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**U.S. Keep
Your Bloody
Hands Off Nicaragua
and All of Central America!**

On the very day the "Reagan mandate" was declared, also declared was "potentially the most serious U.S./Soviet confrontation since the Cuban missile crisis." The United States is raising the specter of Soviet MIG aircraft in Nicaragua and, fangs bared, has delivered bloodthirsty threats and proceeded with real preparations for major acts of aggression and violence. As we go to press, any number of "solutions" are being openly bandied about: Nicaraguan harbors might be mined; U.S. fighters could engage in "surgical strikes"; the entire country might be quarantined; or, the U.S. could invade. Already, a U.S. frigate has entered Nicaraguan waters, a U.S. C-130 aircraft, Nicaraguan airspace. And the U.S. has announced a rapid call-up maneuver of 15,000 troops in Honduras, and, with the requisite brutal gusto, has also announced the name of these maneuvers: Quick Thrust. There are to be concurrent naval maneuvers as well, involving twenty-five ships in the Caribbean.

The Yankee provocations have already prompted a demonstration of 2,000 people in San Francisco, which was violently attacked by the police (see pg. 4). The action underscores the potential for great political turmoil and upheaval in the U.S.

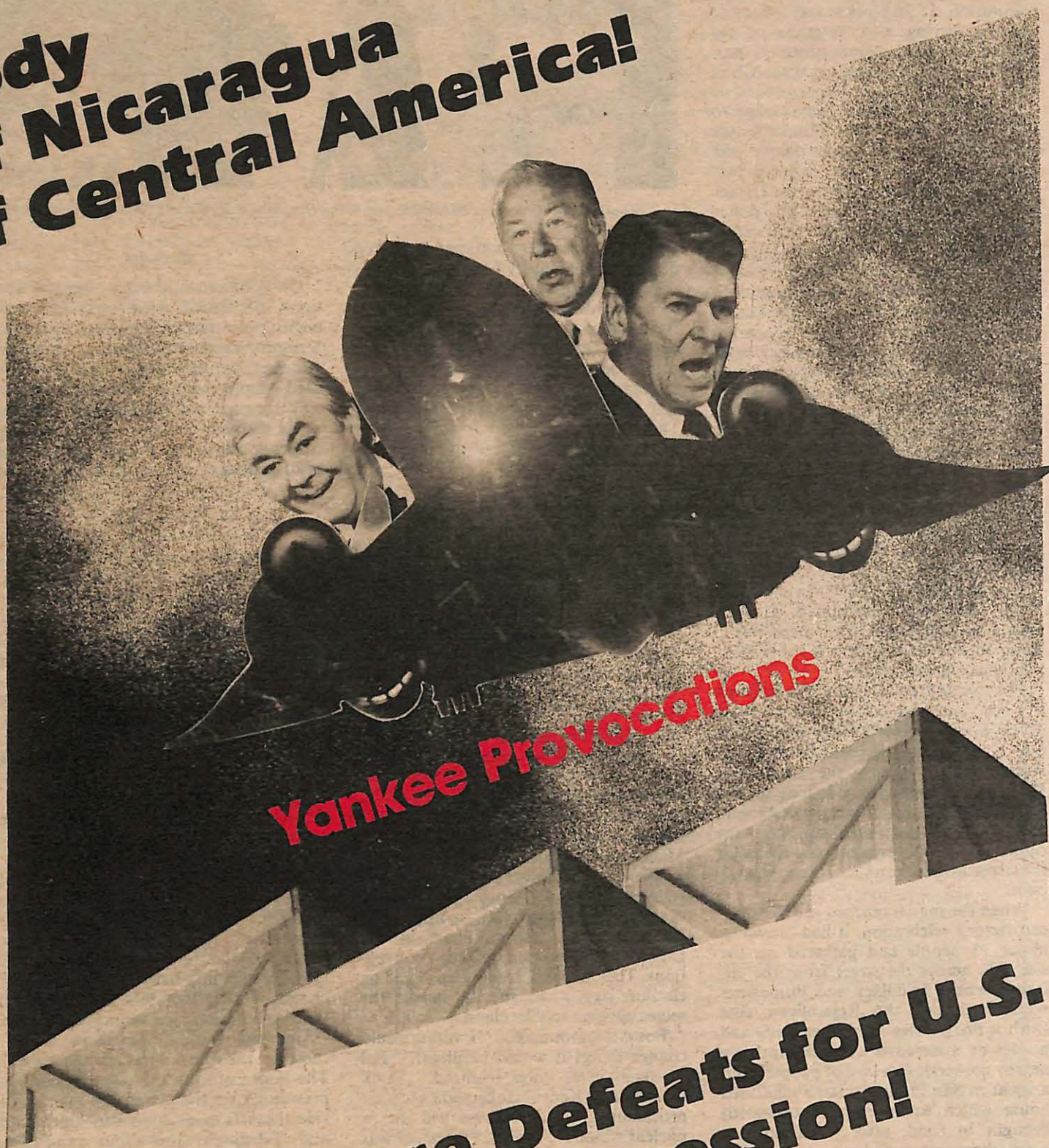
Rabid Imperial Arrogance

With the polls about to close, the momentum was marching in the designated direction. What better time for the U.S. to produce a crisis, of global dimensions, in Central America.

Suddenly, the news that U.S. officials were monitoring a Soviet freighter heading to Nicaragua began to filter through the projections and percentages. The freighter might be carrying high-performance Soviet MIG aircraft, the

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**Many More Defeats for U.S.
Wars of Aggression!
Imperialists'**

**Oppose the Imperialists'
Heightened
Escalations Toward
World War 3!**

On Mandates and Fitting Representatives

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Anti-Candidate Declares Victory

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ELECTION DAY ACTIONS

In several parts of the country, youth and others took to the streets on election day. As we went to press, some reports of these activities had been received:

SAN FRANCISCO

At 6:30 election night, groups of punk youth and political activists began to gather in San Francisco's UN Plaza, intent on going up in the face of the election political shitstorm, and the victory of Ronald Reagan. The plan, announced beforehand through word of mouth, was to march to the Republican victory celebration, 15-20 blocks away. Many of those gathering were veterans of the Democratic Convention protests, particularly the Democratic War Chest Tours.

Even before the march had a chance to fully gather forces, when the protestors only numbered from 30-40 people, the San Francisco police made a move, bringing in five squad cars to back a dozen pigs in the arrest of one woman. The police told one protester as they put their target into a squad car, "We haven't figured out the charges yet." They did make it plain that the arrest had something to do with the "Fuck a Bunch of Good Americans" stickers that had been appearing around town — and they made it even clearer that the SFPD was playing the Gestapo's role in relation to this march.

The march took off through San Francisco's Tenderloin District, then into the posher neighborhood where the Republicans were holding their celebration. It took a meandering course past several Democratic Party headquarters, to make crystal clear the point that it equally opposed the Democrats and the Republicans. The dreary site of the Democratic victory party was greeted with a chorus of "baa, baa," from the march, as were several polling places, and there was a die-in outside the Democratic Party Election Night Headquarters.

The march grew in size and in spirit as it went, and chants like "One, Two, Three, Four, We Don't Want Your Fucking War," "Fuck A Bunch of Good Americans," "What's the Difference Between Reagan and Mondale? Nothing!," lived up the night. At one polling place, the American flag was ripped down, then conveniently placed in the street so that the marchers could walk on it.

When the march reached the Republican victory celebration, it had grown to about 75 people and gathered on the sidewalk across the street from the entrance where Cadillacs and limousines were disgorging the Republican elite (with a line or riot squad between, and hordes of undercover cops clumped on nearby corners). A crowd of people from a squat in San Francisco (an abandoned house which squatters have occupied) brought in food; after the food was eaten, the mood started to tense up again.



Los Angeles—An "elections beast" carried in the Hollywood demonstration on election day, called by Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade.

Some American flags had been carried on the march specifically for this moment — one with black writing on it reading, "Fuck Your America," went up in flames, along with four others, one after another. One of the Republicans ran across the street, trying to save a piece of the charred remains, to jeers of "fuck off and die" from some of the protestors. The Tac Squad formed up and began to move on the crowd, but the protestors dispersed into the night.

CLEVELAND

Election Day — Cleveland — While the radio and TV announcers whined and cajoled, "take a friend to the polling place," a thoroughly unrepentant band of rebel youth took to the streets of downtown to "smash the war party!" The very appearance of the youth flew in the face of the orderly mandate for World War 3 envisioned by the bourgeoisie for election day 1984 — face paint, mohawks, a "lingerie death mask" made from a black-lace slip, the American flag worn upside down and painted over with red ink, Kafiyeys, red bandanas and buttons of the Tri-Sisters Mafia, a revolutionary feminist group.

The demonstration was called by the Antiwar Action Coalition, a new organization which takes its inspiration from the War Chest Tours at the Democratic and Republican conventions. Their actions, leading up to and on election day, dramatically spread the secret upsurge to Cleveland.

Posters announced, "If voting could change things it would be illegal," and "Reagan gives good warhead." Punk women from Kent State brought a banner proclaiming, "The flowers will die in nuclear winter." The RCYB banner was unfurled, "A vote in '84 is a vote for war,

Berkeley

On Wednesday, the day after the elections, a "BART Alert" was called to begin in downtown Berkeley. Signed by Students Against Intervention in Central America, the Alert drew nearly two hundred people to a march which wound its way through central Berkeley. Rolling along through the streets was the large, stupendously ugly, elections beast, one head a donkey the other and elephant,

which ate ballots and shit out missiles and shreds of ballot paper. The marchers passed by the UC campus ROTC building, and headed back downtown where revolutionaries seized the moment in an intersection and burned an American flag. The crowd was called upon to destroy the elections beast, a task which was performed with gusto by some youth, right in the face of the police. □

War Chest Tour handbook explained, "ATT's subsidiary, Sandia Labs, U.S. Department of Energy nuclear weapons developer is contaminating large portions of the globe with plutonium."

Chased onto the sidewalk by police one minute, the youth were blocking intersections with die-ins the next. The climax of the demonstration was a final die-in amidst rush-hour traffic in the central downtown intersection. "Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one..." The countdown ended with about 15 people stretched out in the middle of the intersection, the RCYB banner raised in their midst. Cars and buses backed up in all directions. The intersection was blocked for about ten minutes. The police arrived (with the Guardian Angels in tow) only after the youth were back on their feet and calling the day's actions to a close. Someone grabbed the bullhorn and from high on the Soldiers and Sailors Monument proclaimed, "I don't owe my allegiance to any fucking country on this planet. You can have your American way. I'm not going to die fighting for this country, I'd rather die fighting against it!" □

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Let's End This Madness Before It Ends Us!

Getting Out The Message

On October 12, 1984, the front page of the *Revolutionary Worker* carried a mysterious announcement: "Soon... the Revolutionary Communist Party will be making public a major message on war and revolution." The next week, spray-painted signs began appearing on freeway overpasses and walls in cities across the country — a prelude to the major mobilization of revolutionary political activity from October 20 to October 29 which saw the successful distribution of 1/2 million leaflets nationwide: *Let's End This Madness Before It Ends Us!* The distribution of this leaflet marked an important and new development in putting the urgent question of nuclear war and the only real way out — revolution — into the hands of the proletariat in this imperialist bastion. About 70% of these leaflets were distributed and intensely discussed among the oppressed sections of the proletariat: in the barrios and ghettos, at factories and unemployment lines; to the youth in the projects and schools; in neighborhoods through small stores, newsstands and restaurants. Tens of thousands of leaflets were also distributed among other sections of the people: the youth and students from the middle class and other sections of the middle classes as well as the better-off workers. Through new and creative means — both boldly public and

clandestine — the leaflet was taken out and taken up by the people, often in bundles of 50 to 100. It is clear from all reports that the message of this leaflet, which set forward the pressing revolutionary tasks confronting those whose interest most lie in revolution throughout the planet, tapped the sentiments and political yearnings of the proletarians, particularly among Black people who have not been heard from in a revolutionary manner for quite some time. This major political initiative, which could not have been accomplished without the participation of thousands, marked a significant step in strengthening the political basis for revolution now, in preparation for the opportunity when the situation is ripe enough and there is a crack that a revolutionary mass uprising can blast through and become a war to overthrow this regime and establish a revolutionary one. As the leaflet itself pointed out: "This leaflet is one part of that political work; at the same time as you're reading this, people all over this country are also getting copies of it — because of the leadership and coordination given by our party. Think about that in terms of building the political and organizational foundation for a revolution." □

The following report on the leafleting in one major city "somewhere in the U.S.A." gives a sense of the political advances made with the distribution of the leaflet, "Let's End This Madness Before It Ends Us!"

Tens of thousands of copies of the RCP's leaflet "Let's End This Madness Before It Ends Us" were distributed in this city — which has a reputation as a tough town — in the fourth week of October. By the evening of October 29, which had been targeted as the deadline for getting out this major statement on war and revolution, the quantitative goals established for this area had been achieved. The overwhelming majority of these leaflets were distributed among (and, to an important degree, by) proletarians; among some of those people who, in Bob Avakian's words, are "that section of society whose interests are, in fact, most fully in line with the fundamental interests of the international proletariat, and whose felt aspirations are also more in the direction of those internationalist interests."

While certain focal points of the distribution were sections of town which have been scenes of fairly consistent *RW* distribution for some time, efforts were made to extend the direct influence of the party's line to other areas that also have concentrations of proletarians and oppressed but have not been the sites of revolutionary political activity as regularly, and in some cases not at all. Whether in newer areas or in more familiar terrain, a close scrutiny of past practice and experiences was necessary to meet the goals, both quantitative and qualitative, of the leafleting efforts.

Fiery Application

We are living in a time when, as the leaflet said, "there will be (nuclear war) — and very likely within the next few years — unless this matter of life and death and the very future of the human race is taken out of the hands of the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union and their allies and puppets.

To stop nuclear war, governments like these must be brought down!" Clearly what is demanded of revolutionary forces at a time like this is not a rote, mechanical perseverance aimed solely at "getting all the leaflets out," but a creative, fiery application of Marxism that would help unleash and arouse the advanced at the same time as it provoked broad discussion and wrangling among the masses, and consternation among the forces of the enemy. In a certain sense, what would be required was a "storming of the heavens" aimed at both taking and hastening the political pulse of the masses in preparation for great collisions of the different class forces in the near future.

Plans drawn up took into account and analyzed the political and social aspects of the city, and even the physical layout as well, to hammer out a correct overall and tactical approach to the distribution of the leaflet. For instance, this is a sprawling, decentralized kind of city, and even in inner-city areas like the northside there are generally not large concentrations of people out in the streets. The tactics emphasized throughout were not based on establishing a presence at certain locations and remaining there for lengthy periods of time, though that method was also utilized at selected sites and times. More often, however, the emphasis was on mobility and flexibility.

Groups of revolutionaries would quickly converge on areas in an apparently erratic pattern, red flags flying, and with a blaster belting out *Beat Street Break Down*. Leaflets and *RWs* were distributed rapidly, and inevitably small knots of people would gather together, reading over the leaflet, often with one person reading it out loud for others, arguing over what it was saying, and quite often posing serious questions and challenges to the revolutionaries. This outburst of red activity would, seemingly, subside almost as abruptly as it had begun. By the time police or security guards had arrived, dull routine would again appear to be dominant. But while the pig brains might have noticed only an

occasional leaflet tossed to the ground by backward forces as an indication that something out of the ordinary had taken place, quite often the stirrings of revolutionary conspiracy were taking place right under their snouts.

In the wake of the more open and bold forms of distribution, organizers were beginning to delve into the challenges and problems posed in taking up revolutionary activity, questions raised in a razor-sharp way by the leaflet and responded to immediately by many advanced proletarians. Patrol cars prowled by, their occupants no doubt both puzzled and relieved that they detected no "abnormal" activity, while hidden from their view, copies of the RCP's *New Constitution* were often being perused for the first time.

Even in areas of town that had long been targeted by revolutionaries for political activity, areas which the political police knew to be the focus of consistent revolutionary activity, the distribution was done in ways that strived to bring the form of distribution up to the level of the call of the leaflet. Certain locations that had long been considered "off limits" were leafleted intensely. How this happened is perhaps being mulled over now by various agencies of the political police; we'll leave it to their sleuths to unravel the "mystery." But we can say that a key element in all this is tapping and bringing forward, at all points, and in numerous different ways, the revolutionary initiative and energy of the masses.

Welcome Challenge

An intense interest in the challenges put forth by the party was evident everywhere the leaflet got out. Among some sections of people, particularly in some of the ghettos, the way this leaflet was received was indicative of the widespread agonizing among many of the oppressed as they grapple with the looming reality of impending world war. Even in the few months since the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and May Day 1984, the escalation

of global tensions has forced many to deal with the inescapable presence of what they'd perhaps previously regarded as remote, or unthinkable. Few, however, are reconciled to this war's inevitability, though many different resolutions are being posed. Generally these fall into the categories of voting Reagan out and supporting the Democrats in various ways, or finding solace and salvation in religion. To many people though, especially including those being awakened to political life by the crunching, jolting motion toward imperialist nuclear war and the feverish chauvinist din enveloping the U.S., the clear presentation of the path that must be taken if this horror is to be prevented came as a welcome challenge to be taken seriously.

One youth angrily expressed this when he came upon a squad of leafleters in the city's central district. After reading over the leaflet, he spoke of how disturbed and upset he had become while watching the Olympics and said that in his high school several teachers were always talking about the imminence of world war. "They tell us world war is coming, we got to be ready to fight, we ought to join ROTC, we need to see *Red Dawn* to see what it's really gonna be like. Not many kids really go for it, but I never knew what to say. They just talk about world war, war with the Russians, they never talk about *this*, that maybe revolution can stop it." He and a friend eagerly took 100 of the leaflets for distribution in their school.

