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At dusk on March 3, in Stanton, California — a town in Orange County and virtually in the shadow of Disneyland — a local cop entered an apartment where a Black woman and her son lived, supposedly in response to an anonymous phone call from a neighbor saying that Patricia Ridge and her son Patrick Mason had not been seen in two weeks. The 5-year-old youth was home alone watching TV in the back bedroom. His mother had just recently gotten a minimum wage job and was forced to do what millions of other women in this country are forced to do — leave her child at home while she worked. Stanton pig, Anthony Sperl, drew his gun as he went into the apartment. This is standard police procedure in this neighborhood which the pigs have dubbed “anti-police and anti-Caucasian” (in other words, an area where the cops routinely harass and terrorize people and where the men in blue can feel free to shoot on sight when given the chance). Sperl then proceeded to the back bedroom, kicked in the door and shot down Patrick with one bullet in the neck. Another Black youth had been killed by the enforcers of law and order; this time simply for watching TV in his room. In the midst of widespread outrage in the Stanton area and across the country, this cowardly and cold-blooded murderer is now on paid vacation (technically called “suspension with pay”) supposedly recovering from his “psychological trauma,” while the murdered youth’s mother is being investigated for “child neglect” and “endangerment of a child”!

Stanton police quickly concocted a

5-Year-Old Child Cut Down: Another Case of Standard Police Procedure

flimsy story for their latest “justifiable homicide.” Naturally the only part of their story that can be taken as true are the statements from the Stanton police chief that, “the investigation so far indicates (Sperl) violated no police procedures.” Killing a 5-year-old Black youth as he was watching TV in his bedroom is an excellent example of proper police work in places like the apartment complex where Patrick and his mother live—one which houses people of many oppressed nationalities and poor whites as well. In such “anti-police” areas, murder is an essential requirement of the job for the assassins like Sperl, if not the highest expression of their service to the rulers. The killer himself knew this all too well. He was no greenhorn, but a pig who was well versed in all aspects of the profession with a B.A. and an M.A. in the “criminal justice field” as well as his regular police training! On March 3, he was presented with an opportunity that no self-respecting pig could pass up;

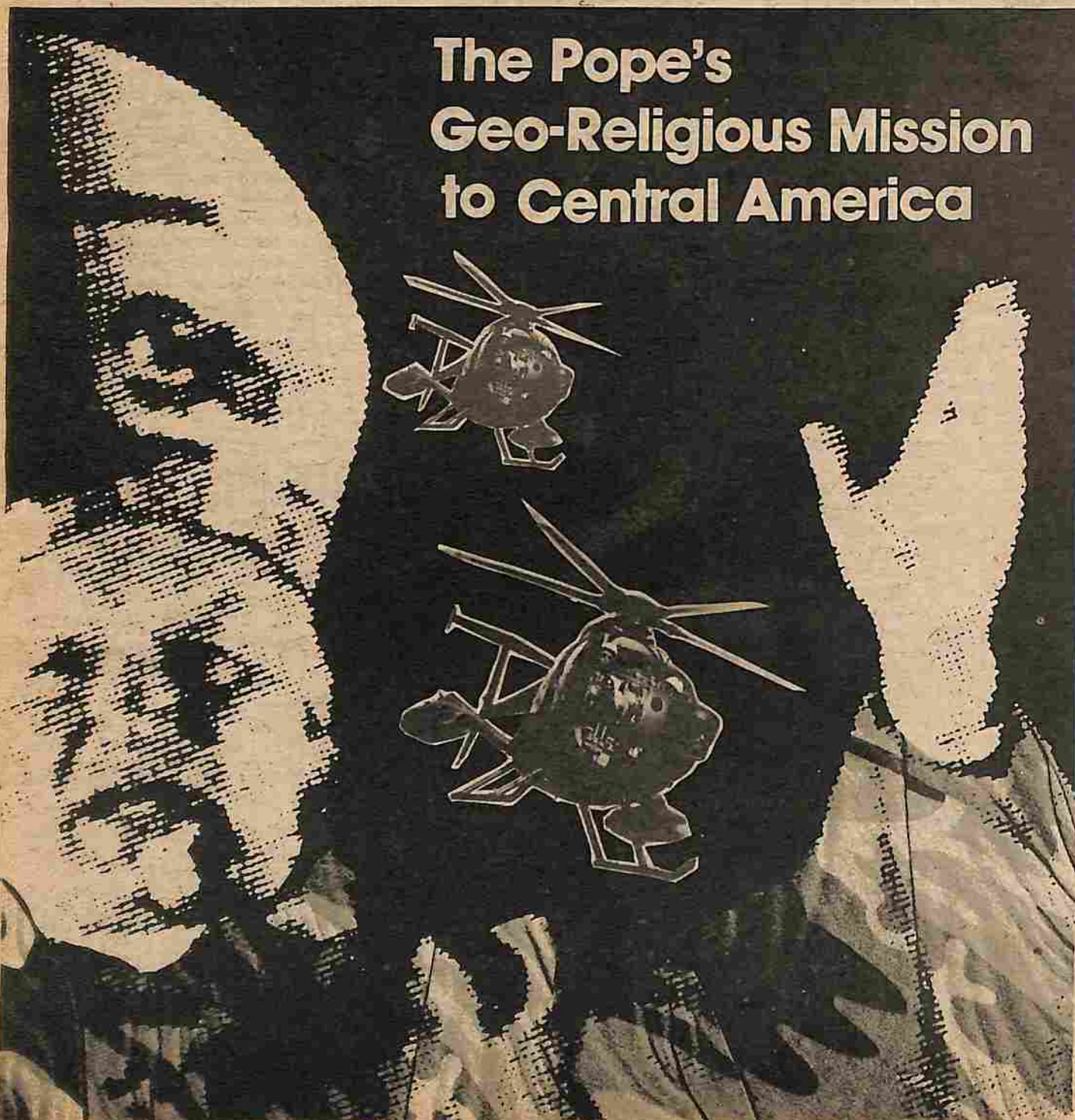
a defenseless Black youth alone in a darkened apartment. He could fire at will with no chance of any harm coming to himself and then make up any story he wanted to justify the deed.

What the police story of what happened in the apartment lacks in imagination is made up by its absurdity. It goes something like this: When Sperl arrived at the apartment to “investigate” in response to the supposed anonymous phone call from a neighbor (neighbors are at a loss to explain who would have made such a phone call), he knocked on the door; hearing no answer, he got a pass key from the manager and walked in with his gun drawn; when he got to the door of Patrick’s bedroom, he noticed a “rope” on the door (actually a piece of string) and, according to his superiors, “got panicky,” for some unexplained reason thinking he was being “set up for an ambush”; Sperl then called into the room and heard a “raspy voice” answer, at which point he naturally kicked it in and

supposedly saw a “shadowy figure” in the darkened room point a gun at him; supposedly fearing for his life, he fired and killed Patrick with one shot. Later it was “discovered” that the “gun” Patrick was supposed to have pointed at Sperl was a “very realistic” plastic toy gun for all the world looking like a real snubnose revolver.

Of course, it is only the word of the killer cop that Patrick was even holding a toy gun. It would be no surprise that this piece of evidence was manufactured after the fact by the police who figured it would be straining the limits of public gullibility to produce a real gun that a 5-year-old child supposedly aimed at a pig. Whether there was a toy gun or not, of course, changes nothing, but the fact that the supposed existence of this “realistic” toy is playing such a central role in the police justification for this murder of a Black child is itself an ugly self-exposure of these killers. Pictures of

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The Pope's Geo-Religious Mission to Central America

Pope John Paul II brought his ministerial machinations to Central America last week, pontificating of “peace, concord and hope,” promising to “share the pain,” pleading for each nation to “confront problems in a sincere dialogue without foreign influence.” In every country — except one — the words dripped with honey, covering over the bodies dripping with blood. While the Pope praised the Lord, the U.S. government was figuring out how much new ammunition to pass to its henchmen in El Salvador. Would \$60 million be enough for now, or would \$100 million be a more “realistic” figure? It was a fine example of the separation of church and state — U.S. imperialist style.

The papal pilgrimage featured a whirlwind tour covering eight countries in eight days — a grueling schedule, but most certainly one that the current situation demands. El Salvador may be the current focus of U.S. efforts in Central America, but the turmoil is evident throughout the region. Even as the Pope was arriving, Ronald Reagan was announcing that “the government of El Salvador is on the front lines in a battle that is really aimed at the very heart of the Western hemisphere, and eventually at us... If El Salvador should fall, I think Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama — all of those would follow.” And all of those — and more — just happen to be on the Pope’s itinerary. Let’s face it, in Central America the flock has been acting much too unsheeplike.

There is a great deal of anti-U.S. sentiment throughout the region, and the pro-Soviet believers have been very active, winning new converts and even making inroads within the Church itself, in pursuit of the historic compromise strategy within the U.S.’ very own “backyard.” For the West’s true believers, this is not such a healthy scenario, especially in the midst of critical preparations for the holy war to come. The highly political pontiff showed up in Central America not a moment too soon.

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The Murder of A.C. Wilson

On March 1, 17-year-old A.C. Wilson was beaten and shot to death at point-blank range a few blocks from his home on Detroit's East Side. Outrage over the murder has swelled through the neighborhood. It has continued to mount as the state's outrageous handling of the case unfolds. The killing, at the hands of an Iraqi store owner, has thrown the question of "who is to blame" as a focus of sharp debate among those drawn into motion by the murder and the blatant statements the authorities have made here over the value of the life of a Black youth.

The neighborhood where A.C. lived is an old, left-to-rot section of town that links the largely Black East Side with the city's "university-medical-cultural center." The section of Chene Street that runs through the area is dotted with boarded up store fronts and closed down businesses. Along this strip there's an occasional bar or corner market. One dimly-lit room with a few video machines is about the only place around for neighborhood youth to hang out. The residential streets that cross Chene are pock-marked with vacant lots where homes have been torn down. In this area unemployment runs as high as seven out of every ten Black youth. Those still in school or struggling for a GED (General Education Degree) sense what those who have been out on the streets for years already know — there's nothing there for them. One woman with teenage kids put it like this: "A Black male between 15 and 25 hardly has a chance on the streets today. There's no jobs for them and nothing for them to do. Are they supposed to stay in the house all day like little children? I can do that because I'm old and tired but these young ones can't do it like that."

The police from the nearby Seventh Precinct "ride heavy" up and down Chene. One area resident said: "It seems the younger they are the more the police harass them. I've seen a lot happen out there. They'll stop someone for no reason at all. The youth get up in the park by Northeastern High School and the police will run them out: 'You can't stay here, you're loitering.' These kids' lives aren't worth a plumb dime." There is a potentially explosive situation among Black youth in the neighborhood and other sections of town. Over the last few months the local news media has responded by seizing on every opportunity to promote a picture of rampant youth crime and gangsterism. Last fall they played up the operations of a local drug ring which used Black youth as couriers and street distributors. The activities and workings of this outfit — so-called Young Boys Incorporated — were widely and vigorously promoted in the news. A media blitz focused on robberies and shootings over

fur-lined airmen jackets, similar to those worn by the drug distributors. According to the media, youth were after the jackets as a "status symbol." All this contributed to a certain "open season" climate around Black youth in the city. A recent victim of this climate was a 17-year-old Highland Park youth being chased by police through the streets in a vehicle he had allegedly stolen. As he stepped from the car to turn himself over he was shot to death. The police claimed he had a shiny object in his hand which resembled a revolver. The shiny object in question turned out to be a hubcap wrench. The shooting was ruled as justifiable homicide by the Highland Park Police Department. This was the context surrounding the death of A.C. Wilson.

At about 7 in the evening of March 1st, A.C., his brother Tony, and a few other friends were hanging out on the corner of Chene and Farnsworth. They had been drinking some beer and were clowning around on the curb. A.C. and Tony were wrestling with one another. At about the same time someone apparently busted out a window of Thomas Dickow's car. Dickow, a Chaldean (an Iraqi Christian), owned the Bicentennial Party Store up the street. His car was parked in the alley behind the store. Dickow had a long history of mistreating people — especially youth — who came into his store. And the contradictions had been getting sharper. He has pulled a gun on numerous youth inside the store. He would chase them away and threaten to call the cops if they were too loud or in one way or another offended him. He had been known to use his dog to track and frighten young children at the back of the store. One guy said, "The way Tom acted he made people hate him. Any little thing he would call the police or pull his gun out on you himself." Late in February his car was torched in front of the store. On his say-so one youth was picked up for arson and is being held in Wayne County jail with a \$10,000 bond.

Dickow also happened to have a particularly close relationship with certain officers of the Seventh Precinct. According to neighborhood residents, they watched over the place for him. "They were up at the store a lot. Tom would give them free cigarettes, beer and wine. Sometimes the cops — in uniforms and out — would sit up there and drink with him." Any time there was the slightest argument the police would be up there to check ID or make an arrest. Two days before A.C. was shot a complaint was lodged against Dickow for possession of an illegal weapon. The cops took a gun away from him but he was not arrested. The store was a hangout for the police in the area and the word on the street is that

"anybody Tom pointed out they went after."

That evening as A.C. and his friends were out on the corner Dickow came running across a vacant lot at the side of his store. He began firing a .38 caliber revolver into the street where the youth were standing. Three of them took off. A.C. stood there ready to go up against him. Suddenly Dickow's nephew came up behind A.C. and grabbed him around the waist — bearhug fashion. Dickow began hitting A.C. on the head with the butt of his gun. A.C. reeled under the blows. He staggered up against the wall of a nearby building. He was half bent over with his hands covering his head. Dickow's nephew began beating him with a baseball bat. He smacked A.C.'s legs and arms. The youth fell to the ground. An eyewitness said Dickow kept hitting, "Like he was crazy. He was hitting him, hitting him, hitting him. He just kept hitting him." At this point Dickow stepped over the body, straddling A.C. between his feet. He pointed the gun and fired down into his chest. The bullet tore through his heart, lungs and lodged in the kidney. That bullet killed A.C. Dickow and his nephew ran back to the store. They chased the remaining customers outside and bolted themselves in the market.

Minutes later the police arrived at the store. They escorted Dickow out. A large crowd of youth gathered around and the mood was tense. The cops had their pistols drawn and some were wielding shotguns. They drove off with Dickow and his nephew. That night extra police were assigned to patrol the area around the store to keep the lid on the situation. The police began stepped-up harassment of youth along Chene. And one of Dickow's buddies — a sergeant from the Seventh Precinct — sat up inside the store till late at night in order to protect it.

People in the neighborhood were waiting to hear exactly what Dickow would be charged with. Over the next 24 hours no charges were placed against him. The police spokesman indicated that he didn't know what they would charge Dickow with—if anything. They retracted their initial statement that Dickow had shot A.C. in a case of mistaken identity and began to float another version: that perhaps A.C. was indeed the person who had thrown the brick through Dickow's car window. The stench of a whitewash was getting more foul-smelling with every call downtown. On Wednesday night a crowd of nearly 200 youth gathered in the street in front of the store. The word was that "the store was gonna' come down."

The police handled the situation with great deliberation, utilizing a variety of tactics. They didn't directly harass the

crowd. One man who witnessed the scene from across the street said: "They didn't go to pulling guns on people or handcuffing them. They knew something could get started quickly. This is 1983 and a lit fuse is burning away out there." The Black cops played a particularly out-front role while the white ones assumed more of a backup position. Once the crowd dispersed they began riding heavy up and down the street — scattering groups of people.

Taking stock of a potentially explosive situation that could have ricocheted around the city, the police and prosecutor's office made some decisions. Thursday they announced Dickow would be charged with first degree murder in the shooting. They also said they would seek similar charges against his nephew — a juvenile. Dickow was remanded to the custody of Wayne County jail and ordered held without bond pending a hearing on March 9. But that was not the end of it. The next day Dickow's lawyer made an appearance before another judge in Thirty-Sixth District Court. He appealed the bond ruling of the previous day. This judge decided to set bond at \$100,000 for Dickow. That afternoon Dickow posted the \$10,000 cash 10% requirement and walked. The murderer of A.C. Wilson was set loose by a Thirty-Sixth District Court judge for \$10,000.

Word began to filter back to the neighborhood that Tom was out on the street. People were outraged over a \$10,000 cash bond for a count of murder one. Plenty of bitterness was spoken by those who had family and friends locked away on far lesser charges but with an even higher bond. The bottom line among those who gathered to discuss the latest developments was put by one guy like this: "This thing is a straight-up encouragement to anyone to do the same thing. It's a justification for what he did. I thought that when he was picked up that justice would be done but this is saying to people that the life of a Black youth isn't worth anything. And it shows that he figured he could murder a boy like A.C. and just walk away from it." Sunday night the store was broken into. And at a court appearance on Wednesday, March 9, Dickow was charged on first degree murder and his bond was reset at \$500,000. The following day the news reported the store had been burned down.

The killing of A.C. Wilson has unleashed a lot of furor directed at the police and courts. At the same time a thread of anti-Arab and essentially chauvinist — "These people from another part of the world vs. us Americans" — sentiment has come out. One of the chants taken up spontaneously in front of the store last Wednesday night was "Arabs go home." In addition to this spontaneous sentiment there are some efforts underway to organize a boycott of Arab owned stores. This is a contradiction the authorities in Detroit have long used to pit Black masses against a convenient scapegoat and deflect their anger from the real cause of the situation.

