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Three Main Points

by **Bob Avakian**
Chairman of the RCP, USA

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

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

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

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

Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

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

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November 7, 2000: National Pick Your Oppressor Day

The Realism of Revolution and the Fantasy of Elections

It's the closing days of this election. The media is trying to sweep people up in the "excitement of a political horse race." And, of course, they always suggest that *your* vote (and the turnout of people *like you*) could well decide who rules the empire.

But really, the *main* outcome was decided long ago: On November 7, 2000, one of the two representatives of this system will be chosen as the next president. These men were hand-picked and tested over years by the ruling class itself—they are trained, trusted and totally loyal.

Two months after the election, there will be a ritual transfer from one imperialist president to the next. And all the core instruments of power, all the inequality and exploitation of capitalism will remain in place.

No matter who wins, the guns and nukes of this system will remain poised against people all over the world. U.S. navies will remain in the Adriatic Sea, the Persian Gulf and Vieques. American capitalist corporations will still bleed the life and labor of millions of people—in the U.S. and around the world—in sweatshop factories, assembly lines, chemical plants, mines and oil rigs. And on the streets of the cities, in the parks and projects and reservations, on the highways, and in the schools, police will patrol the people—harassing, insulting, frisking, arresting, framing, beating and even killing members of an increasingly criminalized generation. Two million prisoners—twice the number of a decade ago—will wake up surrounded by steel bars and armed men.

And all of this will continue with the firm support and guidance of the next man who sits in the Oval Office—whether that is George Bush or Al Gore.

Look at this circus from the viewpoint of the kids in crumbling ghetto classrooms, from the dangerous crossings of militarized borderlands, from poisoned fruit fields and stifling factory floors. Look at these candidates and programs through the eyes of our brothers and sisters, trying to survive and free themselves across this planet. From that perspective, it is clear that there is NOTHING here for us, in these convention

halls, in this whole sick process of photo ops, debate, TV ads and voting booths. There is no future here worth living for the new generation.

A Sham

"Who the hell wants the right, the so-called right to see which group of oppressors and exploiters is going to oppress and exploit you? We don't want that right - it's not worth a damn! We want the right to be rid of being oppressed and exploited - to put an end to the sham of democracy and the reality of dictatorship."

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP

Lots of people in the U.S. sense that this whole election circus is owned and operated by wealthy, powerful and sinister interests. TV offers us "Gore vs. Bush" debates—but the real question debated by millions of people is: "What can we do, together, to bring about a radically different kind of politics and society?"

Can we influence policies by voting? Can we pull the system in progressive directions by pulling in new voters who are oppressed and eager for change? The answer is NO. And to get at the heart of this, it is necessary to break down and analyze some rather intense electoral fantasies that have a grip on people (and that are being energetically promoted).

RCP Chairman Bob Avakian writes: *"To state it in a single sentence, elections: are controlled by the bourgeoisie; are not the means through which basic decisions are made in any case; and are really for the primary purpose of legitimizing the system and the policies and actions of the ruling class, giving them the mantle of a 'popular mandate,' and of channeling, confining, and controlling the political activity of the masses of people."*

Basic reality check: The ruling class of this system savagely rip off and suppress billions of people. They have nuked cities, flattened countries, assassinated opponents—and they are not about to turn around, every year or so, and let *the masses of people* have a final say over how their system is run.

Elections are not the time when people influence the

politics of this system. It is the opposite: it is a time when the masses of people get indoctrinated in the policies this system intends to adopt.

The media magnifies the microscopic political differences between the candidates. But who can miss that the range of official political debate has narrowed so much, and shifted so far to the right, that on most issues these current presidential candidates practically *breathe* in unison.

Bush is covered with the blood of prisoners he has executed in Texas, while Al Gore is cut and dry about his support for capital punishment. To make things clear, the Clinton-Gore administration have now scheduled the first federal execution in 35 years. Bush runs with the backing of the religious right, while Gore has his sidekick "Holy Joe" Lieberman preach on the importance of conservative religious values and censorship. Both candidates support Star Wars. Both speak in support of imperialist profit, global restructuring of production, NAFTA and the cruel policies of institutions like the World Bank and the IMF. And so on.