This episode, in a certain way, points to a problem confronting revolutionaries in a time that is approaching unprecedented opportunities, yet still (in the U.S.) is characterized by a surface calm among the oppressed. To the extent that this superficial atmosphere of "business as usual" went unchallenged and prevailed, the leaflets were generally received politely but the political questions were not joined with the urgency they require. But when the real terms and stakes of this

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San Francisco: 2000 Confront Weinberger On Nicaragua

Caspar Weinberger came to San Francisco Thursday night, November 8, to be feted by the USO at a \$125-a-plate dinner, and given the USO "man of the year" award. He was met by a tense demonstration — roughly 1500 people, many boiling mad about the extreme U.S. threats toward Nicaragua, especially the latest "MIGs" crisis.

Significant sections of the crowd were in the mood for some political disobedience — a simple voicing of "responsible protest" of U.S. policy would not do. On the other side, the police were out in force. They were clearly determined to keep this demonstration from making a powerful statement against U.S. intentions in Central America. The police were certainly very aware of the demonstration last April against Henry Kissinger, which took over the streets for over an hour, as well as the summer's powerful protests against the Democratic convention. They were clearly determined to see that this did not happen again. It all added up to a sharp confrontation, with police lashing

out with roughly 30 arrests and some vicious beatings.

The rally was called by a coalition including Casa El Salvador, Casa El Salvador "Farabundo Marti," CISPES, Nicaragua Information Center, the CPUSA, and others; but it drew a spectrum of political forces, *not* revisionist-connected, including antinuke forces, punk youth, anarchists, and revolutionary communists. Among the many banners were "U.S. Keep Your Bloody Hands Off Nicaragua and All of Central America" and "Many More Defeats For U.S. Wars of Aggression." After a short march through San Francisco, the demonstrators set up a loud and boisterous vigil on one side of Union Square, across from the very expensive St. Francis Hotel where Weinberger was to be the guest of honor. Besides being out in force, the police had set up a metal barrier across the street from the hotel; this was to be the line the demonstration could not cross.

After a period of chanting, and bang-

ing pots and pans, the metal barrier was overturned — to the tune of war whoops from some in the crowd. The police attacked on horses and on foot, knocking one person unconscious (who later had to be taken away in an ambulance), and setting the barrier back up. When the barrier was shaken again, the police brought in reinforcements, and moved a line of Tac Squad right up to the edge of the barrier. At that point, a line of sixty Tac Squad stretched from one end of the block to the other, backed by horses and squad cars.

While tension built on the street directly across from the St. Francis, a group of about 30-40 youth formed a chain and moved around the block to another side of Union Square, out of sight of the police in front of the hotel. They began to snake-dance through the streets, blocking traffic and shouting, "No More Wars!" and "Eat the Rich!" By this time, the scene had grown and spread over several blocks. Teams of undercover cops inside the demonstration grabbed particular individuals, then uniformed Tac Squad

moved in.

One youth who was in the center of all this told the *RW*: "I saw four cops grab one guy. All four of them pulled him to the ground, then they all just started beating on him with their fists." When TV cameramen and news photographers went in with their lights to get pictures, the police started smashing at their equipment with clubs too, injuring two of them according to news reports.

But if the crowd was supposed to be intimidated, it grew even more determined to expose and oppose the U.S. war machine. Large numbers got up in the cops' faces, giving the "heil Hitler" salute to the arresting cops. Others cheered as one young woman was dragged into a paddy wagon, yelling, "Fuck America!" Even after the doors closed, her voice could still be heard across the street, "Hitler was elected. Fuck a bunch of good Americans!" □

Provocations

Continued from page 1

reports all said, and Dan Rather of CBS announced that U.S. officials were considering a "preemptive strike against Nicaragua." It was later revealed that U.S. spy satellites and airplanes had been watching this particular ship for over a month, but "intelligence sources" evidently deemed election night the right time for the announcement, and the free press was more than cooperative — not only in conveying all the facts that the powers-that-be want us to know, but most especially, in declaring it all a Nicaraguan — and then, very quickly, a Soviet — "provocation," "threat" or "act of aggression." The whole operation was a tribute to the U.S. democratic process and a testament to "redeemed America."

Rabid imperial arrogance and hypocrisy is oozing from every bloody pore of U.S. officialdom — such as "upbeat" Ronald Reagan. In his first post-election news conference, the very first question was about the U.S.-alleged MIGs. His response: "We have informed (the Sandinistas) that for them to bring something that is absolutely unnecessary to them — the high-performance craft in here — indicates that they are contemplating being a threat to their neighbors here in the Americas." Clearly, the Great Communicator has attained new levels in his quest for the ultimate in imperial duplicity.

The U.S. operates its puppet anti-Sandinista army, the Contras, out of its neocolonies of Honduras and Costa Rica, conducting kidnappings, murder, sabotage, bombings, mining harbors, etc.; Honduras has been turned into a U.S. fort, with joint U.S.-Honduran maneuvers, directed principally at Nicaragua, a perpetual occurrence; El Salvador's military might has undergone a quantum leap in the past few years (U.S. military aid was 30 times larger last year than in 1980), and while it is directed at the Salvadoran masses today, if the U.S. and its Salvadoran compradors were ever able to clamp down their internal situation sufficiently, there is no doubt that it would all be brought to bear on Nicaragua as well. All this, along with the latest warmongering, reveals that the U.S. "neighbor" views the mere existence of the Sandinista regime as an obstacle and a threat to its imperialist interests, and is acting accordingly.

It gets even more blatant. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence focuses in on a new airstrip being built north of Managua, and TV news reports follow suit; the *New York Times* even comes up with a front-page map depicting five Nicaraguan airstrips either in use or being built — neglecting to mention that several of these have been used for regular transportation since airplanes first came to Nicaragua. The nine military airfields planned for Honduras, seven of which are already built and run by the U.S., including a couple that are home base for regular Contra attacks and spy flights in-

to Nicaragua, are not brought up in this context. But the airstrips point has a particularly sinister message. Who could forget Grenada, another country in the general area of the U.S.'s "own backyard," where an airstrip supposedly to be used by Soviet MIGs was a pretext for a U.S. invasion?

And then there is the matter of the CIA manual, which instructed the Contras in the imperialist art of political assassination, as well as blackmail, sabotage and "implicit and explicit terror" against any who refuse to bow down before the U.S. and obey all its orders. This, too, gets brought up in the current crisis over Nicaragua's "threat." Reagan declares the manual "much ado about nothing." In other words, it's all just fine — and there's much, much more where that came from.

Amid all this, the U.S. declares what weaponry it considers "unnecessary" for Nicaragua. This is nothing but the most naked imperialist logic at work here. The U.S. has the "right" to determine such things because the U.S. has the *might* to make those who refuse to obey pay with their blood. It is a logic well understood by all who dedicate themselves to advancing U.S. national interests. Such as Ted Koppel on ABC's *Nightline*, who incessantly grilled the Nicaraguan foreign minister Miguel D'Escoto (though Koppel didn't fare too well in the dialogue). When D'Escoto denied that any MIGs were in Nicaragua, Koppel demanded to know what it was that the Soviet ships had unloaded there, saying, "Maybe it's none of my business, but it might be in your interest to tell me." The free press, backed up by assassination manuals and the threat of B-52s. Koppel, who also asked D'Escoto if it wasn't a "bit surreal" to say that the U.S. might invade Nicaragua, will certainly be one of the first to praise the "realism" of harbor minings, quarantines, surgical strikes, invasions, or whatever things come to.

The "Evidence"

The scenario on which this crisis is hung seems straight out of the fantasy genre — albeit the most deadly variety. Supposedly, a U.S. spy satellite that routinely flies over the Soviet Union taking pictures, photographed a dozen large crates on a loading dock next to a Soviet freighter anchored at a port on the Black Sea. For the next few days, cloud cover obscured the scene, and when the satellite was next able to get a shot at the dock, both the ship and the crates were gone. The story goes that the crates are similar in size, shape and markings to those in which disassembled Soviet MIGs are packed — this, according to U.S. intelligence experts who specialize in the "highly exotic and specialized kind of art" known as "crate-ology," the study of spy photographs of crates, says ABC's intelligence expert John Scali in all seriousness.

The "crate-ologists" and friends apparently monitored this same Soviet ship as it steamed through the Mediterranean and across the Atlantic. Then, the U.S. says, instead of going through the Panama Canal — where it would be sub-

ject to detection by the Panamanian authorities, the results of which are routinely made available to the U.S., bragged the U.S. authorities — the Soviet ship went all the way around South America and up to the Nicaraguan port of Corinto, where it unloaded its crates. This is the "evidence" on which the current crisis is floating. It may not be much, but as George Shultz said in his recent speech calling for preemptive strikes against "terrorists," the U.S. will move even if it has "evidence that may not stand up in a U.S. court of law." Actually, that's about the *only* place this kind of "evidence" would be accepted.

All this is highly reminiscent of the Reichstag fire in Germany in 1933. An incident is manufactured, part of ideological, political and military preparations for war. In 1933, when the Nazis torched the Reichstag and blamed the fire on the communists, it facilitated Hitler's rise to the position of Chancellor. Reagan, of course, is already President, and the U.S. is manufacturing an incident for exactly the reason mentioned. The evidence here is that of the class nature of these people; evidence of the soul of imperialism.

Global Dimensions

There was more than enough "evidence" for the U.S. State Department to deliver an official warning to Soviet officials (in both Moscow and Washington) — again, on the same day as the U.S. election, when the announcement of it could have the maximum mobilizing effect — that the U.S. would not tolerate Soviet MIGs in Nicaragua. And it was more than enough "evidence" to get people like the Democratic Senator Moynihan on the tube saying that "...we have told the Soviets that this would be an unacceptable event — introduction of MIGs into the region, into that country, into that airport." Moynihan is emerging here as a real leader in the war chants, indicating that the liberals are quite firm around current moves. (This includes the *New York Times*, which on the day after the election and in perfect harmony with the electee, editorialized that Nicaragua better not become a threat to its neighbors.)

In the context of intensifying world tension, the U.S. is desperate to demonstrate its absolute dominance of Central America, as proof of, and a boost to, its ability to contend for global dominance through world war, the active preparations for which are proceeding apace. Moynihan pointed in this direction on NBC News recently when he admitted that the introduction of MIGs would not really change the military equation in any significant way. He said, "It is a (political) statement that this is Soviet-controlled territory. And it's not acceptable." Only U.S.-controlled territory here is acceptable.

And there's the rub. Over the past several years, the U.S.'s control of this area that it has long dominated has been slipping, and the Soviets have moved politically to take advantage of the situation (much as the U.S. has done in Poland Afghanistan). In the case of

Air Force Craft In Central America

1984 figures.

	Combat aircraft	Armed helicopters
El Salvador	59	9
Guatemala	16	4
Honduras	30	0
Nicaragua	12	0

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies

This chart was printed in the New York Times on November 6. Nicaragua is obviously way outnumbered by the other states, which are all U.S. puppets. The statistics alone are revealing, as is the chart's appearance in the Times. One reason such things are run these days is to say "to hell with principles of justice — USA Number 1 is our only principle of operation" and to build up this kind of thought among the populace.

Nicaragua, pro-Soviet influence has clearly moved into a commanding position within the Sandinista regime. While it is doubtful that the Soviets are supplying the Sandinistas with MIGs — at this time — there is no doubt that they have been sending Nicaragua a great deal of weaponry, precisely for the purpose of exacerbating the U.S.'s difficulties in the region and encouraging divisions between the U.S. and its European allies. This is problematic for the U.S., especially if it attacks Nicaragua directly. (At this writing, the Soviets seem to be playing a cat-and-mouse/tough-guy game with that ship in Nicaragua. They are testing the waters.)

And this has further fueled the U.S. frenzy for a victory in the region. The U.S. has continued to ratchet-up the political, diplomatic and military pressure on Nicaragua, trying to create the maximum tension and turmoil to facilitate an eventual, more decisive U.S. move to stamp out all opposition. And it has conducted a vicious and hypocritical propaganda campaign vis-à-vis Nicaragua to create the kind of atmosphere that will be most conducive to such a move.

When Shultz Talks "Sham"

Thus, we have the farcical condemnations of Nicaragua's elections — "a sham" says George Shultz, not a "meaningful electoral process" says State Department spokesman John Hughes, "unjustifiable" says José Napoleón Duarte, of all people. The election got an 80% turnout, considerably higher than El Salvador's election — the one that produced all the paeans of "proof" that the Salvadoran masses love death-squad democracy. U.S. officials point out that in Nicaragua people voted for fear of losing their food ration cards, neglecting to mention that Salvadorans voted for fear of losing their lives. In Nicaragua, U.S. officials complained about censorship of a pro-U.S. newspaper, neglecting to mention that in El Salvador, any newspapers

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A HORRIBLE END or An End To The Horror?

by BOB
AVAKIAN

"You Fight Your Way And I'll Fight My Way"

Mao says at one point that all military logic, whatever the particulars, can be reduced to this.⁵⁵ This does not supersede (and he does not argue that it supersedes) what he describes as the basic principle or object of warfare: to preserve oneself and destroy the enemy, in which the second aspect is principal and decisive.⁵⁶ Mao's point is that "You fight your way and I'll fight my way" is the basic doctrine or strategic orientation for applying this basic principle, for achieving this basic object of warfare.

One specific elaboration of this by Mao — "if I can win, I will fight; if I cannot win, I will run away"⁵⁷ — may not be strictly applicable in all situations, particularly the "run away" aspect, since it relies on being in a situation affording the ability to maneuver and avoid battle (maneuver in time as well as in space). But in an overall sense and as a basic orientation this formulation — "You fight your way I'll fight my way" — applies and is of great importance, specifically to the strategic orientation of not *initiating* battle unless conditions are favorable.

With regard to the imperialists and reactionaries generally, if they can't fight their way — as they are deprived of the ability to fight their way — their strategic weaknesses will increasingly show up; and so it must be a major objective of the revolutionary army precisely to deprive them of that ability. Particularly up against a revolutionary army, they depend on utilizing, and intimidating and overpowering the other side with, superior technology and (at the start) superior numbers. They depend especially on extensive air power not only for heavy bombardment but also to amass combat force and for mobility generally. In this regard it is interesting to note a telling comment in one of the numerous "my true story as a soldier in Vietnam" novels in recent years: Frederick Downs, the author of this one, *The Killing Zone*, says perhaps more than he meant to when he writes, "The noisy fuss of a helicopter was always welcome, dustoff or not. It reassured us of the tremendous system backing us up."⁵⁸ Imperialist and reactionary troops generally cannot fight effectively, or sustain effective fighting, without such "reassurance," especially when they are up against revolutionary armed forces representing and fighting for the interests of the masses of people.

Again, when imperialist and reactionary armies are deprived of the ability to fight their way — to overwhelm and pound the enemy with superior technology and force — then their strategic weaknesses increasingly stand out: they are an army of plunder and exploitation, opposed to the interests of the masses of people worldwide; their troops have no real political consciousness or awareness of the actual interests and objectives they are fighting for; they rely on technology and technological superiority and therefore are at a loss to a great degree when they do not have it or it is effectively neutralized; their ranks are organized in a strict, oppressive hierarchy and command structure and are riddled with acute class and national (and male/female) contradictions and conflicts, including among the "grunts" themselves as well as between officers and rank-and-file soldiers. And all this will gather momentum once it has begun to strongly assert its influence.

All this is also an expression of another basic principle formulated and fought fiercely for by Mao: people, not weapons, are decisive in warfare.⁵⁹ In a fundamental sense, an army is a concentration of the society it is fighting for — of the social and political relations, values, etc., that are dominant and characterize that society (recall here the statement by Lenin cited earlier that war is not

This week the Revolutionary Worker presents the fourth in a series of excerpts from Bob Avakian's newest and most important work to date, *A Horrible End, or An End to the Horror?* The entire book is being serialized weekly in Spanish in *Obrero Revolucionario*. In English, we are only excerpting some sections to give our readers a "taste." The book is available at local Revolution Bookstores and outlets, through RCP publications, and at some other locations.

This week's excerpt includes three subsections from Chapter I and its third major section "Questions Concerning The Actual Struggle for Power." The other subsections in this section of the book are:

The Basic Context and the General Contours of the Armed Struggle to Overthrow U.S. Imperialism

Without a People's Army the People Have Nothing

Returning to the Border Question

Making Good on the Task Set Forth in Coming From Behind to Make Revolution

Some Differences Between the Bolshevik and the

Chinese Army-Building Experiences, and Some Lessons From This In War as in Revolution: The Next Time Is not the Same as the Last

only the continuation but the epitome of politics); and the fundamental difference between revolutionary armies and counterrevolutionary armies will continue to find fuller expression the more a war between them goes on. This is one of the most significant aspects of the importance of being able to keep the revolutionary war going and gathering momentum once it has been initiated.

To get to the point where this is possible — to initiate the armed struggle and be able to continue it to the point of being able (to at least begin) to deprive the imperialists and reactionaries of the ability to fight their way depends on the development of the objective world situation, but a very important part of that is revolutionary struggle and mass protest and rebellion not only in the U.S. but worldwide. And even favorable developments in the objective situation which might provide revolutionary opportunities will be lost without the orientation and the political "tenseness" to be able to recognize and seize the moment to go over to insurrectionary struggle. This is another expression of the importance of political preparation of the masses, especially of the advanced, as well as of the party itself, from now looking forward to the time when the insurrection can be launched and coordinated into revolutionary war for political power.⁶⁰

From the beginning the insurrection must be viewed not as a thing unto itself but as the beginning of a civil war (even if there should be a brief interval before all-out civil war, as occurred in Russia after October 1917). As Lenin summed up in the midst of the civil war in Russia:

Never in history has there been a revolution in which it was possible to lay down one's arms and rest on one's laurels after the victory....