The question of who is to blame has Continued on page 6

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More Reflections & Sketches

The Challenges Confronting Communist Stand-Up Comedians or More On Hypocrisy

by Bob Avakian

During the latter part of last year, the Revolutionary Worker ran a series of articles, Reflections and Sketches, edited from a tape by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP, USA. We are currently printing a new series of articles, More Reflections and Sketches, by Bob Avakian.

For some time I have been fascinated by the prospects for communist stand-up comedians. After all, regardless of the politics of any particular comedian, much of comedy in general and stand-up comedy in particular consists of social and political commentary. How could it be otherwise? This is not to say that all stand-up comedians — or even all those whose social/political barbs are directed against the *status quo* — need be, should be, or could be, communists in today's world. Nor, certainly should every communist try to be a stand-up comedian. But it has struck me that joining the ability to do that kind of humor with a genuinely communist outlook — as opposed to a pitiful doctrinaire, narrow and philistine excuse for such an outlook — could make for a dynamite combination.

Recently, however, much as I remain convinced of the potential here, it seems to me that there are real challenges confronting such communist stand-up comedians — and others as well who seek to subject the rulers and shapers of this society to ridicule. The problem is that from the President on down, these people themselves make such ridiculous and outrageous statements and with a straight face. Let's take a few examples.

In both his November, 1982 speech on the MX missile (sorry, the "peacekeeper") and more recently in his State of the Union Address, Reagan harped on the theme that the Soviets are presently committing "violations of international treaties concerning chemical and biological weapons" and that — get this — "the whole world remains outraged by the Soviets' and their allies' use of biological and chemical weapons against defenseless people in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Laos. This experience makes ironclad verification all the more essential for arms control." There is no doubt much truth to these accusations, but remember they are being voiced by the same people — the U.S. imperialists — who (together with their allies) have already used napalm, phosphorous bombs, Agent Orange and numerous other chemical and biological weapons on a massive scale — not to mention the atomic bomb — and who are presently brandishing nuclear bombs and missiles along with nerve gas, and other chemical and biological weapons and so on.

Or take the recent events in the Middle East, focusing on Lebanon. Here the imperialists and their henchmen are playing a solemn game of "pass the butcher." Reagan blames Begin, or the Israelis generally; the Israeli government, and sometimes Begin, blames Sharon; they all blame the Lebanese Phalangists. And, again, all of this is done with a straight face.

There is in fact a deadly serious purpose being served here, beyond delivering crushing blows to the Palestinian people's liberation struggle and strengthen-

ing Israel's and more generally the Western bloc's hand in the area. By playing this charade that the U.S. tried to restrain Israel while Israel tried to restrain the Phalangists . . . and then sending in the U.S. Marines, together with French and Italian troops to "prevent further slaughter and preserve peace" there is a very significant, and for the Western bloc necessary, effort to restore a noble image to their armed forces and military power, that of the U.S. especially. Through Vietnam this portrayal of a U.S. that would only use its military power "for the good of our fellow man" (to quote Reagan again) had gaping holes blown in it, even for those who had not previously seen through it, within the U.S. itself in particular. Patching this back up and restoring that tattered image as much as possible is an important part of what the U.S. imperialists mean when they talk about overcoming the divisions of the Vietnam era; it is a crucial part of their preparations for another war — this time a world war against the Soviet bloc. It goes along with Reagan piously proclaiming that "Responsible members of the world community do not threaten or invade their neighbors and they restrain their neighbors from aggression" — and really expecting no one to crack up when he utters this as a condemnation by U.S. imperialism, not of itself, but of its rival, Soviet social-imperialism.

One final example for now (as I have said elsewhere, hypocrisy is a big subject and the hypocrisy of the imperialists seems to have an inexhaustible source — it will only be extinguished when imperialism is, finally). Reagan declares that the concession — in the form of a Supreme Court decision — allowing the right to abortion was a "tragedy," vowing to reverse this, identifying himself with the "right to life" crusade. This while he makes a point of insisting that the U.S. soldiers who died in Vietnam did so in the service of a "noble" cause and readies missiles, manpower and womanpower for the next, far greater noble cause. At the same time, the "right to lifers," the "moral majority," et al., wave their bibles like weapons in the war against the liberation of women (and mankind), hissing the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" as a curse against . . . the right to abortion(!), while the Jerry Falwells lead their zombie followers in chants to the American flag: "I love that flag, I would die for that flag."

Well, as I said at the start, it is a real challenge to ridicule these people and their actions without stealing their material! But, on the other hand, their continual if apparently unintentional self-ridicule can and should provide a rich source of exposure — and of fresh material for communist (and other) stand-up comedians. One has every right to hope and expect so, because humor is an indispensable part not only of life in general but of any real revolutionary movement. □

NEXT WEEK: SO MANY LIES IN SO LITTLE SPACE
A Look at a Single Paragraph of a Reagan Speech

Pope's

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The basic underlying theme of the Pope's mission was to direct any who would listen to face Washington, D.C., bow down, and get ready to fight the Soviets. But the complexities of Central America required a somewhat different sermon depending on the particular country and the particular audience. To be effective, the Pope would have to frame his message differently when moralizing before, for example, the Indians of Guatemala than he would when he spoke to the pro-Sandinista priests of Nicaragua. But the underlying content was consistent.

The Pope got down to business as soon as his DC10 landed in Costa Rica. After the traditional ground-kissing episode (to be repeated in every country he visited), he launched into his first tirade. Of course, J.P.II gave his consolations, offering "to share the pain" and generally bemoaning all the vicious circumstances facing the Central American targets of U.S. imperial domination — death squads, poverty, refugees, etc. But he emphasized that changing any of this must be accomplished "without resort to violence or collectivist systems that can prove no less oppressive to the dignity of man than pure economic capitalism." Undoubtedly the man of peace much prefers moderate, reform-type capitalism, like the strategic hamlet/death to the tiller land reform program the U.S. has instituted in El Salvador.

Costa Rica also provided the Pope the opportunity for showing great concern for exiles — those who have been forced to flee their home countries for one reason or another. However, it seems that certain countries were more eligible than others. The Pope managed to fit in a meeting with a Cuban exile group on his busy agenda. And his sermon in San José's La Sabana Park also featured a small group of exiles from Nicaragua prominently displaying placards and signs that read, "We pray for Nicaragua and Poland," and "Priests with Christ and not Marx."

This is all merely *religious* adoration, according to the Western press, and quite appropriate activity for those in the presence of his holiness. What a stark contrast with his next stop — in Nicaragua. There, some people had the nerve to display disrespectful *political* banners, such as the one that read: "Thank God and the Revolution," and the holy ears were also forced to listen to a long welcoming speech from Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega, who made the point that there were many Christians among the Sandinistas. What sacrilege! But dealing with such sacrilege was precisely the purpose of the Pope's brief stopover in Nicaragua.

As in the rest of Central America, the Catholic Church in Nicaragua has become a key battleground between the most loyal U.S. bootlickers and their opposition, including more nationalist and social-democratic forces, and pro-Soviet revisionist forces as well. The church hierarchy, headed up by Archbishop Obando y Bravo has become the rallying point for U.S. lackeydom in Nicaragua, and has taken the offensive inside Nicaragua in attacking the Sandinista government in conjunction with the exiles' military attacks launched from beyond the borders. At the same time, a pro-Sandinista "people's church" has been formed, with much of the rank and file clergy and laity supporting it. For the pro-Soviet revisionists who play the leading role in the Sandinista-led state apparatus, this "people's church" has been a crucial arena for maneuvering, especially trying to use it to keep a semblance of the historic compromise coalition together in the face of U.S. efforts to "destabilize" the regime. Five Catholic clergymen hold government positions, including the foreign minister and the Minister of Culture. The Minister of Culture, poet Ernesto Cardenal, is also the leader of the "people's church." Because of his active role in the overthrow of Somoza and his anti-U.S. posture, Cardenal is probably the most popular priest in Latin America today.

Three months ago, in tandem with Reagan's trip to Latin America, the Vatican announced that the Pope would

refuse to visit Nicaragua if the priests did not resign from the government. When this was refused, a period of maneuvering ensued and a compromise was reached — the Pope would show up if the priests would disappear so that his holiness wouldn't have to greet them. But by the time of his mission, the Pope had made it clear that he was going to come out swinging on his arrival in Nicaragua. So, the Sandinistas countered by putting the charismatic Father Cardenal, dressed in peasant clothing, in the papal receiving line. As the Pope approached, Cardenal removed his ever-present beret and knelt down to kiss the Pope's ring — a calculated move designed to imply papal acceptance of the "people's church" and government minister Cardenal, something that the revisionists have been angling for. But the Pope countered by pulling back his hand and admonishing Cardenal, "You must straighten out your position with the church." The geo-religious jockeying in Nicaragua was off to a grand start.

Over the next few hours, the Pope escalated his side of the barrage. He praised Archbishop Obando y Bravo in every speech and made a point of attacking the "people's church" as "absurd and dangerous," stressing absolute obedience to the church hierarchy. A related scene was the admonition: "Don't forget that you do not need ideologies alien to your Christian condition to love and to defend man." At his final appearance in Managua, some pre-rehearsed demonstrators tried to get the Pope to condemn the U.S.-sponsored exile assaults and offer a prayer for the Nicaraguans who had been killed, but the Holy Father would have none of it. Instead, he took up the cause of the Miskito Indians saying, "I love the Miskitos because they are human beings," and adding in the Miskito language, "Miskito power." Of course, because the early Spanish colonialists with the active participation of the church alternately murdered and enslaved them, there are no Indians in the western half of Nicaragua; the wholesale destruction of any remnants of the Mayan culture was also part of Catholicism's legacy. But if the U.S., with its record on the native question, can take advantage of revisionist-led mistreatment of the Miskitos, can the Pope be far behind?

The papal's defense of Indian rights reared its cynical head one more time during the crusade, when the Pope conducted a highly publicized visit to Quetzaltenango in Guatemala. Here, in one of the highland areas where large numbers of Indians have been picking up weapons and joining guerillas (and revisionist influence is also growing), the Pope spoke out against the "discrimination you suffer and the injustices you must put up with; the serious difficulties you have in defending your lands and your rights; the frequent lack of respect for your customs and traditions." He called for the formation of organizations, run by the church, to fight for "Indian rights." Naturally, this was punctuated by the warning to the villagers not to "allow yourself to be used by ideologies that incite you to violence and death."

Guatemala also offered a closeup view of the rivalry between the Protestant fundamentalism of General Rios Montt and the Catholicism of the Pope. One of Rios Montt's secret tribunals had marked six people for execution, and the pontiff had urged the general not to murder them while his holiness was traipsing around the region. But the general didn't really give a damn about the papal image, and the executions were carried out. It was a slap in the Pope's face, but then Rios Montt has long maintained that his born-again believers are better defenders of the faith than the Catholics. After all, there are too many of these "liberation theology" types running around in the Catholic Church, and while the Pope may be doing his best to get rid of them, you won't find any such nonsense in the religion of Ronald Reagan and Rios Montt.

The Vatican professed shock at the executions, calling them "incredible," and there was even speculation that the Pope might refuse to come to Guatemala. However, the Pope was needed here, and so the issue was never really in doubt. John Paul did make some "circumspect" comments about torture, massacres, executions and so forth, saying that "God will punish" those who do such things,

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but it was a limp-wristed sermon when compared with the hammer of "alien ideologies" and "inciting to violence" that he reserved for the "evil" opposition. When all is said and done, both the born-again butcher and the political pontiff serve the same god, and there is room for both at the U.S.' altar.

El Salvador

The Pope's nine-hour visit to El Salvador was the cornerstone of his mission. While the vast exposure of the U.S.' bloody role in El Salvador required a certain facade of distance, the Pope's trip was designed to offer the utmost support of the U.S.' dual tactics. At the preplanned welcoming ceremony, President Alvaro Magaña announced the new U.S. decision to move up El Salvador's presidential elections from their originally scheduled date in 1984 to December of this year. Then, as per the script, John Paul gave his support to the plan, saying it would help bring "true democracy" (nothing political here) to El Salvador, adding that the solution is "reconciliation." Thus the Pope gave his blessing for the particular negotiating tactic that the U.S. has adopted. U.S. administration leaders have made it clear that they are willing to hold formal talks with *certain* FDR leaders if the subject of those talks is participation in U.S.-sponsored elections. The \$110 million in new military aid for El Salvador is, in part, designed to add more pressure on those FDR leaders to accede to the U.S.' plan. The Pope's tacit endorsement is an added pressure towards the same end. A leader of the Christian Democrats drove the point home with his comments on the Pope's spectacle: "It is wonderful, I think it is the best visit in Central America," said Julio Rey Prendes. "In the elections we are going to assure all the guarantees possible to include the left."

The Pope also played to the grandstand by visiting the tomb of Archbishop Romero, murdered in 1980 while delivering mass. The late archbishop has become a big symbol to a wide-range of forces in El Salvador. It is well known that he was executed by the ruling Salvadoran compradors (including Roberto D'Aubuisson, current president of the Constituent Assembly). What is less well known is the fact that the Pope essentially gave the okay to Romero's executioners. The archbishop had been advocating "dialogue" and a "third way" at a time when the U.S. was demanding absolute obedience to the regime as it was then constituted. Romero had also called to the Salvadoran troops to disobey any orders to massacre civilians. The U.S.

lodged a protest of Romero's actions with the Vatican, and when there was no defense of Romero forthcoming, the way was cleared for a death squad style assassination of the archbishop. Considering the Pope's own role, the visit to Romero's tomb just might have set a papal record for hypocrisy — but there was too much competition for the record at every stop on his tour.

Just before his arrival in El Salvador, the Pope appointed Arturo Rivera y Damas as Romero's replacement. Rivera y Damas earned his promotion by being consistently "even-handed" in his condemnation of both "left" and "right." For example, when the government subjected the town of Berlin to an indiscriminate bombing campaign recently, Rivera y Damas blamed the guerrillas for having taken over the town!

For their part, the pro-Soviet revisionists in El Salvador tried to make the maximum use of the Pope's visit to promote the kind of negotiations they would like to see carried out — those that would leave them the most maneuvering room. A key part of their maneuvering is trying to use the symbol of Romero for that purpose. Thus, they organized a number of people to wave clandestine pictures that showed the Pope and the late archbishop together — a picture that had been banned by the official welcoming committee for the Pope. The front page of the Mexican newspaper *Uno Mas Uno* also featured a photo of FMLN members holding up a banner saying, "Welcome John Paul II, Justice for the Assassins of Msgr. Romero." But the Pope was ready with a snappy comeback: "I ask that you always respect his (Romero's) memory, and that no one ideological interest manipulates the sacrifice that a pastor delivered to his flock." And he further placed the blame on "ideologies that see struggle as the motive force of history" (sic) for "creating difficult conditions for dialogue."

All in all, it was a thoroughly professional performance from beginning to end. This "eminently religious" representative of the U.S. imperialist bloc had carried out his political task to the utmost. It should now be crystal clear to all that the question is not whether or not priests should be involved in politics, but which politics they will be permitted to be involved in. And in case someone missed the point, as his trip was ending, the Vatican announced that Poland was the Pope's next journey, scheduled for June. And as soon as he left the Caribbean, Ronald Reagan announced that he had made up his mind — El Salvador would need \$110 million more in military aid. □

State Clears Track To Railroad Darnell Summers

Murder charges brought again 14 years later? ... on flimsier evidence than in the original case in 1969? ... totally unprecedented!! Case dismissed on the grounds that it violated the defendant's right to due process and a speedy trial, ruled the judge. If you are a regular reader of the *RW* then you are no doubt wondering, didn't the judge already turn down a defense motion to dismiss the charges against Darnell Summers for pre-arrest delay and lack of speedy trial? He did.

Now one month later in an interesting twist, the same Judge Joseph Sullivan at a pre-trial hearing on March 2 in the Wayne County Circuit Court in Detroit, Michigan found that he could not say with certainty the reason there had been the same delay (14 years is a delay!) in bringing the case of Gale Simmons to trial. Therefore he dismissed the murder charge against her for the death of Robert Gonser, a Michigan red squad cop killed in 1968 during a rebellion in Inkster, Michigan. Sullivan in his ruling from the bench based the dismissal on the fact that the "evidence" which formed the basis of Simmons' arrest in 1981 was less incriminating than the "evidence" her arrest was based on in 1969. (In both instances the judge mainly referred to statements coerced from Simmons by the police implicating herself and others, including Darnell in Gonser's murder — statements which she later retracted as lies.)

