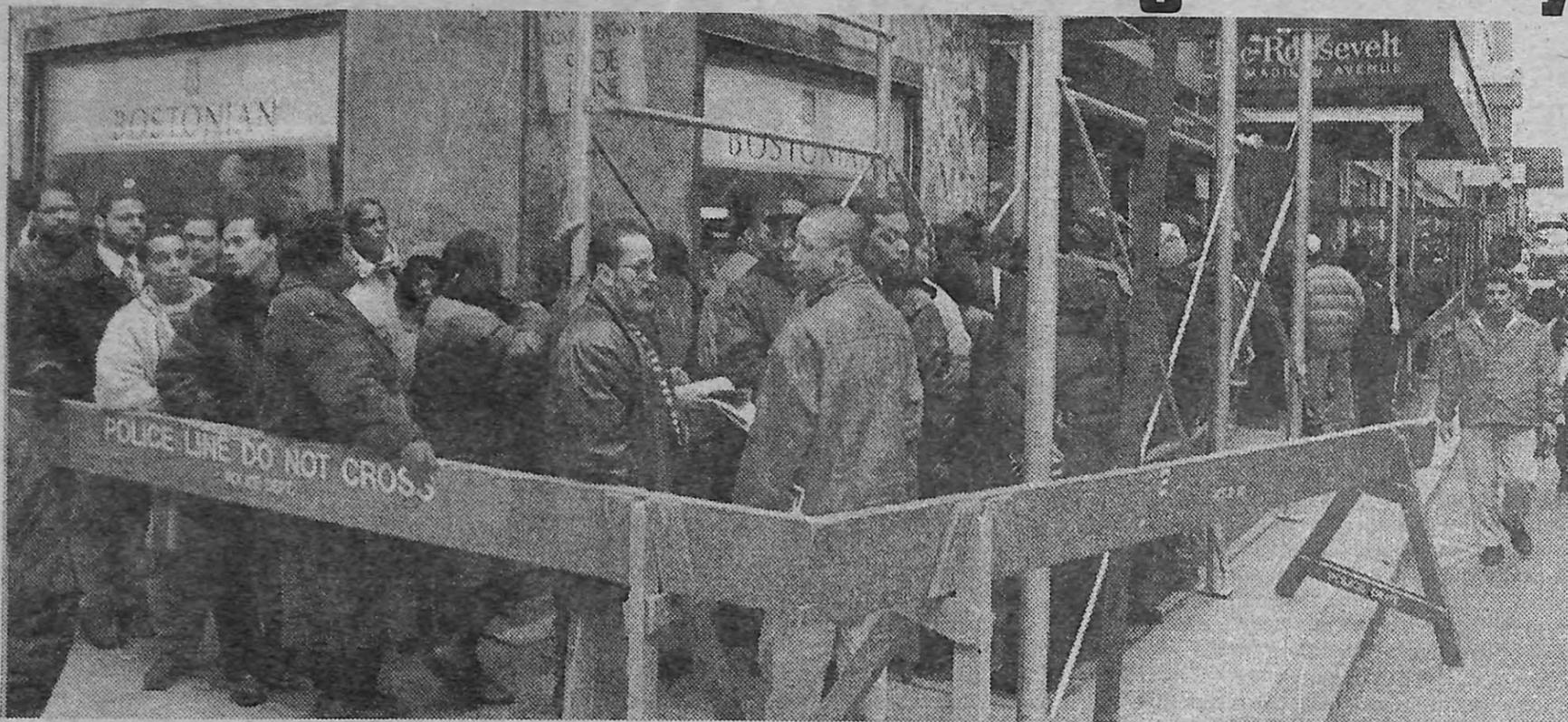
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Welfare, Workfare and Wage Slavery



Some of the 4,000 people who lined up to apply for 700 entry-level jobs at Roosevelt Hotel in Manhattan, March 18.

The realities of "going from welfare to work"

The federal government claims its "welfare reform" will "move people from welfare to work." Cruel cuts are portrayed as "tough love." The government is telling people that these policies may seem harsh, but they will really lead millions of people to prosperous lives. Such promises have even raised hopes among people on welfare. People want to work.

The truth is that the federal government is moving to cut off welfare to millions of women and children—but does not have any plans for providing stable work at living wages. Most people on welfare will not be able to get stable work—the jobs simply aren't there. And those that do find jobs, will most often live in deeper poverty than they did on welfare. Meanwhile "workfare" will force millions of welfare recipients to work for their checks—often moving out workers who used to do that work for better pay.

Last August, President Clinton signed the "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act"—which progressive people are calling the Welfare Repeal Act. In previous articles the *Revolutionary Worker* has analyzed many aspects of this attack—including, most recently, cutting off SSI checks to disabled immigrants and children. In this article, we will focus on the "welfare to work" provisions—and what they will mean for the people.

Where are People Supposed to Go?

The new law will drive people off welfare in two main ways.

First, it requires that each state move more welfare recipients into work programs each year. Twenty-five percent of their caseload must be working or in training this year. And 50 percent must be by the year 2002. For two-parent families, 75 percent of the caseload must be working or in training. In two years, that number goes up to 90 percent. If the states don't meet these quotas, the federal government will cut the money they get for welfare payments. The Clinton administration has announced it will be very strict about these deadlines.

Second, this law sets a limit on how long a family can get welfare. There will be a lifetime limit of five years to the time a family can receive checks from the new federal "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families" (TANF). The time limits starts counting now—so that someone on TANF steadily will be cut off in five years. Peter Edelman, a ruling class welfare expert, writes: "It will make no difference if a recipient has played by all the rules and sought work faithfully, as required. When the limit is reached and the state is unable or unwilling to grant an exception, welfare will be over for that family forever."

Each state will be allowed to make exceptions to this five-year limit for only 20 percent of its caseload.

A third of young men between 25 and 30 with full time jobs don't earn enough to keep a family of three above the poverty line. Many young couples can't make it if one partner has to stay home and take care of the kids or a disabled relative. For millions of women, welfare has been the only option.

Welfare and the Dilemma of Single Working Women

The overwhelming majority of people on welfare are single women with children. And over 80 percent of the women on welfare get jobs within two years. This statistic alone exposes all the lies about the supposed "laziness" among women on welfare—people want to work. But here is the other side of that story: Half of the people on welfare have already been on it for at least five years over their lifetimes.

This shows that large numbers of working class women are in and out of welfare—getting jobs, trying to make it, and then being forced back onto welfare—because they got laid off, or because they got divorced and couldn't make it on one income, or because they couldn't afford child care, or because someone in their family got sick and they couldn't make it without federal medical benefits.

The simple fact is that millions of working class people aren't paid enough to raise a family on one salary alone. Wages are simply too low. Single working women with children often can't afford to feed and

clothe their families—not to mention pay for health care and day care—and that is what forces them on welfare, and then back on welfare even if they succeed in finding a job.

Wages for the millions in the working class have dropped over the last 30 years. Wages earned by men between the ages of 25 and 34 have dropped 26 percent since 1972. And a third of young men between 25 and 30 with full time jobs don't earn enough to keep a family of three above the "poverty line."

The exploitation of millions of working people has intensified so much that many young couples have trouble holding a family together, especially if one partner has to stay home and take care of the kids. For many women, living on their own and going on welfare becomes the best option—at least during the years when their kids are small. Life on welfare is full of raw and painful poverty—but the poverty of the available jobs was even worse.

Now welfare recipients are being forced to try to make it on those jobs. According to the work of Harvard professor David Ellwood, most of the welfare recipients who succeed in finding jobs end up "deeper in poverty."

Meanwhile, at least 30 percent of the people on welfare are disabled or caring for family members who are disabled. Someone has to care for the disabled, and there is often no other way these families can get medical benefits. Edelman reports in a recent *Atlantic Monthly* article (March '97) that at least 36 percent of the welfare recipients in Washington state have learning disabilities.

If over 30 percent are on welfare because
Continued on page 6



A family in Texas facing the loss of food stamps under the new welfare law.

- New York City lost 227,000 jobs since 1990. Now 300,000 women on AFDC are being told to go find jobs.
- Philadelphia is losing 2,000 jobs a month, and already has 47,000 people who can't find work. "Welfare reform" will force 57,000 more people to compete for openings.
- Chicago now has six jobseekers for every entry-level job—even before hundreds of thousands of more people get their checks cut off.

Mood

The '60s and

by Bob Avakian

This is the second in a series of commentaries by Bob Avakian on some features of the imperialist economy and the mood of the people.

We can learn more about the situation today by examining more deeply how this period is different from the '60s in some substantial ways. For example, this is not a period of the expansiveness of the imperialist economies. And socially and politically, a lot of the movement of the '60s—the Civil Rights movement, or the early SDS or whatever—was sort of conditioned by that expansiveness of the economy. Even as a movement seeking to *change* the status quo, it was still conditioned by that expansiveness and the accompanying "optimism"—the Kennedy-Camelot optimism of that time, which reflected the material conditions of broad strata of people in the U.S.

Some people have made the analysis—which I think has some validity, as long as we use it critically—that the '60s was a period of rising expectations, and the particular movements of that time, even the ones that became most radical, were largely shaped by the conflict between the rising expectations and the frustrations or limitations imposed upon those expectations. That was a very explosive mix.

There was a real boom in the economy in the U.S. and internationally before the Vietnam War, and then some factors in the world economy inter-relating with that war started turning things substantially into their

opposite. Before that, in the '50s and '60s, large sectors of U.S. society were moving to the suburbs, and it seemed that, in one way or another, everybody had a lot of upward mobility, everybody seemed to be getting in on it. But there were significant sections of people—in particular the masses of Black people and even the middle class of Black people—who were largely and essentially locked out of that; and this was one of the major and most explosive social contradictions of that time.

That's by contrast to today—not that there's no upward mobility at all—or, on the other hand, no phenomenon of people finding their expectations frustrated. But this is a period of a much different social situation, much different expectations. It is a period, if you will, of lowered expectations among large sections of the middle strata—though not all, because there's real polarization going on even within the middle strata. Because of some of these objective-economic changes, and because of conscious policy on the part of the ruling class, for significant sectors of the middle class there are lowered expectations. This is not the same kind of spontaneous optimism (if you want to put it that way) that there was for the majority of society in the 1960s.