Revolutions are subjected to the most serious tests in the fire of battle. If you are oppressed and exploited and think of throwing off the power of the exploiters, if you are determined to carry this to its logical conclusion, you must understand that you will have to contend against the onslaught of the exploiters of the whole world. If you are ready to offer resistance and to make further sacrifices in order to hold out in the struggle, you are a revolutionary; if not, you will be crushed.⁶⁰

Thus the insurrection and civil war to follow must be viewed, strategically, as a whole, and in an overall sense must be guided by a unified doctrine and strategic orientation.

This is especially important given the concrete conditions and relations in the U.S., where the social base for proletarian revolution is concentrated so preponderantly in the "urban cores" and where a key question from the beginning of the armed insurrection will be to "break out" of an enemy encirclement, containment, and suppression of these "cores." In fact, the emergence of a situation in which there is a "good shot" at doing this in at least a number of major urban concentrations is a decisive aspect of the objective conditions needed to launch the armed struggle for power.

Offense and Defense

The offensive is decisive — and the defensive is death — in insurrection; the objective of this insurrection is at least to establish some kind of revolutionary regime, encompassing as much territory and as many people as possible but viable enough to act as a relatively secure rear for the revolutionary armed forces in the civil war.

First, on the offensive in insurrection. On the eve of the October 1917 Revolution, in refuting those who argued that an insurrection could not succeed and if it did the Bolsheviks could not retain state power anyway, Lenin

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(Note: All footnotes are numbered as they appear in the original.)

⁵⁵ See Mao, "You Fight Your Way and I'll Fight My Way — A Conversation With Palestine Liberation Organization (March 1965)," *Miscellany*, Part II, pp. 447-48.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Mao, "On Protracted War," *MSW*, Vol. 2, p. 156.

⁵⁷ Mao, "You Fight Your Way and I'll Fight My Way," *Miscellany*, Part II, p. 447.

⁵⁸ Frederick Downs, *The Killing Zone* (New York: Berkley Books, 1983), p. 144.

⁵⁹ See, for example, Mao, "On Protracted War," *MSW*, Vol. 2, p. 143.

⁶⁰ Lenin, "The Achievements and Difficulties of the Soviet Government," *LCW*, Vol. 29, pp. 67-68.

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quoted Marx at length on the "art of insurrection," and it is worth repeating here much of what Lenin quoted:

Firstly, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to go the whole way... "Insurrection is an equation with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organization, discipline and habitual authority...; unless you bring strong odds against them you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, once you have entered upon the insurrectionary career, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattered, prepare the way for new successes, however small, but prepare daily; keep up the moral superiority which the first successful rising has given to you; rally in this way those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to retreat before they can collect their strength against you..."⁶¹

Lenin had also summed up from the experience of 1905 that "every beginning is difficult, as the saying goes. It was very difficult for the workers to go over to the armed combat..."; and this gives all the more emphasis to the fact that there must be no wavering, no "playing at insurrection" once it has been decided on. This is why Lenin later (on the eve of the October 1917 Revolution) tore into those pseudorevolutionaries who "'conveniently' forget, of course, that a firm party line, its unyielding resolve, is also a mood-creating factor, particularly at the sharpest revolutionary moments."⁶² It is also why, at the same crucial hour, Lenin even went so far as to say, "The seizure of power is the business of the uprising; its political purpose will become clear after the seizure."⁶³

On the other hand, Lenin not only consistently fought for the position that throughout the political preparation for the eventual insurrection the masses must be enabled to consciously grasp the aims and methods of the revolutionary struggle, but even during the 1905 Revolution he had stressed that the establishment of a revolutionary government, "if only at first in a small part of the country," was a necessary and crucial step, among other things, to "give full scope to the revolutionary creative activity of the masses, who participate but little in this activity in time of peace, but who come to the forefront in revolutionary epochs."⁶⁴ Overall, Lenin summed up then, "a revolutionary government is as vitally essential at the present stage of the popular uprising [i.e., its initial stage — B.A.] as a revolutionary army... The revolutionary government is necessary for the political unification and the political organization of the insurgent section of the people."⁶⁵ This sheds further light on the fact that the objective of the insurrection must be, while seeking to conquer as much as can be in the initial stage, to minimally establish a revolutionary regime, if only at first in a part of the country, to act as a relatively secure base area (rear) for the revolutionary armed forces.

There will be, of course, important differences between the process of revolutionary warfare in different countries and in particular between the two basic types of countries — imperialist states and oppressed nations — and in the latter it will be the general rule that forms of guerrilla warfare in particular areas, rather than simultaneous insurrectionary uprisings, will characterize the first stages of the revolutionary war. But in these cases, too, the objective is to establish revolutionary base areas, embryonic revolutionary regimes, as a rear for carrying forward the revolutionary war. (In this connection, in discussing the basis for protracted war in China, at that point against Japan, Mao argues the following: "The heterogeneity and uneven development of China's economy are rather advantageous in the war of resistance." He adds the observation, very provocative to ponder in terms of revolutionary warfare in the advanced imperialist countries: "to sever Shanghai from the rest of China would definitely not be as disastrous to China as would be the severance of New York from the rest of the United States.")⁶⁶

From the beginning of the insurrection there will be what Lenin called the "fight for the troops."⁶⁷ But, as he insisted, the launching of the insurrection does not depend on nor can it wait for the winning over of the troops of the reactionary army. It will precisely be a fight between the revolutionary and the counterrevolutionary camps for the allegiance of the rank-and-file troops of the reactionary army, and precisely the winning of these troops (or many of them, since it would be foolish to expect to win them all) depends on the initiation of the armed insurrection when the time is ripe, and then on the daring and determination of the insurrectionaries, the increasing polarization of the situation and especially the momentum gained by the insurrection as it advances quickly upon each victory and from each position conquered.

It is this that Lenin is speaking to when he notes that the uprising in Moscow in December 1905 "strikingly confirmed one of Marx's profound proposi-

tions: revolution progresses by giving rise to a strong and united counterrevolution, i.e., it compels the enemy to resort to more and more extreme measures of defense and in this way devises ever more powerful means of attack."⁶⁸ There is no way to get around the fact that it is necessary to defeat, militarily, the armed forces of counterrevolution on the battlefield — "we shall prove to be miserable pedants if we forget that at a time of uprising there must also be a physical struggle for the troops," Lenin remarked.⁶⁹ An insurrection should not be launched without a perspective for doing just that, and for handling to advantage the dialectic Lenin (citing Marx) refers to just above (revolutionary armed struggle compels the counterrevolution to adopt more and more extreme measures of defense, requiring in turn even more powerful means of attack). Winning over significant sections of the troops of the counterrevolutionary armed forces depends on demoralizing them, which in turn depends on defeating them in battle and putting them into disarray.

All this is linked to the often-asked question: where do the revolutionary armed forces get their weapons from, especially at the start? The answer provided by historical experience and revolutionary principles summed up from it is that, overwhelmingly, especially at the start, the weapons of the revolutionary armed forces come from the enemy — that is, they are captured; and the capturing of these weapons is one of the most important objects of the revolutionary army in waging battles.

Mao described how, even after nearly two decades of waging war, the Chinese revolutionary army still faced the situation, at the start of the second (and final) civil war with the KMT, where

we did not have any large cities. We did not have the assistance of foreign powers, our troops were few in numbers [i.e., relative to those of the KMT — B.A.], we had no air force, we had no navy, we had no airplanes, and we had no artillery. We only had light weapons. They were not made by us; they had been seized by us.⁷⁰

Here it is important to note not just that to a large degree the weapons they had were ones they seized from the KMT (Mao also referred to the U.S. as the "quartermaster" of the Chinese People's Liberation Army because it funneled so many weapons and other materiel to the PLA through the KMT, which the U.S. was massively supplying) but also that in effect they took only what they could use — to wage *revolutionary warfare*. They did not attempt to take (but sought to destroy) what was not of advantage in waging such a war (this is another important dimension to Mao's statement of what they did *not* have and the fact that all they had, at the start, were light weapons). This, however, is not some kind of absolute injunction against the use of modern weaponry; rather it is an expression of the fact that weapons are secondary and their use (and usefulness, or lack of it) is determined at any point by what kind of war is being fought and what — or who — is being relied on as the main factor.

Returning to the relation of offense and defense, it is important to grasp that this is a dialectical relationship — they are a unity of opposites, and as such they interpenetrate back and forth in the course of war, of major campaigns, and of battles (defense within offense and vice versa). One of the more important and insightful discussions in Clausewitz's military writings is his analysis of how an offensive, especially when it has gone over to pursuit, can only go on so long — unless of course it can lead to complete victory — and that it is important not to overextend such pursuit or it can lead to a reversal of momentum and perhaps a major reversal of strength overall between the two contending forces.⁷¹

In the armed struggle in the U.S. a particular application of the offense within the defense will be necessary to deal especially with air attacks and even possible nuclear attacks on the strongholds of the revolutionary army: the tactical approach of fighting at close quarters (or "intermingled") with the enemy forces, at least in certain circumstances. Here we can also learn from our enemy — in particular the tactic, advocated by McNamara and some others, of quick thrusts into Eastern Europe with the start of war with the Soviet bloc, to "neutralize" at least some of battlefield nuclear war-fighting of the Warsaw Pact, as analyzed in the *Revolutionary Worker*.⁷² At the same time we should even more learn from the policies developed by the leaders of our class, such as Mao's 1964 discussion of how to deal with the threat of atomic attacks on Chinese cities:

We shall run away when they drop the atom bombs. When they enter the city, we shall also enter the city and the enemy will not dare to use the atom bomb. We shall engage in street fighting. At any rate, we shall fight them.⁷³

There is in certain respects and up to a point an analogy between the forces of proletarian revolution, in particular where the armed struggle takes the form of insurrection followed by civil war, and what Mao says about the fascist states at the time around World War 2 — how important the offensive is to them, that they must remain on the offensive or be ruined and defeated.⁷⁴ But, as I said, this is in certain respects and up to a point; where this analogy breaks down is that it would be fundamentally wrong and harmful — and flying in the face of historical experience — to argue that revolutionary armed forces cannot fight from the strategic defensive and accumulate through fighting the basis to go over, sooner or later, to the strategic offensive and win ultimate victory. Whether a revolutionary war should (or must, to have a chance of success) begin from the strategic defensive or with a concerted offensive, as in the kind of insurrectionary armed struggle discussed up to this point, depends on the concrete conditions and differs with different countries (and in general terms

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⁶¹ See Lenin, "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" *LCW*, Vol. 26, p. 132; see also Lenin, "Advice of an Onlooker," *LCW*, Vol. 26, p. 180. It is significant that, already in the 1905 Revolution, which proved unsuccessful, those who were to lead the successful revolution of October 1917 and following, in particular Lenin and Stalin as well, began to focus on these crucial points. See for example Stalin's citation of similar observations by Engels in Stalin's summation of especially the experience of the Moscow uprising of 1905. Among other things, Engels says that even an uprising "begun in a brainless way" could have a chance of leading to success if it is quickly and resolutely followed up on and its momentum built off of to sweep across as much of the country as possible, drawing in more and more force, winning over wavering elements, and deepening splits and causing desertions among the enemy armed forces. Food for thought! And this, by the way, is another reason why armed struggle can accomplish what elections never can in activating masses and winning over even waverers in the struggle to upend and uproot the old order (see J.V. Stalin, "Marx and Engels on Insurrection," *Works* [Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1954], Vol. 1, p. 247).

⁶² Lenin, "Letter to Comrades," *LCW*, Vol. 26, p. 209.

⁶³ Lenin, "Letter to Central Committee Members," *LCW*, Vol. 26, p. 235.

⁶⁴ Lenin, "The Revolutionary Army and the Revolutionary Government," *LCW*, Vol. 8, p. 563.

⁶⁵ Lenin, "The Revolutionary Army and the Revolutionary Government," *LCW*, Vol. 8, p. 563.

⁶⁶ Mao Tsetung, "On Protracted War," *MSW*, Vol. 2, p. 118.

⁶⁷ See Lenin, "Lessons of the Moscow Uprising," *LCW*, Vol. 11, p. 174.

⁶⁸ Lenin, "Lessons of the Moscow Uprising," *LCW*, Vol. 11, p. 172.

⁶⁹ Lenin, "Lessons of the Moscow Uprising," *LCW*, Vol. 11, pp. 174-75.

⁷⁰ Mao, "Conversation with Zanzibar Expert M.M. Ali and his Wife (June 18, 1964)," *Miscellany*, Part II, p. 369.

⁷¹ There is also an analogy here to momentum — "runs" — in basketball: to the need to "consolidate" and maintain the advantage when the momentum of the "run" begins to be lost. When a team is on a run things go its way for awhile, but inevitably, by the laws of motion, it proves impossible to keep things up on that level; and if that team tries to keep the "run" on that level then it begins making mistakes — turnovers, etc. — and giving the advantage, or at least the opportunity to seize the advantage, back to the other side. We can learn from basketball as well as other aspects of life. I'm certainly not the one who'll be opposed to using basketball to learn! — and since the other side insists on continually using the military and war as a frame of reference for sports, for reactionary purposes, why shouldn't we draw lessons from sports to serve revolutionary struggles and aims? And the principles involved in this basketball example relate by analogy to the interpenetration of offense and defense in war.

⁷² "Nuclear War Fighting With a Certified Dove," *RW*, No. 244, p. 10.

⁷³ Mao, "Talk on Putting Military Affairs Work Into Full Effect and Cultivating Successors to the Revolution (June 16, 1964)," *Miscellany*, Part II, p. 356.

⁷⁴ See, for example, Mao, "The Turning Point in World War II," *MSW*, Vol. 3, p. 107.

The Making Of The Christian Soldiers



This is the third article in a series on the current reactionary religious movement in the United States. It deals with the history of this army of god over the last decade and a half.

In 1968 the ruling class of the United States reeled under heavy blows from all sides. The fat years of the '50s had ground to an end amidst deepening crisis and a rising wave of revolution both within and without. Imperialism needed belligerent, unashamed combat troops, and could not content itself with passivity from the loyalists it had fattened over the years.

So when the Wallace movement arose in that year, lights flashed in the heads of the farsighted representatives of U.S. imperialism. Here was a militant reactionary movement assembled from the various raw materials long nurtured in the mother country. It was a movement that foreshadowed the social forces and political themes which would ooze into view, under different circumstances, in the form of today's religious right.

Ten million people, concentrated in the South but also spread in all 50 states, rallied to support the arch-segregationist, Alabama Governor George Wallace, as he ran for president. Underneath the thinnest veneer of codewords, his message had been clear: step up and not back from the war in Vietnam, and for "Law and Order," a call to mow down Black people and all opposition if necessary to defend the interests of the imperialist citadel. America was to be set right.

There had been no similar movement in the post-World War 2 period. In every sense it was ugly; but to the rulers, this was most welcome.

Unlike the conservatism of the 1950s, this reaction was not based in the effete

intelligentsia of, say, a William Buckley. In fact, it bristled with disdain for the refined and educated, and rejected their dogmas of "individual rights" in favor of the language of the lynch mob.

Unlike the segregationist states' rights movement he sprang from, Wallace held appeal far beyond the regional peculiarities of Dixie. Open racism was no longer just a Southern rallying cry: the active suppression of Black people and others had become clearly the crucial challenge facing reactionaries everywhere. And so the Wallace movement gathered around itself boneheaded labor aristocrats and middle-class rightists outside the South.

The kind of appeal held out by Wallace to these forces was of special interest to the bourgeoisie as the '70s approached and the glory days of the '50s, with their seemingly limitless reserves for imperialism, disappeared into the past forever. No old-style AFL-CIO anti-communists these, the Wallacites avoided any focus on more privileges and benefits for the privileged workers who formed their base, relying instead on emotional triggers, and a mean-spirited, unreasoning defense of Americanism. Unlike John Birch Society-type fantasies of conspiracy pegged to the right-wing petty bourgeoisie of the '50s, this program pledged a clear cut, frontline defense of U.S. imperialism against the *real* challenges in the world.

"Wallace," one commentator wrote, "has no real policies, plans or platforms, and no one expects them of him... Wallace plumbs to, rubs and inflames the fears of those uneasy with the present and wistful for... some imagined past." How familiar today.

Book after book appraised the importance of the new reactionary legions of

Wallace and pondered: how to jolt these most reactionary slime into semipermanent wakedness, how to maintain their activism, train them to speak and forge them into combat forces for world war and the next round of counterrevolution. A virulent linkage had been forged between the "traditional values" of religion, family, white supremacy and small town stability on the one hand, with the international needs of imperialism on the other. "String 'em high" meets "bomb 'em back into the stone age."

Considerable evidence documents how the activism of these forces was encouraged and even directly ordered from the highest levels of society. It has come out that Nixon ordered his Secretary of Labor, Brennan, to organize the infamous "hard hat" demonstrations in New York, where construction workers were led to beat up antiwar demonstrators on Wall Street. Similar actions were attempted across the country to develop these guys as a cudgel force of the "Silent Majority." However, with the general ebb after the '60s, and despite the efforts of the ruling class, none of the reactionary currents took root in any lasting way. Wallace himself was violently removed from the national political scene, under very suspicious circumstances.

