U.S., Iran Bourgeoisie vs. Iran Masses

Another Battle Over Hostages

As we go to press, a new round of behind-the-scenes intrigue is unfolding as both the U.S. imperialists and Iran's bourgeois forces try once again to find some way to throw a fast ball past the watchful eyes of the Iranian people. Both parties are desperately trying to find some steps they can take to get the "hostage crisis" behind them without unleashing a new storm of revolutionary struggle. Continued on page 7.

Class Struggle Rages Over Button Day

March 27 was button day nationwide. From the Revolutionary Communist Party and the National May Day Committee, the call went out to wear a May Day button that day, to wear it in defense of Bob Avakian, the Chairman of the RCP and, as the leaflet said, the most consistent, determined and far-sighted revolutionary leader in the country today. That day, the appeals court in Washington, D.C. was reconsidering his case involving up to 244 years in jail. It was also a call to defy all the reactionary attacks on May Day and the May Day Brigades, including 200 arrests nationwide so far. This day was openly declared to be a test for

May 1st itself: 30,000 buttons in four days was the goal.

Button Day was a tremendous battle. By the time the dust had cleared on Thursday night, 10,000 buttons had been sold, and many were worn on that day. This was itself a significant gain; as was said last week in the RW, it represented a class-conscious force emerging in this country. But at the same time it was clearly only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the numbers of "those who hate this shit," and it was well short of the 30,000 goal.

Why did this happen? What was behind this result? It was certainly not the objective situation in this country today that somehow put a limit on 10,000 on button sales—the experience of Button Day itself showed that. No, it was definitely a class struggle with the enemy to sell these buttons, to reach and mobilize in this way a force of people, but the determining class struggle in this case was one raging within the ranks of those who are the core of ac.

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New Book Analyzes

Imperialism's Greatest Crisis

America in Decline

Chapter serialized in the Revolutionary Worker. p.13

"We must overcome two different kinds of ideological obstacles in building for May 1st: There are those people who don't clearly see the connection between the battle for May 1st and for revolution and are therefore held back from action; there is also the problem of some people who do see the connection and oppose May Day."

"Our purpose is welding all those who hate this shit into a class-conscious force. But there are some people who not only do not hate this shit themselves, but are afraid of those who hate it."

"Those who represent the backward may be more arrogant, but those who demand change are more determined and have history on their side."

Bob Avakian
Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party.
Afghanistan Revolutionary Supports
May Day in U.S.

It was May Day several years ago I got some literature from the RCP. Reading the RCP’s line and seeing its firm determination for revolution seemed my dream come true. I saw the broad prospects of the work of the RCP among the American people as the only answer to revolution in this country. I found myself in full agreement with the RCP’s position on the international movement against imperialism, especially its support to the fraternal revolution. The correct line of the Party in relation to the present revolution in Afghanistan is greatly encouraging to the Afghan working class and freedom loving people of Afghanistan.

As May Day ’80 marks the first battle of the American working class in the stormy decade of the 80’s I strongly support the RCP’s preparation for this battle. I hope May Day ’80 is a spark to light up the flames of 80’s revolution in the U.S.A. which will push forward revolution all around the world.

LONG LIVE THE ARMED STRUGGLE OF THE AFghAN PEOPLE
DEATH TO U.S. AND SOVIET IMPERIALISM
LONG LIVE THE SOLIDARITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS
ON MAY DAY 1980

a member of the Afghan Support Committee
"You people have got to understand your government is using you, putting ideas in your head. Telling you that you have to fight the Mexicans because they are trying to take your good life away. But your government rigs the Mexicans off. They starve. They die. You better start thinking about revolution!"

"All you have to do is look through that wire fence. The face of imperialism is very vivid in Mexico. It is an important that people in this country are seen by others as concerned and interested in politics. Now part of the working class here will be marching on May Day."

These are some of the messages we were asked to take back to the workers in the U.S. As we stood on the Ti­juan­San Ysidro border talking to Mexican farm­workers waiting for the American labor contractors to arrive with the day's jobs, or as we met the Mexicans and Chic­anos in their homes, the message was clear: "We are not against the American people. But against the system? Yes—it is 100% op­pressive."

"The most visible of U.S. oppression is the Maquiladora, the sweatshops on the border," says Ramon, who is in his late 40s and has a news show on a Ti­juana radio station. "The papers run all these big ads for them. A big factor in our country's economy, they say. It's a lie. They come only to exploit the cheap labor. No capital stays behind and the machinery is un­adaptable for other uses," Ramon grew up in Puebla, near Mexico City. He grew up in an area where there is a lot of foreign­owned heavy industry. He grew up under the shadow of imperialism—a shadow that has increasingly cast itself larger across the face of Mexico. "There were always the auto factories—Ford, VW. But in the last 10 years it has really grown. I remember there were small families in the Puebla region working there. But they were driven out and the whole region absorbed by imperialism. Now there is Sears, Woolworth's and all of them," Ramon says bitterly. In Mex­ico, he was a migrant worker for 30 years. And 65% of the youth, fac­ing no schooling, no medical care and no passports into the U.S., are trying to feed the farm­animals. People are forced off the land all the time."

Imperialism is gut-wrenching and mind­bending. It has its subtleties, like a slashing razor—it cuts deep, but the blood takes time to show. "I hated my life. I hated my accent. I studied all the big words. I went to the extremes to get away from the fields," Carlos explains. He is 23 and his mother has worked in the canneries up­stream. He had a girlfriend in Stockton and Lodi, California for 18 years. She is away at least 6 months a year. Carlos came into the U.S. when he was 5 years old as an "illegal." His grand­mother would coach him to say he was from New Mexico if he was asked where he was from. But even at that young age there was a spirit of defiance because he would proudly answer them—"I am Mexican." But when faced with going into the fields he bought the idea that if he could erase his "Mex­icanness" he would be fine. He even got ready to join the Marines. "I look back and see that I lost much of my life. I have contempt. Not for the field­workers anymore but for the cause—working for profit. I wish I could have been on the Alamo when they raised the red flag," he said smiling.

"Or just go into some of these border­towns—these freaks of imperialism. Take a look at the cultural oppression as discos with strobe lights spring up like weeds. Or the image of the se­cret fiesta "Frito Bandito"  that's plastered up in all the tourist shops. It's all there. From the bare­footed kids selling chicle to the cigarette smugg­lers that crowd the bridges going from El Paso to Juarez, to the pornographers and the degrading sex shows with donkeys in clubs like The Cave. Just look through that wire fence."

"Revolution is long overdue in Mex­ico," the driver of a van full of farm­workers told us. "Capitalism is a monster. It does not allow us to take one little step," added another, who called himself Zapata. "I'll be in L.A. I'll march for sure. This U.S. govern­ment has to be overthrown. It's possible but we have to unite all the people," said still another. A chill wind whipped around the parking lot as we spoke to

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move at this time. They claim that the Census Bureau superv is or s, the threat of fraudulant answers are s t iff er, up to a city e to be used as bargaining c hip s you ."

this, they are, inde e d, "countin g on for another and mass evacuations of the Union. "Social scienti s ts" have worked for them . Studies have already been issued a call - for draft kno cking on. And further, under condi­ tion is to meet successfully the many na­ tional and local challenges we face . So goe s the opening message from the director of the Census Bureau in his personal little letter—a letter to everyone living in the U.S. explaining why they must cooperate with the census bureau in the future.

Some obviously unenlightened "ex­ perts" have suggested that its billion dollar bill, and that the public con­ trovery and outright opposition from countless people, make the census a bad idea at this time. They claim that the government could just as easily use demography and social studies, tak­ ing a small sample of the population. But the government says, "No way."

The truth is, they need a vast database of individual statistics, down to what kind of pets live on which block and who lives in what house. "Distribution of the census, go the ads, "we're counting on you!" And you be they, but not because of any intrin­ dic desire on the government's part to keep their computer programmers occupied, but because they need a detailed picture of individual neighborhoods, down to what kind of pets live on which block and who lives in what house. "Distribution of the census, go the ads, "we're counting on you!"

Of course, even the best plan can run into problems. As we've seen, the few censuses that have been taken in the past 50 years have produced un­ correct statistics. Areas that are clearly the most volatile, are the areas which have committed the greatest crimes and have not been counted by the government. Ten years ago, the government estimated that it missed out on counting 25 million people (probably a low estimate), most of whom were minorities. In some of the most violent areas, such as Harlem and Atlanta, less than half the people mailed in the forms, and most of those refused to talk when the census takers came around. There were no widespread reports of census takers getting threatened and beaten up. "Curbston­ ing" the problem was the result of refusing to go to people's houses and just filling out the forms themselves, became a common method of work for the census bureau employees.