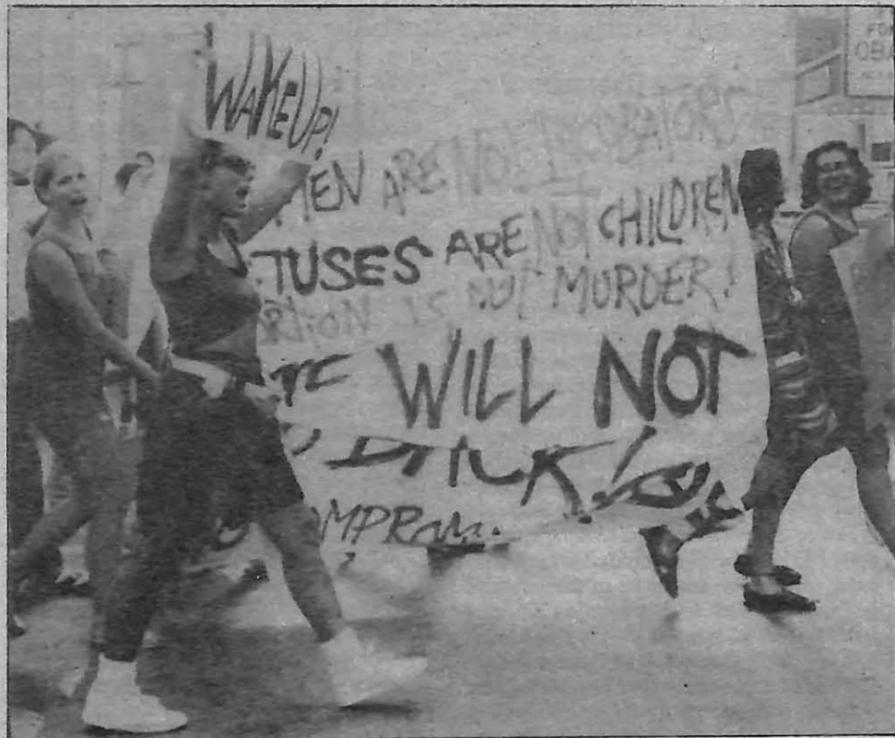
Recently I was reading the Jonathan Kozol book *Amazing Grace*. And while we are very familiar with the conditions that he's describing in the South Bronx—which is the focus of this book—and more generally the conditions of the basic masses, still what he describes is very vivid and very graphic. Obviously, the expectations there, among the most destitute and desperate masses in the U.S., are very different from what they were even for the basic masses 25 to 30 years ago. And this poses some real problems for us in our work. There's a certain degree of fatalism and defeatism which we have to consciously work against—and are working against. But this sets a different cast, if you will, on the way things come down and the way questions pose themselves.

I have made the point in previous writings that things are not going to be a repeat of the '60s. The contradictions will pose themselves and find resolution differently. And strategically speaking that's an advantage for us because it's a reflection of the diminishing reserves of the imperialists (which is something it is necessary to dig into further). And also, along with that, today things come right up against the fundamental relations in society, more quickly than they did in the '60s.

For example, in the '60s with the Civil Rights Movement, particularly in the South, there developed a pretty broad consciousness that something is really wrong in U.S. society—that we basically have this South Africa within the U.S., when we're supposed to be a democratic beacon for the world—there's something really wrong in the U.S. And pursuing that contradiction led to a lot of radicalization.

Recently I saw a video of the documentary movie *Freedom on My Mind*, about the civil rights movement in the south. And you can see this process at work there, not only with the masses of Black people but also the Black college students and the white college students and others who took part in this movement. We know it was a very radicalizing experience because many of us came out of that overall experience. But on the other hand, let's put it this way: you could go a fair distance at that time before you came smack up against some of the basic underlying relations and conditions, the underlying limitations of the system. There was more room to move, more room for the ruling class to maneuver within the confines of bourgeois democracy, and more room for people to believe that these contradictions could be resolved within the system, even though people were, at the same time, becoming more and more radicalized.

I read an interview with Mario Savio when he came



Pro-choice demo, Chicago.



Chicago housing project.

Swings the '90s



Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA.

to Berkeley in 1994 for the 30th anniversary of the Free Speech Movement (of which he was a major leader and sort of a symbol). He talked about how he felt the compulsion to get active again because a lot of the things that he was initially inspired to get active around were all under attack in an intense way now, and a lot of the same questions seemed to be coming around again. He also talked about the difference between then and now—from his own viewpoint. And he was saying that things are a lot more complicated now.

The interviewers were asking: "Why do you think college students are different? Why don't they jump into the movement sometimes in the same way you did, in your time as a college student?" And his response was, in essence, that the material conditions are different—also the questions pose themselves differently. It's not so clear the "right" and "wrong" of everything, it's not so immediately evident. Pretty soon you run into questions of class. He also brought out this point—it isn't just the "right" and "wrong" of racism, but you run into questions of class. And what he was saying, in essence, is that you run into the whole way the society is structured—pretty quickly you come right up against that.

And, again, strategically this is an advantage for our cause, but tactically it can pose some problems because spontaneously people don't see the way to deal with this. It seems overwhelming. In both ideological terms (in terms of their own vision) and practically—in the sense of seeing a material force on the stage that can uproot these deep-seated things—people generally don't see the way to deal with it. So they tend to feel defeated rather than spontaneously being inclined and inspired to fight in a more determined way to change things on a more fundamental level. Obviously this whole thing is contradictory, but this is an important aspect of the objective situation and its effect on people's mood and sentiments.

This is just another example of the way things are going to be working themselves out during this period, which is a period of major transition and upheaval in a different way than in the '60s. As I said, strategically this is an advantage, but exactly for the reasons that it's strategically favorable, it's also tactically somewhat more difficult. You are right up against the fundamental contradictions and fundamental solutions that are necessary. Pretty quickly you get to the fundamental questions in the society—the fundamental problem and solution.

I'm not saying there are no false paths out there—it's not a straight line thing. And certainly the situation

will be marked by tremendous complexity and contending lines, and there will be plenty of illusions about reformist solutions and so on. But what I am getting at is that, objectively and somewhat even subjectively, you're "boom!" right up against these fundamental contradictions of society, once you move into motion against the injustices of the system. So the period is different from the '60s substantially. Tactically this poses some difficulties, but strategically things are more favorable.

At the same time, we can't expect things to unfold in a "familiar pattern" for those of us who are "veterans" in the revolutionary movement. In a certain sense, we can say, philosophically, that *there are no familiar patterns*. It is important to recognize that there is relative identity—things have relative (and temporary) identity. Not recognizing this—failing to grasp the relative identity of things—leads to agnosticism and all kinds of philosophical deviations. Complete uncertainty does not correspond to the way the world really is and how it changes. But, on the other hand, that identity is *relative*—it is contradictory and marked by motion, development, struggle, change. And there are no predetermined pathways—there is the constant dialectical interplay between necessity and accident—so we cannot predict exactly how things will go, even though at any given time we can anticipate certain general patterns with relative certainty.

But even beyond that general philosophical principle, we shouldn't be looking in terms of a '60s analogy—we shouldn't be looking for a repeat of the '60s. There's much to learn and much to bring forward

from that period—much to teach the current generation, and much to remind the older generation (if we dare use that term!) about that period and what was learned from the very rich experience then. It is very necessary and correct for us to do that—even to do more of it. But things are going to work out differently than they did then. Those of us who are "veterans" shouldn't be "stuck in the past" in our way of looking at things. We shouldn't be looking for "familiar patterns"—or we're going to miss some very important things.

So there are significant differences between the '60s and now, as well as the fundamental similarities. And there *are*, after all, the *fundamental similarities*. That is, we have the same system and the same fundamental contradictions. And a lot of the particular expressions of these contradictions are the same, in terms of the major social questions in the society. Besides the basic class exploitation, both within the U.S. and internationally, and the whole system of imperialism with its material foundation, a lot of the particular questions—the national question, the woman question, other major social questions—pose themselves in *both* substantially the same ways as previously *and* in some new ways, some new aspects, which are important. We have to be able to reckon with and deal with both the fundamental similarities—including some essential similarities in how these major social questions are posed—as well as some very different aspects of these things that are posing themselves now as compared to the past. □

RWOCR Photo



National Day of Protest Against Police Brutality, Los Angeles, October 22, 1996.



High school students protest against Proposition 187, Los Angeles, 1994.

Welfare, Workfare and Wage Slavery

Continued from page 3

of family disabilities—and only 20 percent get to remain on welfare after five years—what will happen to the disabled people who don't get exceptions?

In short, millions of women are "stuck" on welfare because there are no decent jobs available to them or their partners that pay them enough to live. And millions are on welfare because of disabilities in the family. Cutting off their welfare checks won't change that—it will simply cause tremendous suffering and desperation.

Inner Cores Without Enuf Jobs

Government spokespeople and reactionaries generally act like "there are jobs out there, if you look hard enough." But the truth is very different.

The front page of the *New York Times* (March 19) recently ran a picture of 4,000 people lining up for two city blocks—hoping to apply for 700 entry-level jobs in Manhattan's Roosevelt Hotel.

Peter Edelman writes: "There simply are not enough jobs now. Four million adults are receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Half of them are long-term recipients. In city after city around America the number of people who will have to find jobs will quickly dwarf the number of new jobs created in recent years. Many cities have actually lost jobs over the past five to ten years. New York City, for example, has lost 227,000 jobs since 1990, and the New York metropolitan area overall has lost 260,000 over the same period. New York City had more than 300,000 adults in the AFDC caseload in 1995, to say nothing of the adults without dependent children who are receiving general assistance. Statistics aside, all one had to do is go to Chicago, or to Youngstown, Ohio, or to Newark... to get the point. The fact is that there are not enough appropriate private-sector jobs in appropriate locations even now, when unemployment is about as low as it ever gets in this country."

Philadelphia has lost 92,000 jobs since 1991. It is now losing 2,000 jobs a month. Yet "welfare reform" will force 57,000 welfare recipients onto a job market where 47,000 people *already* can't find work. This will double the number of unemployed in the city and increase the desperation and competition among those looking for work.

The *Chicago Sun Times* (March 17) reports that in Illinois there were 220,000 more unemployed people and welfare recipients than job openings for which they would qualify. There have been four job seekers for every entry-level position in Illinois, and six job seekers for every entry-level job within in Chicago. This is the situation *before* hundreds of thousands of new people face cutoffs for their checks.

Most new Chicago-area jobs are appearing in the suburbs outside the inner city, while 90 percent of the welfare recipients are concentrated *inside* the city itself. People face major problems getting to those worksites—and then they face the bigger problem of overcoming the prejudices of suburban employers.

So where are people supposed to find jobs when their checks stop?

Government Job Training? Corporate Help?

Official propaganda says that people on welfare will get "help"—like job training, job placement, and special corporate recruitment efforts. This is basically not true. There are a few job-training and job placement programs—but they barely scratch the need. And none of these projects place people at the rate now required by federal law.

In Kansas City, one of the most successful programs put 1,409 out of 15,562 welfare recipients to work during the last year. By last December, 730 of them still had their jobs.

Taking away the safety net increases the desperation of people looking for work. It will depress wages—especially for 38 million working poor who make \$7.50 or less.

Chicago's Cabrini Green had a small but widely discussed program where about half the women still had jobs in five years. That success rate is extremely rare—and yet it is far below the 80 percent national welfare-to-work shift required over the next five years.

The Clinton administration has proposed spending \$3 billion to "create" a million new jobs for people leaving welfare—\$3,000 per job. Everyone in government knows this is smoke-and-mirrors—\$3,000 in corporate tax breaks and temporary childcare will never "create" a new job. The congressional budget office estimates that \$13 billion would be needed to move 80 percent of welfare recipients into jobs—just to cover the most minimal costs of training, childcare and transportation. This kind of funding is not even under discussion.

In his January State of the Union message, President Clinton listed major capitalist corporations who, he said, were "established leaders" in hiring welfare recipients. He could only name five. One of them, United Airlines, later admitted it didn't even have a plan on paper for hiring welfare recipients. Another one, Monsanto Corporation, reported that it has only hired between 20 and 25 welfare recipients in jobs since last August.