Demoralization

As the '60s gave way to the '70s, the bourgeoisie was forced into a period of regroupment and political reconstruction, even as they scrambled to prepare for their most dangerous confrontation. Not only did they face the legacy of defeat in Vietnam, the Soviet Union now posed a life-or-death obstacle to their empire.

One difficult internal problem was that, with America punctured and exposed, and economically damaged, even loyal supporters were deeply demoralized. In the '60s, absolute values had been rocked, old gospels flouted. As late as the summer of 1979, President Carter was placing this problem center stage in his famous "malaise speech":

"I want to talk to you right now about a fundamental threat to American democracy... It is a crisis of confidence. It is a crisis that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will."

And he was calling for a reversal of trends using "spiritual" values:

"We know the strength of America. We are strong. We can regain our unity. We can regain our confidence... Let us commit ourselves together to a rebirth of the American spirit."

These were indeed a difficult and critical time for the U.S. bourgeoisie, scrambling as it was to set its affairs in order for an approaching world war.

The battle cry for a spiritual rebirth became a prime ground for rekindling the

monster of American national will. Every sign, large or small, of movement around traditional, and increasingly religious, American backwardness was explored and encouraged by those who would later recruit the Christian soldiers of the '80s.

One revealing example is a strike among coal miners in 1974. Throughout the decade the miners mounted sharp economic struggles, sometimes with political overtones. During this time, an untypical but significant and totally reactionary strike broke out in the area of Kanawha County, West Virginia and lasted for months. In Kanawha, the strength of the miners (who in West Virginia are largely bornagain Christians) was turned against new textbooks being introduced into the school system. These contained Darwin's theories, sections on drugs and sex education, writings by Black people (including Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*), and other fruits of the '60s. Schools and buses were bombed and coal productions stopped, as miners and others (led by preachers wearing coonskin caps) demanded child indoctrination into that "old time religion."

This and similar sputterings of a mass reactionary movement were recognized as opportunities and seized by political operatives of the ruling class. The textbook protest, like the South Boston anti-busing movement at about the same time, was infiltrated by agents, studied in detail, and popularized nationally.

But if such outbursts hinted at a potential movement, the reaction to the legalization of abortion in 1973 was a declaration of war for right-wing organizers. The Supreme Court decision of that year knocking down state anti-abortion laws is still called "the Pearl Harbor of the Religious Right" by the Right itself.

It seems clear that the Supreme Court decision and the subsequent spread of birth-control clinics, like Planned Parenthood, into nearly every county in the country, represented a recognition of major changes in the lives of women and the shape of the family. It was a decision that, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, perhaps, couldn't be helped. But it also touched off a reaction among those loyal Americans, beset by demoralization and scared to death that women were rising out of "their place," that the family was disintegrating and with it the "American way of life." Fertile ground indeed for the currying of a new reactionary movement.

The antiabortion trumpet call also helped glue together various strands of backwardness and obscurantism. Once the Roman Catholic hierarchy had the field to itself, and during the decade, if anything, redoubled its role, in 1975 com-

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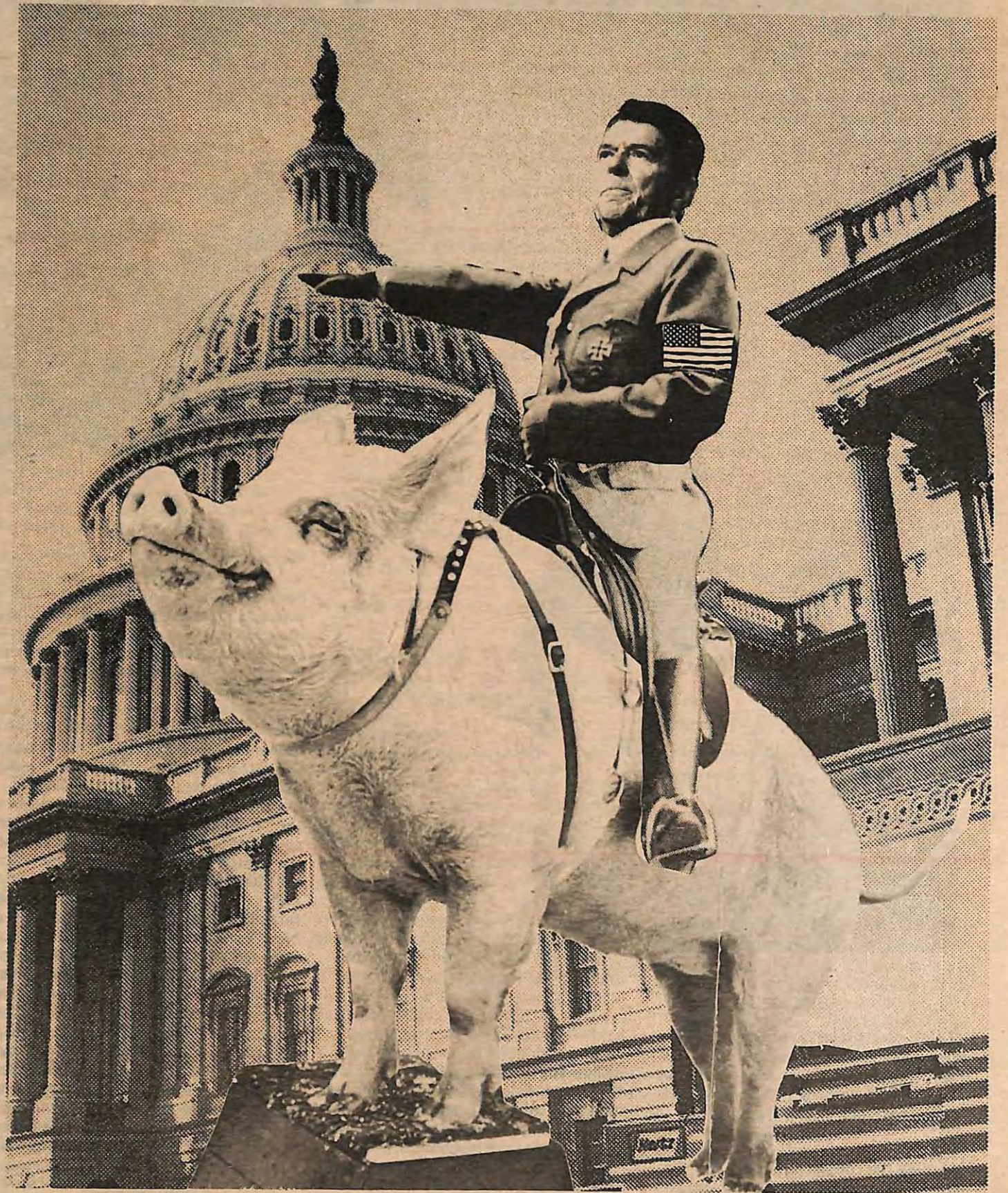
On Mandates and Fitting Representatives

The 1984 election is over. Reaganism with Reagan won; Reaganism with Mondale lost. The ruling class had their man, already groomed, already in office, already proven suitable for their unspeakable plans — and so the outcome was no surprise to anyone. Rarely has the U.S. ruling class pushed so hard for a wipe-out, rather than a horse race.

As early as last February, major news magazines were crowing, "Reagan — America's Choice!" (Oh, you didn't know the election was over...) *Newsweek* emblazoned its pre-election issue with Reagan's face and the word "Landslide." And so by November 7, the only thing left was for the ritual to run its course, herding the faithful into their booths to stamp out the prescribed "landslide mandate." In fact the only question drawing any real excitement was whether Reagan would get all fifty states, or whether Minnesota would mar the sweep by sentimentally going for the native son, which it did. (But then Pierre Salinger reported that a poll in *Le Monde* showed that France would have gone for Reagan if they could vote, so that made up for Minnesota.)

Some feel demoralized by this. Why? This is how the imperialists present their chosen chieftains to the people, and instruct the masses in what they are supposed to think. Just because the ruling class insists this whole circus represents "the will of the people" is no reason to get too confused! Certainly few elections have been such a strained and determined snow job as 1984's manufactured landslide for Reagan.

The cooperation between the mass media and the electoral campaign was truly worthy of Goebbels at his best. The media bragged openly that they shaped the election from beginning to end, decided the issues, could make or break various figures, created the nuances of image and impact. And their mirage-making was obviously laid at Reagan's feet from the start. He became synonymous with Uncle Sam himself. All the headlong, single-minded concentration on preparing to wage and win a nuclear war was packaged as the most logical next step in achieving "peace through strength," with Reagan's studied acts of blank-eyed, country-boy simplicity beaming over television night after night. The open threats to bomb the Soviet Union, to invade Nicaragua, to bolster an American first-strike capacity with killer satellites, the quick thrust into Grenada — all dissolved in a gauzy haze of "sentimental brutality." While the media pretended to be stunned at the "teflon Presidency," the fact is that the media simply proved itself as one of the most highly disciplined, sophisticated and valuable institu-



tions of bourgeois society. It carefully selected which images and "facts" reached people, chopped them up into the famous 30-second bites, and heaped predigested commentary on the whole proceeding so that even the most stupid of America's loyalists could not miss out on what to think.

Going Through the Motions of Opposition

As for the Democratic effort, Geraldine Ferraro inadvertently spoke a truth in her concession speech when she remarked, "Campaigns, even if you lose them, do serve a function." And no one could have served the present function of U.S. imperialism's "mandate" better than this opposition which doggedly insisted on never opposing. Who can remember when the range of official bourgeois debate has shrunk so drastically, until the question became literally: "Who can best carry forward the Reagan campaign for winning world war, the President himself or his challengers?" Right from the start the Democrats insisted that they, not Reagan, could best strengthen the American military preparations; that they, not Reagan, could convince the mother-country population that the empire was worth nuking and dying for; and ultimately (as in the last two debates between the four candidates) that they, and not Reagan/Bush, were most qualified to make the cold calculations needed to

push the button at the right time. Not surprisingly, fewer rallied to them on that basis, since it has been made very clear that Reagan gets high marks on exactly those points. Some of Mondale's top aides admitted in interviews that they too cried emotionally at patriotic parts of Reagan's 30-minute campaign commercial! But it remained for the Democratic slate to carry out their second major task — seeking to gather to themselves sections of the alienated and angry in the United States, to provide them a few symbolic whiffs of a "lesser evil," to draw these forces more tightly into the bourgeois political process... and there demoralize them. Right to the end the Democratic opposition played this role — with Mondale insisting late election eve: "He has won. We are all Americans. He is our president... we honor him," and closed with "God bless you. And God bless America." And Ferraro: "This is not a moment for a partisan speech... but for a celebration for our democracy." So, strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner" rose over Mondale's farewell, and the Democrats touted their run and loss in this charade as proof of the eternal justice, freedom and superiority of the American system.

This is how the U.S. imperialists install their chieftains. Though a miniscule handful ruling a world-spanning empire of billions, they mask their inner workings by hauling out sections of the Ameri-

can population to endorse their choice. The candidates are preselected, the issues are predigested, the channels are patrolled by their media watchdogs. And when it is over the leaders and policies of that ruling class have been hammered into the heads of the "citizenry" and presented as a "voice of the people."

The extremism of what the U.S. ruling class faces, not just the depth of their global crisis but the specific world war which is their only available option, positively required that they manufacture the appearance of national consensus for their leadership. They have dredged up a decrepit Ronald Reagan, along with all the gross and rabid reaction necessary to bolster him, as an American Hitler to lead them in their Armageddon. And straining their credibility, they offered up to him the required popular rubber stamp — gushing money and effort into this massive extravaganza of opinion-molding and rejuvenated "legitimacy."

But a closer look reveals the hollowness of their claims of "Mandate." Sure, this ruling class can put on a show, and basically get tens of millions of people still loyal to them to do what they're told. But when a closer look is taken at what, in reality, the bourgeoisie plans to have people endure in the immediate future... then their moment of glory reveals feet of clay.

In fact, this closer look prompts a provocative question: if they can claim a

Months ago when many were telling oppressed and progressive-minded people that they had to line up at the ballot box in '84, we declared our Anti-Candidacy, running against the notion that the oppressed could advance their interests through the electoral arena. Now, when some are reeling in demoralization and disorientation at the outpouring of patriotic know-nothingism, neanderthal religious fundamentalism and chauvinism of every stripe, consciously cultivated throughout the campaign, we declare our Anti-Candidacy victorious.

Once you cut through the hype about Reagan's victory of record proportion and talk about landslides, mandates and realignments, you come down to the fact that the largest number of voters wasn't those who voted for Reagan, but those who didn't vote at all! They poured millions of dollars into and diverted much media hype to registering voters, yet they were again only able to draw slightly more than one-half of those eligible into endorsing their political process. The reasons why people didn't vote were varied, ranging from cynicism to disgust and outrage at the whole set-up, but the basic division in U.S. society isn't between Reagan and Mondale supporters but between those who still have faith in this system and its political process and those who don't.

Of course, we can't take all the credit for the plurality that our Anti-Candidacy won. First we must thank the candidates for running a campaign where both bragged about being ready and willing to lead America to victory over her adversaries and both claimed to be the candidate of god, country and family — while debating which one was most fit to have his finger on the nuclear button. We must also thank the imperialist system for repeatedly making it clear that voting does nothing to stop it from perpetrating horrible crimes against people here and worldwide.

Finally we note that Reagan has talked of continuing his record of "service" to the American people and Mondale has appealed that we "go forward together as Americans." For our part we will make no such appeal. We are aware of the cracks and divisions in U.S. society and we say fine. In fact we want to see them deepened — politically. Also we will not suggest that anyone passively await service. Instead, those who avoided the trap of voting have work to do. Alienation, dissatisfaction, even conscious disgust with their election ritual won't cut it in the face of the current situation. Those who see that imperialism has dragged the world to the brink of nuclear war, and see the misery that the imperialists force millions worldwide to live in, must take up serious preparation for revolution to overthrow this system and its madness.

Carl Dix,
Anti-Candidate 1984

Anti-Candidate Declares Victory

mandate to rule based on the results of November 7, what can we, without exaggeration and with an eye to the future, rightfully claim on the basis of all the things they have strained to hide, deny or explain away?

The Real "Voter Gap"

In the first place, the absence of any prominent discussion of "turnout" within their electoral postmortems gives a major clue to some of the election's most important developments. The key election result was not the "polarization" between Reagan's supporters and Mondale's. No! It is the polarization between those who voted and those who did not. This race, from everything we can tell, was neck and neck at the wire.

The fact was hidden. When the *New York Times* got around to discussing this, they slipped it into a page 16 article under the title: "Election Turnout Shows Slight Rise...Gains Reversed Decline of 2 Decades." More than a slight distortion! In fact, even by their own figures, the voter turnout this year almost exactly matched the dismal low set by the 1980 elections: 52.9% of eligible voters turned out this year, only a 0.3% change from the last election which was the lowest point since 1960. But that is not the end of the story, since their term "eligible voters" specifically ignores the millions of people, mostly proletarians, in this country who have avoided the honor of citizenship. Because so many are without papers — and avoid being counted — it is simply unknown how many inhabitants of this great democracy are simply excluded from the "eligible." But, if the numbers are 10 million immigrants (and this is hardly unlikely), then there are at least 90,451,000 men and women over 18 in the belly of the beast who didn't vote, compared to the 90,358,000 who did!

Now the elections are always a sham, because the rulers of this country simply do not lay their deepest disagreements before the oppressed to have them resolve — but even looking at the formal bourgeois terms of a supposed "democracy" the vast number of people excluded or

too alienated is both an exposure and a sign of weakness.

And it is particularly significant given the tremendous effort made by the bourgeoisie in this election to make voting a sacred act. ("Don't forget, son, men fought and died for your freedom to vote!")

Never has such a campaign in favor of voting been waged. In particular, the formerly disenfranchised and the disaffected have been the target of tremendous mind-fuck. Here Jesse Jackson (among other "historic firsts") deserves honorable mention. He was sent out ("the first Black presidential candidate") to drag the disenchanted into the arena, to raise up their hopes, and then (after those hopes were spit on, trampled and soiled), he was paraded around to teach them how to grovel in the "realism" of American politics.

Millions of new voters were signed up. Bornagains were unleashed to sign up their millions, previously one of the least involved sections of the people. And in counterpoint to them the Black bourgeois liberals were whipped up in an unannounced contest with these reactionary white religious freaks, over who could get the most of "their base" to participate. Tables were set up in churches, in Black high schools, even on the welfare lines.

Here we can learn something from the constant theme of the voter drives: "The key thing is not who you vote for but that you vote." The bourgeoisie expresses its actual attitude — that the elections are a plebiscite on the system itself, in which the very act of participation represents belief that this system "draws its consent from the governed." They too recognize that the important polarization is between those who vote and those who don't.

All this underscores the significance of the fact that voting did not rise above its twenty-year low. And particularly the strength of Black abstention reveals that many emerged from Jesse Jackson's bespirt-on-and-grovel parade even more consciously alienated. While the overall percent of eligible voters who cast votes

remained (as we said above) essentially stable, some early reports claim that the percentage of Blacks among those voters declined from 9 to 8 percent. ABC News' exit polls were used to calculate that overall the absolute number of Black people who voted also declined, from 7.8 million in 1980 to 7.2 million this year. This takes place at a time when at least a million new Black voters were coaxed onto the election rolls!

All this puts the lie to bourgeois claims that not voting arises simply from apathy or indifference. Broad forces expressed the fact that they are left out of this political process. They said "Fuck it!" out of a deepening alienation, not yet politically advanced or radical, but out of a sense that they have been specifically excluded from a sinister momentum being built up — at the very moment they are being ordered to participate in the system as a whole.