Such obstructions will get up this time around, so the government has spared no effort to convince the oppressed na­tion alities that the census is in their in­ terest. Numerous "community leaders" have been hired to convince the people that they should fill out the forms. The apparent contradiction of recently an­ nounced federal programs have evidently escaped them.) Particular at­ tention has been paid to getting these waves to fight each other in public over which minority nationality would get the most money, with each one telling "his" people that they had better cooperate with the census lest the other group get all the non-existent crumbs.

And of course, the media has played an important role in all this. Newsweek magazine predicted, for example, that the Latino population would climb to over 25 million in new census, passing the number of Black people and thereby shifting government money from the ghettos to the bars.

The government is aware of the fact that this campaign is not achieving the necessary results. It has been a little difficult for them to convince people who even everyday face government workers, whether the police or the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) or both, that the information on the cen­ sus forms won’t be used to better enable the authorities to track them down. This has been perhaps especially true with respect to the undocumented workers, the so-called "illegal aliens." This year, a special question was added to the cen­ sus form—"Is this person of Spanish /Hispanic descent or origin?" It was made to enlist anyone possible in the Chicano and Mexican communities to help. The director of the Los Angeles Studies Department at Cal State University at Los Angeles announced that his department had been ap­ proached by the Census Bureau to help count the "illegal aliens" for the census. "The reaction was very negative. The students are very suspicious of the government, they just don’t believe them when they say they won’t deport those who fill out the forms. We refuse to work with the census."

"The desperation of the ruling class to "enumerate" undocumented workers has been growing. Recently a group of caucen congressmen and racist over­ population freaks filed a lawsuit demand­ ing that "illegal" be excluded from the census, because the areas which they live in would supposedly get more federal money than areas with "real citizens."

The suit has been met with terrible opposition from every major newspaper and magazine in the country. Government policy was clearly outlined when that great upholder of the rights of the undocumented, Ben­ jamin Civiletti, the head of the Justice Department which runs the INS, an­ nounced that he was suspending all INS raids on residential and industrial areas until July 1, specifically to encourage undocumented workers to file their cen­sus forms. In a manner reminiscent of Adolph Eichmann telling the Jews they were just being sent to take showers, Civiletti promised that the information would never be used for deportation. Need to say, this is not expected to get over—in fact, the same poverty pimps and politicians that have been urging undocumented workers to turn in their census forms are now, for their own purposes, demanding an "addi­tion" in the census figures to account for all those who refuse to "be counted."

It’s not only minorities but other large portions of the population as well that are expressing a deep distrust of the government: census plans. The government in Vietnam, West Germany, and areas with their mark on the credibility of the U.S. government. The L.A., chapter of the ACLU told the RW they had received a lot of calls from people asking if they had to fill out the forms. People ex­ pressed more than a little mistrust about the government’s intentions. Even people in the middle-class, mainly white San Fernando Valley near Los Angeles have expressed a great deal of opposition.

Contrary to what our rulers like to think, the people aren’t a bunch of fools, and while most may not see ex­actly what’s up, they have a pretty good idea that one way or another, the census will be used against them. Consequently, in addition to more open threats of prosecution, officials have lately taken to mouthing assurances of "complete confidentiality" of census information, going so far as to "guarantee" the masses that the FBI and INS won’t be able to get near this data until the year 2052, all while the claiming that there have been breaches of confidentiality in the past 50 years. Of course, they neglect to mention that Census Bureau information helped the Justice Depart­ ment find and round up Japanese Americans for concentration camp im­ plementation during World War 2. As our rulers’ massive efforts in the 1980 body count grow to a close, it is perhaps worth recalling that the Shah of Iran must also have strived for demographic statistics. In fact, you can almost hear the faint cry from his hide-out in Egypt, "We figured Teheran would give us trouble... Counting didn’t save the Shah, and it won’t save our rulers either."

The real prospects for the ‘80s—a situation for which they are working even harder—would certainly indi­ cate that this may be the last census they take.
Why There Was No Revolution in the '60s and Why There May Be in the '80s

Part 2: The Black Panthers

Bob Avakian Speech in Cleveland

This is the conclusion of a series of excerpts from Chairman Bob Avakian's speech in Cleveland during his national speaking tour last summer. The first part of this article, "Why There Was No Revolution in the '60s and Why There May Be in the '80s," appeared in last week's issue of the RW, March 28, 1980.

First of all, I want to say that the Black Panther Party no longer exists as a revolutionary organization and barely exists as all, except as a pitiful reformist and petty gangster sect, it is tempting to discard, to negate and to wipe out all its tremendous achievements and all that it contributed to this decisive, earth-shaking period of the 1960s and early 1970s and the development toward revolution in this country. But that is a great mistake.

It is a great mistake to think that the millions of people in this country who tasted the taste of freedom would be like, and of what abolishing capitalism might have been doing. And I saw the need to work as closely with and why they were finally turned around, so the same question we have to be addressing. We have to understand the drive on and understand that what they were doing, perhaps even hundreds of thousands of people toward revolution in this country. Thousands and thousands of thousands of Black, white, Puerto Rican and others were turned toward revolution and even some toward Marxism by the work, by the political activity, and by the propaganda and the agitation carried out by the Black Panther Party. Speaking for myself personally, I know I was turned on to Mao Tsetung by Eldridge Cleaver. Now we know where Eldridge Cleaver has ended up—striving for the Guinness World Record for belly crawling. Coming back here, acting a fool and being dangled to the public by the rulers of this country, spreading his madness about how he saw Jesus in the moon and all the rest of it, when all he saw (probably loaded at the time) was a chance to crawl back on his belly and keep his raggedy ass out of jail.

And I know today I don't talk to people I know who were in the Panthers back in 1966, at the very beginning, and stayed there until they were either driven out or gave up when they saw it destroyed as a revolutionary organization—when I go talk to them, the first thing that many of them say to ask the only thing they want to argue about to me: "When we were talking about revolution, the thing they have a hard time seeing and getting beyond, is how are we gonna kill Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton? Now I can understand this and I can sympathize with it, but it's not the end of the struggle for revolution, it's not the question we have to be addressing. We have to understand what the contributions of people like that were and why they were finally turned around, why that thing doesn't happen again.

As I said, it was Eldridge Cleaver who turned me on to Mao Tsetung. One day, I went over to Eldridge Cleaver's apartment, I was working with the Black Panther Party at the time, and I was for revolution and I respected the Black Panther Party and the militant stand it took, and I respected the work they were doing. And I saw the need to sort, as closely with them as possible and to build for a common party that wouldn't just be Black, or another one that would just be white, but would unite all races and nationalities who were serious about revolution. And as I walked into his apartment, on the wall was a great big poster of Mao Tsetung, made in China. And I was like many of you probably, the first time when you ran into something like this, I was turned on. I was scared. I didn't know what to make out of it, and I didn't say anything at the time. It took me two weeks to work up my nerve to finally ask Eldridge Cleaver why he had that poster in his house, and then I did it over the telephone at the end of a conversation. I cleared my throat, and I said, "Listen, by the way, why have you got that great big picture of Mao Tsetung up there on your wall?" I'll never forget what he said, if he never said or did another good thing in his life, this was a very good one. It came back over the telephone—he said, "We've got that picture of Mao Tsetung up on the wall because Mao Tsetung is the baddest motherfucker on the planet Earth!"

Now I said to myself, "Hey, I've got to check this out!" Cause I respected the Black Panther Party and what they saw how serious they were, I thought they were pretty heavy, and if Eldridge Cleaver was saying this was the baddest motherfucker on the planet Earth, I better look into it! And I did. I read the Red Book; many of you did, but I went further, too. I read Mao's other writings. And I saw that it was true, that Mao Tsetung was the baddest motherfucker around. But not because he was larger than life or whatever you want to say—superman or the idealized Bruce Lee. Not that he knew kung fu, karate and all this other stuff—which don't stop no bullets anyway. It wasn't that he personally could whip up on the heads of a whole bunch of imperialists and oppressors and get rid of them all by himself. The reason that he was so heavy and so bad was because he understood what was the way out of this madness. He, like many others of us, searched for a way out of this—a way out of the living hell that not only the Chinese people were subjected to but people around the world, as he began to see the world more broadly. He looked for a way out of it, and he tested and tried out many different things, and he came to see that the only theory, the only understanding that could lead not just the Chinese people but the people of the whole world to completely upright and finally abolish every form of degradation, oppression, exploitation, the only understanding that really could do that was the Marxist-Leninist theory. And any other theory that claimed to be revolutionary might take you part of the way but not all the way, might take you to a certain stage and then simply find one group of exploiters or oppressors replacing another, and the whole thing turned back.

And this is what it was that enabled Mao Tsetung to make such a contribution and play such a role, not only in China but in the whole world. Because he took that science of Marxism-Leninism and concretely applied it to the revolution in China over decades, and he played a tremendous role inspiring and leading and providing an example for people throughout the world for half a century. Because what that theory, that Continued on page 8
Exposing the Salvadoran junta at recent march in San Francisco where 500 marched in solidarity with the Salvadoran people against U.S. intervention.