A program at Marriott Hotels was a failure. Marriott Hotels hired 650 welfare recipients since 1991—for jobs paying \$6 to \$8 an hour. The federal government provided temporary childcare and transportation subsidies. The moment the subsidies stopped, many of the women with young children simply couldn't afford to pay half their wages for daycare. Many went back on welfare.

In Richmond, Virginia, one new program will send about 6,000 welfare recipients to work for over two dozen corporations, including AT&T, National Car Rental, res-

Keith Wine, manager for Norrell Temporary Agency, says that low unemployment in Richmond, Virginia had caused wages to rise. Now, a new job placement program for thousands of welfare recipients is expected to lower wages. "Everyone has been raising wages to get people," Wine said, "and this will make it possible to hold pay steady."

taurants, nursing homes, and Norrell Services (a temp agency). Norrell's Richmond manager, Keith Wine, explained to the *New York Times* that this program is designed to lower wages in the Richmond area. Wine explained that the area has had unemployment as low as 3 percent recently, and that this has forced capitalists to compete for labor by raising wages slightly. Now the corporations hope that the new welfare policies will help them stop this. "Everyone has been raising wages to get people," Wine said, "and this will make it possible to hold pay steady."

Very few of the people now on welfare are going to find jobs that meet their most basic needs. People will be forced to *scramble* for the worst, dead-end, minimum-wage jobs—and for every person who gets one there will be many who don't. Those who get such jobs will face even more poverty than they now have. And those who *don't* get jobs will face even more desperate choices—like prostitution, homelessness and losing their children.

Workfare—Intensifying Wage Slavery for the "Working Poor"

The only "job program" that is currently taking shape is the country-wide enactment of "workfare." The vast majority of people who are "moved to work" will in fact be forced onto "workfare"—where they still get welfare checks but are forced to perform labor for the money. This is the largest federal "make-work" program since the depression of the 1930s. By the turn of the century, it is estimated that more than four million people are expected to be performing "workfare" at least 30 hours a week (*New York Times*, April 1).

In New York, about 36,000 people are now doing "workfare" at any given time. Legally they are often listed as "trainees" and "volunteers"—so their labor is not covered by union contracts or some labor laws. They show up by the thousands in the



There's Profit in Poverty

The Clinton administration's own study estimated that the new welfare system would move 2.6 million people, including 1.1 million children, into poverty. Eleven million families, about 10 percent of the population, are going to have their incomes cut. This study underestimated the suffering—because it assumed that *two-thirds* of the long-term welfare recipients would find jobs, which everyone knows will not happen.

The impact of this will reach far beyond those most directly affected. There are 38 million working people who make \$7.50 an hour or less. This is 30 percent of the workforce. The system calls them "the working poor." Many of them have been moving off and on welfare and foodstamps. Now under the welfare repeal law, much of the previous "safety net" is being taken away.

Millions of these "working poor" will not be able to "fall back" on welfare when jobs dry up, or when it becomes impossible to make ends meet. Millions will also lose food stamps that fed their kids after cash ran short. And, literally millions of long-term welfare recipients will now join the scramble for the few entry-level openings. Millions of others will be caught up in a "workfare" system that drives down wages and benefits—even for sections of the working class that weren't "working poor" in the past.

These cuts aren't designed to "help" anyone to a better life. While the system cuts off benefits for millions who *cannot* work—it hopes to drive millions who *can* work into an intensifying competition for jobs.

This system doesn't want people out of the "rut of poverty." It wants *more* people to be poor, and it wants poor people to be more desperate. It wants to create situations where millions can be more successfully exploited for profit. These are the cold capitalist calculations behind the so-called "welfare reform." □

In recent months, the RW has run a series of articles analyzing the cruel cuts in welfare and how they will affect millions of people. These articles are available on the RW's web-site for easy downloading and reproduction: <http://www.mcs.net/~rwr>

Parks Department or as street cleaners or in sanitation or as receptionists—often handling work that laid-off city workers once did for much higher wages and benefits.

Many women students in New York's CUNY college system receive welfare payments for their kids, while they take college courses to get themselves white collar jobs. There are increasing reports that women are being forced to *stop* their education, because they must now show up on the orders of the welfare department to do dead-end labor for their welfare checks. This is the opposite of "moving people from dependency to self reliance." This is the crushing of fragile hopes.

Workfare programs are degrading and extremely exploitative. In Baltimore, nine public schools canceled a cleaning contract that paid people \$6 an hour to clean the schools. The schools brought in welfare recipients to clean the school and train as "aides" for school busses—paying them \$1.50 an hour above their welfare checks—costing the school system well below the minimum wage of \$4.75 an hour.

At the Jersey City Medical Center, one woman told the *New York Times* how she was cut back to half-time after 27 years on the job. Her salary dropped from \$22,000 to \$11,000. Meanwhile, her new coworker is being forced to do the same work—near minimum wage—as part of a "welfare to work" program.

Welfare recipients often hope that workfare will lead to permanent jobs. But that rarely happens—these workfare arrangements are often too profitable for the government and companies. A commissioner of New York's welfare department said that last year 75,000 people worked in workfare projects, and only 250 were hired at those projects.

These programs don't "create new jobs"—they *transform* existing jobs. The people on welfare don't get stable jobs, and working people who *once* had better-paying jobs are now often losing them.

Mumia: New Resolutions of Support

There have been a number of new and positive developments in the movement to demand a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Renowned writer Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*, has been very active in the battle to free Mumia. On March 23, Walker visited with Mumia at SCI Greene maximum security prison in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. She was in nearby Pittsburgh as the guest speaker at the Carnegie Library and Museum's Three Rivers Lecture Series. Walker, whose latest book *Anything We Love Can Be Saved* is about activism, dedicated her lecture to three people: Mumia, Judi Bari and Charlotte Hunt. Bari and Hunt recently died of cancer. Bari, a leading activist in the organization Earth First!, fought uncompromisingly against corporate plunder of the environment. Hunt assisted Walker in locating the grave of Harlem Renaissance writer Zora Neale Hurston and bringing attention to her work. Walker told the audience at the packed lecture hall that Mumia "is innocent," stated her opposition to the death penalty, and said that everything possible must be done to save Mumia's life.

A CBS camera crew filmed Walker on her way to the prison, as part of coverage for a special on *CBS Sunday Morning*. The *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* ran a prominent article which began with a discussion of her visit to the prison and talk with Mumia.

Walker is scheduled to return to Pittsburgh on May 28 to visit Mumia again and speak at a free public event sponsored by the Western Pennsylvania Committee to Free Mumia. The funds raised at the event will go to benefit Mumia's legal defense fund.

Walker also did one of the public service announcements accompanying a series of commentaries by Mumia that aired on the Pacifica radio network in February. She said in her PSA: "Take a moment to listen to this rare and courageous voice, speaking from a place we all fear to know. Everyone interested in justice should hear the words of this eloquent man." Her words also appeared on the back cover of Mumia's 1995 book *Live From Death Row*.

On March 25, the Santa Cruz City Council became the first government body in the U.S. to pass a resolution demanding a new trial for Mumia. Following is the text of the resolution:

"WHEREAS, Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently on death row in Pennsylvania in a case which has brought international attention to the serious possibility that the State of Pennsylvania may be killing a man who is innocent of the charges against him; and

"WHEREAS, there is widespread support for a new trial in this case, particularly because of the witnesses for the prosecution who now recant their earlier testimony which was used to convict Mumia in his first trial; and

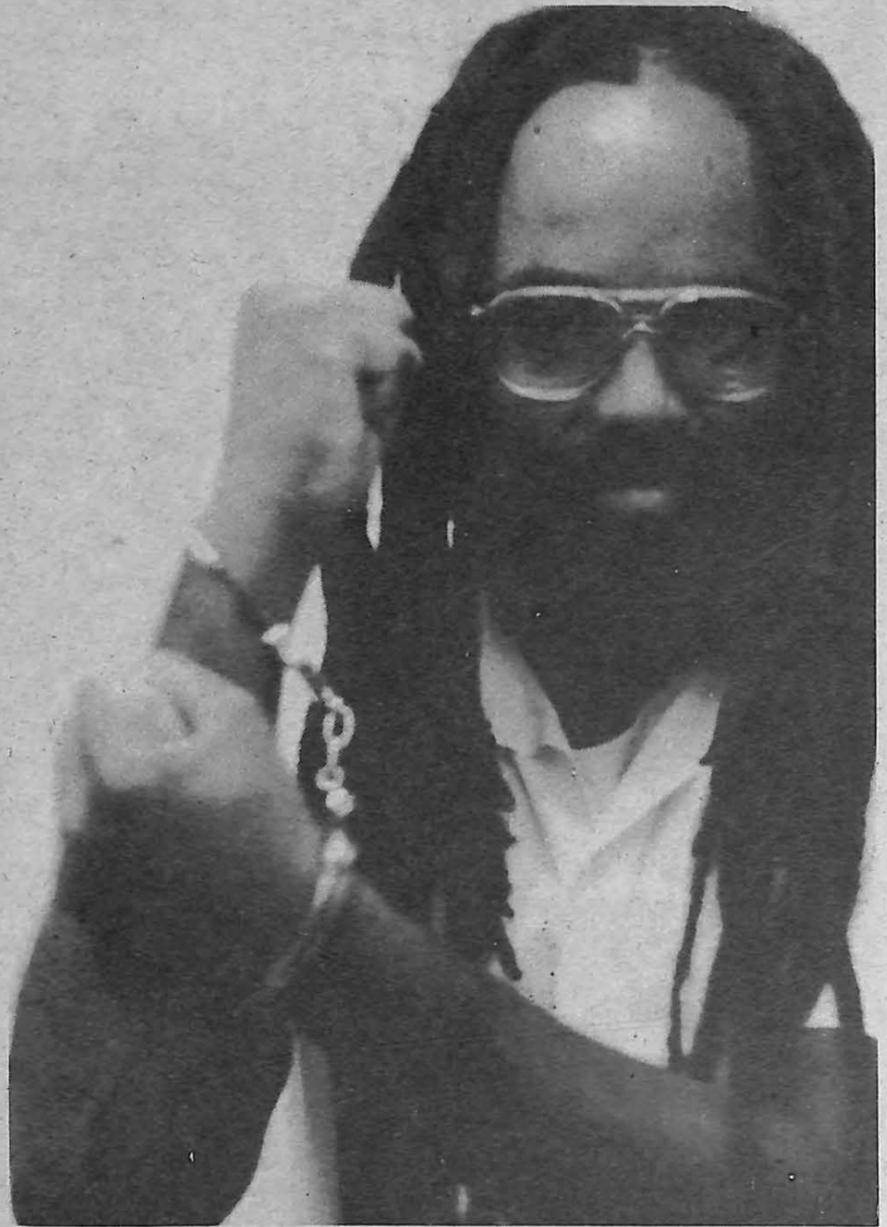
"WHEREAS, there is widespread evidence that the police agency involved in the original case and the criminal justice system which heard the original case were involved in illegal suppression of evidence and pressure on witnesses to falsely testify as to what they observed at the scene of the crime; and

"WHEREAS, there is now a new witness, a police informer, who is prepared to testify that other witnesses were pressured to give false testimony; and

"WHEREAS, the taking of a person's life by the state is something that should only be done, if ever, with solid, incontrovertible, and certain evidence that demonstrates beyond any reasonable doubt that a capital crime has been committed; and

"WHEREAS, that is hardly the situation in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal; and

"WHEREAS, local citizens and organizations in the Santa Cruz community have requested that our City join the international outcry for a new trial in the case of Mumia



Mumia Abu-Jamal

Photo: C.O.C. Productions

Abu-Jamal;

"NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz that the City of Santa Cruz does hereby formally request the State of Pennsylvania and its criminal justice system grant the request of Mumia Abu-Jamal for a new trial, and that he be given a stay of execution until and unless a new trial can be scheduled and completed."