If Judge Sullivan can't (really won't) explain why there was a 14 year delay in prosecuting Simmons, it is no mystery to anyone familiar with the relentless railroad of Darnell Summers, a Black revolutionary internationalist, currently underway in Detroit, Michigan. In the original 1969 case, when Simmons was a defendant, the judge did not bind her over for trial on grounds of insufficient evidence since she had agreed to become a witness for the state. Unfortunately for the prosecution, her testimony conflicted with that of their other "star witness" and both of them later recanted their testimony, admitting they had lied. The current prosecution of Gale Simmons was simply the state making good on its threat to try her for murder after she refused to testify against Darnell Summers. After spending all of 1981 harassing Simmons, arresting her on murder charges, keeping her incarcerated for several months, the prosecution finally got her to sign their scripted statement accusing Darnell of the Gonser murder. Two days after Darnell was extradited back to the U.S. from West Germany, in July 1982, Simmons called the media to publicly denounce the frameup of Darnell and repudiate the statement she had signed under police duress. In retribution and in a blatant and shabby attempt to tighten the vise on their former "star witness" the prosecution of Gale Simmons was underway. Judge Sullivan, in ruling to dismiss the charges against Simmons, was hardly weighing the injustice and trampling of her legal rights that had transpired. Rather it most likely reflected the prosecution's (with the active assistance of his honor) weighing how to best gear up for a conviction of Darnell Summers. Undoubtedly the state had to consider how well its effort to produce a compliant witness through continuing to prosecute Simmons was going, as well as the fact that her approaching trial ran a real risk of ending in acquittal, which would make a conviction of Darnell more difficult to obtain.

The ruling to dismiss the murder charge against Gale Simmons is fine — it exposes all the more clearly what the state has been up to all along in this case. It makes the prosecution's contention look even more ridiculous that this case was the product of "continuing investigation since 1969" in which witnesses just happened to come forward recently. It is a

stark, if unintended, admission that the arrest and prosecution of Simmons was all along a prelude and a means to try and railroad Darnell Summers to make an object lesson of Darnell to millions for his internationalist politics and his revolutionary work, especially in West Germany. (Simmons' falsified testimony in 1981 was the sole evidence used to effect Darnell's extradition back to the U.S. on murder charges.)

In case there is any doubt with these recent developments that the state plans to move full steam ahead with the railroad of Darnell Summers, the prosecution and the judge both took steps to help erase them. Immediately after the dismissal of the charges against Gale Simmons, the prosecutor announced to Detroit reporters that this would in *no way* change his intention to prosecute Darnell. The judge himself recently took some of the still pending pre-trial motions in Darnell's case under advisement and then as if to indicate how he would eventually rule on them, informed Darnell's attorney that the defense could appeal the ruling before the trial got underway. The judge added a final touch of irony to his ruling when he found in Gale Simmons' case that a 14 year delay in prosecution was "unprecedented." The judge said, "I've located cases in five years, six years, but I've located none of 14 years." Fourteen years, how unprecedented — except in the case of Darnell Summers which the very same lying judge is presiding over. And only one month earlier this judge had denied the motion to dismiss Darnell's case based on pre-arrest delay and lack of a speedy trial. Given all the lengths the state has gone to so far, the repeated use of already discredited, twice-recanted lies as "evidence", all the threats, cajoling and intimidation to coerce witnesses to lie in order to frame Darnell, it would not be far-fetched to expect more of the same in the future.

As always with these legal dogs, enough is never enough. In the course of

recent pre-trial hearings the state has insidiously and with the most unmitigated gall tried to actually assert the blame for the flip-flopping of their witnesses on revolutionaries who have consistently sought to publicly expose this railroad. During the February speedy trial evidentiary hearing in Darnell's case, one pig testified that in July 1980 he received a phone call from Gale Simmons, then a prosecution witness, stating that she was being threatened by the Communist Workers Party (sic) and was concerned for her life and that she later gave the same pig an article (which he claimed was from the *Revolutionary Worker*) that was the alleged basis for her fear and later recantation. This pig claimed Gale said the article stated that the case against Darnell would be dismissed if she did not testify and that "she read something into it." Of course, defense attorneys refuted the existence of these fabricated threats and the prosecution didn't produce one iota of evidence to back up these outrageous assertions. It is truly amazing levels of pig logic and hypocrisy for these same masters at threat and intimidation, who arrested Simmons "out of the blue" in Pennsylvania, jailed her for months and cranked up the legal machinery to send her to life in prison and a murder rap, exactly in order to falsely frame Darnell, to then turn around and point their fingers at an *RW* article which exposed the truth about their flimsy railroad, and especially their use of Simmons' coerced and discredited testimony as their sole "evidence" to have Darnell extradited. It would be completely laughable if there were not another threat implied against those who would expose them. In fact, it has been the prosecution and the political police who have had all along made such desperate efforts to coerce witnesses into testifying, using any rotten lie, the central tactic in their railroad of Darnell Summers. (There have been 3 different witnesses, including Simmons who the prosecutor has tried to

use at different times, each with mutually exclusive, conflicting stories, and all of these witnesses have admitted lying in exchange for leniency, dropping other unrelated charges against them and so on.) The current defense of Darnell Summers has never been based on awaiting a good turn in fluctuating witnesses but on politically exposing the flimsiness of the case and the true political motivations in their persecution of Darnell Summers and rallying forces to oppose it. That the state has at the heart of its case discredited, perjured, conflicting testimony only makes the nature of the railroad clearer.

It is political exposure that the state fears in trying to carry out this outrageous railroad for a minimal political price. This was spelled out in a memo released during a recent evidentiary hearing written by a woman in their extradition department. The memo dated July 15, 1982, read: "Due to the many letters received from around the country, W. Germany and Portugal from revolutionary internationalist groups protesting the extradition of this defendant who seems to be a hero with the communist movement... advised Lt. to make arrangements with Washington to get an Air Force plane on the return trip to avoid possible confrontation at the airport in Germany and to cancel his commercial reservations after he arrives safely in the U.S...." The prosecution's apprehension here is clearly over how to avoid a possible public political protest in Germany, to carry out the kidnapping of Darnell Summers back to the U.S. with as little public outcry as possible. Through all the twists and turns of this railroad, including important pre-trial hearings on the bad faith motion, try as they will, the state will not be able to avoid paying the price of political exposure for even attempting to carry out this railroad as more learn of it and continue to come forward and actively work to defeat it. □

Vet Writes

I, For One, Hail the Fury

To the *RW*,

As I finished reading your latest issue, a multitude of memories and associated feelings come to the surface. Feelings that were a major impetus to my stand today. In seeing the slogan "Unleash the Fury of Women as a Mighty Force for Revolution," I am at once catapulted back to the early '70s when the women's movement was very radical, very furious, and right on target. I was an idealistic but explorative young man who sensed a kinship with this fury. As paradoxical as it may seem, I was a member of the most imperialistic aspect of this competitive, anti-feminist society, the military.

We would do well to explore the oppression of women in the military. On a daily basis, I experienced the super-macho, violently competitive atmosphere of today's warrior. I remember a particular incident of being told by a career Air Force sergeant that bombers loved to bomb village bridges at noon in Vietnam because that was when the most women and children would be crossing those bridges. This example of murderous chauvinism against women is twice as acute now as the present ruling class is once again thrusting the military to the forefront.

I cannot describe the intense psychic pain experienced as I saw the small percentage of women thrust into the wolves' den and viewed the predators preying over them like flies over the proverbial shit, with sex as the only motivation. For instance I have heard many officers of different ranks say that the way to control women is to keep them

split (meaning their legs).

The sub-culture that I was forced to live in was so unifocal in view that to think outside of it was heresy. Many of us turned to drugs for escape. What I see now I have been raving about for years, but women have no say at all in today's Navy, Army, etc. Today's military man is more oppressive than ever. They fear that the last bastion of chauvinism will be infiltrated by normal people: women. Some of the highest incidences of wife-battering are in the military, and having spent some time with the Marines as part of a medical team I can attest to the atrocities committed there. For example, there were numerous instances where I saw, but was told to be quiet, or saw the incident but read a totally different report, of wives, after being victimized and beaten by their husbands, snuck into the back door to see a medic or doctor they knew would say nothing, especially in the middle of the night. If the husband was an officer or senior enlisted man, and some complaints were made, the commanding officer would discreetly ask that the report be thrown out and would "guarantee" counseling to the man. Another incident I'm reminded of is a joint exercise between the Marines and the Army. It was decided to allow the Marines to mingle with the Army. The first night the Marines who were all men attempted twice to rape the Army women who were with the Army infantry. What was done if anything to those Marines was kept very quiet.

Having left the military with furious disgust, I can only admire even more the disgust that women hold today. I

grow even more irate with bourgeois movies like "An Officer and A Gentleman," that display such oppressive, unrealistic crap, making the military look like a shaper of men and "lost" women cooing after these reshaped men.

The military is only a microcosm of society that reflects the basis of society's drives and feelings. And it is because of this that it is worth studying. It would be so fitting to see the symbol of imperialism, the military, be the first link of the chain that women's fury breaks. Men had better wake up and realize what is happening. My military experience only forced an internal conflict as I felt one way but was told to think another. Out of conflict comes revolution, growth. For me, I saw the hypocrisy and sexism rampant in this most chauvinistic and jingoistic sub-culture.

As women break the shackles of oppression and grow, men can choose to grow with them and shape destiny together, or they can choose to bury their heads in the sand. They will find today's Army groveling in the same dirt. I for one decided long ago to grow, and I shall also break those chains that are even stronger on the visionary men of society than one might think.

Yes! Women of today, break those chains and open the door of revolution. As they unleash that fury men can choose to affirm that fury or can stand rigid and attempt to smother it. I, for one, hail the fury and shall advance on to revolution.

An eight year Navy man that rebelled

Women's Day March in Berkeley

A powerful International Women's Day rally and march started at noon on March 8th at the UC Berkeley campus. The rally was called by the Berkeley Feminist Alliance, and speakers included the Oakland Feminist Women's Health Center, Tina Fishman, and the satire group, Ladies Against Women.

The Berkeley Feminist Alliance had set aside upper Sproul Plaza for the rally weeks before, but apparently the university authorities sensed the political threat the rally posed; on the morning of March 8th, organizers learned that all the sound amplification equipment had been locked in a room that had been declared unsafe due to asbestos! No one was supposed to even enter the room, but a sympathetic electrician put on a respirator and managed to piece together a sound system out of a tangle of equipment. It was well worth his effort.

The MC set a sweeping and internationalist tone to the rally: "Slavery still exists, feudalism exists, rape still exists, and we are going to stop it. Our intent is to stop rape. Our intent is to stop rape of the people, our intent is to stop rape of the land, our intent is to stop rape of women...our intent is to stop rape

worldwide. Rape is international."

The rally drew over 100 students, mainly women, who were attracted by its radical and revolutionary thrust and saw it as a breath of fresh air, in marked contrast to the normal political scene at Berkeley these days. The speeches had a hard, militant edge and a number targeted imperialism worldwide.

Tina Fishman said in her speech, "This case (the political kidnapping of her daughter) is part of a political and ideological offensive on women — to drag society back to medieval standards of queens and subjects — a reactionary atmosphere in preparation to fight for the old order in a nuclear exchange to see who will rule over us. Part of this onslaught is to even have women accept the idea of rape as a natural phenomenon — part of men's instinct for survival to perpetuate his gene pool as part of natural selection, a concept now being legitimately debated in socio-biological sciences!"

Many of the women commented that they felt the whole rally represented something new, and quite welcome. The MC called for people to march, and to act on what had been said at the rally and

about 100 women went on the march around the campus and into Berkeley.

The march continued the internationalism and radical thrust of the rally. One of the targets was the campus ROTC building, where an American flag was produced, and stuffed into a garbage can. The march then went into the city of Berkeley, where a porno shop was targeted. Garbage was thrown in the doorway, shelves inside were dumped over, and the very appropriate red, white and blue bunting draped around the display in the front window was tampered with by some youth inspired by the march and rally. Returning to the campus, the march targeted the BETA Fraternity, a fraternity notorious for racist and sexist harassment.

A further indication of the timeliness and impact of the action was the favorable front page article on the march in the Berkeley student newspaper the next day. The rally and march was certainly a hint of things to come, and a sign of the fury of women manifesting itself in a new and fuller way on the Berkeley campus. □

Another "Handout"

In January, Interior Secretary James Watt stated, "If you want an example of the failures of socialism, don't go to Russia, come here to America and go to an Indian reservation." Last week, another example of what Mr. Watt's reservation "socialism" is all about and how the government is dealing with it came to light.

At a science writers' forum in Washington, D.C., the head of the National Kidney Foundation, Dr. David Ogden, made public a memo from the Indian Health Service, signed by its leading officials, that bars kidney dialysis treatment "for new patients (with) end-stage renal disease." The order applies to Indians on reservations in most of Arizona. Dr. Ogden, infuriated about this, said that the failure to obtain the periodic blood cleansing that dialysis provides would be a "sentence of death" for probably close to 20 Indians per year, deaths which could almost certainly be prevented through dialysis. He said that this will save the government half a million dollars per year — since annual treatment costs about \$25,000 per patient. The treatment will simply be withheld, and the disease will take its course. One more "hand-out" from Uncle Sam, one more "free ride" — once again, like so many times before, straight to the graveyard.

That the Indians get renal, or kidney, diseases and need dialysis treatments in the first place is itself a product of the wretched conditions of Mr. Watt's reservation "socialism". Among those who will be cut off from dialysis are members of two tribes, the Pima and Papago, who have the highest rates of diabetes in the world, and, according to Dr. Ogden, are at far greater than normal risk of end-stage kidney disease. The incidence of these diseases among Indians in Arizona generally is about twice that of the general population in the U.S. Among the factors contributing to this is the Indians' lack of food and their high-carbohydrate diet.

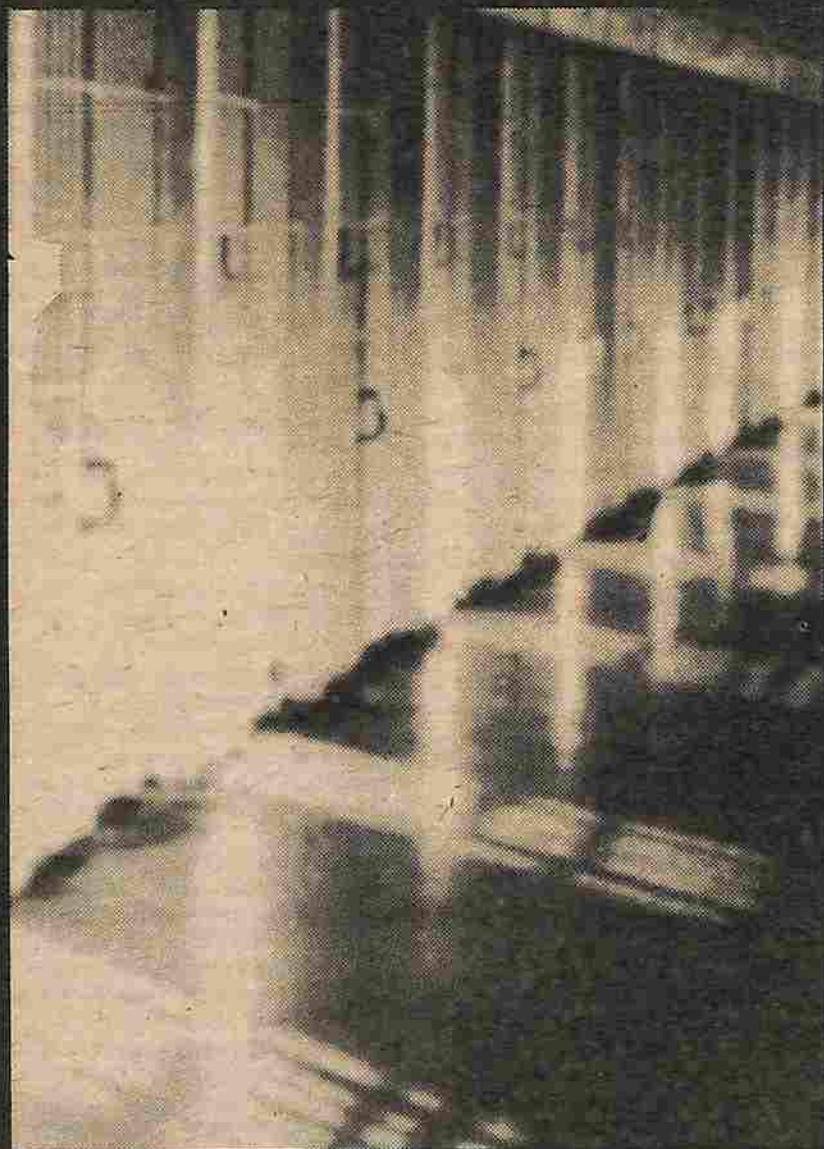
In response to Dr. Ogden's exposure, the government said that the memo was "an internal management document only." It wasn't meant for public eyes! Murdering calculations of the price of Indian peoples' lives are normally carried out by our rulers in private! □

Wilson

Continued from page 2
been the focus of sharp debate and discussion. One view pins all the blame on Dickow and Arabs in general. At the same time others who have been drawn into motion by this see it differently and argue another point of view. One man put it like this to a roomful of friends and neighbors gathered to discuss the developments: "They got you in a vise with this kind of thing. Here I am getting ready to fight one man and I'm standing on a soup line. Meanwhile those at the top are sitting back and passing all kinds of laws every day aimed at keeping us down while we're thinking about this other guy. This thing here is to confuse you. And who are these people? They are peons in their own country. Only a tiny handful over there own anything. These Chaldeans are treated in their own country like we are here. And the Palestinians, why they don't even have a country, it was stolen from them."