It is also highly significant that this election saw a small and "outlawed" revolutionary minority openly calling for a refusal to vote, and exposing the act of voting in 1984 for what it is — an act of complicity with the criminality of this system today, and the truly "historic firsts" the system is preparing for tomorrow.

Given the accelerating pace of world events, and their nature, there is great potential for precisely such a conscious revolutionary force to exert a rapidly growing influence on the more broadly alienated as they are drawn, with all their anger and existing consciousness, into the swirl of political life.

Mondale's Reluctant Voters and Reagan's Mandate

Some of those who voted for Mondale may have a hangover today. They voted for one warmonger over another, and if they feel dirty — they should. They grasped at straws, and ended up in complicity. Freaked out by Reagan's extremism, they sought solace in his official opposition — and ended up demoralized. This is because the Democrats were nothing different and their very participa-

tion only helps Reagan parade as "the winner, fair and square." Some of these people may feel like they were buried under a Reagan avalanche of unthinking meat — they should take heart in the fact that large sections of the oppressed stood apart in largely sullen abstention. Isn't this a sign that Mondale versus Reagan are not the only conceivable poles?

For the established and organized Left who shamelessly promoted this complicity, it was never really a question of clutching at straws but of a cynical and conscious strategy. (One of these revisionist groupings actually called on people to "hold your nose and pull the lever"!)

Coming to terms with imperialist political forces has been part of their strategy all along, and entering the Democratic Party on the eve of a debacle was their idea of "getting in on the ground floor" of a coming shake-up within that party. For that, whatever progressive forces they could get to follow them were to act as capital for negotiations — and these maneuverings are far worse than just "complicity," they are dress rehearsals of counterinsurgency. But even here, the situation is hardly grim for revolution! Just watch how these worms had to wiggle and blabber defensively to come up with justifications for their course — even among their supporters, in the reform-minded middle classes, it was hard to get many to swallow the whole "Dump Reagan/Vote Mondale" scenario, and it suggests that many of these forces may not follow the revisionists in counterrevolution when the battle lines are far more sharply drawn.

Certainly there are forces in America, millions of them, who recognize and militantly support a reactionary program when they see one. The revolution will be, as Lenin put it, a civil war between two sections of the people. There are certainly millions corrupt enough, poisoned enough to actively crave more American aggression, and who even look forward to a chance to take a swipe at the Big One. And for these forces, Reagan has offered every encouragement possible, from his

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The Terror of National Oppression At Battle Creek

To the RW,

In this year of Jesse Jackson for president (a dream deferred), and the whole illusion of electoral politics as a means for Black people to change their oppressed conditions under U.S. imperialism, the illusion of the ballot box can never stop the vicious national oppression that Black people suffer in America. For Black people living in Battle Creek, Michigan national oppression is brutal and atrocious. The Coalition to End Police Brutality and Racism in Battle Creek has been under a constant siege of terror the last 5 years. The Coalition has played the leading role in organizing Black people against police brutality in this city known for its cereal monopoly (Kellogg Corp.) and its racist pigs.

To give you some background on the persecution of Black people and the Coalition in Battle Creek. On June 16th, 1979 Larry Guy, one of the founders of the Coalition, was brutally beaten by the pigs and left in a jail cell some 4 hours without medical care to die bleeding from the ears, nose, and mouth. In 1980, Larry Guy was sentenced to 2-1/2 to 5 years in prison for a weapon pigs planted on him after beating him to a state of unconsciousness (he was sentenced by an all-white jury). Robert Guy, president of the Coalition and the younger brother of Larry

Guy, was killed on August 31st, 1981 by an explosion of a pipe bomb while he was walking from his car to a restaurant. (A month earlier, 2 pigs were caught in the act of placing a car full of explosives outside Larry Guy's home. They were never charged.)

In 1983, Larry Guy's 1.5 million dollar lawsuit against the city of Battle Creek began. Two police officers turned state's evidence (the same two pigs who rigged a car full of explosives in front of Larry's house).

The most recent events in Battle Creek show the blatant, callous and vicious nature of the pigs and the state apparatus they serve. One day in March of this year, a 9-month-old baby (a Coalition member's daughter) died at the hands of the racist Battle Creek hospital. Here is another case of a Black child who died of S.I.D. (Sudden Infant Death); it is mysterious how so many Black babies die of S.I.D.'s. When Larry Guy came on the scene at the hospital to see about the baby girl's death, at least 5 Battle Creek pigs were called on the scene; and they snickered and laughed at the grieving family in the hallway of the baby's death room. On April 10th, 1984 (6 days before Larry Guy's summary hearing for his lawsuit against the city), Battle Creek city pigs, Michigan state police crime lab and SWAT teams, plus canine dogs, raided

the home of Coalition members. The SWAT team, using gestapo and storm-trooper tactics, kicked the door to the house in and planted guns, ammunition and explosive devices. SWAT men wielding guns and plastic shields in front of them (they were in trees and on roofs of houses) held women and children at gunpoint some 4 hours. Larry Guy was arrested on a phony violation of parole charges, while pigs told Larry, "If we can't kill you, we'll kill the babies" and "You won't get your money, you won't get your money"! (referring to his lawsuit). Then children and babies were marched out of the house at gunpoint in the cold rain in nothing but underclothing, with no shoes or coats. About 5 hours after the pigs had raided the Coalition members' home, people were charged with housing a cache of weapons and explosives (the same weapons and explosives the pigs brought in when they raided the home). The pigs tried to paint the picture of the Coalition as a group of terrorists, and terrorism has to be destroyed. The Bureau of Firearms and Tobacco was brought in, as well as a Grand Jury set up by the Calhoun County prosecutor and Battle Creek police. The Grand Jury has subpoenaed about 40 people, including supporters of the Coalition and children to the age of 6 years old. The Grand Jury is serving the same purpose as did the COINTELPRO in the '60s and the early '70s, that is to destroy the Black liberation movement in general; and the Coalition to End Police Brutality and Racism and Larry Guy in particular. The Coalition members have stood tall by not collaborating with the Grand Jury, and some are in jail now for not testifying. One sister's baby died as a result of this sister being put in jail for her noncollaboration with the enemy. The baby died from trauma of separation from the mother — the baby was being breast fed. While in jail the mother requested that her breast milk be sent to her baby to ease the separation — the racist pigs overruled the request.

A recent demonstration put together

by the New Afrikan Peoples Organization (NAPO), along with the John Brown Anti-Klan Society, took to the streets in Battle Creek to get justice. Supporters came from New York, Detroit, Chicago, and other places to participate in the march and chant down police terror and racial oppression. The demonstration in front of the pig department and the march through the Black community had a profound impact. Black people who are normally quiet due to the monopoly of their lives by the Kellogg empire and its soldier cops, were jolted awake by the other Black people stepping out for street justice, chanting, "Fired up, ain't gone take no more!" The march was also significant because the pigs said there would be no march, and the Klan threatened the demonstration. Chokwe Lumumba of the New Afrikan Peoples Organization gave an inspiring speech in front of the site where Robert Guy was killed; he said: "The same imperialist system that killed Robert Guy, is killing Black people right now in South Africa." As the march proceeded through the Black community, it was joined by youth on bikes, people standing out in front of their homes chanting, and people in the streets with banners and signs that said, "Larry Guy Freedom Fighter!" The march and demonstration was a day the people won't forget, or the pigs. Black people as well as other oppressed people must understand that beyond voting and elections is the will to power, and as long as the imperialist system of America has power over us, situations like the terror in Battle Creek will continue. The only way we'll get justice in America is by making justice for ourselves through revolution. Throw down in the streets, not at the ballot box!

The Coalition needs support, anyone interested can contact the Coalition at: The Coalition to End Police Brutality and Racism, P.O. Box 1561, Battle Creek, Michigan 49016.

Soon Forward,
Black Revolutionary
Pontiac, MI

Mandates

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endorsement of the Armageddon mumbo-jumbo, to his (wink, wink) joke about nuking the Russkies.

But it also has to be said that quite a few of the designer brains and rural idiots who were stampeded into creating a Reagan landslide are doing what they always do in deceptively stable times: what they are told. To put it sharply: the kind of beer-keg chic that can hail a mugging like Grenada will not hold together so solidly, especially among the youth, as the full program of nuclear war emerges from beneath the muck of "prepared...for peace." And, as a powerful revolutionary initiative poses a real material challenge, there will be significant sections, who today cast ballots for Reagan or Mondale, won to "friendly neutrality"

toward the revolutionary forces.

When all was said and done, the system settled on Reagan. The imperialists picked well; he fits them. A desperate class of vultures has chosen a rotting corpse. They have propped him up to spin out his bygone nostalgias, while he inches his way toward the button.

Some dreamed of hijacking the ship of state by supporting the "lesser evil" and they had their hopes dashed. Well, such hopes deserve to be dashed — in fact they need to be. We welcome them to the discovery that the elections are a sham, in which the choices are prepackaged and the mandates are manufactured. Let it be no surprise that the imperialists can still convince tens of millions with faith in this system to vote for the imperialist-designated choice, and it should certainly be no surprise that there still are tens of millions of such people! If this is all disillusioning — then, good again. Because

such illusions were a trap all along.

But far more significant developments, significant for the revolutionary proletariat, are stirring beneath the gloss of official versions. When have the official channels of "American democracy," including both the media and the official opposition, so cravenly revealed themselves as yes-men for a preestablished program? So, let the President openly proclaim the theology of "the end of time" and watch the commentators nod thoughtfully and the "challenger" close ranks to "honor" the victor!

At the same time, the election was *not* a success in major, and highly strategic, sections of the population — not surprisingly including much of the oppressed proletariat. Eyed with suspicion and concern by the ruling class, ordered into the electoral arena to be spit on, and excluded from the ranks of the "mandate" — these forces sense correctly that heavy events are sure to follow.

The imperialists have their man of the

times — their Hitlerian Reagan. And they have their extreme plans, dictated by necessity. "You ain't seen nothin' yet!" was one promise fulfilled all too soon: after all, Day 1 of the new term started with open threats of direct aggression against Nicaragua.

Can there be any doubt what all this calls for? The very fact that things are not "all sewn up" for the bourgeoisie — and that much of their touted "mandate" is based on the fact that millions have not yet been confronted by what comes next — calls for boldness to politically "create great disorder everywhere." There is a basis and a need for an "outlaw spirit" to rip at the sordid workings and lies at every hand, to gnaw at this lull and prepare for the moment when it breaks apart on the rocks of coming events.

In Marx's words, "Here's the rose, let's dance!" another way of saying: this is hardly time to be demoralized — it's time to prepare for revolution. □

New York Telegram Demands Release of Fela Kuti

The following is the text of a telegram and signatories from New York City. The telegram was sent to the Nigerian government in protest against the incarceration and trial of musician Fela Kuti. (See RW No. 278, "Fela Kuti vs. The VIPs.")

To the Government of Nigeria:

We would like you to know that we strongly oppose your not letting the brilliant Fela Anikulapo Kuti out of your country so that we can hear his music performed live. There are many here who want him to come to this country, and we know why you have not let him through. We also know that you have oppressed him continuously over a long period of time, and that he is now on trial in an attempt to silence his living musical voice permanently. Take heed, we are not prepared to let your tactics go unnoticed, and if Fela is made a victim of them, his oppressors will have no rest.

Salvator Principato, musician,
Liquid Liquid
Tabby Diamond, Mighty Diamonds
Tinja Stewart, reggae musician
Alan Houghten, owner,
Dubway Studio
Gary Ray, director, Club Darinka
Robert Bradley, booking, Pyramid
Club
Hilly Kristel, director, CBGB
Moses Asch, director, Folkways
Records
William Brown, Soho Music Gallery

Roothie, Cool Runnin' reggae store
Gabe Parsons, Secret Spot/Ratcage
Records
Ira Barauch, Rocks In Your Head
Terry Wilson, reggae DJ
Keith Haring, visual artist
Sur Rodney Sur, Peter Bacharach,
Gracie Mansion art gallery
Marisa Cardinale, Civilian Warfare,
art gallery
Plus ten musicians, one music journal-
ist, one playwright, and three
filmmakers



Correspondence On:

Last summer the Revolutionary Worker published an interview with Joe Strummer by DJ Miller Francis of the "Revolution Rock" show, WRFG, Atlanta. The interview was reprinted in the RW because we believe that given the role of The Clash, important political questions are involved for all revolutionaries and especially revolutionary artists.

In our introduction to this interview the RW said:

"The Clash represented by far the best in practice of the left upsurge that occurred in Britain and the U.S. among artists during the late seventies to the early eighties. They were, first and foremost, a truly great rock band. They also unleashed an advanced audience as no one else, with the exception of Bob Marley, had done for a decade or more. They had a tremendous impact on the struggle among artists, first and foremost the musicians.

"Perhaps their greatest contribution was that they allied themselves openly with the left and they did so in a truly pathbreaking way. They were revolutionaries, they said.

"Around six months ago, Mick Jones, guitar player and co-writer with Joe Strummer of much of the band's material, was fired from the band. Regular RW readers in the U.S. are no doubt aware of the fact that all this occurred on a not too friendly basis, to say the least.

"Our party wishes Joe Strummer and his 'new' Clash well, and we also wish the same for Mick Jones."

Following publication of the interview (July 13, 1984) the RW published correspondence from readers addressing some of the questions posed by the Clash break-up and the interview. This week, we are publishing more correspondence from our readers. Past correspondence appears in RW Nos. 269, 271 and 273. Readers can contact their local distributor and Revolution Books (see box page 2) for copies of the interview and correspondence.

RW,

I wanted to make a few comments on the subject of "cultural imperialism" and some related questions that have come up in the interview with Joe Strummer and Kosmo Vinyl, and in the subsequent correspondence.

First off, I think the term "cultural imperialism" really is not very helpful. What is meant by this term, I believe, is the effects that the domination of the world by the imperialist system has on artistic and cultural life. And this is, in my opinion, a better way to pose the question. That is, it is clearer and more scientific to speak of the effects the imperialist system has on culture, rather than to invent a "cultural imperialism."

To approach this from a little different angle, I think it would be good to consider again what "imperialism" means. It does not mean simply the ripping off of the labor and/or the natural resources of oppressed nations. While this is part of the picture, such a limited understanding of imperialism, if it is left at that level, eventually will lead to some kind of reformist view. (There are plenty of people, for example, who see imperialism as just a problem of greedy corporations or greedy countries extracting superprofits from the Third World. The solution, in that view, is that the imperialists should act more fairly, or perhaps they should be forced to act more fairly.) If imperialism is really much more than this — if its necessities and imperatives are inherent in the very nature of the current world economic system — then it will not do to take the very real phenomenon of cultural forms developed by the masses of oppressed nations being taken and used by the imperialists (or by artists who represent their views) to further their rule, and to call this "cultural imperialism."

I would note two things, in this context, about the effect imperialism has had on cultural life. First, just as imperialism as a stage of capitalism has outgrown national bounds and has become a single

world system, culture reflects these developments in economic and social life and is a great deal more "internationalized" than ever before in world history. This, of course, does not mean that national cultures no longer exist, any more than imperialism means that nations no longer exist. But, on the other hand, this process of "internationalization" goes on under the imperialist system and is twisted and distorted to serve the needs and ends of this system. This manifests itself in many ways. For instance, oppressed countries are flooded with all kinds of decadent culture from the imperial countries, and the culture of these countries is degraded and abused as being inferior to this "advanced" bourgeois trash. At the same time, cultural forms developed by the oppressed masses are ripped off by imperialism to promote their own views and values.

In the interview in RW No. 264 Joe Strummer says, "I feel we've [The Clash] been culturally imperialistic over a lot of the past few years, like ripping off, imitating Black music rather than influencing, being influenced by it, you know, there's a difference." What I think this wrong notion of "cultural imperialism" does, in this case, is to erect a criteria which distinguishes between "imitating" and "being influenced" by the culture of oppressed nationalities. If we are going to talk about "cultural imperialism" at all, then the real criteria for determining who is and who isn't a "cultural imperialist" should be explicitly political criteria. That is, the question is does the art contribute to the freeing of the world's people from the shackles of imperialism, or does it hinder this struggle. And I think that any honest appraisal of the effect of The Clash has to say that they most certainly did contribute to the struggle to liberate humanity.

As far as the question of taking up cultural forms of oppressed nationalities goes, it seems to me that the art of The Clash was anything but "imperialistic." What is the effect of a revolutionary band with a large popular following which — in the midst of all kinds of racist, chauvinist shit being whipped up by the British imperialists against immigrant proletarians from oppressed nations — takes up and popularizes musical forms developed by the masses of these same oppressed nations, and popularizes them among rebellious white youth? In fact, the wide-ranging diversity of forms and style employed by The Clash reflected something of the internationalism of the proletariat, a class that has no country but a whole world to win. And this is in sharp contrast to artists, such as Eric Clapton, who have used forms like reggae for quite opposite ends. And here, as I said, it is a political question of what the content and effect of one's art is.

This same interview reveals the other side of the "cultural imperialism" argument — that what artists should do is develop their "own" culture. Strummer says: We want to discover what our culture was and is. I mean, we're white boys with guitars and drums. . . . And that's something I want to touch again — it really is like starting over." And fur-

ther on: "I feel that we did get into a situation of a bit of a flavor of the month: here's a calypso tune, here's a Mose Allison tune, here's a funky tune, here's a Motown tune, here's a bit . . . and sometimes influences like that are great but if you've got no base to operate from, then you're rootless. It isn't a direction, it's a confusion. . . . And I'm wondering is it because we have no culture, and I know that I used to have one that perhaps I've forgotten about what it is; and that's what we're trying to do, we're trying to go back, touch base, and find our sound, our culture."