There *are* differences within the ruling class. Sometimes they even kill each other over these differences. Kennedy was assassinated, Nixon was driven from office, Clinton was impeached. But these disputes were not decided by elections. They are fundamentally dealt with behind closed doors and often aren't even *mentioned* in the political campaigns.

Those differences that *are* allowed into the campaigns are used to prepare the population for possible changes in policy—like how much to privatize social security and public schools, over which global military strategies to adopt, over how much to restrict abortion, over how to impose more discipline in society and in schools, over how to handle health care costs, and so on.

Lessons of the Past

How do things actually change?

Take the example of Jim Crow segregation in the South. Before the 1950s, Black people were kept strictly segregated in the Deep South—with separate, grossly inferior schools and separate bathrooms in official buildings. Black and white were forbidden to date or marry. Black people had to address all white people as "Sir" or "Ma'am." Black people couldn't sit on juries or ride on busses alongside whites. These hateful inequalities were enforced by the lynchings of the Klan and the chain gangs of Southern sheriffs.

Jim Crow wasn't abolished at the ballot box—it was never voted on, or offered to the people to vote. Jim Crow was destroyed because changes in the economy and the world situation weakened this system of oppression—and *because the masses of Black people and their allies fought to destroy it!*

As Southern agriculture mechanized in the '40s and '50s, millions of Black farm laborers moved to the Northern cities. Meanwhile, the European colonial systems broke down in Africa, and the U.S. imperialists wanted to expand their influence there. Jim Crow became an international embarrassment—making it hard to portray the U.S. as "the friend of de-colonialized Africa."

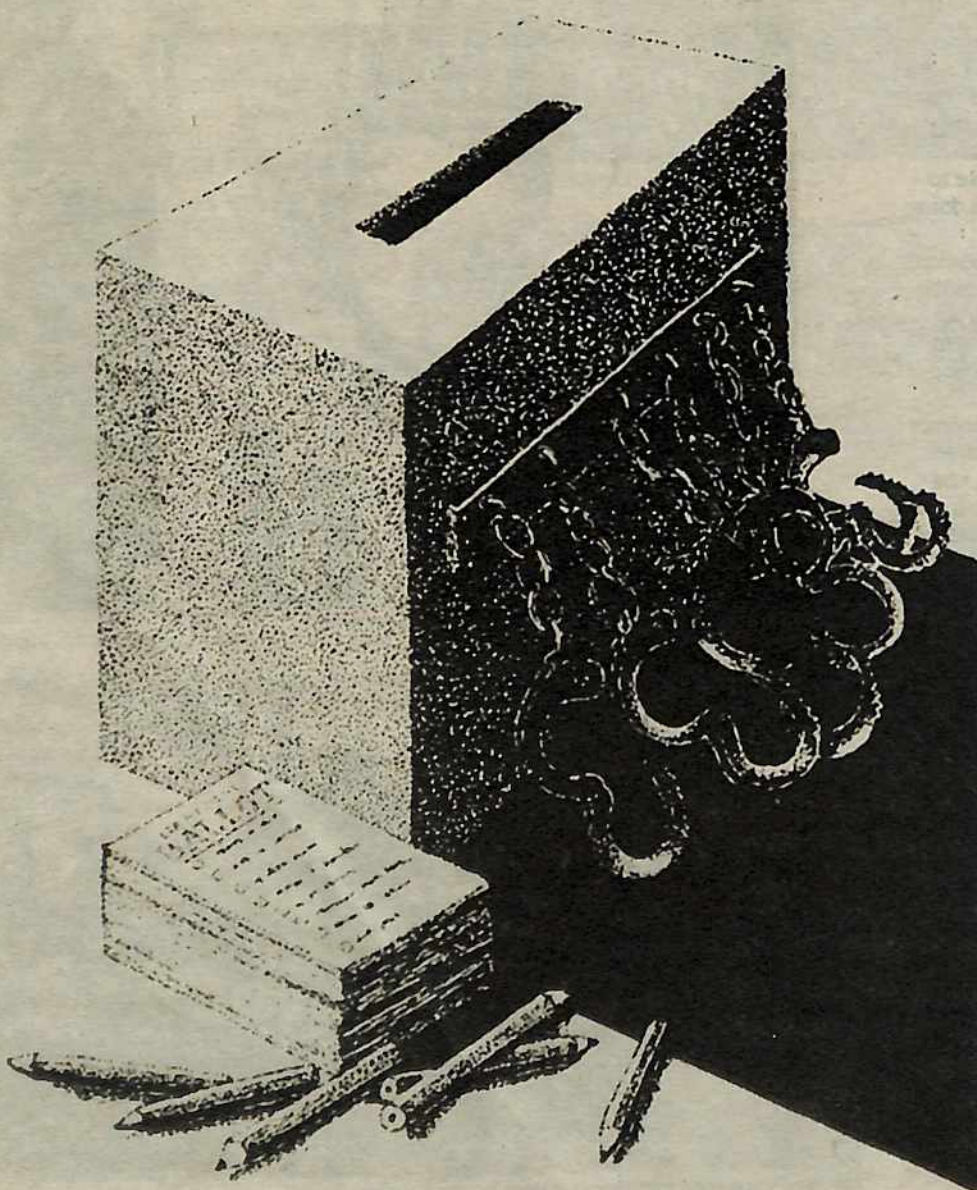
Jim Crow was destroyed when, in the '50s and '60s, Black people rose up in revolt—staging sit-ins and boycotts at segregated lunch counters and bus stations, demanding an end to special "poll taxes" and rigged "literacy tests" that denied Black people equal political rights. Southern jails were filled and major cities started to burn.