As we go to press, rallies, marches, cultural programs and other actions for Mumia were taking place in a number of cities across the U.S. and overseas. These actions are part of the April 4-5 Days of Remembrance, Rededication and Resistance called by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Refuse & Resist!, Afrikan Frontline Network, the Bruderhof communities, Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal (NY), People Against Racist Terror, Mark Taylor (coordinator of Academics for Mumia Abu-Jamal), and Workers World Party. The *RW* will report on these actions in a future issue.



CHA Cop Indicted for Attempted Murder

April 3, 1997—Protesters exposed the brutality of Chicago police at a court hearing for Roland Pace. Pace is the Chicago Housing Authority cop who shot Shaunnay Royal at point-blank range on March 4 in Chicago's Cabrini Green housing project—triggering a major confrontation between the project residents and Chicago police.

The authorities first tried to justify Pace's shooting of Shaunnay Royal. But they were quickly forced to charge Pace with official misconduct and aggravated battery. Now, in a major development, the outrage and struggle of the people has forced the authorities to increase these charges to attempted murder. Since the shooting of Shaunnay Royal, a Black teenager Lenard Clark was brutally beaten by three racists—just for biking near Chicago's Bridgeport neighborhood. This has put an even sharper spotlight on the treatment of Black people in Chicago. (See *RW* #898, 899 and 900.)



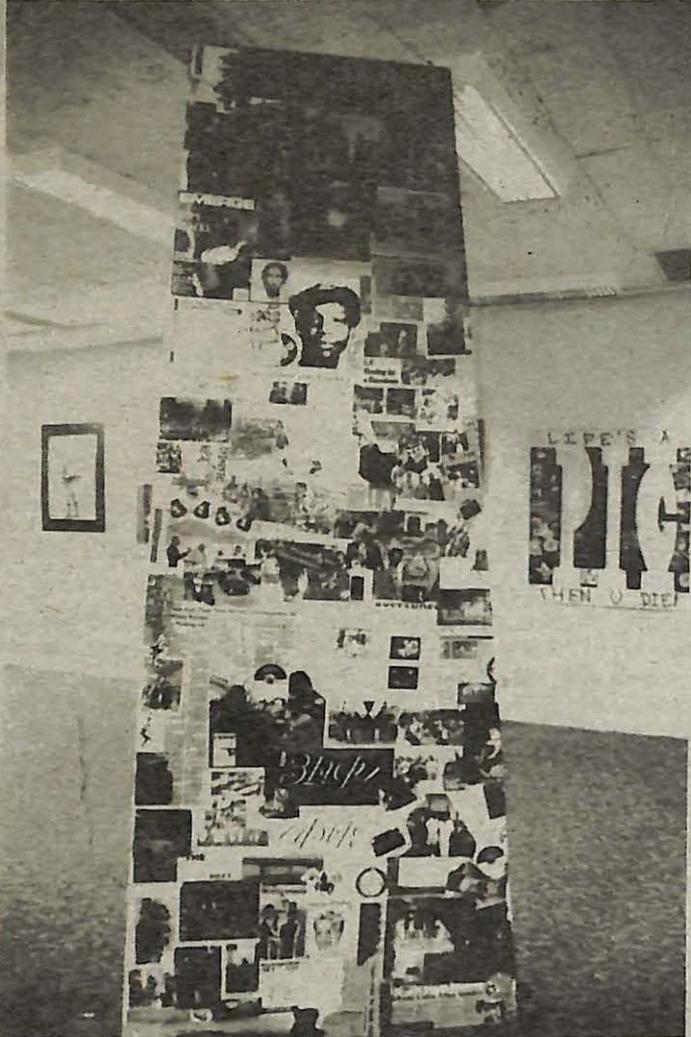
Fernanda Shaunnay Royal

SF Bay Area



Photo: Alvaro Lagos

The opening celebration for the "Art vs. Cops" show



Special to the RWOR

"Los Angeles vs. LAPD" by B. Stevinski



Photo: Alvaro Lagos

Paintings from right to left: "I Luv My Laws" by One Time, "Untitled" by Geoffrey Briones, and "The Wall" by Demars.



"The World is Ours" by M.T.

Special to the RWOR



"No Badge of Honor" by Annie McPheeters

Special to the RWOR

ART vs. COPS

Images in the Fight Against Police Brutality

Revolutionary culture is a powerful revolutionary weapon for the broad masses of the people. It prepares the ground ideologically before the revolution comes and is an important, indeed essential, fighting front in the general revolutionary front during the revolution.

Mao Tsetung

For the whole month of March, the upstairs meeting room of the Centro del Pueblo, a community center located in San Francisco's Mission District, was transformed into an art gallery. Sculpture, paintings, collage, and photography lined the walls and sprouted from the floor. The show was "Art vs. Cops." The works displayed a variety of styles and media, united by outrage against police brutality.

Art vs. Cops was initiated and organized by activists and artists who were part of the October 22nd National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality—as a benefit for the Coalition to Stop Police Brutality. It was a strong articulation of anger and resistance in the cultural sphere.

Most, though not all, of the art was created by youth, and much of it was fueled by firsthand experience with the cops. "Life is a Pig" said the words on one painting by Jose Lopex, Alexis and Domingo, with long sticky looking red vertical stripes running down over the word "pig".

Much of the art was created specially for the show, while some artists contributed works they had done some time before. Probably the most well-known artist with a piece in the show was Robbie Conal, whose piece was in response to a comment made by ex-LAPD Chief Darryl Gates that casual drug users should be shot. This work was "mixed media": silkscreen on paper with .38 caliber bullet holes. One of the pieces was a giant floor-to-ceiling collage of newspaper articles on police murder and corruption, Los Angeles vs. LAPD, it had taken B. Stevinski three years to complete.

Many Latino artists participated in the show—making thematic connections between imperialist oppression of Latin American people and police brutality. "Pasado, presente...futuro?" by Alvaro Lagos mixed times and places, showing official brutality and oppression from

the time of the conquistadors to the present, with a depiction of a beating of a Black man by the notorious SF Cop Andaya, who murdered Aaron Williams. Another painting by Lagos showed a restaurant in the Mission, people inside are eating, a hungry man and a child are on the outside looking in, while farther away in the background SF cops have just shot someone.

A print in burnt orange tones by Carlos Cartagena entitled "Espinaz," showed an amputated bull being given a crown of thorns: a peacetime "gift" from the government of El Salvador to the veterans of the civil war. Another piece by Cartagena, "El Secreto Del Coronel," used a metaphor based on folk medicine: a greenish military man tries to cure his sickness by rubbing himself with a frog, but his sickness goes too deep; it is really caused by his uniform and his medals. So the frogs just die and he stays sick. Said the artist, "I think that they are cut from the same block, the military in El Salvador and the cops here. The same. Their only language is violence. Something that made me happy to participate here was that I knew there were a lot of young artists, and that made me feel great. I am still young, but I've been through a lot. Here in this show are people who still believe in changes, in revolution, even though we are living in disillusioned times. So I said, of course I will be here. I will do this. I still believe in revolution."

Ron Salmeron, Jr. described his piece, a long painting in bronze and dark red tones that looks like a cluster of dense irregular stripes. "I did a piece specifically for the show. It's a word. It says rape. It looks all battered, because when the police arrest you, they just grab you and they take you, take everything from you, touch you, everything that they possibly could do and at the end they throw you in this little white room, and you're just sitting there like damn, what just happened and your senses, you're just in shock. And I've read books, and movies, interviews of women who've been raped, and it's the same thing, like someone stronger than you, trying to rip you apart."

The artists the *RW* spoke with were very enthusiastic about the show, but there were also thoughts for improving participation the next time.

Annie McPheeters pointed out that the next time the show needed to include more women artists. "I'm the only one. My piece is pretty straightforward: there is the badge, the cop running after someone, another person is lying on the ground. The Statue of Liberty is watching through bars. The next time I'm going to paint another piece to put beside it, with the people coming after the cops."

Geoffrey Briones talked about his long painting done in solid shades of gray. "I had this experience and then it was brewing inside, I did this in two days. It's like a stage, a part of the stage where you don't see everything, someone got hanged, there's the gun, long handcuffs, the surveillance camera, everywhere you go you are being surveilled..." He spoke very warmly of the show's organizers and the impact being a part of the show had had on him. "This opened my eyes to a lot of things. When I did this show I met these people that were out there fighting (the police). Getting harassed by the cops is almost part of this culture. When you are out on the streets it can be something you almost accept—'yo you got beat up by the police, that's the way it goes.' But this show and these people made me feel that you don't have to take it."

Another piece, "Target Practice" by Spie, has many cartoon-like images—the Klan, a capitalist, a brutal cop with no heart. On the other side of the canvas, coming forward, there are youth, and in front of them, a newborn baby: the new generation.

One of the most powerful and uplifting pieces in the show is a painting by M.T. with an explosion of colors in the middle. The world is in the background, the central form is an image of Mumia Abu-Jamal, below, being parted by the explosion, are a line of cops. The title: "The World is Ours."

The opening celebration—a night of poetry, music and art—brought out 400 people, again mainly youth. And many others saw the show in the weeks that followed, writing their comments in the guest book. The organizers hope to take an expanded version of the show across the SF Bay to Oakland in the fall and are encouraging more artists to contribute works.

For information people can call: 415/864-5153.



Poster by Robbie Conal (left) and "Who's the Man" by Broke



"Varno Folsom" by Kirso Araiza



"Pasado, Presente...Futuro?" by Alvaro Lagos



"Life's a Pig Then U Die!" by Jose Lopex, Alexis & Domingo



by Spie and Dream



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Capitalist Albania:

Part 1: The Ripoff

Sali Berisha came to power as president of Albania in 1992. His policy was opening Albania wide to foreign capitalist investment—"integrating with Europe" it was called. He was committed to the final dismantling of old ownership systems left over from Albania's earlier socialist days: destroying centralized planning in the economy, ending the state ownership of industry, and dividing up the collectively owned land and agricultural enterprises.

Sali Berisha had the enthusiastic support of the U.S. and the big European powers. They backed his rise like they backed Yeltsin in Russia and similar figures throughout Eastern Europe.

Back then, in 1992, there was much talk of foreign investment, loans, new industries, new prosperity and Western-style electoral democracy. Albania's people were told that if they embraced western-style capitalism, they would soon have the lifestyles of Germans or Italians. Berisha's slogan for the election of March 1992 was "With me, we all win."