Strummer is raising questions that are quite real and confront any revolutionary artist. And they are made all the more urgent and pressing by the times we are living in. But Strummer's answers, in this interview, are just plain wrong. It is wrong to assert that The Clash were just imitating Black musicians, and doing a poor job of it. I really don't think that anyone who listened to, say, a reggae or calypso musician, and then to The Clash, could fail to see the difference — I sure can. And not because The Clash were a poor imitation or something like that. The music on *London Calling* or *Sandinista!* really has something that is fresh and creative, a real synthesis and development of different musical forms. And this, at least in my opinion, did in fact represent a "direction" to their music, and one that was refreshing and invigorating. But more fundamentally what does it mean for an artist from an oppressor nation to assert the necessity to find and develop their "own" culture? Strummer is not here making an argument for keeping British or "white" culture pure, or some other openly chauvinist argument. But the logic he employs could certainly lead one in that direction.

There are surely many important questions that could be — and should be — raised by artists in different mediums concerning different national cultures, the audience they have, the background and skills the artists themselves have. There are, as I pointed out earlier, national cultures which do exist objectively, and there are forms and styles which are more or less accessible to different audiences and different artists. The point is not, as Strummer puts it, to have a "flavor of the month" orientation, or to try to ignore the very real political and artistic problems which are objective facts confronting any revolutionary artist. But, then I don't think The Clash had just a random, eclectic approach, simply picking one style after another for the sake of something different; I think their work had a very real internal consistency, if you will, and one that found an appreciative audience. Further, the interaction of various forms and styles is certainly one of the main ways that culture

grows and develops, and a view which turns its back on The Clash's previous pioneering role can, I'm afraid, only tend towards stagnation. One of the legacies of revisionism in the international communist movement — at least in Britain and the U.S. — is one of artists who at least were at one time revolutionary-minded but who clung to outmoded forms that were deemed "pure," an error which was inevitably bound up with reformism and nationalist tendencies as well.

This letter is probably already too long, but I wanted to make at least a few brief comments on the question of the role of culture, which is another question which the interview and the correspondence have raised. I agree with the comment from the "Musician in South Carolina" (in RW No. 273) when they wrote about "the kind of activity art is: it's more of an expression of how people feel, in the deeper sense, concentrated and taken back to them in the form of inspiration" than it is an attempt to concentrate analysis. Art works more in the realm of perceptions — in images (communicated both visually and in words), in sounds and rhythms, and so forth — and in the feelings and emotions they give rise to, than they do with attempting to communicate a conceptual framework or analysis. This is, in fact, why and how art entertains. And this is also why attempts to communicate analysis as such through the means of art inevitably lead, on the one hand, to a bastardization of political analysis, and to, on the other hand, a very poor work of art. The "political art" view cannot but tend to corrupt both politics and art. What is involved here, I think, is the need to have a clearer conception of the function and role of art — as opposed to agitation or propaganda — which is not at all the same as Strummer's comments, which posed the question as one of finding a balance between being "clear" and being "boring." Here I think it would be useful for more theoretical work to be done on the question of the role and function of art. For instance, the origin and history of various arts and art forms, and the practice of the international communist movement on these questions, are things that need to be critically evaluated from a revolutionary communist point of view. Such work would, too, serve to clarify a related question, the function of artistic forms and their relationship to the content of art.

I am not a professional artist, but as someone who has done some work in a visual art — photography — as well as someone interested in cultural life, I have tried to wrestle with these questions on both a practical and a theoretical level, and I am sure that among the RW's readers there are many who have the ex-

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Christian Soldiers

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mitting itself to a major effort with the National Council of Catholic Bishops' "Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities." But soon, the Catholics were joined by born-again fundamentalists of every stripe, such well-connected cabals as Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum and many others. This die was set for the formation of a new reaction, specifically religious in ideology, with a major prop and battle cry being the oppression of women and especially as time went on, a nuclear glint in its bloodshot eye.

By the late '70s, these forces could call 60,000 into the streets of D.C. to oppose abortion and give rise to the Army of God terrorists who today firebomb abortion clinics, carry out kidnappings and other terror against the women's health movement and others.

The Mechanics

We can gain a sense of how this was accomplished by looking at the work of three political operatives who early attached themselves to bornagain political activism: Paul Weyrich, Howard Phillips, and Richard Viguerie. These three, hardly deep thinkers and not at all open figureheads, worked as political mechanics; they give a key-hole peep into the smokey-backroom origins of the "rise of the right."

None of the three is a bornagain Christian, itself a sign of the cynical adaptation they were to carry out. Their common school was the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) in the early '60s and numerous electoral campaigns afterward. Their political orientation was perhaps best capsulized by Viguerie when he described his lifelong heroes as "the Two Macs"—meaning General Douglas MacArthur and Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Like other bourgeois, these men had been convinced by the defeat of Goldwater in 1964 and by the Wallace phenomenon that the future for American reaction lay with a right-wing populism. Unlike most, they moved on this assessment. From the '60s through the '70s, they carried out a good deal of the spadework for bringing forward a loyal, backward social base for America's great bloody cause to come.

In the early years, Viguerie studiously amassed computerized mailing lists of every conservative known to have contributed money or time to reactionary causes. Starting with a stolen YAF list, he hand copied the names of 12,500 contributors to the 1964 Goldwater campaign, later supplemented by George Wallace's own lists when Viguerie obtained the position of settling the Governor's 1972 presidential campaign debts.

With such resources, Viguerie's operation became a nerve center for the whole fractured right-wing of that period. His client list reads like a "Who's Who Among Cavemen": the Friends of the FBI, "No Amnesty for Deserters" Group, the National Rifle Association, Conservative Books for Christian Leaders, and so on. By the mid-'70s, Viguerie claimed records of 25 million conservatives, including 4.5 million activists. When the stirrings of a "morality" movement started in the mid-'70s he, among others, was in a position to start offensive operations on that increasingly fertile terrain.

In 1973, the Heritage Foundation was established, using funding from the beer capitalist Joseph Coors, with Paul Weyrich at the helm and Viguerie lurking in the shadows. Heritage was to become a major funding source for the fanning of right-wing movements as well as, later, pioneering such military preparations as the Star Wars weaponry proposals (first called for in the 1978 Heritage tract *High Frontier*). One of the first actions of the foundation was to send an operative, James T. McKenna, to act as lawyer for the Textbook protests in West Virginia.

In 1974, the Coors-Weyrich-Viguerie connection established the "Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress" to funnel funds and support for candidates basing themselves on "social conservative" issues.

In 1975, Viguerie, working with Howard Phillips, established the Conservative Caucus. Describing itself as "a lobbying organization patterned on the liberal group Common Cause," it worked to link local reactionary movements to

a national center and to transform sporadic outbursts of reaction into national movements around "single issues." Phillips, for example, established himself as an expert advisor to the racist South Boston anti-busing group, the ROAR organization. At his suggestion a monthly luncheon group was established, attended by national anti-busing figures, and also by Dr. Mildred Jefferson, national chairman of the National Right-to-Life Committee. Former YAF activist Arnold Steinberg attempted to establish a similar movement, BUS-STOP, in Los Angeles, using funds raised nationally through Viguerie's contacts. Similar efforts were made elsewhere across the country, in Cleveland, Louisville, etc. Overwhelmingly the reactionary glue used to stick together the different right-wing movements was explicitly religious. Viguerie, for example, described his proposed "social conservative" movement this way:

"The potential of...a coalition is tremendous. There are an estimated 85 million Americans — 50 million born-again Protestants, 30 million morally conservative Catholics, 3 million Mormons and 2 million Orthodox and Conservative Jews — with whom to build a pro-family, Bible-believing coalition."

These figures greatly inflate the potential of these groupings for Viguerie's envisioned coalition. But Viguerie's intent was to single out religion and morality as wellsprings of the new reaction. From the mid-'70s until today, the religious and "pro-family" coloration became the prism through which the whole familiar range of reactionary issues were projected. White racism now masqueraded as a fight "of concerned parents against having their children bussed across town to inferior schools." The counter-offensive against science and progressive ideas was presented as "a fight by concerned parents to control what their children are taught, and to defend them against moral relativism, sex, pornography, perversion and godlessness."

All the leading bourgeois figures got themselves a preacher. Nixon (a nominal Quaker, and like most imperialists a cold cynic on these matters) transformed Billy Graham into a White House fixture and explained in his memoirs that Watergate interrupted a major plan for corraling the bornagain support. Jimmy Carter rode piety into the White House, making bornagain nonsense politically acceptable in national politics for the first time since prohibition.

Oops! Time to Change Prophecy!

But to fully bring bornagain fundamentalism into politics as the extreme pole of reaction, there were a few little problems to be overcome. One was that the whole tradition of Southern bornagain fundamentalism violently rejected secular activism! That religion, for all its countless warring sects, had always been united in the rejection of "worldly" actions as the road to salvation. Almost by definition, fundamentalism placed the winning of souls, individually, to "a personal relationship to Jesus" as the central (even the only) activity of Christians and their churches. The Biblical stricture to be "in the world, but not of the world" was taken literally and repeated often. Politically this stricture was rooted in the major social role of this religion in the past: to produce a callous and harsh spirituality that could force the most oppressed to concentrate on heaven, remain politically passive, and above all endure oppression as a crucial part of serving god.

A classic example of this doctrine is the sermon "Ministers and Marches," delivered on Sunday night in 1965 in Lynchburg, Virginia, by a then little-known evangelist Jerry Falwell. He sharply denounced the wave of activism sweeping Black churches and some liberal denominations:

"As far as the relationship of the church to the world, it can be expressed as simply the three words which Paul gave to Timothy — 'Preach the Word'.... Nowhere are we commissioned to reform the externals. We are not told to wage wars against bootleggers, liquor stores, gamblers, murderers, prostitutes, racketeers, prejudiced persons or institutions, or any other existing evil as such.... Our only purpose on this earth

is to know Christ and to make Him known. Believing the Bible as I do, I would find it impossible to stop preaching the pure saving gospel of Jesus Christ, and begin doing anything else — including fighting communism, or participating in civil rights reforms.... Preachers are not called to be politicians but soul winners."

But this teaching was now politically outdated, and so, as has been done countless times in the history of religion, the Word of God was now simply reinterpreted. An intense ideological campaign was unleashed within the world of born-again to announce that now it was political passivity (not political activism) which was a sin.

Paul Weyrich (again, not even a born-again!) played a front role in the reinterpretation of divine will, writing, "You are the pastors who have been chosen by God Almighty to lead; we are talking about Christianizing America.... We are talking about simply spreading the gospel in a political context.... We have ceded certain areas of endeavor to the devil.... My friends, what we're talking about here is making ourselves felt."

In Viguerie's house organ, *Conservative Digest*, Weyrich explicitly took on and reversed the long-standing born-again theology: "We see the anti-family movement as an attempt to prevent souls from reaching eternal salvation, and as such we feel not just a political commitment to change this situation, but a moral, and if you will, a religious commitment to battle these forces."

By the end of the 1970s it was widely understood that god's will had shifted. Falwell himself rejected his own "Ministers and Marches" sermon as "false prophecy" and declared in a direct-mailing on his red-white-and-blue stationery: "In recent months, God has been calling me to do more than just preach — he has called me to take action. I have a divine mandate to go right into the halls of Congress and fight for laws that will save America."

While the path of righteousness still included handing your soul over to Jesus, it also now required the godly to strictly enforce their values on the errant sinners around them.

One effect of this call to change doctrine can be seen in the struggles of Falwell-connected forces within the Southern Baptist Convention. This church organization is the largest Protestant denomination in the country, and is particularly valuable politically because it is influential coast-to-coast rather than being based only in the South. In a concerted campaign, openly political forces battled to dump the Convention's traditional abstinence from political activism. (Recently they succeeded and have seized leadership positions in the church apparatus, using opposition to women's ordination as one of their internal issues. The church split nationally in the process and the wing under their control has been swung into the secular political fray.)

Search for a Figurehead

A second problem for the rightist operatives of the mid-'70s, was that a public figure of national Christian stature and modern media abilities had to be found to front for the emerging political network.

Christian leaders were literally weeded through to find the suitable candidate. Viguerie writes in his 1980 book that Weyrich and Howard Phillips "spent countless hours with electronic ministers like Jerry Falwell, Jim Robison and Pat Robertson, urging them to get involved in conservative politics." Of course, all of these men had made major careers already out of draping political reaction with holy idiocy. Pat Robertson, for example, had put together the Christian Broadcast Network, centered on his own *700 Club*; it is today the largest "non-commercial" broadcasting network in the world, reaching 75% of American homes with television, plus the Philippines, Japan, the Armed Forces Network, and most of Latin America.

Similarly, Falwell had already built up a whole industry around his "ministry." In addition to his nationally televised *Old Fashioned Gospel Hour*, his Thomas Road complex claimed 17,000 members, making it the second largest congregation in the country, including within it the Lynchburg Christian Academy, a Liberty Baptist College, a summer youth camp and an alcoholic treatment center.

But Weyrich not only needed a well-known figurehead, he needed a politically reliable one — no easy task in an arena crammed with the slimiest crackpots and two-bit hustlers. Most of the "old heads" of Christian anticommunism, which of course already had a long history, were too openly tainted with ill-concealed financial scandals, wacko political theories, and other inconvenient political positions. A suggestion about how some of these oldtimers may have been "disappeared" is given in the story of Billy James Hargis. At exactly the point where that long-standing political preacher started to pose a problem for the developing political right, Hargis' career was suddenly torpedoed by a major scandal that was blasted through the media. It was revealed that Rev. Billy had been seducing the students at his bible college in large numbers (and in both sexes). Hargis exited from the political stage.

To carry out their serious talent-scouting in the late '70s and to unify the efforts of prominent political Christians, a "Religious Roundtable" was established by Weyrich operative Ed McAteer, bringing together about 150 bornagain leaders and television evangelists.

Early on, it seemed that Pat Robinson would play the main-man role. Then the spotlight passed briefly to James Robison, who dominated the 1980 mass rally called by the Religious Roundtable.

However, Robison seemed incapable of grasping the "larger picture." For example, he remained too fixated with his antihomosexual cause, and was too inclined to forget that Jews were no longer to be insulted.

Jerry Falwell, self-styled "simple country preacher," finally got the nod. Not only was Falwell already one of the major television luminaries, but he had a bent for the patriotic anti-Sovietism that was soon to overshadow sexual questions among the god-fearing.

By 1977 the *U.S. News and World Report* could note "A third force is quietly building a political apparatus that pointedly disregards party labels." To draw in the strings of the "pro-family" movement, to cement the alliance between bornagains, Roman Catholics and the others, and to develop an increasingly common political program, nationally focused campaigns were mounted. A key one of those was the "pro-family" Family Protection Act, introduced in 1979 into Congress where it lingered in one form or another until 1981. This bill had an important role as a manifesto of the "pro-family" movement, an organizing tool and a measuring stick for gauging support for an opposition to the religious right. Viguerie called it a "benchmark" that attempted to "reestablish" the family as "the basic unit of strength for America."

Some of its provisions ran as follows:

... Federal education money was to be denied states that didn't allow prayer in public buildings.

... Federal money was to be denied any textbooks or educational material that "belittle the traditional role of women in society."

... Foodstamps were to be denied college students, to make them more dependent on their parents.

... New tax laws were to favor marriage over single status, and federal legal funds were to be denied any programs that served divorce litigation, homosexual rights and abortion.

... Corporal punishment was to be exempted from child-abuse laws.

... Exempt private and church schools from all federal regulations, including especially "actions designed to overcome racial imbalance."

While the bill did not pass, it did become the rallying point it was meant to be. Its sponsor: Senator Paul Laxalt of Nevada, today a chief political aid to Reagan and Chairman of the Republican National Committee.

By the end of the '70s the major strands of this religious right were coming together.

The "Moral Majority, Inc." (a term coined by Weyrich), announced its existence, with Falwell at the helm, in a highly publicized "I Love America" rally of 10,000 in Washington, D.C. in 1979.

By 1984 the Moral Majority has become the organizing center of a blatant know-nothingism and war fever, con-

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The Message

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battle were sharply put forward, the veneer was punctured to give way to a debate that was vigorous, sometimes acrimonious, and had obviously been thought over deeply by many.

At one crowded location, a woman became quite agitated when she was reading the leaflet and *RW* and came to understand that they targeted both Democrats and Republicans equally as fitting representatives of war-bound imperialism. She began loudly berating a nearby leafleter, insisting that anyone who detracted from the electoral efforts to defeat Reagan was helping the people's worst enemy. A man who had been listening to the argument began to laugh bitterly at the voting advocate and shouted at her, "You fool! How many times do you have to vote before you realize that every time you pull that lever you're cutting your own throat? Don't you think it's time to do something *real*? That's what this is about."

Similar scenes took place in several locations, quite often with people who had been silently listening suddenly stepping forward in the midst of an argument to ask for five or twenty or fifty more of the leaflets. A large and politically significant proportion of the leaflets were distributed in these smaller stacks. A

significant number of people, youth in particular, began passing them out with the revolutionaries immediately upon reading it. On a couple of occasions they told the squad of leafleters and paper sellers to go on to another location; they would see to it that everyone in their neighborhood received one.