A.C. Wilson is dead. Meantime the system whose hand lies behind his murder is jockeying to obscure its role in the whole situation. People are outraged over his murder and even more so over the statement the bourgeoisie has made about the value of the life of a Black youth. In the course of the wrangling and agonizing going on the real workings of this setup are becoming clear. In the words of one guy at the end of a long and heated discussion, "Let's be for real. It's the system that created this situation. We have to target the enemy in this thing." □

Shine the Light of Revolution Behind the Prison Walls



Contribute to the Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund

The Revolutionary Communist Party receives many letters and requests for literature from prisoners in the hell-hole torture chambers from Attica to San Quentin. There are thousands more brothers and sisters behind bars who have refused to be beaten down and corrupted in the dungeons of the capitalist class and who thirst for and need the *Revolutionary Worker* and other revolutionary literature. To help make possible getting the Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party as well as other Party literature and books on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought behind the prison walls, the *Revolutionary Worker* has established a special fund. Contributions should be sent to:

Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund
Box 3486, Merchandise Mart
Chicago, IL 60654

We prisoners, members of the Black Prisoners Caucus at the State Reformatory at Monroe, are itself the product of gross discrimination, send our revolutionary greetings to all those celebrating International Women's Day. We see that part of the whole process of revolution is breaking the chains of women's oppression, what a tremendous force for revolution this unleashes and that without the full participation of women, revolution itself is impossible. We also see that, as some of society's politically conscious people here, we have a responsibility to struggle for that kind of understanding among our brothers here and people we know outside the wall. The chains of women's oppression, along with all the chains of oppression under which we suffer, will be broken!

signed by the
Black Prisoners Caucus 1983
and seven individual members
Monroe, Washington

Dear Comrades,

It is my sincere wishes that upon this Communique it finds you and all the brothers and sisters of R.W. in the very best of health and spirit...

I have never subscribed or wrote this office prior to now, so allow me the opportunity at this time to give you a brief introduction.

I am a young Black man, age 22, and presently incarcerated over here at Montgomery County Prison. I was a recent cellmate of a couple of brothers who came to Montgomery County Prison from upstate for purposes of trial.

While here, they really opened my eyes to things I found very hard to believe. Since their departure, I have read *Revolutionary Worker*, one of several newspapers which they had left behind. I am still locked in the hole and I truly miss reading newspapers such as *Revolutionary Worker*, and I am in serious need of some reading material because after reading *R.W.*, I find these everyday American newspapers to be quite obscuring to say the least.

At the present time I am without any funds due to property that I was accused of destroying. My visits have been cut off for 30 days and I will subscribe to *R.W.* as soon as I am financially able. Would you please mail me copies until then?

The Struggle Continues

I hope when these few lines reach my comrades that they find my Brothers and Sisters in a strong state of mind and in good health. As for myself I am strong and being strong for the struggle. I have some bad news for you all that two weeks ago I was set up by these Anglo-Saxons and put in the box in Attica and the note that you all had sent me I have received (regarding RCP Funddrive—ed.) and I am sorry I cannot get some help from some of the righteous fellow comrades here in this hell-hole but I hope that they have got your call for the Major Party Fund Drive. So my brothers and sisters out there struggling in this world of a depressed state I know it might not be much, but things are bad in here and they are even more bad off in this box, but I am sending a Fund Drive donation for \$5.00...

I close for now, but not my thoughts of you all out there. And the struggle still lives inside of me no matter how much they try to drain my mind and spirit, you know. And I also close with my Peace and Strength to you all.

Attica

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Reprint from Mass Line

Behind the Violence in Assam

Below we are reprinting an article from the February edition of the Indian Marxist-Leninist newspaper, Mass Line, on the violence that has engulfed the northeastern Indian state of Assam, triggered by the enforced holding of elections by the Gandhi government.

A few background points are in order.

For the past several years, the Assamese people—one of the many oppressed nationalities of India—have been rebelling against the central government, last year bringing down the state administration and forcing Gandhi to place Assam under "direct rule"—martial law. The recent election was for the purpose of reasserting this "direct rule"—through democratic means, of course. Assamese nationalists called for a boycott of the election as part of the struggle against the central government. In the course of this, violence broke out between different sections of the oppressed. This has been manifested in a series of brutal raids and massacres that have involved Assamese, various tribal groupings in the region, and Bengali immigrants who have streamed into Assam from neighboring Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) over the last few years and whom Gandhi has tried to cultivate as a base of support. (But apparently, as the article implies, the fighting was not only between those who supported and opposed the election.)

An element of the Assamese national movement has been the call for the deportation of Bengali immigrants—the "foreign nationals"—and recently, a demand that the immigrants be excluded from the voting rolls. An editorial in the Jan. issue of Mass Line spoke to the source of the situation in which the oppressed are being set at each other's throats:

"The foreign nationals issue which has plunged Assam into a three year long agitation against the policies of the central government is the product of the irrational division of the Indian sub continent on religious basis. This was done by the British imperialists with the full support from Congress and Muslim League, the two main collaborationists of the British rulers. The policy of suppression of minority nationalities perpetrated by the dominant rulers after 1947 only added to the problem. Cultural overshadowing and economic plunder of various nationalities is as rampant within India in the same way as imperialist culture and economic plunder stands in relation to the entire country."

Of course, in recent decades it has been the Soviet and U.S. overlords that have overseen the further carving and recarving of the region that has exacerbated divisions among the people. In fact, it was atrocities of the war they instigated between India and Pakistan in 1971 and the subsequent oppression and exploitation of broken-off Bangladesh by these contending imperialists that was responsible for driving the latest wave of Bengali immigrants into Assam.

It is important to note that the Assamese national movement itself is contradictory, made up of divergent class forces. An excerpt from a document adopted by the Assam State Plenum of the Central Reorganisation Committee of the Communist Party of India (M-L) in November 1982 sheds some light on the complexities involved. In analyzing the movement in Assam, the document notes: "Though (the) petty bourgeois class is the main fighting force in (the) Assam movement, they constitute a mere fraction of its leadership. They are largely influenced by other sections of leadership like local bourgeoisie and feudals. . . ." (The resolution appears in full in Mass Line, Feb. '83.)

The Indian government imposed the elections on Assam with every expectation of unleashing reactionary forces and

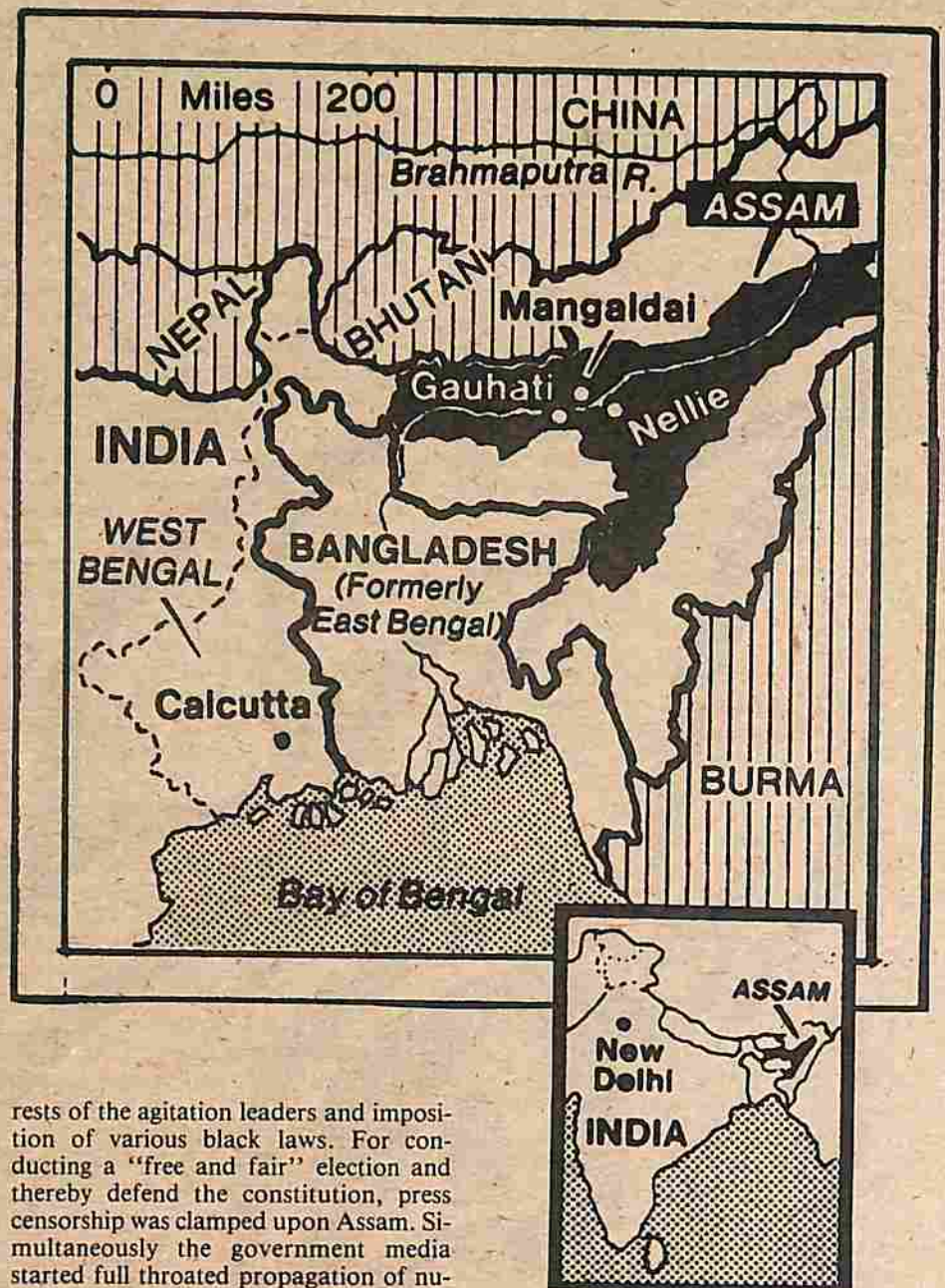
setting sections of the masses against each other while at the same time manufacturing justifications for increased intervention and suppression by the forces of the state. (To cite just one example of the government's incitements, India's railway minister was exposed as having made speeches to Bengalis in which he said, "If they kill one of yours, you kill four of them.") And in these efforts, Gandhi and her Congress (I) Party received the unqualified backing of India's revisionist ruling partners as the CPI and the CPI(M) (Communist Party of India and its "Marxist" progeny—both pro-Soviet) headed up a front called the Left and Democratic Alliance which fully backed the elections and helped whip up Bengalis against Assamese, with the CPI(M) in particular crying that the struggle in Assam was a secessionist trend and that it should be opposed to defend India's "national integrity."

Likewise, the hand of India's other imperialist mentor could be visibly seen stirring the waters of reaction. Notably the pro-U.S. Janata Party opposed the holding of elections while supporting reactionary incitement by Assamese leaders. This stance was clearly calculated to aim some fire at the well-exposed position of the revisionist parties in siding with the government and to embarrass Gandhi—perhaps creating some pressure for her to put more eggs into the U.S., not the Soviet, basket.

Within the last two weeks more than a thousand innocent people were killed in Assam. Estimates of the number vary, but the most conservative calculations point out fratricidal clashes have claimed more than six hundred lives. Top government bureaucrats gracefully concede that they have "lost count" of the dead bodies. They intend perhaps to supply the correct information after the dead have fully integrated with soil. About four hundred people are estimated to have been killed in violence involving the police and paramilitary [police] forces. Beyond doubt the estimated number of one thousand deaths is no where near the actuality. The exact number will never be known, as is the case with all such episodes.

This situation was not unanticipated. When Mrs. Gandhi declared elections for Assam she knew what's going to follow. During her limited election tour in "safe" areas in Assam she made it clear that the people of Assam are of no relevance to her. She declared that only those who want elections to be conducted need vote and that she is not bothered about the overwhelming number of Assamese people who did not want an imposed election. All other ruling class parties also knew very well what's about to emerge. Still, some of them wanted elections to be conducted "at any cost." All these animals are definite partners in the horror committed in Assam. They are all soaked in the innocent blood of the people and today or tomorrow they will be stripped to their skin in front of the people, showing all the patches of caked blood on them.

The entire episode smacks of a very well planned conspiracy from the side of the rulers. While "negotiations" were going on between the representatives of the three year old Assam movement, serious plans were being devised and perfected to crack the movement. Like their imperialist predecessors the method adopted by the present rulers too was to divide the people and thus crush the latter's opposition. That is why Mrs. Gandhi all on a sudden developed respect for the much ravaged constitution and declared elections. The declaration of elections was immediately followed by large scale ar-



rests of the agitation leaders and imposition of various black laws. For conducting a "free and fair" election and thereby defend the constitution, press censorship was clamped upon Assam. Simultaneously the government media started full throated propagation of numerous canards. The government media agencies, especially the All India Radio pronounced shameless lies and distortions with the objective of misleading the people everywhere. And then, the government flew in fifty extra battalions of Central Reserve Police and an unspecified number of military personnel. Tens of thousands of bureaucrats and clerks were also imported into Assam for poll duty. Those officials in Assam who refused to do poll duty were summarily sacked. Even those officials outside Assam who expressed unwillingness to go to Assam were disciplined promptly.

According to agitation sources, there is in Assam one CRP person for every three families. This is in addition to the number of state police and army. According to newspaper reports, Assam (just before elections) looked like a besieged area with regular gunning down of people who stubbornly resisted the attempts of the central government to impose its government on them. The resistance of the people took novel turns with Janata curfews and the like. Sporadic attacks on government offices, police and CRP, running dogs of the central government and communication network erupted. The agitation took a definite turn in the sense that it became an increasingly anti-state one in its manifestations. The resistance assumed a genuine mass character with the election candidates having to stay off their voters. Within a few days the CRP shot down hundreds of people and arrested and injured many thousands. After all this the polling was remarkably low. Many hundreds of booths registered no voters at all.

Hundreds of other polling booths registered less than 5% voting. Only in the areas inhabited by the migrant population was the voting anywhere close to normal. Even in these few areas, the percentage of voting did not cross 50%. It was decisively shown to the outside world that election is a fraud and is thoroughly illegal and invalid. The anti-people character of the present elections in Assam was finely exposed by the resistance and boycott by the people there.

Such a predicament is not all that pleasing for the reactionaries. Repression let loose by armed forces of the central government did not mean much because the people were determined to split the fraud imposed on them. It was in this situation that fratricidal killings broke out in the predominantly tribal and immigrant areas. Mindless violence set in, dousing the land in the blood of men,

women and children. Mrs. Gandhi made a pre-planned tour to the riot-torn area and vehemently pronounced that the responsibility for the carnage rests on the shoulders of the agitationists. Some other co-conspirator made an aerial survey of the area and said the same thing. All the parliamentary skunks were struck by sorrow! None of the "opposition" fellows seems to know who is responsible. The same case seems to be true for the monopoly press which was taking one side or the other.

Academics who are in love with numbers and living in commodes will certainly come out with some theories. We can anticipate what they are going to say. Some "deep rooted ethnic factors" will be cited as the reason for this carnage. We cannot expect them to smell the stench of rotting corpses and festering wounds because of their locational peculiarity of being in shit pots permanently. But surely someone is responsible for this bloodshed.

In Assam today, people are pitted against people. History teaches us that only the oppressors can gain from this. In this specific case the reactionaries have scored a success, at least in the short run. How long this success story will last is quite another matter. A crying incongruity in the whole scene unmistakably points at the bloody hands of the central government. Though Assam is flooded with army and paramilitary to "safeguard democracy," the carnages that took place were very leisurely affairs. The explanation dished out is that the state murderers were busy murdering people elsewhere. And the delay in reaching the state murderers to riot areas is explained away by saying that the agitators had burned down bridges and erected road blockades to prevent people from voting. But none of the burned out bridges or boulders on the streets could prevent the CRP from shooting down the people who wanted the elections to be cancelled. Evidently, the logic is quite flimsy. The central government wanted the riots. That is why no professional murderers were around to witness the riots. In none of the burned out places, whether Nelli or Gohpur or Chamaria or Jagiroad were the CRP or the Assam police anywhere in sight. The rioters took their own time. The medieval type of butcherings were reenacted with hordes of armed killers chasing innocent people and hacking them down one by

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Lenin On KARL MARX

(A Brief Biographical Sketch with an Excerpt)

March 14, 1983 is the 100th anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, and on this occasion the RW is reprinting below an excerpt from an essay by V.I. Lenin on the life and work of Marx.

Karl Marx was born May 5, 1818, in the city of Trier (Rhenish Prussia). His father was a lawyer, a Jew, who in 1824 adopted Protestantism. The family was well-to-do, cultured, but not revolutionary. After graduating from the Gymnasium in Trier, Marx entered university, first at Bonn and later at Berlin, where he studied jurisprudence but devoted most of his attention to history and philosophy. He concluded his course in 1841, submitting his doctoral dissertation on the philosophy of Epicurus. In his views Marx at that time was a Hegelian idealist. In Berlin he belonged to the circle of "Left Hegelians" (Bruno Bauer and others) who sought to draw atheistic and revolutionary conclusions from Hegel's philosophy.