The U.S. system was *forced* to grant major concessions by intense struggle of the people. The people wanted liberation—and at the same time the oppressors for their own purposes found it necessary to move toward *new* ways of controlling Black people—new ways that were not so crudely based on Jim Crow segregation's *open* and *legally* enforced inequalities.

The change was forced through by struggle, not by voting.

Another example: Women did not win the right to abortion through elections. There was no wave of congressional or presidential candidates who swept into office declaring support for abortion rights. The legalization of abortion was forced from a reluctant Supreme Court at a time when millions of women were

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LAPD Answer to Protests Against Police Brutality: Rubber Bullets and Concussion Grenades

"We are here today to offer further proof that the LAPD deserves its reputation as this nation's most brutal police force." James Lafferty, Executive Director of the L.A. chapter of the National Lawyers Guild and a member of the national coordinating committee of the October 22nd Coalition, opened a Los Angeles press conference jointly hosted by the NLG and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Called to expose and denounce the LAPD attack on the Los Angeles demonstration for the 5th National Day of Protest, the press conference was also a stirring salute to the brave resisters.

Los Angeles police claimed they were provoked when they fired rubber bullets and concussion grenades at the more than 2000 protesters who had marched to LAPD headquarters. But videotape and eyewitness testimony at the press conference told a story of unprovoked police brutality. The police even fired on the rally stage where families of police murder victims were gathered to speak. And, through it all, the protesters held their ground.

As a video clip taken during the police attack was shown, Lafferty described, "...it clearly shows that the protesters at this past Sunday's anti-police brutality demonstration were not engaged in any violence or illegal acts prior to the brutal assault by the police." He also submitted a copy of a letter from the president of the board of police commissioners that proved "...that the organizers of the October 22nd demonstration—as I indeed told the police at the time—had a legal, valid permit to march, and that the police, therefore, had no right—no right—to close off those streets as they did."

He also offered proof that many protesters were injured, some of them seriously, "...as a result of the wanton assaults by these totally out-of-control officers on the scene. These injuries resulted from the unauthorized and criminal use of rubber bullets and other weapons, as well as from the brutal use of bully [billy] clubs."

Demanding that the police who were involved in these attacks be prosecuted as criminals, charged with assault and battery and assault with a deadly weapon, Lafferty exposed the reality behind what the authorities euphemistically call "less-than-lethal weapons" by displaying a rubber bullet canister recovered from the scene of Sunday's police riot. Prominently featured on it are written instructions warning that the bullets are not to be used on human beings or directed at human beings because they can cause serious injury or death.

One of the people most seriously injured during the police attack on Sunday was Xochitl Estrada, a ULCA student who suffered serious damage to her eye: "What I saw in the march is a little bit different from the video. I saw a little bit more beating from the police. I was out there with my bullhorn, shouting 'Stop police brutality! Stop police brutality!' And I looked and I saw an officer on a horse aiming at me and he shot... When I was trying to get medical attention, no one would help me. A police officer was laughing at me when I showed him my eye."