In the wake of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the subsequent government attack on a demonstration of 30,000 at his funeral, the struggle of the Salvadoran people is an anti-imperialist one and is headed for a showdown. There is increasing talk in U.S. circles of some form of military intervention to put down the continued resistance of the Salvadoran people to the U.S.-backed junta that has ruled since the U.S.-stage-managed coup which ousted the pro-Communist Salvadoran Revolutionary Organization. Most likely this military intervention would not be in the form of direct U.S. invasion but would use troops of other countries, for example, from Guatemala or Honduras or perhaps as OAS "peace-keeping force." The U.S. has three bases inside El Salvador and has stationed troops at various bases as training the Salvadoran National Guard troops as well as training Honduran and Guatemalan military forces at various bases.

In the U.S. the public opinion makers have already sprung into action. A recent Chicago Tribune article quoted Salvadoran President José Napoles as saying, "There are people here willing to fight. We have a chance of winning this thing. But the U.S. is the leader. Either you are the leader or you are nothing." Like prior to the invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965, the U.S. is trying to create an image of a well-intentioned, barbaric refugee government (as was the L.A. Times article on the janata "no-bullet men," forced by guerrillas and urban chaos to be repressive, and facing externally (Cuban) supported subversion) that the junta may indeed be some Cuban aid to the anti-junta forces in the country, this being the most significant pro-Soviet influence in El Salvador has not been mentioned in the U.S. press.

The assassination of Romero was clearly U.S.-inspired, in spite of the government's efforts to have everyone from the junta to Pope John Paul II. The junta's Assistant Minister of Defense for Guatemalan "counterinsurgency" was killed when he issued a well-publicized statement that the archbishop had "committed a crime" by urging the soldiers to refuse to carry out the junta's reign of terror against the people. The next day, hired gunmen killed Romero while he was giving a mass for the mother of a well known newspaper publisher whose paper is a voice of anti-junta elements of the Salvadoran national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, as evidenced by the tremendous growth in the mass demonstrations after the PCC's made its switch. The first demonstrations occurred when the PKM brought out 300,000 people.

There is no question that the prospects of the PCC's are up to no good. While they have seemingly broken with their past policy of seeking "revolutionary influence in the established government by making various deals and alliances, everything for the struggle" against the junta, they have not changed their objectives one bit. They have only changed tactics, sensing that it was not too safe to stand with a junta that was rapidly failing. Even now, they are calling for unity with reactionary forces in the government, including "progressive" young army officers. They are out to establish a pro-Soviet state capitalist government in order to solidify the struggle even siding with the mass struggle if it puts them in power. They are not at all opposed to armed struggle against the junta if it puts them in power. They are the ones in power at the moment, of course.

P "C" is not today as all to be taken lightly. Without determined struggle against them, they will certainly gain influence and get themselves in a better position to turn around whatever gains the Salvadoran people have made. Without determined struggle against them, they will be able to make the U.S. sacrifice and bloodshed that they are now trying to force the Salvadoran masses to make.

Chicago, On March 28 Judge Frank McGarr abruptly announced without a hearing that he would uphold the U.S. government's decision to extradite Ziad Abu Ein, a young Palestinian, to Israel by denying his appeal. Israeli authorities have accused Ziad of planting a bomb in the marketplace in Tiberias, Israel, and in a frame hearing last December, a Salvadoran National Guard judge, based almost solely on the confession of one witness who later recanted his testimony, the government found the accused guilty and "probable cause" to extradition. "I am a man without a country," he cried more than a hundred demonstrators on the following Monday morning after Judge McGarr's hopes of trying to conduct this railroad in the dark on a Washington street were quashed by the cold heat of anger fuelling the determination of the Palestinian people to continue the struggle. El Salvador today is a country in the grip of the imperialist-backed Ziad Abu Ein, "assisting" all junta elements in its policy of seeking to gain influence in the country. "The Palestinian people are not included in the talks because the U.S. and Israel refuse to even acknowledge their existence as a nation," said a Salvadoran National Guard officer.

So said the preacher. He has not changed his objective, only his tactics, sensing that it was not too safe to stand with a junta that was rapidly failing. Even now, they are calling for unity with reactionary forces in the government, including "progressive" young army officers. They are out to establish a pro-Soviet state capitalist government in order to solidify the struggle even siding with the mass struggle if it puts them in power. They are not at all opposed to armed struggle against the junta if it puts them in power. They are the ones in power at the moment, of course.

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P "C" today is already in great turmoil and upheaval - and all caused by the dangerous struggle of the masses of people who are determined to end the misery and oppression heaped on them by the U.S. imperialism. A Sandinista government in El Salvador today is not at all to be taken lightly. Without determined struggle against them, they will certainly gain influence and get themselves in a better position to turn around whatever gains the Salvadoran people have made. Without determined struggle against them, they will be able to make the U.S. sacrifice and bloodshed that they are now trying to force the Salvadoran masses to make.

Palestinian Fights Extradition

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Red Flag Theatre, a young revolutionary troupe from the San Francisco Bay Area, has just finished an 8 city tour of Burtolt Brecht’s The Mother. The show, which brings to life the story of a working class mother who becomes a revolutionary in the storms of the Russian Revolution, for Red Flag which has mainly done political satire in the streets and parks, was this a new whole thing. With three short weeks of rehearsal, the troupe hit the road in late March. The theatre was in Washington D.C., in the midst of the battle raging for May 1st. 1980.

The company consists of mostly very young creative artists and others eager to see it and help bring this art to the people made our mountain. Over 1400 people saw the play and gave it an enthusiastic response.

The Revolutionary Worker talked with A. Pine, a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party who worked closely with the Red Flag Theatre in adapting the play and preparing the tour:

RW: The portrayal of The Mother by the Red Flag Theatre is really different from other portrayals I’ve seen on college campuses and so on. What accounts for this difference?

A: We discussed a lot the question of how to portray the Mother going into the production. And we agreed that we didn’t want to have this typical portrayal of working class people that we see on the T.V. all the time, like your Shag, or your Archie Bunkers and stuff like that. And so we tried to get into the question of what Brecht was saying and that these people are like, what revolutionary workers are like. Just in general we all agreed that we wanted this character to be optimistic, vigorous, and down to earth, and very conscious and very real. We didn’t want the kind of stuff you see in some of these 1960s songs that are supposed to be working class workers’ songs. “Oh, it’s really terrible, things are really terrible, everything’s really hard” and all that. We wanted the optimism that we’ve seen when people struggle against their oppression. We put that on stage. We thought that Brecht wrote the play so that the Mother was very humorous, and not in some sort of an abstract way, but, because of her very deep understanding of the necessity for revolution, she could really see the contradictions in the ideological or political questions that came up, and in the actions of the state. And she wouldn’t expose this stuff. The main thing is that we wanted her to be optimistic. That was the bottom line. And I think that’s what came across.

RW: Does your orientation on the character of the Mother come up, and in the actions of the stage- the masses of people, and the contradictions that the people are raising, specifically, “Why ‘The Mother?” To me it is an important work because of its artistic level and its social significance.

A: The plays and the films that we and the other portraitists have done in the last couple of decades are abstract, way but, “The Mother” is an important political work because of its concrete level and its social significance. We tried to study this to some extent; we have to do a lot more study about it. One thing is for sure: we wanted to portray the Mother and the other revolutionaries at 100% resistance. We think that people need to see these characters on the stage—the masses of people, and especially the working class and oppressed people, the Black people and people of oppressed nationalities—need to see characters on the stage who represent their aspirations and their desire to struggle against oppression and to resist oppression. So we definitely wanted 100% resistance on the stage.

RW: Have there been any characters on the stage who have really come up, and in the actions of the stage- the masses of people, and the contradictions that the people are raising, specifically, “Why ‘The Mother?” To me it is an important work because of its artistic level and its social significance.

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understanding ensured him to see that it wasn't a handful of heroes that determined the shape of society, but that it was the working class that had to struggle up before the new class relations. He had seen the struggle of one class rising up, overthrowing another and replacing one system by a higher one, that he redefined the meaning of revolution. Where, through the unprecedented revolution of the working class, a new class relations had been imposed on the old class relations, a class of exploitors, but a class of exploited and oppressed rising up—that finally all forms and any basis for exploitation and oppression had to be swept away. And this is what I found by reading Mao, and by talking to the Marx-Leninist theory that he based himself on and what he added to it. But the Panthers, you see, much as they upheld Mao, they also upheld the idea that the everyday bad, also only wanted to go part way with Mao. And they had to a certain degree a misunderstanding of this, in a rather somewhat painful way. Because they used to say, “Listen, Mao isn’t really a communist, he’s a Chinese nationalist, and that’s what we should be.” But this was turning Mao upside down. The reason that they said that they had to change in China, and they did, that’s the U.S., the first necessary phase of the struggle was to kick out the foreigners and to liberate China as a nation, as a country, from foreign domination, and from the rule of the lackey of imperialism. So the struggle was the struggle of national liberation against foreign domination.