One essential truth was covered up: Capitalism is rooted in the private ownership of the social product. Under capitalism, the wealth of a few is always based on the labor and poverty of the many. Some countries may have relatively high standards of living, but that is because capitalism/imperialism, on a world scale, impoverishes and exploits billions of people who live in oppressed countries around the world.

The masses of Albanian people were offered a re-entry into the capitalist world market—but as the exploited, not as the beneficiaries of exploitation.

This reality hit hard and quick in Albania—as it has throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Berisha's rule has been increasingly brutal and fascistic. And then, in January 1997, the people of Albania woke up to suddenly discover that they had been robbed of almost every dime they had!

Since January, Albania's people have created a countrywide rebellion against the government. Large parts of the country have left the control of the central capitalist government in Tirana. The shockwaves of this revolt are being felt throughout the Balkan region—and the rest of Europe.

Investment— The Capitalist Thing To Do

From 1991 on, massive changes swept over Albanian society. Collective ownership was destroyed in Albanian villages.



February 13, Vlore—Women confront police after the collapse of investment funds, waving leeks to protest that the people have nothing else to eat.

Land was broken up among families.

A few investments came in from foreign capitalists—mainly from Italy and Germany—attracted by the promise of low wages. U.S. and European companies announced that they had spent \$100 million studying Albania's mineral wealth—and that they had discovered significant oil deposits. Meanwhile, U.S. Marines from the Sixth Fleet Expeditionary Force started training in Albania's mountains. Albania's government signed a military pact with Turkey's infamous fascist military, which is a member of the U.S.-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

A new private banking system was set up in Albania. And people were urged to put their money in investment funds.

These days, in the Western press, the Albanian financial institutions are described as "pyramid schemes" and "investment scams." But that is not how they

were presented to the Albanian people. People were told that such investments were the way ordinary people ensured their own future in Western-style capitalist countries. With the dismantling of the old state-guaranteed social services, Albanian people could no longer count on having jobs, pensions, medical care or education. Instead, they were told, each person was now responsible for their own survival and prosperity. Saving money was not enough—there was great danger that sudden inflation might eat up savings overnight. So people were told to invest money with the country's new banking system. And they did.

Between 1992 and 1995, the Albanian parliament worked out a new structure of banking laws. On the advice of a team from the International Monetary Fund the final versions of these laws took out provisions that would have required new banks to in-

sure the savings of depositors. The IMF experts apparently felt such government regulation would be a burden on Albania's newborn capitalist banking institutions.

A number of rival "investment funds" emerged in Albania that promised a heady rate of return. As they competed for investors, their promised rate of return started to rise: from 8 and 20 percent, to 80 and 100 percent a month. These associations were closely identified with the government. These funds were promoted as the new-style capitalist way to go.

Many small farmers were having trouble making a living on the small patches of land they had gotten from the breakup of collective farming. Many sold their land and invested the money. Meanwhile 500,000 Albanians had emigrated to Western Europe to get jobs. Many sent their hard currency earnings back to families in Albania. Much of that money too ended up in the "investment funds."

By September 1996, these funds had \$1.2 billion invested in them—virtually all the savings of the people.

These funds were a way that Albania's emerging Western-style capitalist class was quickly accumulating pools of capital to buy up the most profitable sectors of the state-owned economy. Behind the scenes, everyone now knows, the capitalists were investing these funds in typical capitalist ways: They siphoned off profits for themselves and moved them out of the country. It is widely reported that the funds laundered money for Albanian and Italian drug smugglers. The largest fund, *Vefa*, poured money into the election campaign of Berisha's new Democratic Party. *Vefa*'s owner, Vebia Laimucaj, became an Albanian representative to NATO. Another of these funds is said to finance the opposition Socialist Party.

Luxury cars, satellite dishes and high government connections became symbols of a new privatized capitalist class. These "entrepreneurs" created an Albanian stock market in 1996, and started buying up those parts of the economy they considered profitable.

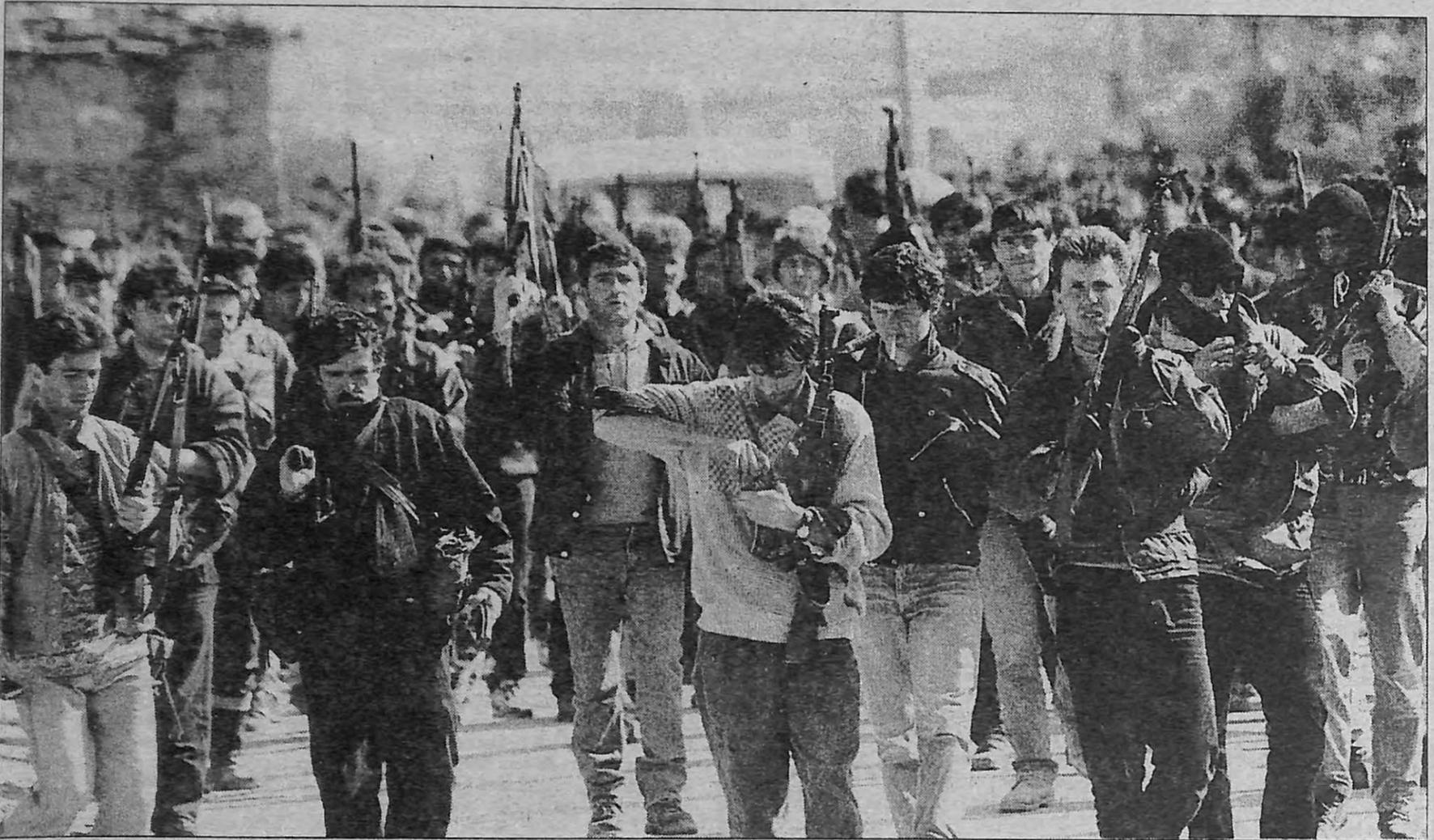
A Total Wreck— Thanks to Free Enterprise

In its socialist days, Albania's people had been relatively poor—but their lives had improved tremendously because of the revolution. Together they had built a modern industry out of the old feudal society while facing the constant hostility,



March 6, Memaliaj—Rebel captures two secret police agents of the Albanian government.

The Ripoff and the Revolt



Albanian rebels with guns liberated from army base in the town of Permet.

military threats, and economic embargoes of surrounding capitalist countries. And they had been proud of their self-reliance and their socialist equality.

When the country was opened to the capitalist world market, Albania as a whole sank into economic collapse. As cheap foreign goods flooded in, many domestic Albanian factories closed.

Agriculture also stagnated. Formerly collective village granaries, day care centers, meeting halls and mills fell into disrepair—as the collective village organizations were broken up. Each farming family was now on its own, trying to make a living. A small handful was starting to get wealthy at the expense of the majority. The reactionary traditions of Albania's patriarchal clans got a new lease on life.

The promises of foreign investment and loans also faded. Albania, it was said, did not have the "infrastructure"—highways, railroads, electrical power—needed for profitable investments. A few Italian capitalists opened new factories in Albania and a few new Albanian businesses sprang up—routinely forcing the workers to labor extra long hours for as little as \$20 a week.

Perhaps the biggest "growth industry" has been smuggling. Arms and oil pass through Albania going north into Yugoslavia. And drugs pass through Albania going west, across the Adriatic Sea, into Italy. Such operations reportedly involve elements of the *Shik* secret police, with close ties to the Italian Mafia. Mountainous farming regions have been introduced to cash crops like coca and marijuana.

Now about 400,000 people are officially listed as unemployed (in a country with about 1,500,000 adults). Less than 10 percent of the old industrial capacity is being used. Many working people have been forced to leave the cities and return to farm villages—and even there most people reportedly had a hard time avoiding starvation. The average per capita yearly income is \$360.

One Italian capitalist recently said in a newspaper interview that Albanian people were now so poor that they had to live on a diet of bread and onions. And he bragged that this poverty made it easier for him to extract sexual favors from women working in his factory.

Living with such outrages, the masses of people became more and more disgusted over the last few years.

A Duly Elected Police State

At the same time, the promises of Western-style electoral "democracy" also

turned sour. After winning office in 1992, Berisha used the crudest methods to steal the following elections. The various opposition parties were simply shut out, some of their leaders were jailed and many of their delegates refused to even sit in the parliament.

The police and secret police became more active. In one now-famous incident, police clubbed a rally of elderly pensioners protesting the naked fraud of last May's election. Journalists were arrested for criticizing the government in print. The TV and radio became tightly controlled.

Berisha created an elected police state—in many ways he was just copying the political arrangements the Western powers have nurtured in many countries throughout the world—including Chile, Peru, Guatemala, Turkey, Croatia, Russia, Rumania and so on. As late as March 6, the *Washington Post* still called Berisha "Our man in Tirana."

The Shameless Robbery of a Whole People

Last fall, major disaster struck the

people. More and more investment funds stopped paying people the monthly interest payments they had been promised. Instead the funds went bankrupt. The shocked people were told that their money—their total savings—were simply gone for good. Over one million people—in a country of three million—had been ripped off. The Albanian people are not alone—similar investment funds have collapsed in nearby Macedonia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Russia.