Black People

Particularly among Black people the feeling was widely held that not only must something "drastic" or "radical" be done to prevent nuclear war, but also a certain sense that they are in a particular position to do that something. A woman who had distributed leaflets to her friends in their very old and decaying ghetto said that she had fought to win voting rights 30 years ago, and while her lessons had been bitter, she didn't want today's Black youth to make the mistake of thinking they had any future in America.

And while the pull exerted by the relative quiescence of today's situation and the inertia of the majority is still a strong one, it seems that many people no longer feel quite so bound by these things. This was borne out mainly through the different forms of activity many people took up, and why they were doing so. This remark, from a youth, was typical. "Me and my friends spend a lot of our time hanging around and talking about — no, make that dreaming about — revolution. Now a lot of folks, you just

got to excuse them now, they don't know about the revolution, they're just into hurting themselves with wine or whatever. But I'm ready for it. And I believe that a lot of these others, when they see a chance to really do something, they're going to jump."

The very favorable widespread reception to the uncompromising message of the party's leaflet is in itself an indication that new stirrings are developing deep in the ranks of the oppressed America has long feasted on, and it is at the same time an urgent indication that the time still at our disposal must be utilized to further build and train a revolutionary organization to be "the solid core of a *revolutionary* struggle — the one kind of struggle that can really change (and maybe literally save) the world." Among advanced Black proletarians in this city, an important force has come forward through the course of intense leafleting to receive revolutionary training by the party on various levels. The 1982 Central Committee Report of the RCP, *Accumulating Revolutionary Forces For the Coming Showdown*, makes the point that "it is (not) necessarily the case that all, or most of, the advanced people will 'come through nationalism' to come to us," and further, "...while we should weigh how we are doing in relation to those Black masses whose outlook is basically nationalist, we should weigh even more how we are doing with, and how we are viewed by,

Black masses with internationalist inclinations." Several of the most advanced forces who stepped out during the various forms of action around the leaflet here were in fact *seeking out* internationalism. One young man who distributed about 100 of the leaflets said what he liked best was that it was "talking about changing the whole world, not just one part." A youth watching some wild activity downtown walked up to someone selling the *RW* and said, "I've been ready for revolution. But before I join in I got one question. What does your outfit think of people from places like Iran, Palestine and El Salvador? Because I don't want anything to do with a group that's just concerned with America."

Questions — And Answers

These questions and other serious questions about the possibilities and process of revolution were raised by many of the people who responded to the leaflet. And among the advanced, these were most definitely not raised academically — but as answers to pressing, practical problems. A man in his 30s who had distributed dozens of leaflets and had begun reading Bob Avakian's new book had this question uppermost in his mind when an organizer got to talk to him. "What does your mental unity have to be to join this party? Because if you don't have a strong mental unity, it can lead to

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sciously wielded by the bourgeoisie to create public opinion. It has indeed entered the world of secular politics, with much aid and fanfare on the part of the bourgeoisie. But, significantly, this has not been due to any genuine groundswell of religious fundamentalism; the base of bornagains does not seem to have grown numerically through the 1970s until today. One study by a public relations firm in Chicago with connections to the Republicans admits that those who profess a religion like fundamentalism (this study did not insist that its subjects actually use the term "bornagain") have grown in numbers over ten years only at the same rate as the general growth in population. What is different, says this study, is that the bornagains are "more organized, especially around Ronald Reagan." This does not exactly smack of a spontaneous groundswell.

Another study, published in the current issue of *Foreign Affairs* magazine, also helps to gauge the size of this social base. This study, based on a poll by the Public Agenda Foundation on the mood of people toward nuclear war, writes that 25% of its respondents "see the Soviet Union as an 'evil empire' threatening our moral and spiritual values. A majority of them believe that in the event of a nuclear holocaust, their faith in God would ensure their survival."

However, this rather bizarre medieval ignorance is not the same thing as the *organized* reactionary movement centering on the "Moral Majority" itself. The organization, headed by Falwell, developed as far less than the grand coalition of conservative religions envisioned by Viguerie in the quote we gave above. In practice, it is almost exclusively bornagain (not to mention being *very* white) and has to operate in loose alliance with Catholic rightists who have their own hierarchy and organizations. Even among bornagains, bourgeois studies show that only about 6.6 million identify with the general term "moral majority." Falwell himself claims contact with 37,000 preachers (and therefore with their congregations), but that is far more likely his *mailing* list, not an activist membership list, and signifies his "target market" of potential support.

What is certain, however, is that magic media and money of the bourgeois world showers on Rev. Falwell. However nebulous his actual organization might be, the fact remains that the Reverend himself covers 330,000 miles a year in his Israeli "Jet Commander," bopping from local talk show to local talk show, spewing his poison and flogging the faithful into action.

Who is the Hunter? And Who is the Hound?

According to liberals, to the Mondale

campaign, and to many "leftists," the religious right is part of an extremist fringe threatening to take over the Republican Party, and through that vehicle upset the traditional American political system of balance, tolerance and bourgeois democracy. They make a great deal of the "radical" and "anti-system" flavor of statements by the religious rightists such as this by Paul Weyrich: "We are radicals who want to overthrow the existing power structure. We are not conservatives in the sense that conservatives mean accepting the status quo."

The religious right of the last years had aimed bitter attacks on some mainstream politicians and not just Carter (which would of course be quite the norm). Falwell talks of "godless, spineless leaders [who] have brought our nation floundering to the brink of death." Liberals are equated with capitulation to Satan and Marx.

What this proves is that some bourgeois inevitably get their toes stepped on when the political times change. However, like extreme reaction historically, including various kinds of fascism, the "radicalism" of the religious right is hardly a challenge to the American system in any way — these are the system's most vicious defenders.

Without a doubt the religious right is a radical and extreme movement, but it has grown because these are extreme times and *because the needs of imperialism demand such extremism*. The development of their movement reveals who was in command: the most philistine and corrupted sections of the population were targeted and studied. Their spontaneous forms of reaction were pandered to and popularized. Tremendous financial resources and marketing techniques were used to swell their ranks and solidify their organization. And in the process their movement, even their very theology, was being molded to suit specific political purposes. Falwells are not going to "take over America"; they are instruments of those who already rule.

A most important example of this is the process by which the whole array of "moral" issues, which after all gave birth to this monster, has been given second rank, lately, to the more burning questions of patriotic revival and war preparations.

Viguerie remarked recently that the Reagan administration has been consistently symbolic in its support for the "moral" social issues, while focusing single-mindedly on the issues connected with war: "In the so-called social issues, there's a lot of rhetoric, and that's mostly what it is — whether it's busing, abortion, prayer in schools, etc. You go down past the White House when they are battling for AWACs or the IMF and the lights are burning all night long to get

what they want. But you don't think for a moment that Mike Deaver is sitting there making a lot of calls on the pro-life amendment, or on equal access, or on prayer in schools. They work it into the President's speeches and the President generally supports it. But his staff isn't working overtime on it."

The tail does not wag the dog. And the religious right does not establish the national priorities for the imperialist bourgeoisie. On the contrary, a clear agenda is being established here; the religious babblings about morality and discipline are promoted by the White House using the Presidency as a bully pulpit, but the *pace* of inquisition has remained tied to the broader imperatives of the ruling class.

Reagan and the Main Issue

In fact, looking over the years since 1979, it is possible to discern a process by which the priorities of the religious right themselves changed, and in which patriotism emerged as the principal concern over issues of social morality. The bornagain "moral issues" — antiabortionism, for example — continue, of course, to play an important role in the whipping up of this social base. But they are firmly wedded, and overshadowed, by the politics of world war.

In this process Reagan himself has played a major role in shaping up fundamentalism for the task at hand — above all, the role of nuclear warmonger. By adopting Ronald Reagan as standard bearer to the extent that they have, the bornagains have also adopted — and adapted themselves to — the needs of U.S. imperialism facing a fierce rival.

By no means has Reagan been the beloved of the fundamentalists all along, despite a number of recent books which attempt to package Reagan as a long-time holy-roller-in-government. Even at the time of his 1980 campaign, Reagan had not been fully dressed out as a closet bornagain, and in fact among fundamentalists he had the reputation of being too much of a Tinsel Town product with a strong streak of Hollywood decadence. As late as 1980, such as Phillip Crane and John Conally were the evangelical favorites, with Viguerie describing Conally as "a man on a white horse, a strong leader, a gladiator, and that's what the country needs."

However, by the fall of 1980, it was clear that Reagan was the gladiator most favored by the imperialists; the new religious right fell into line. Because Reagan's nonreligiousness was known, the kingpins of the Religious Roundtable had to go through contortions explaining their new support for him. Robison caught the spirit well when he remarked, before the 15,000 fundamentalists gathered in Dallas that summer, alluding to Reagan:

"If necessary, God would raise up a tyrant, a man who might not have the best ethics, to protect the freedom in-

terests of the ethical and the godly."

Although gross national chauvinism was always one of the characteristics of the religious right, world war against the Soviet Union was hardly a spontaneous political demand even among them.

Professional operatives like Viguerie, certainly, understood quite early that "moral" issues were merely a vehicle for more crucial political tasks. Like his mentors (the two Macs), Viguerie has always been a proponent of preparing, waging and winning global nuclear war. In his book he writes that despite the traitorous lack of preparations for the third world war, it is not lost yet: "...the Third World War is not over. It can still be won by the Free World if we take certain critical steps without delay." He continues: "As the old song goes 'We did it before and we can do it again.' But today we have much less time. The alternative to... an all-out all-American effort is simple. The Soviets will either force us into a war we will lose, or we will be forced to surrender."

With this kind of consciousness characterizing the activists leading the religious right, the movement has proven itself well prepared to become part of the more general "Reagan Revolution" more characterized by patriotic than religious fervor.

And so in March 1983 we find Reagan addressing the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida in a speech which cites "morality and faith in God" as the strength of America... needs precisely to triumph over the Soviets. This was the infamous "focus of evil" speech, a call to battle by Reagan which was followed a very short time later by his speech calling for Star Wars, and then the fevered U.S. war roll of events in the Year of the Missile. By this time, religion is firmly wedded to the nuclear crusade:

"I believe we shall rise to the challenge; I believe that Communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages even now are being written. I believe this because the source of our strength in this quest for human freedom is not material but spiritual, and, because it knows no limitation, it must terrify and ultimately triumph over those who would enslave their fellow man.

"For in the words of Isaiah: 'He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increased strength. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary.'"

The march through Sodom and Gomorrah is thus set to continue on to Moscow. It is a motley and ignorant army indeed being assembled to lead the charge, but these are not forces poised to "take over America" — they are Americanism itself. □

The Message

Continued from page 13

people caving in when the shit gets rough. Also, what is the guiding thought of the party?" A copy of the *New Constitution* was sold and plans laid to discuss it with him and a friend who he said had also distributed the leaflet.

Many people like these — most of whom were not ready to drop what they were doing and begin leafleting right at the time — were crucial in winning the struggle to distribute all the leaflets. Cynics and agnostics might suggest that these leaflets were carefully stowed away, not understood and not distributed with much consciousness. In fact, virtually everyone who took leaflets, when later visited by an organizer, had already passed out their initial consignment and asked for more. And as for the "understood" part, this incident should shed some light on the approach advanced proletarians are taking to the most profound questions of our time: A small group of Black women in a project had taken 50 leaflets, bought several *RW*'s, and made arrangements to get back with a circle organizer. But it rained torrentially for almost the entire week, and the night of the scheduled meeting the streets were flooded and impassable. When a circle organizer was finally able to make it to see these women two days later, they told him they understood why he wasn't able to make it, so they had gone ahead with the discussion without him. Seven people from the projects came; they reported that the discussion centered on what the stakes of things are in today's world, and who is capable of preventing world war.

Particularly among immigrant proletarians in areas where the *RW* has been regularly distributed, there is a broad knowledge of and respect for the party's line. Circles of immigrants were among those who played the most advanced role in the leaflet's distribution, eagerly anticipating the announced release of this major message and then taking hundreds

themselves to get out, as well as at times being part of the squads of distributors, in a more clandestine fashion. One group of revolutionary proletarians from El Salvador joined a group of youth who got out the leaflet widely at a demonstration against U.S. moves in Central America.

But also, there seemed to be less of a sense of "something has to be done to stop nuclear war and we're the ones who have to do it" among immigrants than there was among some proletarians born in the U.S. In some ways, this was due to the influences of nationalism and revisionism. A very small number of immigrants, upon hearing that the leaflet was put out by the RCP, immediately responded that they didn't want anything to do with Maoism. A somewhat larger number thought that it is not their responsibility to wage political struggle here — their responsibility is to their homeland. It seems, though, that more important than the direct influence of various bourgeois ideologies is the influence exerted by the general tension and pressure of the times. Time after time, proletarians from Mexico and El Salvador would say, "Sure, this sounds great — but why is nobody from the U.S., especially the Black people, really moving on this? Immigrants are a small part of the population here — we aren't the ones who can really change things."

An important number of these "millions of nobodies" acted otherwise, however. In certain districts, particularly those where the previous issues of the *RW* with excerpts from Chairman Avakian's book had gone out, there was some broad anticipation of the party's statement on war and revolution, and the phenomenon of advanced forces waiting to receive instructions from the party regarding this statement. At a small project where mainly immigrants live, one household scraped together change to get a copy of the *RW* and make a donation for the 50 or so leaflets they wanted. While this was being done, a middle-aged man told some young teenagers to do with these leaflets like he had taught them to do with the May Day announcements from the party.

They grabbed the leaflets and ran out to leave them at apartments with friends they trusted.

In another episode across town, a young woman recently arrived from Mexico opened her door a crack to say she wasn't interested. But one of her roommates heard "RCP" and quickly came to the door. "Yes," she said, "we read that a message was coming from the party, and we were hoping it would be soon. Of course we want at least 50 of these, to bring to work and to leave on the bus. There is English too? Good, because some women where I work will like to see this."

Newly Stepping Out

In all the diverse activities, some newly awakening forces were stepping out to be among the most advanced. An important portent of the shape of future clashes was that the majority of these new forces were women of all nationalities. The paths these women had traversed before taking up beginning revolutionary activity were widely varied. They ranged from an older Black woman who had been involved in the civil rights movement decades ago, and said that years of struggle had resulted in nothing but broken promises, official lies, impoverishment, and war on the horizon — and who added that she could no longer participate in this system by voting — to teenagers who had fled from Mexican villages and found that their place in the "land of the free" was cleaning bathrooms and being under constant assault by the immigration police.

A small but feisty group of rebel youths also began grappling with the politics of the party's call. Some, upon reading the leaflet, made a large banner with the leaflet's headline in English and Spanish, signed it RCP, and took it to various locations where youths in particular were concentrated, including a demonstration in another city opposing U.S. war moves in Central America. The questions posed there by other youths made some want to dig into sections of the RCP's *New Programme* for the first time — particularly the section on the

transformation of society.

The next night, a discussion at a punk club, in which a few Republican War Chest Tourists took part, began delving into the importance and possibility of doing something like that in this city. Some who had read the leaflet pointed out that a call was being made for a countrywide "No Business As Usual Day" in the spring — and said that whatever is done here should be done then, to give the action the most powerful impact.

Overall, the political offensive the party launched with the distribution of this message caused a great stir among the masses. An aggressive and bold approach to its distribution quite often provided more "air to breathe" for the advanced, and the backward were subjected to scorn and ridicule. A very healthy energizing of political life has taken place. The coordinated, nationwide political assault, and the ability of the party to develop tactics that both eluded the police and protected the identity of new forces has itself been a telling indication of the seriousness of the party's intentions to many of the oppressed.

Lenin often made the point that imperialist crisis pushes humanity to the "brink of a precipice." This takes place through wrenching twists and leaps, and it often takes place "overnight" — but it doesn't necessarily take place "all at once." A small number of people, but a number that is both significant and growing, feel that they have been pushed to that edge already — and are restlessly searching for a way out. Many people were very animated, and also relieved to be dealing with the prospects and tasks of an internationalist, revolutionary way out. Certainly much work cries out to be done to build and strengthen the forces needed for winning a revolutionary uprising, but it would be a gross miscalculation to underestimate either the longer range significance of this leaflet's massive distribution, or the partially tapped potential that exists *right now* for further developing the party's line and influence among decisive sections of the population. □

Clash

Continued from page 11

perience and the understanding to shed further light on these subjects.

— A reader in southern California

RW:

I don't know if you're still continuing the clash debate. It took me a while but there were some additional points I thought needed to be made. So here's my 2c.

When Strummer talks about "cultural imperialism" (ripping off Black music) and "roots" (we're white boys with guitars and drums) — is he being totally off the wall here; is he making up excuses to capitulate to racial divisions? I don't think so. I think these are real and difficult contradictions which Strummer (and others) are floundering on the rocks of, within the stormy world situation.

First of all, cultural imperialism — the exploitation of artists of oppressed nationalities and of their art — is real. Strummer didn't make up the word or the reality. (The analogy with imperialism is politically sound. The essence of imperialism is exploitation; export of capital around the world is above all export of modern exploitative relations, not export of commodities. So it's not just that "cultural imperialism" would imply export of American music.) Black people are really conscious of this and tend to scrutinize — yes, with some suspicion — white artists for the content and purpose of their use of "Black" forms.

Okay, but the point of recognizing this contradiction is not to retreat from it and abandon the field of so-called crossover music to the ripoff artists of *either* color. Many Black artists have shown themselves "equally" capable of white-washing and turning into capital forms of music which originally arose from the Black masses and their search for creative expression of their "outlaw" feelings and experience. Sad to say,

"Black" music can also be "American."