Mao saw, however, because he was a communist that a struggle of national liberation wasn’t far enough; that unless you struggle further for the complete liberation of a nation, the revolution would fail. So, you’d get rid of foreign exploitors only to have a homegrown variety rise up in your midst and take over your government, which is exactly what’s happening now. That in fact, the only way a revolution can be successful is to turn back—so if it was temporarily turned back, the only way the basis could be laid was by a struggle of national liberation. With the first struggle for national liberation, Mao fought for, upheld and applied the understanding that the revolution had to base itself on the working class, which is the class in society that has no interests in any form of exploitation or oppression of the people and could carry the struggle through to victory.

But the Panthers wanted to go part way and not all the way. They had in a deep, or several related diseases that have plagued the communist movement and the revolutionary forces in this country going back a long way, and that has plagued the communist movement in this country, the old Communist Party and the revolutionary movement going back a long way, is disease of pragmatism. Now many of you may not have heard of pragmatism as such, but you’ve heard of it of course or heard of it, and pragmatism says basically this just rely on what’s the immediate experience of the people. If the immediate experience tells you true or good, that’s all you need to know, don’t ask the question why, don’t ask the question, don’t ask the question. If it makes sense in its relationship with anything else, just accept it. And you’d get radical pragmatism out of this if it feels good, do it. Now almost all of you have heard that before. This is pragmatic—if it feels good to me I do it, what about you? The only way to get good to cheat on your old lady or your old man, do it—never mind what it does to your personal relationship or what it does to your health or your mind or your soul. If it feels good, do it. That’s carried this way. If it feels good, do it. That’s probably the conclusion, that’s all you need to know—that makes it good, makes it true, don’t question the question. Do more, do more, do more, do more, do more. The more fundamentally or in any more long-term way, just do it. If it feels good, do it. And this realism tells us to rely on common sense. Now you know what common sense is—common sense tells you that if your immediate experience teaches you, that’s all you need to know and that’s the truth. And that’s O.K. up to a certain point. But you should agree with the eclectics who also said the same thing. But because Marx founded the communist philosophy, had fundamental understanding that communists said common sense, fine fellow he is, does very well as long as he stays within his own four narrow walls, but when he goes out into the world, that’s where he runs into all kinds of trouble. Think about it. It’s common sense that if a fire is flaring up in front of you, you run out of that house and that’s all the common sense that you need to know. Well and good. But what if it’s a fire that’s fueled by the violation of the legal code, and this fire that men and women build, the fire of social relations. It’s not just necessary. Common sense may not tell you that—on July studying the properties of fire and the different materials man burns it that kind of fire, is gonna enable you to understand that. You’re gonna have to learn much more science before you have to rely on common sense. Now it is difficult, I know, when you’re fighting a fire and smoke and inhalation of fumes and choking things like that, but even then it is difficult and it is difficult to pull out a book and study the properties of fire right then. We’re still gonna have to learn how to do this. We’re gonna have to learn how to fight with a gun in one hand and a book in the other when it is necessary. If that point comes now it’s right in the midst of battle, that’s all the more reason why you better study before and afterwards, so you won’t get caught napping. Common sense can’t be relied upon in times of emergency.

You see, common sense will not take you far enough. You need the whole broad spectrum of knowledge that is available out there. You can’t see them but you can catch them. Only with the microscope can you really see them. And that’s why, my friends, the Communist Party doesn’t tell you what I referred to earlier, that the light from the stars that you see out there actually left them many years ago. In fact, some of the stars whose light you’re seeing now may have already exploded long ago and you’re just now seeing their light. Common sense won’t tell you that, but a telescope and studying the properties of light, that’s the way you do that. That’s why the Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tseung Thought is—it is a telescope and a microscope, to enable us to magnify and under the greatest distances and understand the events in the world in their interconnections.

But the Panthers ignored this to a great degree, not completely but in the main. And they fell into this disease of pragmatism. They turned away from the fundamental understanding that the working class must be, can be and will be the decisive revolutionary force in the world. So they turned their back around and they believed the lies that George Meany and Martin Luther King and Ralph Bunche is a typical representative of the working class. They even said that the Black workers, not only the Black workers in the U.S., but people all over the world will be all bought-off, conservative, bourgeois foot-knocks for the system, and the working class in this world will never rise up. They are so misguided. They look at Marxism-Leninism thoroughly, they didn’t look at it in all its implications, in fact, they didn’t look at the history, they didn’t look at other countries, they looked right at what was before them and said, “Right, that’s how it is in America, therefore it never will be.” Now it was true that the working class in the U.S. did go through all kinds of hardship, but in the big picture, it was very correct and a great advance for the Panther Movement. We have to make sure that we don’t draw the wrong conclusion from that. We have to take a broader sighted, just plain pragmatic. This is pragmatism—whatever is immediately right in front of your face and what is the most practical results, that’s all you need to know, that’s good, that is true, don’t question any broader or further.

Panthers Turn Against Marxism

So despite the revolutionary heroism and determination that the Panthers showed, after a short time they turned against the old Communist Party, they more and more turned away from revolution toward reform. I remember in 1969, using this formula, Seale, Seale, Seale, Seale, Seale, Masai Hewett (another leader of the Panthers), was asking me, “What is a Marxist?” I told him I was carrying on a very sharp argument, them on one side, me on the other, about what was the decisive force for the working class, and that the working class would never be revolutionary and that was why I didn’t believe in Marxism-Leninism, we should only take part and leave the real alone, especially the part about the working class being the vanguard of the revolution.

"Look at the old Communist Party. That’s Marxism-Leninism, therefore we don’t need it—you can see the way of the way the Black Panthers went. That’s Marxism-Leninism. We can take some of it and leave out all of it. They fell into a disease of pragmatism. They turned away from the understanding that the working class would never be radicalized, and especially that it would never act as the vanguard of the revolution. And that’s what my idea was—"
After the collapse of their earlier efforts to win the release of the hostages to the U.N. Security Council and the flight of the Shah to Egypt, the U.S. imperialists are playing out their latest round of diplomacy with little prospect of quickly winning the release of their CIA and State Department operatives and other assorted embassy personnel or, more importantly, of rebuilding their influence in Iran.

At the same time, their continued inability to do anything of any "legitimacy" power has led to a serious undercutting of their credibility with their allies. (What kind of "leadership" will there be in the upcoming world war if the U.S. government cannot even control its embassy in a "third-rate" power—we can hear the West European capitalists begin to ask themselves.) It has also led to an erosion of the reactionary public opinion among the American people which they had to carefully cultivate and which is equally crucial to their war preparations.

Early this week it was announced that a new tough stance was being adopted. Carter sent President Bani-Sadr "an ultimatum," announcing that unless the Iranian government fulfilled its promise to prevail upon the student militants to place the hostages under direct government supervision, the U.S. would escalate its political and economic pressure against Iran, including an embargo on all trade with Iran and pressuring their allies to follow suit, as well as reducing the size of the Iranian diplomatic mission in the U.S. "I think he has decided in his own mind that it is time to escalate," Assistant Secretary Packwood said on Carter's new "firmness." At the same time this new tough stance was also a clear political signal to the Iranian government to get things under control.

While split on the tactics which are most suited to capitulation, and still fighting among themselves to determine who will emerge on top, the bourgeois forces in Iran's Revolutionary Council are united around one thing: the need to consolidate a new government to get things under control. The need to consolidate a new government to get things under control.

At the same time, Khomeini—having wasted more than a week to take a reading on the mood of the masses—finally issued a statement on Tuesday, last-ditching out at the U.S. for continuing its efforts to deceive the Iranian people and support the Shah, calling recent U.S. maneuvers a "new trick," an attempt to "pull the wool over our eyes by expressions of moderation and fat­ terly." But he left the door open for compromise by staying silent on the question of transferring the hostages, and once again ended his statement by holding out the promise that the situation could be resolved with the election of the Iranian parliament.

When it was announced that on Tues­ day Bani-Sadr would be making an im­ portant speech, Carter and the rest of the ruling class were anticipating "progress." But alas, the wild card in the deck, that force that defies the civilized code and rules of the "re­ fined" elements of society, rumbled to life once again! When Bani-Sadr heard of Carter's speech to a gathering of over 200,000 in Tehran, he was greeted by "angry shouts and boos" that forced him to immediately retreat into a long dissertation on U.S.-Iranian relations to prove he hadn't made any deals, of course, and to say flat out that the "revolutionary people" was all too obvious. At the same time, the im­perialists were forced to maintain a somewhat bellicose stance and refuse to make any "apologies." After all, a "great!" imperialist power preparing to hurl hundreds of millions of people around the world into war doesn't do it by apologizing to other countries, or by exposing its past crimes to the masses in its own country and worldwide.