After graduating from the university, Marx moved to Bonn, expecting to become a professor. But the reactionary policy of the government — which in 1832 deprived Ludwig Feuerbach of his chair and in 1836 refused to allow him to return to the university, and in 1841 forbade the young professor Bruno Bauer to lecture at

Bonn — forced Marx to abandon an academic career. At that time the views of the Left Hegelians were developing very rapidly in Germany. Ludwig Feuerbach, particularly after 1836, began to criticize theology and turn to materialism, which in 1841 completely gained the upper hand in his philosophy (*The Essence of Christianity*); in 1843 his *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future* appeared. "One must have oneself experienced the liberating effect" of these books, Engels subsequently wrote of these works of Feuerbach. "At once we [i.e., the Left Hegelians, including Marx] all became Feuerbachians." At that time some Rhenish radical bourgeois who had certain points in common with the Left Hegelians founded an opposition paper in Cologne, the *Rheinische Zeitung* (the first number appeared on January 1, 1842). Marx and Bruno Bauer were invited to be the chief contributors, and in October 1842 Marx became chief editor and removed from Bonn to Cologne. The revolutionary-democratic trend of the paper became more and more pronounced under Marx's editorship, and the government first subjected the paper to double and triple censorship and then decided to suppress it altogether on January 1, 1843. Marx had to resign the editorship before that date, but his resignation did not save the paper, which was closed down in March 1843. Of the

Soon to be published

FOR

**On the "Crisis of Marxism"
Power of Marxism—Now M**

An Essay Marking the 100th Anniversary

"We, in our turn, mark
the new era. Let us
have sown drag



Exposition of Marxism)

more important articles contributed by Marx to the *Rheinische Zeitung*, Engels notes ... an article on the condition of the peasant wine-growers of the Moselle Valley. Marx's journalistic activity made him realize that he was not sufficiently acquainted with political economy, and he zealously set out to study it.

In 1843, in Kreuznach, Marx married Jenny von Westphalen, a childhood friend to whom he had been engaged while still a student. His wife came from a reactionary family of the Prussian nobility. Her elder brother was Prussian Minister of the Interior at a most reactionary period, 1850-58. In the autumn of 1843 Marx went to Paris in order to publish a radical magazine abroad, together with Arnold Ruge (born 1802, died 1880; a Left Hegelian; in 1825-30, in prison; after 1848, a political exile; after 1866-70, a Bismarckian). Only one issue of this magazine, *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, appeared. It was discontinued owing to the difficulty of secret distribution in Germany and to disagreements with Ruge. In his articles in this magazine Marx already appeared as a revolutionary advocating "merciless criticism of everything existing," and in particular "criticism by weapons," and appealing to the masses and to the proletariat.

In September 1844 Frederick Engels came to Paris for a few days, and from

that time forth became Marx's closest friend. They both took a most active part in the then seething life of the revolutionary groups in Paris (of particular importance was Proudhon's doctrine, which Marx thoroughly demolished in his *Poverty of Philosophy*, 1847), and, vigorously combating the various doctrines of petty-bourgeois socialism, they worked out the theory and tactics of revolutionary proletarian socialism, or communism (Marxism) In 1845, on the insistent demand of the Prussian Government, Marx was banished from Paris as a dangerous revolutionary. He removed to Brussels. In the spring of 1847 Marx and Engels joined a secret propaganda society called the Communist League; they took a prominent part in the Second Congress of the League (London, November 1847), and at its request drew up the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which appeared in February 1848. With the clarity and brilliance of genius, this work outlines the new world outlook — consistent materialism, which also embraces the realm of social life, dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development, the theory of the class struggle and of the world-historic revolutionary role of the proletariat, the creator of a new, communist society.

When the Revolution of February 1848 broke out, Marx was banished from Belgium. He returned to Paris, whence, after the March Revolution, he went to Cologne, Germany. There the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was published from June 1, 1848, to May 19, 1849; Marx was the editor-in-chief. The new theory was brilliantly corroborated by the course of the revolutionary events of 1848-49, as it has been since corroborated by all proletarian and democratic movements of all countries in the world. The victorious counter-revolution first instigated court

proceedings against Marx (he was acquitted on February 9, 1849) and then banished him from Germany (May 16, 1849). Marx first went to Paris, was again banished after the demonstration of June 13, 1849, and then went to London, where he lived to the day of his death.

His life as a political exile was a very hard one, as the correspondence between Marx and Engels (published in 1913) clearly reveals. Marx and his family suffered dire poverty. Were it not for Engels' constant and self-denying financial support, Marx would not only have been unable to finish *Capital* but would have inevitably perished from want. Moreover, the prevailing doctrines and trends of petty-bourgeois socialism, and of non-proletarian socialism in general, forced Marx to carry on a continuous and merciless fight and sometimes to repel the most savage and monstrous personal attacks (*Herr Vogt*). Holding aloof from the circles of political exiles, Marx developed his materialist theory in a number of historical works, devoting his efforts chiefly to the study of political economy. Marx revolutionized this science (see below, "The Marxist Doctrine") in his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859) and *Capital* (Vol. I, 1867).

The period of revival of the democratic movements at the end of the fifties and in the sixties recalled Marx to practical activity. In 1864 (September 28) the International Working Men's Association — the famous First International — was founded in London. Marx was the heart and soul of this organization; he was the author of its first Address and a host of resolutions, declarations and manifestoes. Uniting the working-class movement of various countries, striving to direct into the channel of joint activity the various forms of non-proletarian, pre-Marxist socialism (Mazzini, Proudhon, Bakunin, liberal trade-unionism in England, Lassallean vacillations to the Right in Germany, etc.), and combating the theories of all these sects and petty schools, Marx hammered out a uniform tactic for the proletarian struggle of the working class in the various countries. After the fall of the Paris Commune (1871) — of which Marx gave such a profound, clear-cut, brilliant, effective and revolutionary appraisal (*The Civil War in France*, 1871) — and after the International was split by the Bakuninists, the existence of that organization in Europe became impossible. After the Hague Congress of the International (1872) Marx had the General Council of the International transferred to New York. The First International had accomplished its historical role, making way for a period of immeasurably larger growth of the working-class movement in all the countries of the world, a period, in fact, when the movement grew in breadth and when mass socialist workers' parties in individual national states were created.

His strenuous work in the International and his still more strenuous theoretical occupations completely undermined Marx's health. He continued his work on the reshaping of political economy and the completion of *Capital*, for which he collected a mass of new material and studied a number of languages (Russian, for instance); but ill-health prevented him from finishing *Capital*.

On December 2, 1881, his wife died. On March 14, 1883, Marx peacefully passed away in his armchair. He lies buried with his wife in the Highgate Cemetery, London. Of Marx's children some died in childhood in London when the family lived in dire poverty. Three daughters married English and French socialists: Eleanor Aveling, Laura Lafargue and Jenny Longuet. The latter's son is [in 1914, at the time this was written — *RW*] a member of the French Socialist Party.⁴

THE MARXIST DOCTRINE

Marxism is the system of the views and teachings of Marx. It was Marx who continued and with genius consummated the three main ideological currents of the nineteenth century, belonging to the three most advanced countries of mankind: classical German philosophy, classical English political economy, and French socialism together with French revolutionary doctrines in general. The remarkable consistency and integrity of Marx's views, acknowledged even by his opponents, views which in their totality

constitute modern materialism and modern scientific socialism, as the theory and programme of the working-class movement in all the civilized countries of the world, oblige us to present a brief outline of his world outlook in general before proceeding to the exposition of the principal content of Marxism, namely, Marx's economic doctrine.

Philosophical Materialism

From 1844-45, when his views took shape, Marx was a materialist, in particular a follower of Ludwig Feuerbach, whose weak sides he saw, later as well, only in the fact that his materialism was not consistent and comprehensive enough. Marx saw the world-historic and "epoch-making" importance of Feuerbach precisely in his having resolutely broken away from the idealism of Hegel and in his proclamation of materialism, which already in the eighteenth century, especially in France, "was not only a struggle against the existing political institutions and ... religion and theology; it was just as much a ... struggle ... against all metaphysics" (in the sense of "drunken speculation" as distinct from "sober philosophy"). (*The Holy Family*, in the *Literarischer Nachlass*.) "To Hegel," wrote Marx, "... the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos [the creator, the maker] of the real world With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." (*Capital*, Vol. I, Afterword to the Second Edition.) In full conformity with this materialist philosophy of Marx's, and expounding it, Frederick Engels wrote in *Anti-Dühring* (which Marx read in the manuscript): "The unity of the world does not consist in its being The real unity of world consists in its materiality, and this is proved ... by a long and laborious development of philosophy and natural science." "*Motion is the mode of existence of matter*. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be Matter without motion is just as inconceivable as motion without matter." "But if we ... ask what thought and consciousness are and whence they come, we find that they are products of the human brain and that man himself is a product of nature, who has developed in and along with his environment; whence it is self-evident that the products of the human brain, which in the last analysis are also products of nature, do not contradict the rest of nature's interconnections but correspond to them." "Hegel was an idealist. To him the thoughts within his brain were not the more or less abstract images [*Abbilder*, reflections; Engels sometimes speaks of 'imprints'] of actual things and processes, but on the contrary, things and their development were only the realized images of the 'Idea,' existing somewhere from eternity before the world existed."⁵ In his *Ludwig Feuerbach* — in which he expounds his and Marx's views on Feuerbach's philosophy, and which he sent to the press after re-reading an old manuscript written by Marx and himself in 1844-45 on Hegel, Feuerbach and the materialist conception of history — Engels writes: "The great basic question of all philosophy, and especially of more recent philosophy, is that concerning the relation of thinking and being ... the relation of mind to nature ... which is primary, mind or nature Philosophers were divided into two great camps according to their answer to this question. Those who asserted the primacy of mind over nature and, in the last analysis, therefore, assumed some kind of creation of the world ... formed the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism." Any other use of the concepts of (philosophical) idealism and materialism leads only to confusion. Marx decidedly rejected not only idealism, which is always connected in one way or another with religion, but also the views, especially widespread in our day, of Hume and Kant, agnosticism, criticism and positivism in their various forms, regarding such a philosophy as a "reactionary" concession to idealism and at best "a shamefaced way of surreptitiously accepting materialism while publicly denying it."⁶ On this question,

Continued on page 10

R A HARVEST OF DRAGONS

"n" and the
More than Ever by Bob Avakian
Anniversary of Marx's Death

... must also understand the specific features and tasks of
... let us not imitate those sorry Marxists of whom Marx said: 'I
... dragon's teeth and harvested fleas.' "

Lenin, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our
Revolution," *CW*, Vol. 24, p. 86





The arrest of Karl Marx in Brussels during the revolutionary uprisings which swept Europe in 1848.

MARX

Continued from page 9

see, in addition to the above-mentioned works of Engels and Marx, a letter of Marx to Engels dated December 12, 1866, in which Marx, referring to an utterance of the well-known naturalist Thomas Huxley that was "more materialistic" than usual, and to his recognition that "as long as we actually observe and think, we cannot possibly get away from materialism," reproaches him for leaving a "loophole" for agnosticism and Humism. Especially should we note Marx's view on the relation between freedom and necessity: "...freedom is the recognition of necessity. 'Necessity is blind only in so far as it is not understood.'" (Engels, *Anti-Dühring*)¹⁰ This means the recognition of objective law in nature and of the dialectical transformation of necessity into freedom (in the same manner as the transformation of the unknown but knowable "thing-in-itself" into the "thing-for-us," of the "essence of things" into "phenomena"). Marx and Engels considered the fundamental shortcomings of the "old" materialism, including the materialism of Feuerbach (and still more of the "vulgar" materialism of Büchner, Vogt and Moleschott), to be: 1) that this materialism was "predominantly mechanical," failing to take account of the latest developments of chemistry and biology (in our day it would be necessary to add: and of the electrical theory of matter); 2) that the old materialism was non-historical, non-dialectical (metaphysical, in the sense of anti-dialectical), and did not apply the standpoint of development consistently and comprehensively; and 3) that these old materialists regarded the "human essence" abstractly and not as the "ensemble" of all (concretely and historically defined) "social relations," and therefore only "interpreted" the world, whereas the point is to "change" it; that is to say, they did not understand the importance of "revolutionary, practical activity."¹¹

Dialectics

Hegelian dialectics, the most comprehensive, the richest in content, and the most profound doctrine of development, was regarded by Marx and Engels as the greatest achievement of classical German philosophy. They considered every other

formulation of the principle of development, of evolution, to be one-sided and poor in content, and distorting and mutilating the real course of development (which often proceeds by leaps, catastrophes and revolutions) in nature and in society. "Marx and I were pretty well the only people to salvage conscious dialectics [from the destruction of idealism, including Hegelianism] for the materialist conception of nature..." "Nature is the test of dialectics, and it must be said for modern science that it has furnished this test with very rich [this was written before the discovery of radium, electrons, the transmutation of elements, etc.] and daily increasing materials, and thus has shown that in the last resort nature works dialectically and not metaphysically..."¹²

"The great basic thought," Engels writes, "that the world is to be comprehended not as a complex of ready-made things but as a complex of processes, in which apparently stable things no less than the concepts, their mental reflections in our heads, go through an uninterrupted change of coming into being and passing away... — this great fundamental thought has so thoroughly permeated ordinary consciousness especially since Hegel's time that it is now scarcely ever contradicted in this general form. But it is one thing to acknowledge it in words and another to carry it out in reality in detail in each domain of investigation." For dialectical philosophy, "nothing final, absolute or sacred can endure.... It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything, and nothing can endure in its presence except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away, of endless ascent from the lower to the higher, of which it is itself the mere reflection in the thinking brain." Thus, according to Marx, dialectics is "the science of the general laws of motion, both of the external world and of human thought."¹³

This revolutionary side of Hegel's philosophy was adopted and developed by Marx. Dialectical materialism "no longer needs any philosophy standing above the other sciences." Of former philosophy there remains "the science of thought and its laws — formal logic and dialectics."¹⁴ And dialectics, as understood by Marx, and in conformity with Hegel, includes what is now called the theory of knowledge, or gnosiology, which must regard its subject matter in the same way — historically, studying

and generalizing the origin and development of knowledge, the transition from non-knowledge to knowledge.

Nowadays, the idea of development, of evolution, has penetrated the social consciousness almost in its entirety, but by other ways, not through Hegelian philosophy. But as formulated by Marx and Engels basing themselves on Hegel, this idea is far more comprehensive, far richer in content than the current idea of evolution. A development that seemingly repeats the stages already passed, but repeats them differently, on a higher basis ("negation of negation"), a development, so to speak, in a spiral, not in a straight line; a development by leaps, catastrophes and revolutions; "interruptions of gradualness"; the transformation of quantity into quality; inner impulses to development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society; the interdependence and the closest, indissoluble connection of all sides of every phenomenon (history constantly discloses ever new sides), a connection that provides a uniform, law-governed, universal process of motion — such are some of the features of dialectics as a richer (than the ordinary) doctrine of development. (See Marx's letter to Engels of January 8, 1868, in which he ridicules Stein's "wooden trichotomies," which it would be absurd to confuse with materialist dialectics.)

The Materialist Conception of History

Having realized the inconsistency, incompleteness, and one-sidedness of the old materialism, Marx became convinced of the necessity "of bringing the science of society... into harmony with the materialist base, and of reconstructing it on this base."¹⁵ Since materialism in general explains consciousness as the outcome of being, and not conversely, materialism as applied to the social life of mankind demands that social consciousness be explained as the outcome of social being. "Technology," writes Marx (*Capital*, Vol. I), "discloses man's mode of dealing with Nature, the immediate process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation of his social relations, and of the mental conceptions that flow from them."¹⁶ In the preface to his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx gives an integral for-

mulation of the fundamental principles of materialism as applied to human society and its history, in the following words:

"In the social production of their existence, men enter into definite, necessary relations, which are independent of their will, namely, relations of production corresponding to a determinate stage of development of their material forces of production.

"The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which there arises a legal and political superstructure and to which there correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life-process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary it is their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production or — what is merely a legal expression for the same thing — with the property relations within the framework of which they have hitherto operated. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. At that point an era of social revolution begins. With the change in the economic foundation the whole immense superstructure is more slowly or more rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic, in short, ideological, forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out.

"Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such an epoch of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production.... In broad outline, the Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production may be designated as progressive epochs of the socio-economic order."¹⁷ (Cf. Marx's brief formulation in a letter to Engels dated July 7, 1866: "Our theory that the organization of labour is determined by the means of production.")

The discovery of the materialist conception of history, or rather, the consistent continuation and extension of materialism into the domain of social phenomena, removed the two chief defects of earlier historical theories. In the first place, they at best examined only the ideological motives of the historical activity of human beings, without investigating what produced these motives, without grasping the objective laws governing the development of the system of social relations, and without discerning the roots of these relations in the degree of development of material production; in the second place, the earlier theories did not cover the activities of the masses of the population, whereas historical materialism made it possible for the first time to study with the accuracy of the natural sciences the social conditions of the life of the masses and the changes in these conditions. Pre-Marxist "sociology" and historiography at best provided an accumulation of raw facts, collected sporadically, and a depiction of individual aspects of the historical process. By examining the sum total of all opposing tendencies, by reducing them to precisely definable conditions of life and production of the various classes of society, by discarding subjectivism and arbitrariness in the choice of a particular "dominant" idea or in its interpretation, and by disclosing the roots of all ideas and all the various tendencies, without exception, in the condition of the material forces of production, Marxism pointed the way to an all-embracing and comprehensive study of the process of the rise, development and decline of social-economic formations. People make their own history. But what determines the motives of people, of the mass of people — what gives rise to the clash of conflicting ideas and strivings? What is the sum

Continued on page 11

The following is a call for a teach-in on the Black youth murders in Atlanta which is being circulated by the RCP in Atlanta and various progressive and revolutionary groups and individuals. The teach-in is currently scheduled for March 30 at 7 p.m. at the Morris Brown College Student Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

February 27, 1982: With the swift pounding of a gavel, the two-year reign of terror against Black youth in Atlanta is declared over and done with. The authorities finally got their man — a "sick, black individual" — and removed him from society. All is in order. Once again, so the story went, the vicious murder and oppression of Blacks was shown to be the work of a deranged individual, while the system, with its courts, cops, politicians and FBI, had once again done its job of "protecting the people." Like the strutting sheriff in a grade-B western, those who rule this country shouted from the rooftops, "You can go home, folks. We have everything under control."