Sonia Sanchez, in a 1970 poem "summer/time TV/(is witer than ever)," nails this contradiction on the head: "...the whole/fucken place/ is up for grabs/ and bloods be/ singen bout diene for/ what ain't even theirs. brings back memories of diana/ ross and the supremes/ rogers & hart/ en all over the screen. diana blowen back the softstraightstrains/ of her pressed mind... and then. the SoundDD/ of wite/ screeeamms/ the young rascals/ foamen at the mouth (with bongos)!"

Second — and my main point here — is the reality of cultural roots. I know for myself this was one of the points in Strummer's interview which I felt there was something to — that there is both a power and a problem to cultural roots which can't be wished away — although Strummer's conclusion that "our" culture for white youth is confined to a certain kind of rock and roll is way off.

I seems to me there are opposite, though related, tendencies. Many artists make an absolute out of separate cultures, separate audiences; they deliberately or spontaneously represent one or the other. Others attempt to ignore the whole question of developing and understanding the roots of their audiences and just want to "do their thing," which usually ends up in the same place.

There *are* separate roots, though there will not always be. There are words (or chord changes, or visual patterns) which have a connotation and/or emotional impact in a particular people's culture which goes beyond an individual's experience or viewpoint. This is because of the historical experience of a people and, importantly, the associations which have built up from a whole history of music, stories, etc. Such things can be learned and shared but it is a process and a struggle to do so; it's not instantaneous. One expression of this is that often people enjoy many different forms of music but still find that there are certain forms which have a peculiar power to really knock them out of their chair. An artist, in learning and developing a new form, can't just "imitate" — she/he needs to be able to knock *herself* out of her chair with it, to grow new roots.

Let's face it, "roots" are always particular and concrete. This is not the same

as the (overall more crucial) point that the content of a particular work has *universal* power and ability to speak for and inspire oppressed peoples anywhere in the world. At some point in our future world — if we don't destroy it first — national cultures and separate roots will be overcome. (Of course there will be greater diversity than ever, but all people will be equally able to respond deeply to and understand all these diverse forms.) Here's an example of how roots are always particular. A friend, musician, was commenting: "I've been wondering, what are *my* roots? I'm just a middle-class Asian boy. So what I'm struggling to grasp is that my roots are in internationalism, in the common interest and struggle against imperialism worldwide." This is certainly basic in a political and ideological sense, and the material basis for it *is* the common struggle... but I don't think it's true in the sense of cultural roots, not yet, though this is the direction we're struggling for. So I asked him, "if that's true, how come you don't play Chinese music? You do play punk and reggae and funk and jazz — which a lot of people think is really wierd — but you aren't wierd enough to get up and play a set of Chinese music even though it truly belongs to and speaks for the international proletariat." (He said, "well, it's too hard to learn — different scales, etc.," but that's just another aspect of the same point.)

Even within this country there are still *relatively* separate audiences and different roots, which is why we have to struggle to break these barriers down.

The most important thing, though, is that life itself (and the nature of imperialism as a world system) is continually and rapidly breaking these barriers down. In feudal societies cultural roots were very stable, unchanging over generations, and very distinct — the difference between the dress, dialect, etc., of one's own village and one fifty miles away being an important part of one's identity. But in today's world, and especially in times of revolutionary upheaval, conditions, social relations, and interactions between people go through great and rapid change. Roots are continually pulled up (i.e., we reject parts of our cultural background) and new ones grow, depending also on one's

political stand.

For example, in the U.S., the words "dancing" and "party," in certain contexts, are known to *millions* as code words for rebellion, especially among the oppressed, because of the associations of these two things, literally and in the culture, from the '60s, as in "Summer's here and the time has come for dancing in the streets." Even the words "black" and "white" have been radically transformed in their literary connotations for millions of people since the '60s. Black used to mean evil and white pure, as Black writers pointed out. (For many, of course, it still does, but they tend to be more conscious of the political implications of such usage.) Today, white often connotes washed out, colorless, bland — like white bread or "white jazz." Which demonstrates how fast language can change, and how different sections of the masses (and not just the most politically conscious) really do speak different languages.

Again, the point is not to say there's nothing to this question Strummer raises about "roots." There is history and associations developed both for the artist and for the audience which influence what people want to hear or see, which has to be learned from. But overcoming the differences between different cultures is not an ideal or moral question. It is taking place all the time, if in a beginning way and accompanied by great struggle, both among the people and with the forces of repression. Actually the bourgeoisie itself creates "associations" with new forms by attempting to isolate or suppress them. Millions of people among the oppressed, the rebellious youth and broad advanced pick up their ears and listen when they see any new form of music, etc., which is really alive and new and especially is bursting through the confines of acceptability and legality. They can and do take up such forms *as their own*, though again this is not without struggle and contradiction. A revolutionary artist or one who seeks to push this process forward plays an important role in concentrating these seeds of the New, heightening and strengthening them.

A writer (aspiring)
Honolulu, Hawaii

A Horrible End, or An End To The Horror?

Continued from page 6

with the two basic types of countries: imperialist states and oppressed nations, with insurrection followed by civil war the general model in the first type and protracted revolutionary war, beginning in the countryside and with the strategic defensive, generally the model in the second type). It is counter-revolutionary war that cannot be fought on a protracted basis on the strategic defensive (at least not by counterrevolutionary forces involved in war against revolutionary armed forces); and more generally all imperialists and reactionaries (and not just fascist states) have great difficulty sustaining a war where they cannot succeed in simply overpowering their enemy and where they have difficulty confronting him in fixed battle lines (this remains so despite the efforts of the imperialists and reactionaries to employ more mobile forms of warfare).

But to return to the point of analogy with what Mao says about the fascist states around World War 2: these fascist states were, in fact, the "have not" imperialists, forced to seek a bigger sphere of influence and a bigger share in worldwide plunder and exploitation, especially in the colonies. They not only had the necessity, in the actual circumstances in which they found themselves, to seek a major redivision of the world to their advantage (as did the "have" imperialists of the time) but they had to adopt dramatic tactics of offense in the attempt to deliver crippling blows to their rivals before the strategically superior reserves of the latter could be brought into play. In a different way — and with profoundly different and opposite goals and overall means — the revolutionary proletariat, where its necessary strategic approach is to begin with armed insurrection, must also strike dramatic blows quickly. It must shatter the existing status quo and balance of forces, thus bringing into play its vast, powerful reserves — among the masses of the oppressed — and bringing over to its side important parts of the previous reserves and forces of the enemy, among his own troops as well as middle forces in society who tend to "go with the flow" (and more to the point, with the power — with who is on top or at least has the momentum).

But here, again, the analogy ends, because, after a certain phase, even if the insurrection is victorious, it will come to the point where consolidation of what has been won will be necessary (once more the relevance of the analysis by Clausewitz on pursuit coming to its limitations in any given situation). It is quite possible then that the newly established revolutionary regime will have to go over to the strategic defensive for a period in the civil war that follows.⁷⁵

The Prospects of Actually Winning

Yes, the other side is powerful — it does have a genuinely awesome arsenal of destruction — but it is also strategically vulnerable (Vietnam certainly showed that imperialism is not invincible!) and it is facing the unbelievably difficult prospect of world war (strategically even more difficult for it than for the international proletariat and revolutionary people worldwide). The present world situation, including the ever more intense "face-off" of the rival imperialist blocs, contains many elements favorable for the revolutionary proletariat and the masses of the oppressed in the world. Wars are never decided by weapons alone, and in the case of revolutionary war versus counterrevolutionary war

⁷⁵ In this light I have to modify my "correction" in *Conquer the World* to a statement in *Mao Tse-tung's Immortal Contributions* in the chapter on revolutionary warfare. In this "correction" I underestimated the degree to which the importance of the defensive at the beginning of a war may apply to even revolutionary war in imperialist countries. This can be seen if it is kept in mind that the insurrectionary phase, which must be characterized by the offensive, is in a sense a prelude to civil war — a decisive stage and struggle in its own right, without whose success the revolutionary civil war cannot follow, but nevertheless a prelude to the civil war that will inevitably follow a successful insurrection and initial seizure of power. (Compare *Conquer the World*, pp. 31-34.)

this is all the more the case — or there never could or would have been a successful revolution!⁷⁶

The horror produced by the prospect of a war between the rival imperialist blocs — involving almost certainly the massive destruction of major nuclear exchanges — can itself be an impetus toward revolutionary struggle against the imperialists, and must be developed as such by the revolutionary communists. The horror produced by such a war, if it actually does break out — if it is not prevented by revolution — would be truly monstrous and devastating; but this does not change the overall task at hand nor the truth that the overthrow and the elimination of all exploiting systems and relations is the only way to finally abolish such monstrosity. Nor certainly does it change the fact that they will be more vulnerable than ever before, that the whole global landscape — including of course the U.S. — will be suddenly, dramatically, and profoundly changed, one way or the other. Our basic orientation must remain that put forth by Mao in 1964:

One must not become flustered in fighting with rifles, guns, or atom bombs. One will not become flustered if one is well prepared politically. . . . In general, we must be ready to fight, we must not become flustered when the fighting starts, we also must not be flustered in fighting the atom bomb. Do not be afraid. It is nothing but a big disorder throughout the world. It is nothing but people dying. Man eventually must die, he may die standing up or lying down. Those who do not die will go on with their work, if one-half meets with death, there is still another half. . . . Do not be afraid of imperialism. It will not do to be afraid, the more one is afraid, the less enthusiasm one will have. Being prepared and unafraid, one will have the enthusiasm.⁷⁷

And I must say that after having gone deeply into and facing squarely this whole prospect of "nuclear winter" and the kind of devastation that I think you have to realize is on the agenda, if it's not prevented by revolution — after all that I still found it tremendously uplifting and inspiring to go back and read this statement by Mao which, despite the greatly increased destructiveness of nuclear weapons today as compared to 1964, embodies a fundamentally correct and vital, liberating orientation.

On the other hand, Mao also insisted that fighting on enthusiasm alone would lead to mistakes and specifically to being tricked by the enemy.⁷⁸ We must combine our revolutionary enthusiasm — our urgent desire for radical change and our deep hatred and strategic contempt for imperialism and its crimes — with sober, serious, scientific, and consistent preparation for revolution. That means most of all political preparation now, but it also means specific preparation for revolutionary war — in the realm now of theory and strategic thinking and the urgent summing up of the practical experience in war of all different forces, but especially revolutionary forces, in the international arena. (One important form of this might be conducting interviews with and requesting letters from veterans who fought in the imperialist armed forces in Vietnam, or elsewhere, and people with experience in warfare against imperialism, from all over the world. This could be published and important lessons thus popularized.) It also means taking initiative and making innovations to develop practical steps which are not themselves military but involve people in mass forms that lay a basis for military organization in the future, when the armed struggle does come on the agenda. (Note that Sun Tzu, the expert on warfare in ancient China, stresses the importance of drill — even without arms — at the beginning of military training. His works exerted significant influence on Mao, among others, and are for good reason studied and applied by diverse forces to this day.)⁷⁹

In short, without making rash mistakes and being tricked or provoked by the enemy on the basis of our own enthusiasm or impatience, we must prepare now to be able, as soon as conditions ripen and a political jolt or tremor in society opens a wide and deep enough crack, to channel the eruption of the formerly suppressed revolutionary energy of oppressed masses and launch and wage a revolutionary armed struggle. And when we do so it must be with the real perspective of going all out to win!

⁷⁶ Even war waged by reactionary forces is never a "purely military" affair. For example, the victory of Caesar over Pompey in the civil war in ancient Rome was in large part due to political factors, including Caesar's use of political maneuvers and enticements to split and weaken the enemy army in combination with successful battlefield strategy and tactics. Or to take another example, the conquest of Mexico by Cortez involved not only the military aspect but also his tactics in pitting many of the peoples he conquered against each other, making use of rivalries and so on — which contrasts with the more crude tactics of Pizarro, conqueror of Peru, who was a more unembellished and "personally interested" plunderer and who lost his head, literally, in a falling out with his fellow pillagers.

⁷⁷ Mao, "Cultivating Successors to the Revolution," *Miscellany*, Part II, p. 357.

⁷⁸ See Mao, "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," *MSW*, Vol. 1, p. 188.

⁷⁹ See Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, translated with an introduction by Samuel B. Griffith (London: Oxford University Press, 1980).

Provocations

Continued from page 4

favorable to the opposition have been destroyed and their publishers either killed or forced to flee the country. Hughes says the Nicaraguan election was "not a meaningful electoral process" because it was conducted "without the participation of any significant opposition," a comment echoed by Duarte. Of course, no mention is made that in El Salvador, the opposition did not participate because of the very real threat of death — political and otherwise.

Indeed, the U.S.'s salvos against the Nicaraguan election are even more blatant and hypocritical than a comparison with El Salvador provides. For it turns out that, according to U.S. officials, they never had any intention of allowing their main "significant opposition" man, Washington D.C.-based banker Arturo Cruz, to participate in the election under any circumstances. A report in the *New York Times* said that the CIA worked closely with a Nicaraguan businessman's group to make sure that Cruz would not agree to run "because then the Sandinistas could justifiably claim that the elections were legitimate, making it much

harder for the U.S. to oppose the Nicaraguan government." It also turns out that the U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua met with all the more pro-U.S. bourgeois parties just before the election. This was merely to present U.S. objections, of course, and no threats or pressure of any kind was applied. Perhaps just a careful reading of the CIA assassination manual.

The U.S.'s campaign against the Nicaraguan election was preceded by a major press barrage declaring that the Sandinistas were losing support (as if the Nicaraguan masses just love the U.S. and its lackeys) and that Nicaragua has major economic problems (which are certainly nothing to set it apart from the Central American neocolonies dominated by the U.S.). And then, after weeks of declaring that regional peace talks were not working and that negotiations between Nicaragua and the U.S. had hit a dead end, the *New York Times* dropped the following paragraph into a "news analysis" article the day after the Nicaraguan elections: "If the regional peace talks collapse and the negotiations between the United States and Nicaragua fail to make progress, administration officials said, the chances of some kind of American military intervention in Nicaragua would increase if President

Reagan is re-elected on Tuesday." Of course, this won't stop U.S. officials from arrogantly declaring the Sandinistas "paranoid" whenever they state that the U.S. is preparing an invasion of Nicaragua — a statement they will probably continue making until the U.S. paratroopers touch down on Nicaraguan soil.

Despite all its threatening comparisons with Grenada, the U.S. is fearful of invading Nicaragua — knowing that this would definitely not be a cheap fix. Such a move has the potential to bog the U.S. down in a no-win situation and touch off a tumultuous situation in many parts of the world, including possibly the U.S. itself, that could spell disaster for its global plans — a disaster that would be greatly welcomed, and made use of, by revolutionary forces internationally. (In particular, revolutionary forces in the U.S. call for "many more defeats for U.S. imperialism" — and that's on this MIG issue too!) But the U.S.'s global compulsion is driving it in a continually bloodier direction in Central America.

U.S. officials have publicly refused to say what they will do if they decide to declare that MIGs are indeed on Nicaraguan soil. (And the commentary has already begun that even if there aren't MIGs involved, the Sandinistas are surely

getting more advanced anti-aircraft — and perhaps this would be "justification" enough for a U.S. direct intervention of some kind; when the U.S. makes up its mind to move, there will undoubtedly be some story to go with it.)

The "idea" of quarantining Nicaragua was raised by the liberal Walter Mondale during the presidential campaign. The notion has gained popularity in the last few days. This has brought up comparisons to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, and the possibility that the U.S. might stop Soviet vessels on their way to Nicaragua. Along with this comes an overdose of the imagery of big, bad America facing down the whimpy Soviets.

But there is a world of difference between 1962 and 1984. International tensions are at a snapping point; all the imperialists face an intractable crisis, including the Soviet Union which is now a contending imperialist power. World war — their only solution — was not on the historical agenda in 1962. But it is today, and today a "Cuban Missile Crisis" could spiral to world war.

Clearly, extraordinary efforts are required to oppose the U.S.'s Central American crimes, in active preparation for prevention of the doomsday scenario through mass revolutionary struggle. □

An important new book by the Chairman of
the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

A HORRIBLE END or An End To The Horror?

by BOB
AVAKIAN

**IF THERE'S
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If the rulers of this country can prepare for a global war of conquest against their Soviet rivals, a conflagration which has the potential to extinguish human life on this planet, then why cannot those who understand this fact and who aspire to a higher form of society prepare to overthrow these rulers before they embark on this monstrous enterprise? This is the profound challenge posed by Bob Avakian in his latest and most important work to date, *A Horrible End, or An End to the Horror?*

Avakian surveys the contemporary social and political terrain to reveal how and under what circumstances U.S. imperialism might be brought down. Yet what makes this such a compelling study is not merely its insights into revolutionary strategy but its insistence that these issues be viewed in the larger setting of the historical advance toward, and the problems attendant to, the achievement of socialism and communism.

Avakian casts his analytical gaze on the shortcomings of the movements of the 1960s, the recent assaults on Leninism, Marxist-Leninist military theory and experience, the enslaving essence of modern democracy, the role of dissent in socialist society, the centrality of the woman question to the revolutionary process, and the ideological roots of accommodationism and capitulationism within the revolution. Here, as in all his writings, Avakian articulates a Marxism for which revolution cannot be a halfway affair.

A Horrible End, or An End to the Horror? is not airy speculation but a lucid and riveting assessment of the problems, tasks, and opportunities that this critical historical period presents to revolutionary-minded people. It may be objected to but can no more be ignored than can the imperialists' plans for nuclear war: the world situation is just that acute and the approaching possibilities for the revolutionary seizure of power are just that real.

Excerpts from:

A Horrible End, or An End To The Horror?

by Bob Avakian

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