After the imperialists have drawn millions into political debate over Iran, including those who lusted for a quick and crushing victory over the "uppy" people, material reality has smashing them in the face and shattered many illusions about both U.S. might and U.S. intentions. Millions are becoming more cynical about the whole deal. In a recent poll, over 47% said the U.S. should not support Iranian efforts to extradite the Shah.

And Iran's bourgeois forces are also confronted by a mass movement that they can't control. The anti-imperialist understanding of the people is continuing to deepen, and there's been a strong shift to the left in public opinion. Exposure of the role of noted political figures like Ayatollah Shahri-Madari as having seduced the Shah's regime during the revolutionary up­ surge in 1978, and the publication of
Bob Avakian Speech in Cleveland

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...to the people there, and said, "This problem is not that this country is actually ruled by a capitalist dictatorship, but there's a handful of fascists like Nixon who control the government, who are taking us, the working people, and the oppressed people around the world, to the point where we can have democracy and the constitution can actually be lived up to."

Well, I walked into this meeting, where this kind of reformist garbage and false illusions were being peddled, and I remembered what Bobby Seale and surrounding them, were wall-to-wall revisionists—members of the Communist Party, USA. And I thought about the still more revisionist radicals there, because the one equality that the Com¬

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In 1940, in the middle of China's war to drive out the Japanese imperialists which have plundered the land and exploited the people. But surprisingly, now that the Japanese imperialists have been defeated by the revolutionary war, they have turned to a new axis of aggression. The British imperialists who for decades fought the guerrilla war and the heroic war to defeat the white settler imperialism. It is a question of whether they are to be disarmed and disarmed. If we want them to be disarmed, if we want to disarm them, it is a question of whether their outlook and political line has led or will lead them to disarming. They dismiss as shrewd tactics Mugabe's decision to disarm the Rhodesian military forces by turning it into a national liberation army. The fact is that the imperialists have not been broken. And Mugabe's plan to disarm the military forces of the settler regime, the Rhodesian army, to stay intact, while disarming his guerrilla army into it—under the command of the former leader of that reactionary military force—and disarming the black masses, proves that the popular forces have disarmed the imperialist and political power in Zimbabwe. It is the opposite. Unable to deny that the military power of the new "national front government." This, they claim, "shows the mature political level of the ZANU central committee...this is a better condition to disintegrate it (the white army) even further. Even more, this is the best condition to try to control them and at the same time build up ZANU's independent military forces by furnishing it with newer and better weapons."

Unfortunately for this "rose-colored glasses" view, Mugabe himself has taken the opposite stand on arming the masses. Yes, black Zimbabweans may still have weapons, but only because he hasn't had time to collect them all yet. As he said in an interview printed in Time magazine, "There must be disarmament of everybody, not only the whites. There are many guns around and we want to remove them. We want this to be achieved in as short a time as possible. The people now have the power, so I don't see any reason why they should have these individual firearms. If we want them to be armed, we will arm them properly." That, of course, is very unlikely. "There can never be a return to the state of armed conflict," Mugabe told a television audience. "It is time to beat our swords into plowshares so that we can attend to the problems of developing our economy and society.

The fact of the matter is that the military power of the white settler regime, much less its economic power, and the political power of the imperialists, has not been broken. And Mugabe's plan allows the large military force of the settler regime, the Rhodesian army, to stay intact, while disarming his guerrilla army into it—under the command of the former leader of that reactionary military force—and disarming the black masses, hardly proves that the popular forces have disarmed the imperialist and political power in Zimbabwe. It is the opposite.
It is one year after the near meltdown of 3-Mile Island nuclear power plant in Middletown, Pa, and TMI is still a time bomb as the NRC receives nationwide press attention. After the meeting, the Middletown City Council President asks "to return to sanity" and "be logical and objective about the situation"—the system won't let them. The RW talked to a man who literally lived through the meeting. "This whole country is a contradiction. You can't get a straight answer out of anyone. If you just want a straight answer, you've got to get a copy of the mail saying "Greetings!! What do you do? You mark it out. I don't mark it out. I know if you know the circumstances in this community. Down here by the airport today they've got one of the biggest nuclear power plants and closed them down. They've closed down, a lot of people were walking out of their apartments, businessmen closing their doors. Then they came in and said, 'We're going to be building a big nuke. A lot of people, jobs, work and all that.' Did they give the people a choice? Hell no they didn't give them a choice. TMI is still a time bomb as the NRC and the public works to negotiate a settlement to prove. But more significantly, it is symbolic of an even greater, in fact far greater, problem that is generally, but not completely, beyond their wishes, forces beyond the control and certainly beyond the comprehension of the residents. It has to be seen in situations that today represents only a jolt—a minor breakout. But a glimpse of this, and the whole situation will be reduced to an arm's length and will experience far greater, jolts—considerable destruction. This is what we mean when we call the man quoted above: ... before all this happened, we used to carry around the place everyday that it was. But it doesn't mean a thing to me now."
The following is the last of three articles serializing a chapter from an extraordinary, new book, AMERICA IN DECAY: Imperialism's Greatest Crisis, An Analysis of the Developments Toward War and Revolution in the U.S. and World in the 1980s—to be published soon by Banner Press. This is a past-past-brushing effort, written by a writing group under the leadership of the RCP Central Committee and its Chairman, Bob Avakian.

Do you want to really understand why Bob Avakian said “the imperialists are in a lot of trouble. you may not think that revolution is a serious possibility, but the rulers of this country are convinced that it is a real possibility...”? (“Opening Remarks” at the recent RCP Central Committee meeting)” This book analyzes why this is so. With a view to including this chapter, the possibility of revolution, the urgent necessity—and basis—for preparation now like May Day 1980, lumps off the pages at you.

This particular chapter deals with the present condition of the masses in the U.S.—their relations to their political mood, and how this objective situation will develop in the future. It is being serialized in the RW and appears in its entirety in the Party’s magazine, Revolution. Subheads are ours.

What Kind of War?

What kind of war are we talking about? Nuclear war? Perhaps, and most likely at some point in the course of this war. The presence of foreign troops on U.S. soil and the actual seizure of territory by them! A very real possibility. During World War II the general population in the U.S. was able, for the most part, to conduct their lives in an ordinary and routine manner. They were shielded from the war’s effects. But let’s get back to some of these Pentagon studies. Here is one possible scenario that is envisioned:

“Suppose the USSR invaded Western Europe, and that the U.S. conventional and tactical nuclear forces cannot stop them. At that point we should be prepared to use a strategic Limited Nuclear Option (LNO) by evacuating our cities. Hopefully the Soviets would be deterred by this action; but if they are not, the relocation would have made us ready to execute the LNO.”

With an even greater possibility that is as amazing as it is spooking, these planners are mulling over the idea of blowing away several Soviet cities. And in this scenario millions of people in this country would be gathered up and dispersed in the U.S. to protect those who know how long, in order to strengthen the bargaining and logistical position of the U.S. imperialists, they could care less about people’s lives. It is the old shell game. Come see if you can find us! Imagine you are your enemy’s populace as hostage you turn large chunks of your own civilian population into poker chips. The other side can’t kill enough of them to make it worthwhile in the meantime the nuclear warheads are being readied. The Soviets have their own variations on the same theme: their “civil defense” system is more highly developed. How quickly cities can be evacuated and whether it is even feasible on not the point is what is the means that will be employed to protect and reinforce systems of exploitation in the United States and Soviet Union. No technology and no fall-back plan is beyond adoption to win such a war. But all this is covered in terms of protecting the country; in other words, cities are “protected” by an anti-ballistic missile system, a “counter-force strategy” (in which your adversary’s potential to strike back is knocked out) is developed to “protect” against a lethal attack.

Now the actual effects of a nuclear war have been documented (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) and anticipated by the systems-planners. There are the prompt effects—blast damage and fire storms—and the delayed effects of radiation, disease, the despoliation of water air, and soil. Today’s planners have never prefaced their thinking on the absolute end of the world. The Pentagon has commissioned the think tanks to “think through” possible nuclear exchanges. Two recent studies have considered targeting strategies which would be aimed at wiping out the Soviet leadership group and unblocking recessionist movements in the Soviet Union to effectively dismember the country. Said one Defense-official in reference to these studies (and preparations), “We are trying to see in the ultimate nuclear exchange what should we be trying to do other than just flatten their industry.” A consultant chimed in, “It’s thinking up ultimate strategies to bomb them into the stone age We should have real objectives that make sense.”