Civil rights attorney Carol Sobel talked about the lawsuits the ACLU is planning on filing against the police for this attack, and the damage lawsuits they are going to file for those who were injured. Further, the ACLU will seek an order from the federal judiciary enjoining the entire LAPD from using rubber bullets, and police on horses from using batons.

"In the past 10 years in this city, we've had five or six major lawsuits against the LAPD for abuse of demonstrators engaged in lawful demonstration," Sobel pointed out. "If you think about it, we've gone through chokeholds, hog tying, baton strikes to the head, dog bites, and now we're on to rubber bullets. ...After the DNC, the press announced that people had breathed a sigh of relief because the LAPD hadn't killed anyone. We have to ask ourselves what is wrong in this city when our standards of whether the LAPD is doing its job is whether they killed somebody that day."

Reverend Richard Meri Ka Ra Byrd, who was MC at the rally when the police attacked, spoke on behalf of the October 22nd Coalition. "I'm here today especially to speak to the courage and to the commitment that was demonstrated by all of the members of the Coalition, by all of the people who answered the call to come and present themselves to this city and to the world on behalf of the October 22nd Coalition to fight against police brutality."

"I want to commend all of the people, all of the warriors and the soldiers for democracy and for freedom, for standing their ground, for *refusing* to be cowed, for sitting down in front of the horses and sitting down in front of the riot police, and refusing to be broken into a mass of running confusion so that we could all be attacked. It was an act of extreme courage, and I'm proud to have been there and to have stood with them, and to know that the people of this city will be invigorated—not fearful, but invigorated—because they'll see even more clearly today the struggle that we're involved in against the police brutality, the repression and criminalization of a generation."

John Gordon was a young man when he was murdered a little more than a year ago by Long Beach police. His father, Greg, was on stage Sunday holding John's six-month-old baby when the LAPD opened fire on the crowd. Greg was shot three times. He read this statement at the press conference: "My name is Greg Jordan. I'm speaking for some of the family members that were there on October 22nd. We are the families that came to October 22nd to march and to remember the lost lives of our loved ones. We have suffered their violent deaths at the hands of the police, and know in our hearts that we need to bring these deaths to the attention of the public so that no more will die needlessly as they did."

"We came and we brought our family members to march in a demonstration that was sanctioned and authorized by the proper government bodies, to show up to have our say as concerned people. We came with our spouses, our children, our babies, and our friends."

"Soon after we got to Parker Center, we were fired upon by the police on horseback. We did nothing to provoke this.... It was as though we were the targets."

"If this was done to keep us from returning, they're wrong. The brutality that we were united to protest was clearly demonstrated this year on October 22nd by the L.A. police department."

"I speak for the family of Sofia Saldaña, the mother of Juan Saldaña, shot to death by an LAPD Rampart CRASH officer; Gloria Santos, mother of 16-year-old Julio Castillo, shot to death by the Los Angeles sheriff's department; and Greg and Judy Jordan, family of John Jordan, shot to death by the Long Beach police department."



Los Angeles

Photo: Robin Rosenfield



Gloria Santos, mother of Julio Castillo, Los Angeles.

Special to the RWOR



Mounted cops charging demonstrators in Los Angeles.

Photo: Tom Gorman/INC

October 22, 2000—5th National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality In the Streets for Justice

Thousands protest in more than 60 cities

The low wail of a conch shell pierced the afternoon skies and drum beats rolled down Broadway as 50 Aztec dancers led the way for the 5th National Day of Protest Against Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation in Los Angeles—2,500 determined people were headed for LAPD headquarters at Parker Center. Before the day was over, the march was attacked by LAPD cops on horses, cops and riot squads firing concussion grenades and rubber bullets and beating people with clubs. But not even this brutal attack could shut down the day, as people fearlessly stood their ground and kept the rally going.

Overwhelmingly young and militant, the marchers were all nationalities and backgrounds, and each brought their own flavor to the mix. Many were new to resistance or had just gotten involved during the protests at the Democratic National Convention this summer. The strong proletarian character of the crowd, and so many diverse people dressed in Black, gave an edge to the march—a sense that a new kind of resistance is taking root.