On the PBS *Lehrer News Hour*, one "expert" arrogantly claimed that this was the people's own fault: they should have known that it was impossible for ordinary people to reap such profits. Pointing out that the amount stolen from the people is equal to one year's gross national product of the whole country, this expert added that the Albanian people must accept that no government can repay it. And finally, he concluded, people must understand that nobody is guaranteed profit under capitalism—windfalls for some often come at the expense of others.

In Albania, the Finance Minister Riouan

Bode remarked, "This is capitalism; companies can collapse."

In 1990, as the Soviet Union collapsed and Western-style capitalist restructuring took hold in Eastern Europe, the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement put out a call to the peoples' of Eastern Europe: "If you want to know what Western democracy is really about, turn off Radio Free Europe and find the way to ask South Africa's blacks, or Palestinians in the Gaza strip, ask the Arab dustmen in Paris or Turks in Hamburg, ask England's coal miners or Chicago's ghetto inhabitants—get them to tell you about the 'marvels' of Western democracy. Or you can just wait to find out for yourselves."

The people of Albania have found out.

Part 2: The Revolt

The collapse of the "investment funds" literally ruined the population of Albania—and angered people deeply. There was a groundswell of revolt against the much hated new capitalists—those swindlers, parasites, and paid frontmen of foreign powers. All throughout January and February, massive protests grew throughout the country—demanding that the government repay the lost funds. The police tried to violently suppress these demonstrations—people were killed.

Berisha called the growing resistance "a conspiracy of extreme leftist groups and Mafioso." He announced "We won't pay a penny. Never!"

The situation exploded on Saturday, March 1 when the police attacked 42 students on a hunger strike at the university in Vlore, a small southern port city. Thousands of youth stepped out—utterly fearless. They defended the hunger strikers. They fought the police and killed several of them. And then, when the people realized that they had routed the police—they took over the city. People burned the headquarters of Berisha's hated *Shik* secret police. They seized police stations and prisons. People marched on the barracks,

sent the troops home and seized military weapons. Throughout the city, and then soon in the surrounding districts of southern Albania, people stopped work—went on a general strike—and concentrated on overthrowing the government.

The Spanish newspaper *El País* writes: "In Lushnja, two trucks full of riot police were stopped by angry protesters and forced to get off. Forty were disarmed. In Saranda about 3,000 demonstrators had the run of the town. Armed with sticks, they burned businesses and banks, destroyed six police cars, seized the prison and liberated about 100 prisoners, and armed themselves with 400 Kalashnikov assault rifles.... In Himarar, hundreds of people took to the streets and burned the city hall and police station. In Gjirokaster there is an ongoing general strike and protesters burned down the police station."

Police took off their uniforms and hid. The secret police fled to the capital, leaving the south in the hands of the increasingly armed people. The demands of this revolt are clear: People demanded that their money be returned and that the crooked dictator Berisha leave power.

Berisha insisted that he would never give

in or open his government to the opposition. On March 2 he declared a state of emergency. He ordered the rebels to turn in their arms. He banned marches and threw hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people into jail. And he tried to mobilize his army to retake the southern districts.

However in town after town, the army refused to fight the rebels—some army forces just melted away; others joined the uprising. Both officers and ordinary soldiers also lost their savings in the bankrupt "investment funds." Rank-and-file soldiers have been making about \$2 a month and had little love for Berisha's corrupt regime.

The whole southern third of Albania slipped out of government control. As we go to press, it still is out of control.

One newspaper report described what happened at Pasha Limini, a military base near the port of Vlore. The commander of the base, Major Astrit, described the scene: "A massive crowd surrounded the garrison, maybe 10,000 people. The guard, made up of 50 soldiers, simply abandoned its posts. And I opened the doors." Astrit is now a commander of rebel forces defending

Continued on page 12

Capitalist Albania: The Revolt

Continued from page 11

Vlore.

It is estimated that throughout Albania at least 150,000 automatic rifles were taken from various army installations and distributed among the people.

Prison guards started to walk away from their posts. At the Central Prison in Tirana, 300 prisoners were liberated, including prominent political opponents of the regime. As the struggle spread to the capital

itself, Berisha tried to mobilize his base in rural northern mountain regions—bringing in armed militia bands from isolated northern villages into the capital. He tried to enflame regional and national differences—portraying the uprising as a power grab by southern Albanians and secessionist ethnic Greeks—as well as continuing his usual charge that it was led by an alliance of “extreme leftists and Mafioso.”

Counter-Insurgent Maneuvers

Only a week into the uprising, Berisha's options started to run out. He called for Western military intervention to prop up his government. But the Western powers, at that point, were extremely leery of entering a counterinsurgency war—especially against a heavily armed population.

The various imperialist powers pressured Berisha to bring the six opposition parties into his government on March 9. Berisha fired his own Prime Minister and appointed the leader of the Socialist Party to that job. The head of the secret police was fired and later it was announced that this police force would be dissolved. New elections were scheduled for June.

None of Berisha's moves met the demands of the people—and at least a third of the country remains firmly in the hands of various organized rebel councils and organizations. But the intention of the imperialist powers was to pave the way for a new pro-Western government (possibly without Berisha), which might be more acceptable to parts of the rebel movement and the population at large. Berisha's days may well be numbered. He has already sent his family into exile. The Socialist Party was formed out of the bulk of the country's old revisionist ruling party, the Party of Labor of Albania. It has formally renounced Marxism, and has “repackaged” itself as a Western-style social democratic party. In several places in Eastern Europe—including Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary—the old revisionist parties have come back into power after such social democratic “repackaging.”

The Socialist head of this new coalition government, Bashkim Fino, announced that he was tripling the salary of the police. And he called for Western powers to send him military advisers—to help reorganize the government army and disarm the people. Then Fino set out to negotiate with the rebel forces, city by city, hoping to take advantage of the extremely fragmented nature of this insurgent movement between now and the June elections.

International Intrigues

The Western imperialist powers are extremely hostile to the uprising. They clearly do not like to see hundreds of thousands of people, pissed off by capitalist robbery, arm themselves and seek to overthrow a government. Their press has been openly hostile to this uprising—calling it “chaos” and “anarchy.” *Time* magazine charged that civilization itself was “vanishing down a

sinkhole.”

In particular, the ruling class of Europe and the U.S. are concerned that the uprising in Albania could “spill over” to the oppressed Albanian populations in the Yugoslav region of Kosovo and the Macedonian republic. They worry what will happen if the Kalashnikov rifles of this revolt fall into the hands of the Albanians oppressed in neighboring countries.

Such “spillover” could easily provoke fighting between Albania and Serbia (which dominates Albanians in Kosovo). And it could encourage a Greek invasion of Macedonia or Albania. Sections of the Greek ruling class have been fanning an extreme chauvinist climate in Greece—even demanding annexation of Greek-speaking parts of southern Albania and calling for the destruction of Macedonia as a state.

If such local wars break out, the whole Balkans region could easily spiral into a major war involving Greece and Turkey (now Albania's military ally). This would deeply disrupt relations between major European imperialist states—and would disturb various “security arrangements” that the U.S. uses to dominate this region and “lead” the larger world imperialist system.

The main imperialist plan at the moment is to “contain” the uprising within Albania, create a new Albanian national government around the opposition Socialist Party—and hope that the uprising cools enough so that the people can be disarmed.

Over a thousand UN troops, including 500 U.S. soldiers, are already stationed in Macedonia as a tripwire. Anyone fighting in Macedonia risks killing some of those troops and “triggering” a U.S.-led military response. Some of those UN troops have just been moved along Macedonia's western border with Albania.

Meanwhile, foreign imperialist powers have moved militarily to intervene directly inside Albania itself. There were a series of foreign provocations: U.S. Cobra helicopter gunships opened fire on Albanian people on March 14, while evacuating foreign nationals from the capital. German troops also shot at Albanians. This shooting was hailed with particularly perverse joy and publicity in Germany: It was the first time German troops have fired outside German borders since the fall of Adolph Hitler, and the German government is thrilled to see this longstanding “taboo” broken.

The European Union sent a Dutch diplomat to offer “military advisers” to Albania's government. The U.S. government and International Monetary Fund had high-powered teams of economic and military advisers on the scene from the beginning.

At the same time, the U.S. and Germany are wary of trying to occupy the country themselves and directly confronting the rebels. As one U.S. Congressman, Elliot Engel, said, “It's going to be very hard to get this genie back into the bottle.” Albania's people have bloodied invaders before—and they are very pissed off and very armed at the moment. Instead, the U.S. is allowing smaller “allied” powers to intervene—in the name of a “UN humanitarian effort.”

As we go to press, the final plans are being laid for sending up to 5,000 UN troops into Albania. Officially, these forces are only going to help distribute relief supplies. But a sizable part of that force will land in the harbor of Vlore—the small southern city that has been the epicenter of the revolt. They are almost certainly intended to play a counterinsurgency role.

The plan for this invasion was developed by the Italian government—and the Italian military has been given command of the operation. Military units from Italy, Greece and Turkey will play a major role in the operations—all of which have had designs on Albania in the past. Albanian people remember well that it was Italian fascist troops under Mussolini who seized their country during World War 2 and had to be defeated by an intense communist-led guerrilla war. Spanish, Portuguese and Austrian troops will also be involved in the coming UN military intervention.

In an additional outrage, an Italian Navy ship struck and sank a refugee boat carrying

Or You Can Just Find Out For Yourself

From the CORIM Call to the Peoples of Eastern Europe

On February 20, 1990, the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement issued an appeal to the people of Eastern Europe. It was called “Cast Away Illusions! Revolution—All the Way!” It was translated into Polish, Czechoslovakian, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian, German and several other languages. Tens of thousands of copies have been distributed throughout Eastern Europe. It also appeared in the journal *A World to Win*, #15. The following is an excerpt.

Western propagandists tell you to forget the evidence from Poland and Hungary of what more Western penetration will mean for you; look instead to Germany, Scandinavia or France—if you adopt democracy and join Europe, someday you too will live like this, they claim. What poison pours from their lips! Of course the West is richer—it has been more successful than its Soviet-bloc rivals in building a worldwide empire. Their exploitation fields stretch from Chile's copper mines to South Africa's gold mines up through the Middle East oil fields through South Asia and into the Far East, where tens of millions produce textiles and electronics for pennies an hour. Because the West is richer and has a relatively large middle class, it can allow some of its people to say what they want (some of the time) and go abroad (if they can afford it). The West is not rich because it is democratic, it is democratic because it is rich and it is democracy for the rich; the secret of its riches, and hence of its democracy, lies in its empire built on bloody conquest and maintained through savage wars like Vietnam, continual invasions of little countries like Panama, Grenada or the Malvinas, and perpetual misery and suffering for hundreds and hundreds of millions under apartheid regimes and military juntas and including within the borders of the imperialist countries themselves. If you want to know what Western democracy is really about, turn off Radio Free Europe and find the way to ask South Africa's blacks, or Palestinians in the Gaza strip, ask the Arab dustmen in Paris or Turks in Hamburg, ask England's coal miners or Chicago's ghetto inhabitants—get them to tell you about the “marvels” of Western democracy. Or you can just wait to find out for yourselves. □



Police flee protesters in Albania's capital in January—back when the people were only using stones.