Today, one year later, *nothing* is closed. What was true before the authorities so self-righteously declared "case closed" is still true today — and doubly

A Call For A Teach-In

The "Case" of the Atlanta Black Youth Murders: Nothing is Closed!

so with their efforts to cover it up. The murder of 28-plus Black youth in Atlanta, carried out with cold, calculated precision, was no more the work of a sick individual than are the daily murders of Blacks in every major city of this country by "official" police. They were no more a deviation from the "great traditions of American democracy" than the thousands of lynchings that would fill the pages of any American history book that told the truth. The Black youth murders were, as is widely known, testimony to the whole experience of Black people in the U.S. since its origins, and a sharp indication of the times we are living in.

But of course now all of that is supposed to be "out of order." The case has

been solved — and the verdict passed was not so much that Wayne Williams is guilty, but that the system is innocent! *That* is the verdict every arm of the authorities and the press have so desperately been shoving down our throats, while thousands throw it right back up. But two years of attacking and suppressing the people (under the lofty heading of "keeping things under control") while literally protecting the murderers cannot be so easily washed clean — especially when it has continued and intensified over the past year.

— Twice this past year Black men have been found in a field near downtown Atlanta brutally murdered — one lynched, the other chopped to pieces. Again, "no similarities," declared those in power.

— The city, state and federal governments have fought hard to enforce their "verdict" with suppression and outright attacks on anyone who would dare oppose it. Webster Brooks, a Black member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, has to this date been sentenced to 16 months in prison by the Atlanta courts for distributing the proclamation "Only the People Can Close the Case of the Atlanta Black Youth Murders!" downtown and at Atlanta Jr. College, and leading youth in opposing the government's vicious closing of the case. As former UN Ambassador Andrew Young, now the mayor of Atlanta, said once, there are still political prisoners in the U.S. — he should know! (And Greg Johnson, a white member of the RCYB, has been sentenced to 8 months in jail and 10 months probation for similar "crimes.")

— This is the real pattern that linked the Atlanta Black youth murders. From day one, whoever it really was that was sweeping up and systematically murdering Black youth was not alone. Every step the murderers took, every body thrown in the Chattahoochee brought with it more and more intense "official" attacks and outrages — from the occupation of Techwood Homes to crush the bat patrols to the hounding of the STOP Committee and the mothers generally — hounding that still continues today as many continue to demand their children's murderers be caught. To those in power, including the wide array of Black officials, the "problem" in Atlanta was not that Black youth were being systematically murdered, but that millions saw it for what it was — a vivid concentration of the oppression of Blacks and other nationalities in this country and a rallying cry in the struggle of millions against that oppression.

We cannot let that stand! There is far too much at stake here to leave the field open to those whose *only* concern is to "keep the peace and order." The criminals are loudly proclaiming that they have solved their own crime. This historic teach-in is being held to further penetrate the truth, to expose the hand of the government this past year and to probe deeply into the real causes and implications of this outrage. A teach-in held last year during the Williams trial struck a powerful blow against the authorities' plans — that blow must be deepened.

The crime of the Atlanta Black youth murders has put a major challenge before anyone who burns with hatred for the oppression we see around us day-in and day-out — a challenge especially to cut through the fog that has been thrown over these murders by the powers that be since they began over 3 years ago. We call on you to be part of an event that will be an important step in making it clear that **NOTHING IS CLOSED.**

The following is a partial list of endorsers:

- Webster Brooks, Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade
- Douglass DeLoach, writer
- Miller Francis, DJ, writer
- Michael Gandy, reggae DJ
- Rob Gibson, station manager of WRFG*
- Ernest Gregory, jazz historian
- Vince Hoffman, youth of 19
- Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, parents of youth murder victim Aaron Jackson
- Greg Johnson, Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade
- Brenda Joiner, Feminist Women's Health Center, Tallahassee, Fla.*
- Arthur Langford, a former Atlanta City Councilman*
- Paul LaRaque, Haitian poet
- Janice Lidel, from the Political Science Dept. of Clark College*
- Alice Lovelace, poet
- Abdul Rasheed Mannan, radio producer
- Brother Onaje, citizen of the Republic of New Afrika
- Dr. Sondra O'Neal, professor of Literature, Emory University*
- Earl Picard, the Political Science Dept. of Atlanta University*
- Mike Pilani, member of PAC*
- Revolutionary Communist Party
- Annie Rogers, mother of youth murder victim Patrick Rogers
- Sonia Sanchez, poet and playwright
- Students Publications, from Morris Brown College
- Venus Taylor, mother of youth murder victim Angel Lanier
- Askia Toure, poet

*For identification only

MARX

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total of all these clashes in the whole mass of human societies? What are the objective conditions of production of material life that form the basis of all historical activity of man? What is the law of development of these conditions? To all these Marx drew attention and pointed out the way to a scientific study of history as a single process which, with all its immense variety and contradictoriness, is governed by definite laws. □

(continued next week)

NOTES

1. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1976, p. 14.
2. See Marx's letter to Arnold Ruge, September 1843, and Marx, "Introduction to *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*".
3. In May 1851 the activities of the Communist League in Germany were virtually halted by police persecution and arrest of its members. On November 17, 1852, shortly after the Cologne Communist trial, the League was dissolved on Marx's suggestion.
4. The Communist League played a great historical role as a school for training proletarian revolutionaries, and as the embryo of the proletarian party. Later many of its members took an active part in the founding of the International Working Men's Association. For the history of the League, see Engels' article "On the History of the Communist League" (1885).
5. *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. This militant organ of the proletarian wing of democracy did much to educate the masses and rouse them for struggle against the counterrevolution. Most of the leading articles which determined the newspaper's stand on the key problems of the revolution in Germany and Europe were written by Marx and Engels.
6. From the first months of its existence, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, because of its resolute and irreconcilable position, its militant internationalism and its political exposure of the Prussian government and the Cologne local authorities, was subjected to attacks by the feudal-monarchist and liberal-bourgeois press, and was persecuted by the government. This persecution was intensified after the counter-revolutionary Prussian coup d'etat of November-December 1848.
7. Despite the persecutions and police disruptions, the newspaper boldly championed the interests of revolutionary democracy and the proletariat. In May 1849, while the counter-revolution was on the offensive everywhere, the Prussian government, having denied Marx Prussian citizenship, ordered his deportation from the country. The newspaper ceased publication following Marx's deportation and persecution of the other editors. The last number of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* appeared on May 19, 1849,

printed in red ink. In their farewell message to the Cologne workers, the editors of the paper said: "At any time or place, our last word will be: *The liberation of the working class!*"

5. On June 13, 1849, the petty-bourgeois party of Montagnards organized a peaceful demonstration in Paris to protest against the dispatch of French troops to Italy to suppress the revolution in violation of the Constitution of the French Republic which prohibited the sending of French forces abroad to interfere with the freedom of foreign peoples. The demonstration was dispersed by troops. Its failure testified to the bankruptcy of French petty-bourgeois democracy. From that day the French authorities launched persecutions against democrats, including foreigners residing in France.

6. *The French Socialist Party* — a reformist party founded in 1902 by the Jaurésists. In 1905 the French Socialist Party merged with the Socialist Party of France (founded by the Guesdists in 1901) and formed the united Socialist Party, which included all socialist parties and groups (Guesdists, Blanquists, Jaurésists, etc.). The leadership of the united French Socialist Party passed into the hands of reformists led by Jean Jaurés, who constituted the majority. During the First World War, it took a social-chauvinist stand; its parliamentary group voted for war credits and its members entered the bourgeois government. The French Socialist Party split at its Tours Congress, December 25-30, 1920; the majority formed the Communist Party of France, while the Right-wing opportunist minority, led by Léon Blum, left the congress and formed their own party, retaining the old name of the French Socialist Party.

7. Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1956, p. 168.

8. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, FLP, Peking 1976, pp. 54, 74, 44 and 30.

9. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, FLP, Peking, 1976, pp. 16, 17 and 19.

10. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, FLP, Peking, 1976, p. 144.

11. See Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach" (Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, FLP, Peking, 1976, pp. 61-65).

12. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, FLP, Peking 1976, pp. 11 and 28.

13. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, FLP, Peking, 1976, pp. 41, 8 and 40.

14. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, FLP, Peking, 1976, p. 31.

15. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, FLP, Peking, 1976, p. 25.

16. Marx, *Capital*, FLPH, Moscow, 1954, Vol. I, p. 372, footnote, translation revised.

17. Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, FLPH, Moscow, 1951, Vol. I, pp. 328-29, translation revised.

18. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, FLP, Peking, 1975, pp. 32-33 and 46.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

5-Year-Old

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it have been published in newspapers across the country along with articles explaining that the police really have no choice but to treat such toys as the real thing and shoot first and ask questions later. Now Black youth playing with dime store toys are publicly considered fair game for police bullets. Perhaps now cops who shoot down young children will have a new defense, the "toy gun defense." And perhaps it will even become standard police procedure to carry plastic toy "throw down" weapons for use when they murder kids, along with the real "throw down" weapons they carry for use when unarmed adults are blown away. We are only speculating here, of course.

Along with dutifully running out the lies of the Stanton police in this case, the media nationally has focused on the plight of none other than pig Sperl who is portrayed as "sensitive," "intelligent," and "deeply remorseful," etc. More than one TV anchorman has summed up reports on the murder saying, "Of course you feel for the child... but you also have to feel for the officer; he'll have to live

with this for the rest of his life." The press has also focused on attacking Patricia Ridge for "child neglect" as the Orange County District Attorney has turned the whole case over to a grand jury including the question of formally charging Patricia with "child neglect" or "endangerment." It would seem that the authorities need some time to figure out how to make these monstrously outrageous "child neglect" charges stick while letting off the pig who murdered Patricia Ridge's son. Would their legal argument be that she is responsible for "endangering" the life of her child because everyone knows that police consider Black children alone in their houses targets for assassination? Will Sperl's defense be that Patricia Ridge left him no choice but to kill her son because she went to work and couldn't afford to pay a babysitter? Will it all be laid out nice and legal-like in court that Black people and oppressed people generally should be advised that the armed enforcers of this system have a license to kill whenever they see the chance? This remains to be seen, but the point has already been made a thousand times over in a thousand ways by the murderers of Patrick Mason and untold numbers of others. □

Accumulating Revolutionary Forces for the Coming Showdown

The Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA held an important meeting in the latter part of 1982. In RW No. 194 we reprinted as a special supplement all of the documents of the meeting. They consisted of background material which was circulated before the meeting and the Report from the CC, all of which was written by a leading member of the Central Committee on the basis of points raised by its Chairman, Bob Avakian. Because of the importance of the questions dealt with in these documents, and also because some of our readers might not have seen RW No. 194, we are reprinting these documents in sections. Last week we reprinted the background material. This week we are reprinting Part I and Part II of the Report from the Central Committee. Next week we will reprint Part III and Part IV of the Report from the Central Committee.

The supplement from RW No. 194 containing all the documents from the meeting may be obtained from the RCP in your area, or may be ordered by sending 75¢ to: RCP Publications, PO Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654. The price includes postage.

Report from the Central Committee

I. What We've Accomplished, What Remains to be Accomplished

There should be no underestimating what we've accomplished by building this party and, in a basic way, developing its line, organization and influence... and no underestimating what we can and *must* do in this decade. Our vision of our internationalist duties within the U.S. must be no less than this: What we wish there had been in the '60s, we can be in the '80s when the stakes are a lot higher—that is, a party steeled and tempered with a core of leadership, a vision and a program to do it.

A look at the world confirms Mao's important point that "a mature party" is a most important condition to win revolution. In many countries, the existence today of even a small core of Marxist-Leninists would be a major advance and would open up now-closed avenues toward revolution. Here there is more than that. This is in no way to underestimate our difficulties and our still small size and experience but fundamentally our party does meet the criterion of "a mature party." This means more than that we've "weathered storms" like some battered ship (although we have weathered storms); it means we have developed a basic analysis (on a world level and of the U.S.), a strategy as concentrated in our *New Programme*, and the framework of party organization which needs to be further built, but a core of which has been established.

This puts new and weighty responsibilities on us — both within the U.S. and internationally. We should not be complacent, but on the other hand, in order to fulfill these responsibilities, it is necessary to recognize and stress that we have accomplished some things. This is a point made in the background material when it gave some emphasis to consolidation on the philosophical and ideological fronts — and based on that, stressed actively carrying out our responsibilities.

After studying "Conquer the World?..." , letting it settle in and weighing it in light of the whole recent history of developments both in our own party and internationally, a leading comrade made the remark, "Conquer the World?..." settled some things." Of course, it didn't settle everything and questions and struggles around ideological and political line will go on (though in varying forms); however it is quite important to grasp that "Conquer the World?..." (together especially with the *New Programme* and *New Constitution*) do represent a certain "settling" and landmarks of clarity on major questions confronting the proletariat, particularly in the context of the coming world-historic conjuncture.

There has been a process going on in the material world, in the international movement and within our own party. It is worth studying over our own major documents with this in mind; one can see a whole series of interrelated questions first raised in a systematic way in the "Thoughts..." document in 1978 which were touched on again and again in succeeding documents and then achieved a resolution particularly in "Conquer the World?..." . The call for consolidation ideologically and politically should be seen in this light. It is not a question of "Well, we arbitrarily opened up a lot of questions and now, arbitrarily, we're shutting them down." First of all, we're certainly not intending to shut down critical thinking and the raising of and grappling with important questions — "turn out the lights, the party's over." In close connection with stepping up our all-around revolutionary activity there are many important theoretical questions that have to be struggled over and solved, the context for this being set by our party's basic line. In this way, there should and must be active ideological struggle throughout the party. But secondly, this emphasis on consolidation is not at all arbitrary, but a reflection of a process that has been unfolding internationally. It's part of a whole process in the development of Marxism and has very much to do with the development of contradictions in the world, a process which began for the international movement with the coup in China and the questions that threw

up before us. The questions treated in these documents were not accidents; they had to do with the actual questions that were thrown up by the development of imperialism and the socialist revolution, in particular by the setback in China and the further unfolding and sharpening of contradictions on a world scale. (It was some time after the split with the Mensheviks that we summed up that the heart of the political question facing the party in that struggle was whether or not to capitulate in the face of imperialist war.) So these questions were not innate in the mind, were not arbitrarily cast from the skies by god, but have arisen as very real problems to be solved. Obviously they are not all solved; however there are spirals and phases in spirals. It is not the case that now a whole period characterized by reflection and self-examination is called for. Rather, the point is that a number of questions have been settled and that we have achieved a certain perspective and sufficient clarity both on some basic questions of the international arena and, linked with that, on our immediate tasks in terms of the seizure of power in this country (or, as has been pointed out in "The Border Question,"¹² as much of it as we, the international proletariat, can get our hands on).

A higher level of theoretical clarity has been achieved on a number of major points including: a materialist (and dialectical) analysis of the laws of motion of imperialism internationally; a more correct understanding of the contradictions involved in the relation between the defense of socialist countries and the advance of the world revolution; the proletarian revolution as fundamentally an international process; our central task and a series of strategic questions of class analysis and path to revolution in the U.S. "Conquer the World?..." and, in a different way, the *New Programme* and *New Constitution* are a concentration of all this. Ironically, if we don't clearly understand that certain questions have been settled, then we will be unable, based on this, to raise and settle new ones that face us.

There is a deep methodological point about the relation of theory and practice involved here, a question of the theory of knowledge and the development of world history, and theory in that context. Our theory arises from practice — practice in the broadest sense of the experience of the class struggle (and that of production and scientific experiment) internationally — and in turn serves the revolutionizing of practice and so on in spirals. This is the method behind our line; it would not have been a correct line if an idealist or rationalist method had been behind it (that is, had we used the method of simply taking time out for reading and comparative text study, deciding what was right and wrong in each text — a method which would make it impossible in fact to decide that). This spiral of development now means both an increased emphasis on practice and popularizing the basic line we have achieved. And it also means there should be *increased* theoretical work on various levels in the party, especially over the many questions that confront us in deepening this line in practice (again, speaking broadly).

This Marxist theory of reflection — as opposed to rationalism — also applies to how we should view our criticisms of the historical body of Marxism. Some people, perhaps, are waiting for the "other shoe to drop" from us, à la Bettelheim, and for us to dump Stalin and perhaps "thoroughly settle accounts with Engels" (and Marx...?) or other such nonsense as well. They are wrong. Internationally some people (whether from a rigid and mechanical view of Marxism or from the cousin of this view, agnosticism), were shocked by "Conquer the World?..." and frankly misinterpreted it. The fact that it criticized some ideas of Marx did not mean that it attacked the historical body of Marxism. (In fact there is a way in which, by criticizing Marx, the criticisms made of Stalin, while more severe, were "put in perspective" in the sense of also being criticisms of errors in the history of the development of Marxism, not outside of it. Despite the real criticisms made of him, you could even say, in this sense, the stress was on "the bright side" of Stalin.)