The new technology of war does not override the decisiveness of the human factor: even the imperialists recognize this. They need people in their armies and occupation hordes, they need their fac-

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That is just the point. Such a war, even if not immediately, will lead to a situation of unprecedented scale and violence, directly and indirectly, because it will cause a sharp turn in the daily existence of the masses. The fact of the matter is that the development of a broken habit and routine, has not fundamentally left people with no choice but to accept the death of their lives. But out of the recognition that only the overthrow of the system can resolve the suffering and contradictions of the masses, it becomes clear that a new world crisis is deepening and the outbreak of war, the social ferment and tremendous upheaval. Exactly routine, has not fundamentally left people with no existence of the masses. The fact of the matter is that the economic crisis so far has not broken habit and maintained order. It spells trouble for the decline of our situation. Whether a "crash" and major depression like the '30s, the outbreak of World War III, will the question before millions: why are we in this situation and what people will be forced to go through, any less gruesome. And, in escalating fashion, the monstrous developments towards war will fill more with hatred for the system and a burning desire to act. The increasing hardships, along with a deeper understanding of what the bourgeoisie have in store for people, will put the question before millions: why does this continue? and what will people do? and more clearly than sooner. The Iranian revolution stands as testimony to this. It was the youth, the intelligentsia and sections of the petty bourgeoisie that were engaged in the early and pitched battles with the Shah's regime. That one victory over those tactics was to offer striking oil workers a 100% wage increase was an indication of the fear the revolutionaries had of the working class entering the struggle as a political force and also the fact that up until then sections of the working class were mainly unoccupied with more narrow concerns. But the workers threw this brick back in the Shah's face, they struck and paralyzed the oil fields in support of the revolutionary demands of the struggle and in doing
The Day the Workers Pulled the Switch

Detroit. Late July 1973. The workers at Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue assembly plant were already fed up with the way their factory was run. The plant had been causing trouble for years, with long delays and low morale. The workers were determined to take action.

The Jefferson Avenue assembly line was the scene of a sit-down strike. The workers had been sent in to put it down, but they refused to leave. The workers refused to leave, and the plant was closed down.

The workers put up cables, clamps, and chains to secure the power cage. They got together a petition to have Woolsey fired. The union officials had trusted Woolsey to lead the way for the revolutionary Left that has refused to compromise on such basic issues, and the Iranian people will mediate outcome of the latest talk of the town.

At 6:00 a.m. on July 24, Isaac Shorter and Larry Carter left their work stations on the Jefferson Avenue assembly line. They walked into the plant power cage, secured the door behind them, pulled the main power switch and shut down the entire plant. Immediately, a crowd gathered around the cage. Others began picking up cables, clamps, and chains to secure the cage better.

Plant protection guards came to the scene, took one look at the workers, and turned tail toward the office. Meanwhile, a shop steward began to plead and whine, "You'll get fired." The company brought in arc welders to cut the cable. As they forced their way through the crowd, Shorter put his hands around the cable. There was a moment of hesitation, then a shout came from the crowd—"Torch his hands and we'll torch you too!" The welders backed off.

At 2:00 a.m. on July 25, the workers voted to keep the cage. They talked to 2 other workers, who began to spread the word to those who could be trusted.

Immediately several workers surrounded Shorter and Woolsey especially delighted in making racist taunts in the metal shop, where 280 of 300 workers were Black. Two weeks before, a number of workers had gotten together a petition to halt the continuing struggle of the masses.

For 13 hours the struggle raged and the plant remained at a standstill. Only after a Chrysler official was forced to temporarily approach the crowd of angry workers with a written agreement in his hand to fire Woolsey and make no reprisals did the workers begin to unfreeze the cables and clamps. When the cage was finally opened, Chrysler's slave drivers triumphantly streamed out of the plant. Carter and Shorter on their shoulders.

At the time of the action and in recalling it in the years since, there are some people who called this an isolated act, individualistic, adventurist and other such stuff. But the whole story in fact proves the opposite. In the first place there was advance planning and discussion, as has been pointed out. But that is not the main point. The action of the two men in taking over the power cage galvanized the sentiments of the masses and aroused the masses themselves to act in a way that they had not done or maybe even thought possible before the fact. That one of the two put his hands around the cable first in the company's torso objectively demonstrated that they had confidence that in one way or another, the masses would support this move, would defend it because the workers grasped the stakes involved and it gave them an opportunity to step forward around their class interests. And while, in this case, the action was around a very specific demand, it represented some thing much broader to the masses of people and in fact inspired others far beyond the confines of the Jefferson Avenue Assembly Plant.

The takeover had an electrifying effect on the city of Detroit. It was the talk of the town. At two other Chrysler plants in the city, workers were unquestionably inspired by the action and took some action of their own. Two weeks later at Detroit forge, after a worker had arm crushed in a conveyor, workers wildcatted for two days. At the Mack Avenue stamping plant, a two-day plant sit-down strike was followed by a wildcat. The strike was broken only when a "flying squadron" of 1000 UAW officials armed with clubs was sent in to put it down.

The impact of Carter's and Shorter's action was felt and remembered around the country as well. Several months later at a cafeteria table in Cincinnati, in the heat of an argument between an older man and a younger, the older said to the younger, "And you think Black people are too stupid to do anything." Scenes of this sort were undoubtedly repeated in many other cities, factories after factory.
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any real problems? Where do these problems come from? Are they just in her mind or are there real contradictions and tensions and questions that have to be resolved? Those problems have to be out there. But I think what a lot of artists and some of these other people that I've mentioned, those problems don't get resolved. We were concerned that that wasn't going to be the case. We want to go on, because what is necessary in many revolutions is to have a break through and to understand—things in the real world so that you can change them. And in general, I think they probably inspired even revolutionary-minded artists who are around, because their initial response was always, "That's an up on the stage." They would even break it down, like people have other things that are not humorous. For example, in one case one woman said "Yeah, the struggle that was going on between the Mother and her son in the beginning—that's like my mother, man. And I'm gonna struggle with my mother." People said things like that they were never interested in the theater before because of what they'd heard, or what they saw of a certain, and you're got to understand—I don't know what the hell, you've got to understand—Froud or something—to understand what's up there on stage. Very esoteric, your avant garde stuff that doesn't have anything to do with the lives of the people. A number of people said that they had never been to a theater before. This wasn't what they thought it was and they thought that this sort of thing should be taken everywhere, taken out to the masses of people.

RW: You mentioned the characters in *Romeo and Juliet*, by Kunta Kinte, as being 100% resisters. When you talked at first about the character of the Mother, you said you wanted her to be a humorous character. Some of the other characters you were most interested in were Margaret 

A: In the first place, Brecht wrote her that way. The political agitation that she did, the way she exposed the oppression, the state and so on, was often utilizing humor. I think that side from that particular point of view, it's something that the masses really love. That would let them see themselves as fighting resistors. You can even look very broadly out there at what's goin' on, even on the TV. The situation is to change people in such a way that the masses love, and I think that the Mother is a very appropriate character. She is unique—more than her. But the main point about this character is that she represents the petty bourgeoisie, or the middle class, in its attitude to the revolution, and particularly the intelligentsia. And I think that this character is different in that something is missing. I mean, you don't grasp that, you're going to perform him differently from what Brecht intended, and than what reality really is. If you understand that, you understand that Brecht's character—not someone to be completely ridiculous, but the camp of the bourgeoisie—and he is also really what he is. He has these vacillations and the way he represents the working class or the bourgeoisie.

A: Well, the first thing is that's a difficult contradiction because the professor is a sympathetic character but he's not the hero of the play. I know what you're talking about—every other production I've ever seen he winds up being the character you really remember when you leave the theater. You remember him basically right up there with her, or even more than her. But the main point about this character is that he represents the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, or the middle class, in its attitude to the revolution, and particularly the intelligentsia. And I think that this character is different in that something is missing. I mean, you don't grasp that, you're going to perform him differently from what Brecht intended, and than what reality really is. If you understand that, you understand that Brecht's character—not someone to be completely ridiculous, but the camp of the bourgeoisie—and he is also really what he is. He has these vacillations and the way he represents the working class or the bourgeoisie.