Albania in Brief

Albania is a small country along the Balkan coast—inhabited by mountain people famous for their fierce independence. Its population is about 3.5 million. It is bordered to the north by the Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, to the east by Greece, and to the west, across the Adriatic Sea, lies Italy. All of Albania's neighbors have tried, at one time or another, to take over Albania or carve off parts of its land. Serbia today controls the Albanian-inhabited region called Kosovo, and heavily oppresses the people there. The Greek ruling class has been accusing Albania of persecuting Greek-speaking people in its southern districts—and threatening to take those areas away from Albania. And Italy long attempted to conquer and colonize Albania—including during World War 2, when the Italian fascists and their German Nazi allies carried out a brutal occupation of Albania.

Socialist Revolution— Allied with Mao Tsetung

At the end of World War 2, a communist-led guerrilla army liberated Albania from years of brutal occupation by Italian fas-

cists and German Nazis. Albania became an independent socialist country.

Led by the communists, the people of Albania's isolated villages fought to create a new collective agriculture. They broke the power of the old *bey* feudal landowning classes. As the war-torn economy was rebuilt, modern industry emerged in Albania for the first time—created along socialist lines. Albania had close ties to the Soviet Union—which in those years was a socialist country led by Joseph Stalin.

In 1956 phony communists rose to power in the Soviet Union and overthrew socialism. They restored capitalism—using a *state-capitalist* system of ownership. And their new, state-capitalist owning class exploited the people, even while they continued to call themselves "communists."

Albania was the only country in Eastern Europe that refused to follow the Soviet revisionists down that capitalist road. At great risk, Albania's Party of Labor broke with the Soviet Union, and made a close alliance with Mao's China. Albania remained socialist for two more decades, led by Enver Hoxha, the leader of the Party of Labor of Albania (PLA).

After the death of Mao in 1976, capitalist

roaders came to power within China. Albania's leadership increasingly moved away from revolutionary positions, and consolidated a revisionist line of their own.

In 1978 Enver Hoxha published a series of attacks on Mao Tsetung and the Cultural Revolution—denouncing important theoretical developments of Mao on the class struggle under socialism.*

The Restoration of Capitalism

It was forces *within* the Party of Labor of Albania who overthrew the socialist relations in industry and agriculture. Then in the late 1980s, they called for fully "opening up" to the world capitalist market. In 1991 they welcomed U.S. President Bush's Secretary of State Baker to Albania—in a move that marked a major turn toward open capitalism.

Elements within the PLA decided to fully discard the label of "communist" and *openly* embrace the politics and economics of western-style capitalism. Berisha, who had been a secretary of the PLA and a confidant of its leadership, formed a right-wing "Democratic Party" with close ties to the British Tories. The bulk of the old PLA

renamed itself the Socialist Party—proclaimed that they were Western-style social-democrats, and no longer communists or Marxists. When Berisha became President, this pro-capitalist "Socialist Party" moved into opposition.

The new government, its military, the new capitalist ruling class and even Albania's new Mafia-style underworld drew many of their honchos from old state-capitalist ruling circles—who became more and more *openly* capitalist.

Then in 1992, with support from Western imperialist powers, these *openly* capitalist forces rose to political power, led by Berisha, and proceeded to carry out a major "opening" to the world capitalist market—and with it a systematic restructuring of Albania's economy and political system. □

* For the RCP, USA's analysis of Enver Hoxha's attacks on Mao, see "Beat Back the Dogmato-Revisionist Attack on Mao Tsetung Thought" in "The Communist," Number 5, May 1979. For a critique of Hoxha's overall line see *Revolution* magazine, September 1979.

dozens of Albanians on March 28. Many died, though the exact numbers are unknown. During the Albanian uprisings, thousands of people have left Albania for Italy—prompting loud complaints by the Italian government that their coastal city of Brindisi is being overrun by refugees. Italian warships were deployed in the Adriatic Sea to turn back refugee boats, and many Albanians believe that the Italian Navy deliberately sank the recent boat—to send a bloody message that Albanians are not welcome in Italy.

Albania's revolt shows the political potential for revolution in Eastern Europe. The suffering of Albania's people and their profound disillusionment with Western-style "market reforms" are shared by millions of people in the former Soviet bloc. The masses of people, especially in the south, have taken a hard, united stand against Berisha and his regime. And they do not seem inclined to wave U.S. flags or identify themselves with reactionary and religious symbols (the way the anti-government street marchers in neighboring Serbia have been doing).

Despite the fact that the government constantly accuses the rebels of being "unrepentant communists and extreme leftists"—there are no signs that this rebellion has gone beyond demanding the return of money and the removal of Berisha.

The leadership of this revolt seems to be largely local and decentralized—so far. The explosive growth of the uprising immediately outstripped any existing organizations. New mass organizations formed in the streets, villages, high schools, colleges,

and out of army units that went over to the people. The rebel leadership has been mainly centered in various local councils, and seems to be drawn from diverse political forces. Some leading forces came from the old PLA government, others are former prisoners of that PLA government, others arose directly out of this revolt and have no clear political history.

As we go to press, the country is still divided: between a southern region, under the control of these local councils, and a northern region, centered in the capital, where the central coalition government is trying to regroup its army and political influence. As far as we know, there is no revolutionary Maoist party in Albania to lead a socialist revolution. And so it is likely that one way or another *capitalist* forces will take the political power that has been slipping from Berisha's hands. All the main contenders for power, including the Socialist Party, intend to drive Albania further down the capitalist road.

Despite this, the fierce uprising in Albania is having a profound and positive effect—in Albania itself and throughout Europe. This is the most powerful mass movement of resistance to "free market restructuring" in Europe since the "Fall of the Wall." It is tearing away all kinds of free market lies.

Who can look at Albanian experience and honestly claim that "integration" with the Western capitalist market benefits the people? In a world where billions are ground into the dirt by ruthless capitalism—a welcome wind has blown in from Vlore, Albania. □



March 13, Elbasan—Young rebel seizes gun during takeover of an Albanian army barracks.



THE L.A. SIS HITSQUAD



Friends of Grover Smith confront cops after he was shot in front of his house, February 25.

On the night of February 25, officers from the Special Investigation Section (SIS) of the Los Angeles police department opened fire on a car full of people on a dead-end residential street in the San Fernando Valley area. They killed three people in the car: Kim Benton, Kirk Deffenbaugh and Eric Fields, all of them in their early twenties. The police say one person in the car escaped, and they later arrested Michael Smith.

Michael Smith has made no statement, and there are no autopsy results available on those killed. The only version of the killing of Kim Benton, Kirk Deffenbaugh and Eric Fields comes from the SIS cops who shot them. The cops said that they were following a car from the scene of a robbery at a night club, when someone in the car pointed a gun at them. The police said they then opened fire. The shooting was so intense that several houses on the street were hit by police bullets, but no cops were wounded. And the cops don't even claim that the people in the car fired a single shot. Although articles in the mainstream press called it a "shootout," it was clearly a one-sided, cowardly execution.

The LAPD almost killed a fourth person that night. Before they arrested Michael Smith, heavily armed cops roamed through the surrounding area. They saw 20-year-old Grover Smith (not related to Michael Smith) walking down the street, and opened fire on him with shotguns. As Grover Smith went down, writhing in pain from multiple pellet wounds to his legs, the cops started shouting, "We got him, boys.

We got him." A man who lives in the neighborhood told the *RW*, "They were acting like they were from the South or something."

Grover Smith was shot in front of his own house. Several people saw him as he walked on the sidewalk with his hands up and then was shot by the cops, who opened fire without warning. Police said later that he "fit the description" of the man who escaped from the car they shot up. All the people in the car were African-American. The description the police gave was "a dark-skinned male." Grover Smith is a very light-skinned Black man.

Police also told a story familiar to anyone who knows about police brutality and murder. They claimed Grover Smith "reached for his waistband." Several newspaper accounts said he was "hiding in the bushes" and called his shooting "an accident." Several of his neighbors told a different story. They said Grover Smith lived in a house with other young people and knew what it was like to be harassed by the cops. When he saw that the whole area was swarming with cops, including police helicopters, he decided to walk out of the area. He was being very careful.

The SIS cops were on a killing spree—and they shot the first Black man they saw on the street.

After the shooting, angry residents shouted at the heavily armed police, demanding to know why they had shot their neighbor. Grover Smith suffered severe injuries to his leg, including nerve damage and shattered bones. His recovery may take

six months to a year. He has joined 50 others in a lawsuit against the SIS. When Michael Smith was arrested later, he was charged with the murders of the three people in the car as well as armed robbery.

The February 25 shootings in the Valley were typical of how SIS operates. Attorneys for victims of police brutality and murder have called SIS a death squad because of particular tactics that it uses. SIS officers follow people who have been accused of armed robbery. But they don't do the kind of "detective work" that people see in the movies—interviewing witnesses, searching people's houses, looking for fingerprints. They wait until their targets are in a vulnerable situation, like leaving the scene of an armed robbery, and then confront them with shotguns and other heavy weapons. One of their techniques is to yell "Freeze," and open fire when the person turns around to look. According to anti-police-brutality lawyers, the SIS cops have shot hundreds of people and killed 44. The LAPD's own records show that SIS officers have shot more people per cop than any other LAPD unit.

The SIS unit makes no effort to prevent robberies. They wait for a moment when they have a pretext for a one-sided armed confrontation. SIS officers also pass up chances to arrest their targets for other crimes, including such felonies as weapons violations.

February 12, 1990: four men allegedly broke into a McDonald's in the Sunland area of L.A. before it was open for business, pointed guns at the employees, and took

money from the safe. The McDonald's workers called 911 when they heard someone trying to break in the back door. But the SIS notified local LAPD cops not to answer any calls. The SIS waited until the four were sitting in their car, and then opened up on them. Three of the men were killed. Physical evidence showed they were shot in the back. This contradicted the cops' story that the alleged robbers had turned around and pointed guns at the police. In fact, they were armed with pellet guns.

The FBI announced two days after the killings in the Valley that they were going to "investigate" the SIS for civil rights violations. There have been two other FBI investigations in the past, and no charges have ever been filed against the SIS. LAPD Chief Willie Williams, like Daryl Gates before him, backed up his killer elite.

The L.A. City Council has called for an investigation—of Grover Smith's lawyer, not the cops who shot him. The lawyer, Steven Yagman, is a well-known advocate of victims of police brutality. His lawsuit describes the SIS cops as "assassins," and charges that they shot Grover Smith "in a frenzy of Nazi-like blood lust." It also notes that he was shot in the back.