The fundamental question here is not even so much the question of Stalin, but more the question of a correct, not idealist, approach to the development of Marxism and, on a basic level, the question of the socialist revolution

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itself: can you do it, and if you can, is it worth it?

The experience of many forces internationally who have dumped Stalin merits attention. (Not that this is the only, or even everywhere the main, error in relation to Stalin — witness the Albanian trend — but this still merits attention.) Recently the Canadian group *In Struggle!*, after mucking around in centrism and bourgeois liberalism (including on the Stalin question), took the final step. They formally abolished themselves, publishing a document to that effect, complete with a picture of Snoopy on the back cover gleefully flapping his ears over the announcement. Unfortunately, *In Struggle!* is not alone in this agnostic, social-democratic swamp. The point is not the pragmatic one that since everyone who has dumped Stalin has ended up no good, then we shouldn't. The point is that Stalin had some truth. He also had some metaphysics, but he did have some truth. Because of this, and because the experience of Stalin is part of the historical experience of the proletarian dictatorship, it is necessary to take the attitude of "Stalin's errors are our errors, the errors of the international proletariat." Only in this way can we learn from them, as well as his positive contributions.

Mao once made the assessment, referring to Khrushchev's secret speech, that there are two swords, the sword of Lenin and the sword of Stalin, and those who have cast down the sword of Stalin have, or will soon, cast down the other sword. This is true and still relevant.

In our last Central Committee report, we said we should take a "Marxist approach to Marxism." There we were referring to the necessity to cast off some old concepts and to recognize that Marxism is a living science. Here again, though from the other side, the same point arises, that Marxism is a living science with an historical development. We have often referred to the "heritage we renounce," speaking of revisionist currents within the international communist movement. We have been busily renouncing *this* heritage, and we should keep on renouncing it in its various aspects. But then there is also the heritage we do not renounce, that being Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, understood as a living science with a process of development, including the continuing development of our own political line. This, too, is a Marxist approach to Marxism.

Perhaps we and the whole international communist movement could learn from the approach of some natural scientists. Stephen Gould, for example, with his theory of punctuated equilibrium in evolution, has broken with much traditional Darwinism. But that has not led him to place himself outside of the school of Darwin's theory. As Gould himself wrote, the newly developing theory "would not be Darwinism, as strictly defined, but it would capture, in abstract form, the fundamental features of Darwin's vision. . . ." (*Science* magazine, April 23, 1982) Why should Marxists be less scientific than this? Why is it that the body of Marxism should be considered more like the Catholic Church than like a science — that is, a set of scriptures instead of a living science? (And, of course, once it can be shown that there is even one hole in the scripture, then there is an opening for agnosticism.) No, Marxism is a science and this is a heritage we do not renounce.

There is quite a bit of talk in the world today about a "crisis of Marxism." And, yes, as Chairman Avakian has addressed in a number of his writings, some incorrect currents, including within the "Maoist" trend, have run into real problems. But, as the method of "Conquer the World? . . ." shows, these are problems which can and must be solved with the basic principles of Marxism, especially materialist dialectics. They will not be solved, as we have pointed out, by clinging to a soiled grey shirt of disproven and/or revisionist concepts; but neither will they be solved by pissing and moaning about "crisis" armed (if it can be called that) with agnosticism and social-democracy. This is precisely the method of combining "a sweeping historical view with the rigorous and critical dissecting of especially crucial and concentrated historical experiences, and to draw out as fully as possible the lessons and to struggle to forge the lessons as sharply as possible as weapons for now and for the future." ("Conquer the World? . . .", p. 9) And we and others in the international communist movement have applied this method, and some basic answers have begun to emerge. In the face of this there are those who say, with the inverted gleam of self-righteous agnosticism in their eyes, that "you have no idea what you don't know. Wait until you grow up, then you'll have a *real* crisis, like us." In a way, they are right about the first part: there are many deeds that cry out to be done and there will be many unpredicted twists and turns in the struggle that cry out for answers. But unlike such agnostics we believe that Marxist theory is indeed capable of growing to comprehend that ever growing tree of life. And, more than this, we have firmly grounded ourselves as a party in that method and made a basic analysis, elaborated a programme and policies. As for growing up, it would be an excellent idea for still more people to grow up and confront the coming conjuncture with all its necessities and opportunities, as opposed to the comfortable fairy-tale land of social-democracy and agnosticism.

Of course, we should recognize that, viewed from another angle, agnosticism will be part of the objective conditions that a revolutionary party will have to deal with in a period like this. Grasping this fact will help the vanguard avoid the rather rearguard behavior of becoming obsessed with it, constantly banging our heads up against it. Instead, we can deal with it like other conditions, as we persist in carrying out our overall (and broader) responsibilities. Chairman Avakian pointed out some time ago in "Coming from Behind to Make Revolution" that it requires the weapon of materialist dialectics to see beneath the very real difficulties and dangers of the present situation to see also the very real opportunities. Besides the war danger, there has also been the loss of revolutionary China. As the Chairman pointed out, one thing socialist countries are good for is combatting idealism with materialism, and this is especially true on a broad scale when they are around. When there are no socialist countries around (especially after they have been overthrown), there is more fertile ground for idealism. So we should not be paralyzed by the existence of agnosticism, but should understand the political basis for its existence today and more firmly grasp the scientific basis of our line and carry it out.

We have forged a basic line and developed some policies for carrying it out; armed with this, along a tortuous path, we can meet our obligations and rise to the occasion. There is no basis, no need at all for second-stringism when it comes to vanguard responsibilities. It is true that we still have many defects and face many difficulties. These should be analyzed and should not be glossed over. Hype will not do. But neither should defects or difficulties in general be seen as some sort of obstacle that must be torn down before we can advance. Instead we should approach these defects and difficulties in the spirit of "if we have problems, we should solve them." Perhaps this sounds flip, but it isn't. Rather it points to the firm foundation we have, and also to the duties and responsibilities that face all of us in accelerating the revolutionary advance.

II. More Stepping Up, Stepping Out

Our party is at a crossroads. Not a crisis but a crossroads where we can, and must, build off the solid foundation of line and organization we have forged and make significant further advances in a number of arenas. This is not to say we can now become the leading force among the masses, or any other such "left" economist swill. Neither is it to say even that we should put ourselves on some kind of all-out "war communism" footing in this period in an attempt to leap ahead; spiral-like development does need to be taken into account. But it is to say that we have been through a phase in which we have made some significant breakthroughs, both in theory and in practice, and we must now put more emphasis on applying these to make further breakthroughs, especially in practice.

This should make clear that calling for some consolidation in the philosophical and ideological fronts is not by any means a call for passivity, for sitting around and building a blockhouse to guard our achievements. Rather it is consolidating our political line in the context of carrying it out on a still higher level and popularizing it broadly, particularly among the advanced in our social base but also in every arena in which there are outbreaks against the current order.

Neither should this be understood to mean "now we are going to do practice." We have been carrying out revolutionary practice, in many forms and arenas, but this should be continued and deepened. This, too, will require theoretical work — in fact, increasingly comrades will be called upon by the party and the course of events to make analysis in various ways. The brain, as Mao said, is an organ for thinking and it should be used as such.

While today is not a time when we can recruit thousands, can we not recruit a significant (if relatively small) number of advanced people, particularly proletarians, into our party? While we cannot lead the mass movements today, can we not do better still at being an influence within many of them — and even lead some of them — and further train advanced proletarians through our press and in other ways to appraise such events and the various class forces involved? While today is not a time of revolutionary crisis, are there not more than a few "minor crises" which are a rich vein of opportunity for us in preparing minds and organizing forces? And while the conditions are not ripe for our party to become a force contending now for hegemony in society, even exercising hegemony on "the left," is it not possible to work in an all-around way so that the various forces active in political life do feel more compelled to weigh and react to our line — and aren't there even some opportunities when we can "light up the sky" with the basic line and stand of our party?

In short, we have to continue to carry out our central task "create public opinion. . . seize power" and deepen our understanding and our all-around application of it. The *New Programme* describes the central task as "the bridge from the present to the future." This means, as the Chairman has stated, that only with the forging of our line on central task and the wielding of the newspaper as the main weapon could we "really begin to forge the links between our work in this period and the actual mass armed struggle for power in the future." Saying this, of course, does not mean this is easy — or more to the point that it does not involve contradiction. In fact even stating there is a "bridge" implies that there is a "gap" of sorts between the present and the future. In particular there is a gap between where the masses are now and the vanguard position. This gap presents itself as an obstacle to bringing advanced masses to a vanguard position during the long period when the bulk of the masses aren't revolutionary. This is part of the basis for the contradiction that always exists between the vanguard party and the masses, a contradiction that progresses through the process of bringing the masses forward toward a revolutionary position. Our line on central task provides the way, under our conditions, to correctly deal with the contradiction.

But we can learn better how to handle this contradiction, this "bridge and gap" — how to apply our central task — by studying the experience of how other revolutionaries, including in this country, have tried to deal with it. The Panthers tried — and ultimately broke their back on it. They did, in a very refreshing and significant way, establish a vanguard position. They put revolution and the armed struggle for power on the map in this country, and that was no small accomplishment. As Eldridge Cleaver once put it, the CPUSA had ruled the gun out of order and completely off the political agenda. The Panthers put it back on. But having established the vanguard position, the Panthers, too, had to deal with that gap.

While the Black masses in the U.S. were definitely not quiet in that period, and there was a significant section that were in a revolutionary mood, still it was not a revolutionary situation; U.S. imperialism still had reserves (linked to its international position) and this was reflected in the consciousness and action of even the more advanced Black masses. The Panthers were in a vanguard position and the masses weren't. So there was a need to deal correctly with that vanguard/masses contradiction and to do the maximum possible at that time at bringing them to a revolutionary position. The Panthers tried to get the masses to relate to the vanguard, as they put it, and move forward. Even things like the Breakfast for Children program (in their original conception) were efforts in that direction. They were never really correct, and later degenerated completely into reformist and Black capitalist schemes, but originally they were linked with struggle against capitalist institutions, like big supermarkets, and they even raised the question of political power in the sense of "the capitalist system isn't meeting the needs of the Black masses and we are taking care of business." The point here is not to sum up the whole experience of the Panthers (the pamphlet "Summing Up the Black Panther Party" does quite a bit more), nor certainly to uphold the breakfast programs. But it is to point out that revolutionaries must deal correctly with the contradictions involved here, striving to maintain a genuine vanguard position and prepare for revolution through straining at the limits at every point in bringing the masses forward: Our central task is a qualitatively greater weapon for doing that today than anything the Panthers wielded; at the same time we must continue to carry it out correctly ourselves, persevere in that path and push things forward as far as conditions allow at any point. The contradiction involved in forging that bridge over a period of time is a difficult one; it is difficult in particular ways for parties in imperialist countries where the masses want revolution less (at most times) and where the armed struggle can only be launched at a time when contradictions in society are very acute. But this same contradiction involved in forging the bridge between the present and the future also presents itself in the colonial and dependent countries because, even though the armed struggle can generally be started earlier there, the masses there are not always in a revolutionary mood

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Accumulating Revolutionary Forces for the Coming Showdown

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and often the armed struggle continues on a small scale for quite a while before a nation-wide bid for power is possible. There, too, it is not so simple as constantly growing while constantly whittling down the enemy's strength.

This contradiction between the vanguard position and the masses' position also poses itself differently at different stages in the struggle, even within one country. At a later stage in the struggle in the imperialist countries, it will pose itself in a qualitatively different way, when it is really possible and necessary, as Lenin wrote in *"Left-Wing" Communism...*, to move millions to support the revolutionary programme. But at every stage in the struggle, including today, it is a question of how to bring forward masses (even if this overwhelmingly means the advanced sections) to the maximum degree at any given point — without at the same time going "to the masses" — that is avoiding the economist recipe of basing the vanguard's position and activity on the level of the intermediate masses at any given time.

This is the point of the section in the background material for the meeting where, quoting Mao, it speaks of the need to hasten and await changes in the international situation. Our central task is precisely the way in which we, under our conditions, are hastening while awaiting.

Also related to this "bridge and gap" question is the need (raised in the background material) to maintain a constant tension between the vanguard's fundamental need to be "way out on a limb," engaging the enemy in battle (as defined by our central task, which means political battle for us now) and, secondarily, the need to have that "string tied to our backs," building united fronts, never being completely cut off from the broad masses. Living in the present situation, and with the tension involved in this contradiction, any revolutionary soul becomes filled with impatience, with the desire to get it on. And that's fine (as long as it is tempered by our line, including an analysis of the present situation) not only because such impatience is justified, but also because it can be a prod pushing things ahead, helping to overcome any lagging on our part.

In the same way, there should also be impatience with our relatively small size and with the kind of shortcomings (mainly quantitative, within the real leaps) that have been summed up about May Firsts and the battle for 100,000 paper circulation. Unfortunately, however, the basic situation (our still small size and relatively limited, though significant, influence) is not due mainly to our own mistakes. We say "unfortunately" because if this were due principally to our mistakes then we could do a quicker job of changing the situation and bringing proletarian revolution onto the agenda. The fact that the masses aren't in a revolutionary mood and lots more people aren't rallying to our banner is due mainly to world events. By this we don't mean only that a world historic conjuncture has not yet sharpened all the way, but also some more particular (though related) events. For one thing, if looked at from the standpoint of world balance of forces, our trend has been taking it on the chin internationally for the last five years or so. This doesn't mean we're on the ropes and about to be knocked out; on the contrary, we've become more steeled and politically are more prepared to meet the challenges and make big advances in the coming period. But still it's not like the loss of revolutionary China was a non-event or something, or that its absence today has no effect on the broad masses. To the contrary. International events of this magnitude not only affect material force in the world but, because of that, exert a deep effect on the masses' mood.

On a lesser, but still important, scale the fact that our trend was not able to really get on the map within Iran has also had its effect. That revolution, which was definitely a revolutionary mood-creating factor internationally from around 1978 to 1980, has also turned basically into its opposite, as was unavoidable as long as those class forces that led it stayed on top of it. Today that reactionary Islamic Republic inspires no one — except perhaps the Soviets (and also the Western imperialists) who are scratching for a way to make some more inroads. Take also the recent situation in the Middle East. The fact that the Palestinian masses did not wage a decisive offensive had a real effect. We were not engaging in idle academic chatter when we raised Marx's point that sometimes a desperate struggle of the masses, even in a hopeless cause, is essential for their future struggle, and, we added, most importantly for the whole international proletariat. Had Arafat and the rest of them not provided the kind of aid only they could then provide for imperialism and had they instead led such a struggle, there would have been quite an interesting situation internationally. Not that it would have automatically manufactured a revolutionary situation in ten other countries, but it sure wouldn't have hurt. Even the masses in the U.S. would likely be in a different mood today — let alone the Middle East. This is a symptom of the profound and brewing volatility in the present world.

The point here is not to invent our own "Catch 22" by turning the correct point of "hastening or awaiting changes in the international situation" into its opposite in the form of: "let's wait around until the PLO finally wises up and carries out a revolutionary strategy." The basic point here is that there is an international, and material, context for the present situation, including our degree of influence on the masses here.

But we can and must do more. Even these examples underline the fact that it's not exactly boring out there. There are profound possibilities shaping up amidst the difficulties. In these circumstances, it's quite correct and important to broadly popularize our analysis of the 1980s and to resurrect the slogan "Revolution in the '80s — Go for it!" There are those who might say to us, "Oh, you were saying that three years ago." And, to that, the obvious reply is, "Yes, we were saying it then — and it's all the more relevant now!" It would take either a vested interest in spreading confusion or a straight line ahead view of reality ("revolution must go straight ahead, or its basis isn't there") to say that world contradictions have not sharpened since the beginning of the decade. Our analysis has reflected reality very profoundly; and its consequences are all the more important. This does not mean things are easy; they are not. But we never promised straight line progress, nor rose gardens of any kind. What we have said is that this will be a decade of the ripening of the clash between the trends toward war and toward revolution on the world scale. This "promise" is based on a materialist analysis (something generally lacking, even among revolutionary forces in the world today), combined dialectically with a view that gives full play to revolutionary people's conscious dynamic role. There is a great need to popularize this line with its hard, revolutionary "edge" (while also understanding and making clear that things will advance through spirals and we have to learn to vary our pace in tune with that).