A: You'll never see communists in a play or something like that, being more than that, pretending that they don't exist. I think you see a lot is covering these contradictions up, or, pretending that they're absolutely fine. It's like what Bob Avakian said in the interview. He was talking about the Black United Front and the desire of the Revolutionary Communist Party to unite with such forces in common struggle against the enemy. He said they were forces of the petty bourgeoisie and the interviewer said, "Don't be insulting." He said something like "I'm not being insulting, I'm being scientific." We seek unity with such forces in common struggle against the enemy. We seek unity with these people. But the attitude, whether you want to do away with this situation or not—whether you think this situation is intolerable, or it's tolerable, or what, you're going to determine your attitude toward such a play or such a character as the Mother. I think it's tremendous that so many people took this thing up, wanted it to be there, got changed by it, and want to see this sort of thing really develop. It shows that the potential is there and that the necessity is there for revolutionary artists to get it on, to decide who are going to serve, the working class or the bourgeoisie.
Bob Avakian Speech in Cleveland

Continued from page 10

don't have this community control of police, we will not be able to curtail civil war in America. "Now, you see, I don't care about the police. In America, we need and can't have anything less than revolutionary civil war in this country: it's the only way we can move forward to stop the increasing murder, exploitation, oppression, discrimination and every kind of degradation. We cannot try to avoid it, we cannot wish it away. We have to educate people to, we have to unite people for, we have to fight for and be in the vanguard of causing it to happen in coming out revolutionary civil war to overthrow capitalism and abolish all the madness we have to go through to get to some kind of socialism and move on toward a whole new world!

But because the Panthers turned away more and more from reformism and worked more clearly and more to reformism, and finally they ended up in the position of what they were, the government, today don't see beyond the point of simply wanting to kill Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton. But we have something different to say. We see that our struggle to educate people, to have us unite people for, we have to do more than organizing people in order to bring about what they are trying to bring about in coming out revolutionary civil war to overthrow capitalism and abolish all the madness we have to go through to get to some kind of socialism and move on toward a whole new world!

The most fundamental thing we have to learn and to learn to work through is this: we have to learn out of the experience, dedication, determination, heroism and self-sacrifice of thousands of Panther members and supporters, most fundamentally, we have to learn the basic lesson from their negative experience—that we have to base ourselves thoroughly, wholeheartedly, on the foundations of a revolutionary theory and a revolutionary movement that can lead us to see through all the distractions and seductions and illusions and bewilderment that exist out here, to bring to the forefront right now and in greater and greater numbers, and in a more and more decisive way, the fact that our society that, when united around its common interests, can feed all the oppressed to rise up and make revolution.

We have confidence that this will happen, not because of any poylanna, goody-goody, wishy-washy shit, but because we have a scientific understanding, because we know that among our working class, workers, the put the truth out, they call on them to rise up, to recognize the truth, to take it in their hands, grasp their own interests and struggle for them. We have confidence that through tremendous work and struggle, through going to the streets to raise the banner of revolution, to shake the lie and the lies and the deceptions, to expose the lies and the deceptions, and a socialist system, to say straight up to millions and millions of other people who have workers, to get people to stand up and say to them: Look, we have to learn, to forget about it. We don't want to and we don't need to, because the time is sharpening up. The coming year and the storms and the upheavals in the world are bringing to the surface this question as the correctly revolutionary May Day demonstration next year on May 1st, 1980, a day that is celebrated as a revolutionary holiday by classes of people that have the most to gain and the least to lose: millions of people throughout the world in their millions and hundreds of millions. In 1980 our Party will be joining with and helping lead this movement of people throughout the world to come out revolutionary, and to come out revolutionary for May Day demonstration next year on May 1st, 1980, a day that is celebrated as a revolutionary holiday by classes of people that have the most to gain and the least to lose: millions of people throughout the world in their millions and hundreds of millions. 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Red Flag—Internationale Day

On Thursday April 24, one week before May 1st, a mighty force will rip across this country. On that day, in factories, schools, housing projects, buses, everywhere the masses of people live and gather, red flags will fly—50,000 Red Flags! A wild and lofty sign of strength and determination for May 1st itself.

And that same day, at 1:55 Eastern time, 12:55 Central, 10:55 in the West and all the way to Hawaii at 7:55 AM—all at once the class conscious forces will rise together and, in straight up defiance of all the shit of this society, sing strong and loud and in dozens of languages, the Internationale, the anthem of the international working class. Throughout that day, and in the week to come, it will be as if a powerful bugle has sounded, signalling the charge toward May 1st.

![Red Flag](image)

The Internationale
Anthem of the International Working Class

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!
Arise, ye huddled masses-
For you are those who have nothing to lose—
Better worlds are birthed.
No more tradition’s chains shall bind us,
Arise, ye slaves; no more in thrall!
The earth shall rise on its foundations,
We have been taught, we shall be all.

Refrain:
This the final conflict,
Let each stand in his place.
The international working class shall be the human race.

We want no condescending saviors,
To rule us from a judgment seat.
We workers ask not for their favors;
Let us consult for all.
To make the thief disgorge his booty,
To free the spirit from its cell,
We must ourselves decide our duty,
We must decide and do it well.

La Internacional
¡Arriba, parias de la tierra!
¡En pie, famelica legion!
¡Atuena la razón en marcha,
Es el fin de la opresión
El pasado ha que hacer anicos,
¡Legión esclava, en pie, a vencer!
El mundo va a cambiar de base,
Los nada de hoy han de ser.

Ni en dioses, reyes ni tribunos
Está el supremo salvador.
Nosotros mismos realizamos
El esfuerzo redentor.
Para hacer que el tirano caiga
Y el mundo siervo liberar,
Soplemos la potente fragua
Que el hombre libre ha de forjar.

Refrain:
Agrupémonos todos
En la lucha final,
El genero Humano
Es la Internacional.

Button Day
Continued from page 1

Five organizers for May 1st, especially within the Party itself,
Even before Button Day, that was done. America is in decline and headed toward war—world war. Any reasonable analysis of the conditions—the objective situation in this country today—means that certainly 2% or 3% of the industrial proletariat alone (the workers in basic industry, numbering 21 million) are revolutionary-minded—not fully class-conscious proletarian fighters, but those with basic revolutionary hatred for whom the message of May 1st is no stranger but instead a voice for their inner feelings. And we are talking about mobilizing a small percentage of that small percentage into the streets on May 1st. We are going to do it. The Party is firm on this, as is the new wave of revolutionary fighters stepping forward around the Party. The objective situation is ripe, the key is the subjective factor—that is the Party’s firm grasp on the revolutionary line on May 1st. This was made very clear by the results of Button Day.

Even—and especially—in the face of reactionary attacks, the revolutionary-minded people among the masses stepped forward when given a chance and Button Day spread. Inside one plant in Atlanta, backward tools made a fire out of some copies of the leaflet announcing the 27th. In response to this and on the spot, a revolutionary on the inside of the plant sold 27 buttons. It was all she had on her. Workers were buying the buttons in any language they could—whether they understood it or not. It didn’t matter, they had to take a stand.

In many places, advanced revolutionary forces that had been suffocated by a deadly air of backwardness among the forces building Button Day broke through by the last day and showed some results. In Detroit, for example, more buttons (800) were sold on Thursday than on the previous three days put together, and struggle raged all day in some plants about wearing them or not. Buttons in the pocket one minute came out the next onto shirts when struggle was raised over what this was all about. In Chicago, on Thursday, at one plant where many workers speak neither English nor Spanish, 50 buttons were sold in a couple of hours to one shift. A paddy wagon was there, a boss stood out front, the language barriers heaped; but it was clear that this was about
Some people who knew no language but English, and without fear, just broke into song—the International, anthem of the international working class—and workers bought buttons, with a few short words like "This is good...right international working class." There were wide gaps in sales, with a few people selling 50 or more buttons in an hour on a transit train, and not the same number of Revolutionary Worker newspapers, while other people, in almost identical conditions, sold one or two, it was a matter of line.

Where Bob Avakian's name or picture was brought out in some places, it sharpened up the revolutionary stakes involved in Button Day, and sales shot up. In one place, a banner with his picture went up and intense discussion broke out about his case and the meaning of this action.

In some places, this was completely or largely liquidated—substituting instead some much more narrow and non-revolutionary "concern." In Battle Creek, Michigan, where there had been a sharp confrontation between cops and the Black community and May Day was becoming known and embraced, Button Day organizers got up a picket line at the police station on the 27th and thenip that was given did not even mention Bob Avakian or urge people to buy but two.

These were not "accidents" in the main, but the products of a political line—a non-revolutionary political line that is discounting and even jumping out in the face of the revolutionary potential for May 1st.

In area after area across the country, sharp struggle with the enemy is bringing forward the advanced, revolutionary comrades within the Party and the new advanced among the masses to do battle against the bourgeoisie, right over the heads of the backward if necessary. Those that have begun to move forward have sensed that there are those in the Party who grasp and uphold Chairman Bob Avakian's revolutionary line, including on May Day, and that there are those who do not, and these masses are correct in what they sense.

The Party is not going to allow the enemy to suffocate the force of the advanced coming forward. It is high time to pull out all stops and ride over the heads of the sabotage of the backward.

The revolutionary line is there to unite these two groups and not run away from it.

The Revolution is Being Baited Out Now

The heart of the revolutionary line and policy on May Day is clear. May Day is a major step in revolution, here and around the world. Revolution does not come out of nowhere. What we do today can be crucial. Lenin put it this way: "The revolution itself must not be regarded as a single act, but as a series of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with periods of more or less intense calm."