Sylvia Bentley, the mother of 22-year-old Kirk Deffenbaugh, told reporters, "I'm not upholding what they did, but they were young. They hadn't even had a chance to experience life yet. They could have just arrested them." Michael Smith's mother said, "These police are people hired to kill somebody. They are hit men. They are trained to do these things." □



LAPD Gets More Heavy Guns

The SIS is called an "elite" unit of the LAPD. The SIS execution squad is distinguished from other LAPD divisions not only by their stalk-and-kill tactics, but by their use of heavy weapons. Within weeks of the killing of Kim Benton, Kirk Deffenbaugh and Eric Fields and the wounding of Grover Smith, the Los Angeles Police Commission voted to put heavy, military-style weapons in the hands of all the L.A. cops. Officers will be allowed to carry .45 automatic pistols, which fire larger, more deadly bullets than their current 9mm pistols. Supervisors in every division, including the traffic division, will carry AR-15 assault rifles in their cars. The AR-15 is almost identical to the M-16 rifle first used by the U.S. Army in Vietnam. The M-16 fires a high-velocity .22 bullet that causes massive tissue damage when it strikes a human being's body. If it doesn't kill, it inflicts wounds that are very difficult to treat. LAPD officers will also be issued slugs for 12-gauge shotguns. A slug is a single large projectile over a half-inch across.

In front of the TV cameras, the cops always say they need more sophisticated weapons to "protect the public." But the history of the SIS—and other heavily armed divisions such as the SWAT team—show that more weapons in the hands of the police only means more brutality and murder against the people. □

New Weapons for NYPD:

Dum-Dum Bullets, Pepper Spray, and Yearbooks?!?

A series of recent moves by the New York City Police Department show how they are moving to increase their arsenal of murder and repression against the people.

9 Million Hollow-Point Bullets

The New York City Police Department recently announced it was moving to convert all its ammunition to hollow-point/dumdum bullets. (The transit and housing police in the city already use these bullets.) Because of their hollow tips, dumdum bullets do not pass through their victims but instead expand inside their bodies, causing more deadly injuries than regular bullets. Hollow points are intended to enable the cops to more effectively kill and maim. As one top police official put it (using language that reflects the cops' total disrespect for the people), "Perps are going to be going down sooner." The NYPD ordered 9 million rounds of these bullets—which they say is a one-year supply.

There were no public hearings or debates on this planned conversion. The change came to light when the police commissioner was answering questions from the press about recent shootings of bystanders by cops. (One victim was Juberkis Silverio, a young Latina who lost her eye as a result of cops shooting outside an apartment building as she was coming out.) The commissioner said that to avoid the hazards of ricocheting bullets, "We are, in fact, changing to hollow-point ammunition."

With a straight face, this police representative argued that the switch to hollow-point bullets was being made out of concern for the "safety" of ordinary people!

In a lame attempt to make the cops look less bloodthirsty, the commissioner said the N.Y. police fired less bullets in 1996 than in 1995. He failed to mention that 1995 was a record year for the number of bullets fired by the cops in New York—and that they still fired more bullets in 1996 at people than they did in 1993 and 1992. Their own statistics prove how trigger-happy the police are.

The revelation by the police commissioner created a stir, and various forces stepped out in opposition. The N.Y. Civil Liberties Union denounced the move and demanded public discussion. A number of candidates running against Mayor Giuliani opposed the plan. Even the Civilian Complaint Review Board—which is supposed to monitor police abuse but rarely recommends action against cops—was forced to create a committee to investigate the use of dumdums.

The NYPD hoped to make the ammo change behind closed doors. But because of the controversy, Giuliani was forced to put the bullet conversion "on hold" while he "further studied" the issue.

Deadly Statistics

Off of the dumdum controversy, the NYPD was forced to finally release statistics on how many people they shot in the last two years. According to their figures, 27 people were shot to death by N.Y. cops in 1995, and 29 were killed in 1996. They did not reveal the names of the victims nor the circumstances of the shootings. And they did not say how many people were killed in police custody.

In the five-year period from January 1992 to December 1996, the NYPD killed at least 187 people. Another way to look at this deadly statistic is that on average the police in New York kill someone about every 10 days.

While some of the chilling and exposing statistics about police murder have come out, overall there has been an increasing suppression of information. The police no longer supply even basic information to the mainstream press. Recent articles in the press have complained about the police harassing and suppressing them and denying access to crime scenes and other police activity. The *N.Y. Daily News* recently reported that there have been 11 confrontations in the last six months between news people and police—"ranging from photographers being prevented from taking pictures at fires and crime scenes to incidents in which cops have grabbed photographers'

cameras and blocked them from shooting." In February the New York Press Club sent the police commissioner a letter saying they were "deeply concerned about what we perceive as a pattern of police harassment." Most recently, a *N.Y. Times* reporter was arrested when police attacked people at the funeral procession for rapper Biggie Smalls in Brooklyn.

A More Lethal Pepper Spray

Immediately following the controversy over the dumdum bullets, the NYPD announced the switch to a more toxic pepper spray. The department has begun to issue cops bigger cans of spray that can shoot twice as far—15 feet rather than 8. This new spray is mixed with citrus fibers that make it stick to the person attacked with it—making the chemical in the pepper spray even more potent and painful for the victims.

Police chief Louis Anemone said of the spray, "We think this is an effective, less-than-lethal tool." But two separate incidents on the same weekend in mid-March show this to be a lie. The cops pepper-sprayed two men before shooting and killing them.

Yearbook Mug Shots

A few days after the announcement about the new pepper spray, the press reported on an internal police memo instructing detectives to collect yearbooks from all the junior high and high schools—so that the pictures could be used as mug shots. The police have already been using yearbooks for this purpose, but this is the first time this practice has been presented as official policy. The *N.Y. Daily News* quoted the memo which appeared in the Detective Bureau Training Bulletin dated January-February 1997. The memo said, "Every precinct detective squad must have the

most current yearbook for each secondary school in their respective commands."

There was immediate opposition to this police-state move. A principal in Bushwick, Brooklyn said, "I certainly am not doing it. They can't get the yearbook from me." Another principal, from Clara Barton High School in Crown Heights, told reporters, "I'm not looking to help [the NYPD] build their database." The school commissioner said yearbooks are educational records and should not be distributed to public agencies or to the media. A state senator said that the police are "out of control." The head of the N.Y. Civil Liberties Union said, "We believe that this will increase the potential for violating the rights of thousands of innocent and law-abiding high school and junior high school students by placing them in a position where they might be considered a suspect through mistaken identification."

The police claim they only use these yearbooks so "crime victims" can identify suspects. This practice is outrageous in its own right. But this is also part of NYPD's efforts to build up its "juvenile database." In April 1994, the NYPD issued its "Police Strategies"—blueprints for some of the police-state moves being brought down on the people. One of those documents revealed that the NYPD is creating a database "by inputting and cross-referencing all juvenile reports, truancy youth referrals, and gang intelligence in a format that can

first be used by precinct personnel and ultimately be interfaced with the Family Court's Juvenile Justice Information Service." The document said that the aim was to "centralize and make easily retrievable intelligence on repeat youth offenders, their street names, gangs or 'posse' affiliations, and to use the technology to help curtail and defeat criminal activity among young people."

The public schools of New York are made up overwhelmingly of students from various oppressed nationalities. (It is unclear if the NYPD policy applies to private schools.) This intelligence-gathering on African-American, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Jamaican and other youth is part of the criminalization of a whole generation.

A 1996 Amnesty International report compared the brutal NYPD to the armed forces of oppressive regimes around the world which are notorious for murder and torture. As the recent developments show, the power structure is giving the NYPD the green light to become even more brutal and murderous.

A revealing example of the criminal mentality of the police came out in a recent *N.Y. Times* column. The article quoted a youth who described a run-in with a cop: "One time there was an officer who wouldn't let me go into the building where my friend lives. I said 'Do you have any reason to stop me?' He said, 'Shut the [expletive] up.' He said if I tried to go inside none of my family would ever see me again." □



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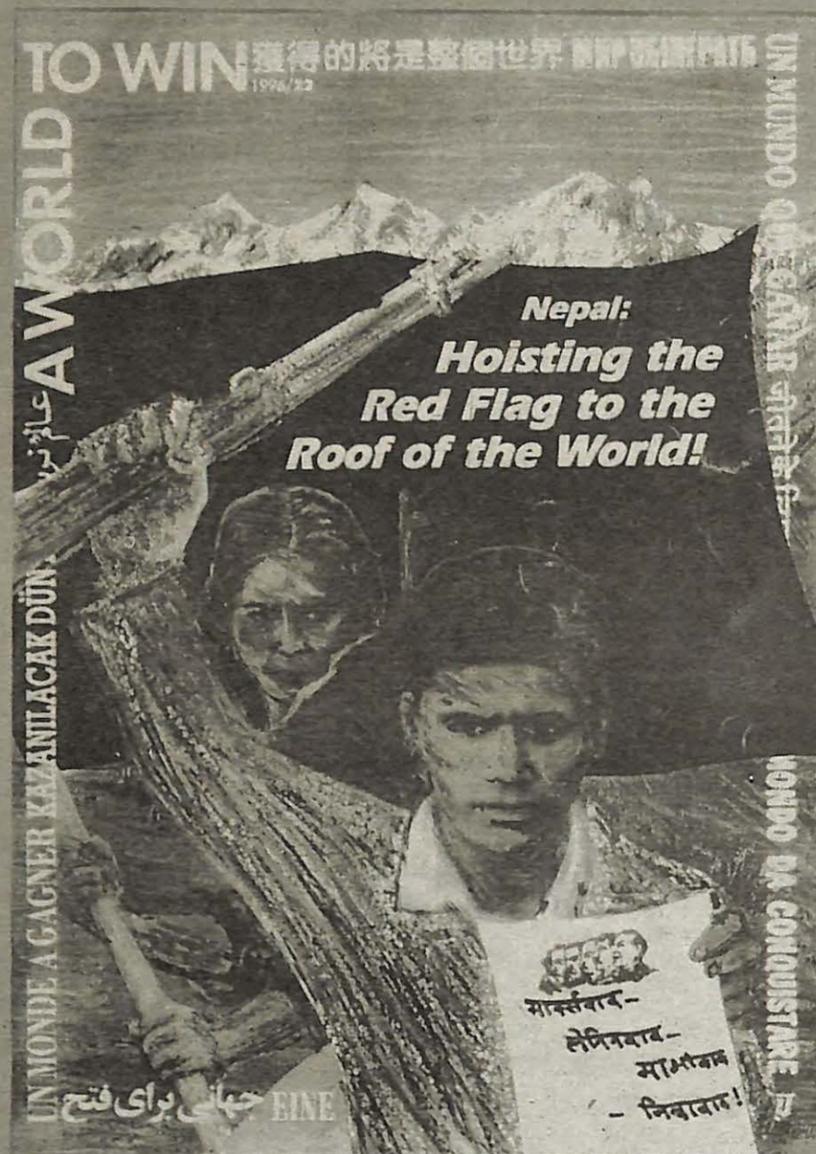
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Initiation of People's War in Nepal

February 13, 1996: "The sight of hundreds of thousands of peasants and workers in Nepal standing up and taking on their enemies cannot help but inspire the oppressed masses throughout the world. It highlights the decisive role and vitality of the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and gives further impulse to the forming and strengthening of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties and organizations united in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement. The initiation of the People's War in Nepal is a daring and glorious step forward for the world revolution."

Two-Line Struggle in Peru

In the prisons of Peru itself, among the slum dwellers in India, in the "electronic world" of the Internet, debate is raging over the two-line struggle which emerged in the Communist Party of Peru (PCP). Let's carry the fight against the Right Opportunist Line through to the end!



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