In some ways our analysis of the '80s has become an "outlawed analysis" on the left, particularly in the last couple of years, even as popular

movements have grown (and particularly as reformist trends to unite everyone against Reagan have arisen). A couple of years back, the turning of the decade along with some rather sharp revolutionary developments (particularly in Iran and Miami) provoked quite a bit of broad thinking along the lines of the slogan we had once advanced, "if you liked the '60s, you'll love the '80s." At that time, however, what the various political forces meant by that had not been so clearly elaborated. Now they have, while also some things have happened in the world which give some temporary advantage to revisionists. So an analysis which seemed more popular and immediately evident then is largely outlawed now in many circles. For one thing, such revolutionary stuff tends to interfere with grand schemes to make the left "respectable" and insert it as a major mainstream force in America.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks were a sect in the sense of outside the mainstream with their line, too, for most of the period leading up to and even during the Russian revolution. When Lenin advanced his "April Theses" in 1917 that things had gone as far as they could go in the bourgeois democratic stage and it was necessary and possible for the proletariat to lead things on to the socialist stage of the revolution, he was isolated, to say the least. In a typical case, one ex-Bolshevik reportedly wrote, "For many years the place of Bakunin (an anarchist—ed.) in the Russian revolution has remained vacant; now it is occupied by Lenin." But while Lenin's was an isolated analysis, more important still was the fact that it was true. And because it corresponded to material developments, in just a few months it was the programme of a successful revolution. So while we should not glory in the relative isolation of our analysis at the present, neither should that deter us from broadly popularizing it. In fact, there is a way that its uniqueness, its very "outlaw" character, can open avenues to popularizing it more. It is hardly boring conventional wisdom, and it is both true and corresponds to deeply felt needs (even if not understood possibilities) among the advanced, and in particular in our proletarian social base. Among them, we have to popularize both our analysis and also our programme and that everything that we are doing now is, simply put, "getting ready for revolution" and that they need to join in that.

In unity with and as part of this analysis, we also should instill a kind of "be patient, it's coming" outlook among the advanced forces — that is, an understanding that things are indeed sharpening and, as always, it is proceeding through spirals, not in a straight line, and that we must be energetic in carrying out our preparation in an all-around way without falling into freneticism.

Even as we broadly popularize our basic analysis of the world situation, however, there is also the question of continuing to get deeper clarity ourselves on the character of this decade and its particular revolutionary possibilities. It is not the '60s; it is being shaped principally by different (and ultimately more profound) contradictions. This does not mean the '60s are not important to learn from; they are, but the lessons must be genuinely learned, generalized and applied with the knowledge of the differences in the '80s as well. Certainly we do not seek to resurrect the more backward, reformist things from the '60s; beyond that we must grasp that the forms in which new, revolutionary things arise will be different. Chairman Avakian has pointed this out, particularly in the article "'60s People'" (a point we'll return to later).

The way in which revolutionary struggles take shape in this decade on a world scale, including within the U.S., is bound to be different from the '60s in many cases. This, too, has to do with the principal contradiction shaping things. In the '60s, things were mainly influenced by the oppressed nations vs. imperialism (particularly U.S. imperialism) contradiction; there was Vietnam which was a focal point of contradictions on a world scale. In addition, inside the U.S., as part of this but having its own particularities, there was the Black liberation struggle and other social upheaval (which was stimulated by profound material changes brought by the world development of imperialism). There was also revolutionary China and the Cultural Revolution. These things, which set a context for the times, are profoundly changed today (though the contradictions which gave rise to all this have hardly disappeared).

In the present world situation, and particularly looking at the implications of it for the development of the revolutionary movement within the U.S., the contradictions between different imperialist forces are lending new features to the political landscape. In these circumstances, it is especially important to grasp Lenin's point about how the masses are drawn into political life by the ruling classes themselves, and to recall another point from Lenin which was referred to in "Charting the Uncharted Course" (p. 12), that "the independent historical action of the masses who are throwing off the hegemony of the bourgeoisie turns a 'constitutional' crisis into a *revolution*." In this decade, the likelihood of just such situations quickly emerging, including in this country, is greatly increased. There is past experience on this, including from the '60s. In his memoirs on the *Years of Upheaval*, Henry Kissinger writes of a "vacuum" that existed for a time in that period which was created because of inner-bourgeois contradictions. This, he says, allowed a "vocal minority" of radicals to exercise influence far beyond their numbers. If this was true then (and it was), then consider the possibilities in the years ahead, with the near-certainty of far more serious crises in the U.S. Such situations can emerge quickly and in them the preparations and leadership of the vanguard party will be sorely needed — and tested. This kind of analysis lends still more weight to the profound possibilities for "coming from behind to make revolution."

With these possibilities and the whole world situation at present in mind, it is important not to underestimate the pro-Soviets, including the CPUSA. We should consider the CPUSA in light of the analysis made by Jorge Palacios in his book on "historic compromise,"¹⁵ as well as in light of the international factors now shaping up. The CPUSA has a strategy for power, perhaps in alliance with other imperialist forces — a strategy which combines gradualism with from-the-top putschism. Revisionism is not simply, or mainly, an ideology, something that we will defeat by a mere battle of ideas, though it will certainly require that. Revisionism has state power and all the things that go with it — including *an army*, and other resources of a powerful imperialist state. This exerts a powerful pull in the world on various class forces. But exactly because it is all this, and not just an idea, it is also a colossus with feet of clay, as Lenin said of imperialism. Revisionism, too, can be overthrown and defeated everywhere by the revolutionaries, and the preparation we do today for this will be crucial. All this will give shape to the outlines of a potential revolutionary crisis in this country. It is certain to involve

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cracks and splits among the imperialists — internationally, of course, but also domestically in relation to international developments. The revisionists are sure to be operating like a motherfucker in this climate, contributing to it. These are certain to be very complex and *highly political* times, in which the programme, tactics, organization and all-around preparation of all political parties is going to be critical — and battlefield-tested. (Our *New Programme*, particularly pages 19-21, gives a vivid description of all this.) These are the times in which revolutionary opportunities can emerge very quickly, the times in which fissures can emerge (as Lenin put it) through which the revolutionary initiative of the masses can burst.

If we do not see things in this light, then we can be caught totally by surprise, failing to see anything but "a bunch of bourgeois stuff" and a locked-up situation. This is yet another way in which, as we wrote in "Charting the Uncharted Course," a potential revolution can be turned into a constitutional crisis if the revolutionary forces fail to act. We should see, and lead the masses in seeing, how a world situation with two blocs of cutthroats at each other's throats gives us excellent opportunities to go at them. Grasping all this as part of our analysis of the '80s, and closely linked to our emphasis on the key role of the vanguard party, is another aspect of the task we described at the end of that same piece: "In a sense we are clearing the ground of economist litter and all other obstacles so as to be able to see such an opportunity as it is arising and not to miss it." It is such developments as these, linked with our overall line and strategy for revolution in the U.S., that we must be preparing for.

In this light, we should see the importance of the "minor crises" that develop along the way. We should regard them as excellent "schools," concentration points and generally as opportunities that must be seized. Such crises are fundamentally favorable ground for us, favorable for carrying out our central task in an all-around and accelerated way. This is quite a different attitude than arises from a gradualist, reformist view which usually sees such things as unfortunate and damaging disruptions. We can remember this attitude in the time of the Iran crisis when virtually the entire U.S. left besides our party dove under the rug with muffled cries of "Oh, god, look at the wave of reaction." There was, to be sure, a reactionary mobilization; but practice demonstrated how the masses being moved into political life in a sharp situation can be turned into a very good thing through the efforts of revolutionaries. (Of course, it was not mainly cowardice that drove the CP under the rug then; the alignment of forces internationally and domestically was such that they had little to gain.) Not every crisis is like the Iran crisis; most, in fact, will be more characterized by a variety of left forces in the field. But in any case these are favorable times for us, important times for engaging the enemy in battle. Of course by this we mean political battle, as defined in an all-around way by our central task. And when we say "engaging," the key thing is to see it not as simply something we do, but as something that arises from the objective situation and which the party plays an important role in unleashing and leading. We are obviously not an army; but we are also not a *political army*, confronting the enemy alone in political combat. We are a political party. As such, particularly in times of opportunity, we must play our full political role. As we summed up in the pamphlet "Support Every Outbreak of Protest and Rebellion": "What is revealed in these 'minor crises'? The different class forces, not only in their ideology but in practice; the nature of the state — the bourgeois dictatorship, the fundamental weaknesses of the imperialists' system; all of this provides fine opportunities for the revolutionary forces." (p. 5)

Perhaps it should go without saying, given all this and the analysis of the '80s in particular, that building our party is a key task. Still, what with the history of economism in the international communist movement, including in our own party, it is worth reminding ourselves of it. But more specifically, it is important to emphasize the aspect of broadly popularizing the party and its programme, making its basic line accessible in a concentrated way to the masses. This is clearly linked up with the importance we have recently been attaching to recruitment into the party, especially (though not only) from the proletariat, and to the *New Constitution* as the basic document which people must agree with to be recruited.

The *New Constitution* is the correct document for recruiting since it provides basic principles and lines of demarcation. This approach is not only

necessary in making the party and its line still more accessible, it is also helpful in demarcating revolutionary principles which are a weapon against opportunism. People need a basic foundation to come into the party, but they don't need the whole elaboration of it yet. This is a matter of the ongoing education of party members. The old Revolutionary Union used to have its "three principles of unity" (the need for armed struggle to smash the state, for the dictatorship of the proletariat and for democratic centralism). While we are not advocating a return to exactly this, the method here is important, and we now have a higher level of understanding synthesized and concentrated in our *New Constitution*.

None of this means that we are attempting to build a "mass party" or that we are raising the slogan "to the masses." To try to base ourselves on the broadest masses, even the broadest masses of the proletariat, under today's conditions could only mean disaster. It would mean reversing the view so succinctly put forward by Chairman Avakian when he said, "In particular the viewpoint comes through that 'you shouldn't do anything to offend the American people' which, if you think about it, is ridiculous. I mean, why shouldn't we?" But we do want to and should build the party among the advanced, particularly the advanced proletarians. To do this correctly requires giving this task some emphasis and systematic attention, defeating any shamefaced tendencies toward the task of recruiting. It also requires consolidating the advances in political line we've achieved and giving emphasis to taking this revolutionary synthesis out more broadly. Continuing our party's lofty character does not mean that we cannot concentrate and popularize its basic line; in fact it requires it. This means such things as giving increased emphasis to the use of our *New Programme* as well as the *New Constitution*.

We should also cultivate a kind of "early Christian spirit" at all levels throughout the ranks — a spirit of building up our small forces and of all members actively analyzing heaven and earth. It used to be a great strength of the Revolutionary Union (linked, of course, with some of the primitivism) that all its members and units took up seriously the task of building the RU even from the time it was a fledgling organization and of analyzing major events in the world and the movement as they occurred and also applying the same method to more local developments. Now that we have advanced and established a nation-wide party organization and a central press, shouldn't it be more — not less — possible to do all this correctly? If we do so, we will have taken another stride in building the party qualitatively, the central element of which is line, including the training of its members and those coming around it in this line. As long as all members and units adhere to democratic centralism and carry out party line and policy, this will not hinder, but will in fact facilitate, consolidation.

In the same spirit, we should encourage "local authorities to take more initiative under centralized guidance" in the spirit of Mao's policy in "On the Ten Major Relationships." (*SW*, V. 5, pp. 284-307) Again, given the increasing strength of our line and centrally set major policies, it should be possible, and quite important, for local party organizations to make analyses and take initiative. This, too, is linked with the question of the whole party on all levels "taking responsibility for the movement" which was raised by the Chairman in "Conquer the World?..."

The Chairman has spoken of the need to begin to make a further leap — even a "rupture" — in terms of the party itself. This is definitely an urgent need and one which, if understood correctly and dialectically, is perfectly in tune with the emphasis on consolidation in terms of political line. On the basis of building off our correct line and the solid framework of party organization we have developed, it is necessary and possible to press further ahead in expanding the base of the party, challenging the advanced to take part on a higher level in the class struggle as party members, bringing forward fresh forces and further preparing the party to meet the tests ahead.

"Thoughts on Points for Discussion," a report by Bob Avakian to the Second Plenary Session of the Second Central Committee of the RCP, USA in 1978.

²RW No. 174.

³By Bob Avakian, 1980.

⁴RW No. 147.

⁵*Chile: An Attempt at "Historic Compromise" — The Real Story of the Allende Years*, Banner Press, Chicago, 1979.

⁶An International Marxist-Leninist Journal, No. 2, May, 1982.

Assam

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one. Suppliant mothers with babies at their breasts were spared together. In one village the inhabitants were first attacked from one side and when they fled, hordes of spear wielding killers picked them one by one from the other side. People were trapped and killed in the same rhythm in which they begged for mercy. Hundreds of hacked bodies of women and children are still lying strewn all over public places in the affected area, the living among them uncared for by any medical personnel. Smoke from charred remains still bellows.

Mrs. Gandhi, in her "election" speeches in Assam, was only concerned with the minorities in the state. Both the tribals and Bengali immigrants are minorities. In fact they are the only minorities in the state. But most of the killings happened between them. According to one newspaper report the Boro tribals killed the inhabitants of Naharani village with cries of "Joi Indira Gandhi." In another village the Bengali migrants attacked and killed tribals crying the same slogan. The concern for the welfare of the minorities by Indira Gandhi was clearly manifested! No wonder she made an air dash and kicked out the journalists who were hanging around.

The chief culprit of this gory blood bath is trying to escape detection by projecting the complexity of the situation. But the situation is complex only if it is

put in a simplistic manner. Otherwise everything is clear. Pro-election groups attacked each other. This is seen as a very complex situation, even as a paradox, by many. The answer is given by the common slogan shouted by both the groups. Projecting the Assam agitation as the enemy to the minorities Mrs. Gandhi and her party and other running dogs like CPI and CPI(M) had already created an atmosphere of hatred between oppressed people. It was this process that was going on during the protracted "negotiations" between the agitation spokesmen and the central government. The tribals in Assam are no doubt one of the most exploited and miserable sections of the Assamese people and in a politically underdeveloped situation it is possible to pit them against others who are in the same position, especially if the others belong to another cultural background. The influx of refugees from across the border (which provided cheap labour for the real exploiters) was instilled as the reason for the plight of the tribals while the ruling classes are actually responsible for the plight of both sections. When the Assam agitation took an explicit anti-state character one section of the oppressed was hurled against another to discredit the agitation and thus crack it. It was nothing but a conspiracy from the rulers who want to keep Assam as a colony of theirs forever. For this purpose they are ready to massacre a few thousands of innocent people. In the case of Assam they first created pockets among the tribals

and migrants by pretending to be champions of their cause. Then the champions used their pockets to divert the nationality issue which was threatening their exploitative system. In the process they facilitated the gushing out of blood from innocent bodies. They planned this outflow of blood as a means to "solve" the problem. The massacres were nothing but a means engineered by the central government to defuse the crisis they are facing in Assam.

What is the role of the Assam agitationists? Can they wash their hands off the blood? At a time when they were getting killed by the CRP and police why did they provoke the tribals and other minorities? From newspaper reports we can see that the pro-election groups were physically attacked by the anti-election groups in many places. This was not confined to attacks on political rascals. In some villages the common people who were misled by the ruling classes were attacked. What more do the enemies want?

Atal Behari Vajpayee, leader of BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party, pro-U.S.], declared that Assam will turn red if the elections are conducted. "The Brahmaputra will turn red." He or his party is not a non-believer in elections. They are staunch believers in splitting the people, and make use of them as vote banks. They are as reactionary as anyone else and are solid believers in "*Akhanda Bharat*" and "*Hindu Rashtra*." The influence of these communalists in the Assam agitation is a reality. Their in-

terests are centered on expelling the Muslim migrants from across the border who initially came as cheap labourers for the Hindu landowners and other exploiters. No doubt the genuine nationality question which the Assamese people — Hindus as well as Muslims — are facing is not to the tune of obscurantists like Vajpayee. It is quite possible that these reactionaries encouraged the diversion of the anger of the Assamese people against minorities. Mrs. Gandhi was obviously calculating on these lines when she designed her plans. The BJP are of her kind and the further developments clarified this truism. In their craze for crumbs of power, parties like CPI, CPI(M), SUCI and Congress(S) [rival Congress Party faction] ably abetted the inhuman conspiracy. Indeed, they are a miserable lot.

In the pig sty all members are "moaning" the holocaust. But none of them can escape the responsibility. Some of them are more responsible than others, but all of them together created the horror. And it is a lesson of history that such criminals will be hanged in public by the people when they resurrect their dignity and identify their enemies. In the meanwhile the criminals will moan, and conspire for more moaning. It is a world of criminals of various shades and their sham shades will not protect their skin after a certain point. The not so ceremonious hanging will happen only when the people come to know whom to hang. This is the task in front of all justice loving people. □

Three Weeks To Go!

MAJOR PARTY FUND DRIVE!



On March 31st, the Major Party Fund Drive will end. The significant and enthusiastic response to the call to raise funds for the party has been evident in the many diverse letters printed in the *RW* over the last two months. But to bring this drive to a victorious conclusion, we're calling on people to fully carry through and conclude their concentrated fundraising efforts, to make their individual contributions, and fulfill all pledges (to the greatest degree possible) by March 31st. As the original call for this fund Drive stated, "Many deeds cry out to be done. Large sums of money are needed to help strengthen the revolutionary communist trend internationally, to help build the party and deepen and spread the influence of its line into all the diverse streams of rebellion and protest; to further address the burning questions of our time, including in our party press; to counter the constant attacks by the state — in short to hasten the process of revolution worldwide." One important goal of this drive is to fund in their entirety major projects such as the *Introduction to SCIENCE OF REVOLUTION* book (\$10,000), the Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund (\$10,000) as well as underwrite special aspects of the publication and distribution (including internationally) of the *Revolutionary Worker*. For all those who recognize the importance of the party, its influence and work, your efforts in the next four weeks are crucial.

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