As Bob Avakian put it in his New Year's article in the RW, "The work we do now, the battles, especially the major political battles, we must not regard as crucial not only, at hitting back, politically, at the enemy, but also as general preparation, but beyond that perhaps in deciding the outcome of whether the politicians for revolution do ripen.... This emphasizes, again, that all we are doing now is or must be, politically and economically preparation for when the conditions do ripen and that (in line with the statement by Lenin referred to just above) our actions are, in another sense, part, a very important part, of the whole process of revolution and to have a great deal to do with victory or defeat when there is a qualitative leap in the situation."

This is why May 1st is crucial. It is a political action, but it is like a major

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early campaign in a liberation war. There is no possible issue. May 1st will make a real difference.

Once most people from the basic masses see the real interest and if May Day all the more firmly. But some people, a handful, even if they become part of this new revolutionary party, will remain hostile and are driven to wildly opposite actions.

That is why one question that is before us now is, whose Party is this? Is this the Party of the landed aristocracy, the imperialists or is it a resting place for those who feel they have something to save—some of the deep layers of the masses down? Today these two forces are pitted against each other.

This is not a matter of some people's intentions, but of political line. It shows itself in action. The Party on Sunday called to the Party's followers to gather behind the struggle for May Day. In one case in Atlanta, for example, a student called the May Day call saying how she had heard of Button Day, wanted to buy a button for her friend and that her friends wanted some too, but they wouldn't be able to afford them until Friday. And to buy a button for her friend, a non-revolutionary political line, said only "OK"—get it together and sell them to the friends. The non-revolutionary Party is another revolutionary head of this and virtually completely isolated. It has to come immediately on a consignment to be paid back at the end of the week. This is an example of how the struggle for May Day is perceived. The matters that we know that the Party has scheduled for this Monday, but that somehow not that many buttons would be sold in the next two or three hours, with much marching yet to go, all these buttons were sold, with marchers running out of the button store. 55 cents, no one left. People, revolutionaries and friends, all come together to be paid for, and they go on to what will surely be a corpse in history's bone yard. Others, for whom life often seemed to have become more so, now see that they have something to live for, all in the joke of "safe haven" in store, and they flock for the coming opportunity to end this madness called American society.

Why This Struggle Now? It is not surprising that this struggle would erupt. The fact that it has not just a matter of a few ideas that suddenly popped up in some people's heads, no, they just "went through the motions." There are reasons for this. This struggle is rooted in the objective conditions, the international situation in the country, and the world, and the questions that are posed by that. America—once on top of the world capitalist dung heap—now is in disgrace. Some feel they have something to live for, and some want to see if they can still make a fortune out of those who are determined to see May 1st be a major step toward realizing this dream.

Coming Next Week Special issue of the Revolutionary Worker Featuring a major statement by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP, USA. A personal statement by Comrade Avakian calling people to May Day. We will be making a special effort to distribute this next issue of the newspaper, to sell 75,000 copies of this issue—up from our new run of 50,000. We call on all revolutionary-minded people, all who value Chairman Avakian's revolutionary leadership, to join in this special distribution effort.
Holy Water

Continued from page 12

The new Zimbabwean Minister of Labor and Welfare, Mugabe, is determined to go back to work. In effect he argued that they should not try to take matters into their own hands because further action would make things better for them in due course. The one thing that thing now was to keep the economy running and the white settler-controlled economy.

Mugabe rejected the principle of his government the least possible disruption of the white settler economy, insisting that gradual change something off in the future. There would certainly have to be some changes. Everyone, including the British and the U.S., realize that. The point, he is not long tolerate living in the old way. In his efforts to deal with these demands, without breaking the economic power or organizing the vast holdings of the imperialists (65% of Rhodesia's wealth), that power will be held by white settlers, Mugabe will have "some help from friends," representatives of the British and other western governments, including white settlers, military forces and political and economic structure. "Chairman Mao himself entered three units from during the Chinese national liberation struggle, that the imperialists and colonialists emphasized the need for and on the relationship between the three magic weapons of both, the workers and the struggle and the unity!" They might add to the point that Mao himself warned against the reactionaries who would use his words to defeat what he stood for.

Yes, Mao put forward the necessity of using the three magic weapons of the working class and the masses of people, the means of resistance against imperialism, a united front of the working class and the masses of people, the means of resistance against imperialism. As he said in On New Democracy, "No many of us, but we will defeat the imperialists!" He has been united against the imperialism, a united front of the working class and the masses of people, the means of resistance against imperialism! Come on! In their efforts to justify ZANU's struggle with the imperialists, Mugabe has been united against the imperialists, to show that the "three magic weapons," Workers' Viewpoint manages, not only to stifle its own argument.

Objectively, Mugabe and the top leaders of ZANU, along with the leadership of the Chinese and the leaders of the white settlers, have become the "saviors of the masses." Of course, they believe that only those who control the economy, power, or, in this case, get into power, rely not on the masses of people, but on steering and dealing with the imperialists, what Workers' Viewpoint calls "outmaneuvering" the imperialists. But the real deal here is in the wheeling and dealing of bourgeois policies, the whites are late-comers and outliers. They have already used the masses as leverage for their own advancement and control over the country into the next generation. The principal argument of Workers' Viewpoint's distortion of the events... are the "Communist."

The "Communist" theory is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution, but is based on sacrificing the world revolution for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory sets the imperialists and the "Communist" theory as the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory's argument is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution, but is based on sacrificing the interests of world revolution for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory sets the imperialists and the "Communist" theory as the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory's argument is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution, but is based on sacrificing the interests of world revolution for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory sets the imperialists and the "Communist" theory as the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory's argument is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution, but is based on sacrificing the interests of world revolution for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory sets the imperialists and the "Communist" theory as the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory's argument is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution, but is based on sacrificing the interests of world revolution for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory sets the imperialists and the "Communist" theory as the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory's argument is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution, but is based on sacrificing the interests of world revolution for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory sets the imperialists and the "Communist" theory as the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory, World revolution is the "Communist" theory for the survival of the "Communist" theory. The "Communist" theory's argument is not based on advancing the interests of world revolution.
and is for more democracy ruthlessly gouged out so now the most important is what the future holds in store and how to prepare through these battles for it. Under these complicated conditions the working class must seek a basis of unity with such forces while remaining independent and without ceasing to resolutely for leadership in the overall struggle without compromising the basic interests of the masses.

The decisive question for the future is whether the working class can take independent action in the most intense period of revolution and spark a revolution. The dialectic that is enthused here is that already the conditions faced by people along with the social and political situation were already compared with what lies ahead and a more cataclysmic decline in the economy. Is the situation, that the working class can take action in the first stage of the advanced sections of the working class can act as a lightning rod, as it were, to the rest of the working class and point the way forward to the diverse strata whose rumbles can be felt. The accumulated anger and hatred that has been voiced and sharpened across the ranks of the working class around the illusions and programs of the union leaders to talk tough. On May 11th, 1911, in commemoration of the raging blow for blow, wound for wound, 2nd it is all forgotten.

What is the existence of a revolutionary party? The May 1st is going on, led by the Internationale stolen from them and the Internationale. With its splash of red thrown in to the graves of those killed in Haymarket Square in Chicago, Revolutionary Worker in Revolutionary Work in the United States may well turn out to be a place where the chain snags in the coming confrontation, giving hope to the working class to take independent action. Whether it actually turns out to be the case or not, it is this possibility which the union-conscience section of the working class and revolutionary fighters must prepare for. It is to prepare to scale the heights of history.


The Mexican workers who had just arrived in the United States were granted a day off today. But is it wrong and naïve to suppose that there will be some smooth development of things such that the working class of the United States, now gathered the strength to take on the bourgeoisie as everything else fails in place. As the authority of the bourgeoisie breaks down, powerful forces will be unleashed throughout the country. But the forces of resistance involving different sections of the population and with dynamics of their own will be more the order of the day and transformed, perhaps, among some of the oppressed nationalities and in the South. This is the case in which other organized forces, with programs of their own, command the respect and allegiance of the masses. Under these complicated conditions the working class must seek a basis of unity with such forces while remaining independent and without ceasing to resolutely for leadership in the overall struggle without compromising the basic interests of the masses.

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The possibility of revolution in the United States cannot be assessed from the existing situation of a struggle in this country—or the existing objective situation. It is based on what is developing within the working class around the bloc headed up by the United States and the extraordinary attempts to use a hindrance war is an economic and political barrier of the working class. It is far down and out, but it is extremely desperate. There are seeds of the future in the current battles of the working class. The working class is not the most important is what the future holds in store and how to prepare through these battles for it.

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