People who live every day under the gun of the police brought their courage, their desire to put an end to this oppression, and their contempt for the system. Hundreds of immigrant proletarians lined the street, as the contingent from Pico-Union, a large immigrant barrio policed by the Rampart division of the LAPD, marched with a huge banner—calling attention to the police brutality and corruption scandal that has rocked L.A. for months: “La Pico-Union Bajo la bota de Rampart, Vidas Robadas, Vidas Arruinadas, Jamás olvidaremos, Jamás perdonaremos (Pico-Union Under Rampart, Stolen Lives, Ruined Lives, We will never forget, We will never forgive). The Watts Drum Corps and a young girls’ drill team set the beat, as the infectious chant from the Watts Committee Against Police Brutality echoed up and down the march: “Who Let the Pigs Out? Oink, Oink, Oink, Oink!”

There were signs that the police were preparing for an assault. When the march reached the front of Parker Center, riot cops were out in full force with clubs drawn. “They’re over there with their rubber bullets, waiting to attack you, like they did at the DNC, like they do in dark alleys,” a young revolutionary told the crowd. “They know we’re watching them. They know we’re here in numbers, united, putting our differences aside and fighting

for this cause. Show them.” As the youth marched to surround the building, they were blocked by police, who disregarded the march permit. The police launched their attack without warning and the POP, POP, POP of rubber bullet guns echoed blocks away.

Dozens of people were hit with rubber bullets, some seriously injured—including a student from UCLA who suffered permanent damage in her eye. Cops on horses advanced on the crowd, hitting people with their long riot batons. Riot cops on foot beat and pushed people while others shot into the crowd. Hundreds of people were pushed back into the main rally area while others were forced down side streets and out of the area when they found many of the streets leading back to the rally blocked by cops.

The families of the Stolen Lives were on the stage speaking about their loved ones killed by the police when the police opened fire—hitting some family members in the back with rubber bullets as they



Stolen Lives banner leading the San Francisco march.



People from the South Bronx and RCYB members in front of the banner made by residents after the police raid before NDP.

tried to protect the children. Sofia Saldaña, whose son Juan was murdered by the notorious Rampart cops, said, “Now I know what my son must have felt like surrounded by these dogs—I thought they were going to try and kill us.” At least four people were arrested—three face misdemeanor charges and one faces a felony

assault with a deadly weapon charge.

But the people stood strong, especially the youth who stepped out to protect the rally from the advancing cops. Young women were right up in the faces of the police, calling them out as murderers. Hundreds of youth sat down directly in front of the advancing cops, blocking

them from sweeping into the rally. And the rally went on, as family members bravely spoke out—joining people across the country who took the streets, held memorials, marched, sang, and shouted to bring out the truth about how the police had killed their children, brothers, uncles, sisters, and cousins.

This scene of the families and militant youth standing together with their allies against the puffed-up, helmeted enforcers of the LAPD typified a powerful alliance that was manifested around the country.

In more than 60 cities, this 5th National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation brought home the reality of the epidemic of police murder and brutality in this country—and the growing and determined resistance to STOP it. Thousands participated: 2,500 marched in Los Angeles, 1,500 in New York, 900 in San Francisco, 400 in Chicago, and significant actions were held in Detroit; Cleveland; Columbus, Ohio; Seattle; Philadelphia; Portland, Oregon; Atlanta, Georgia; Houston; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Austin, Texas; Cherokee, NC; Hendersonville, NC; Denver; Louisville; Kentucky; Phoenix, Arizona; Providence, RI; Minneapolis/St. Paul; San Diego. And as we go to press, organizers are still receiving reports from other areas.

In New York City, more than 30 family members, including Saikou Amadou Diallo, the father of Amadou Diallo, joined a young and militant crowd, dressed in Black, to march and rally—in the face of several attempts by the police to intimidate and detain organizers.

Since his 13-year-old son was murdered by a housing cop in 1994, Nicholas Heyward, Sr. has become an outspoken organizer against police brutality. On October 22, 2000, as Nicholas was preparing to MC, the police arrested him at his home at 6 a.m., charging him with failure to pay a ticket for not having his dog on a leash! Lawyers and activists immediately located Nicholas, demanding his release, and escorted him to the rally to speak.

Three days before, six members of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade and five people from the South Bronx were arrested when police broke into an apartment—in a blatant attempt to intimidate people making plans for the protest. This happened in the same building where Malcolm Ferguson was murdered by police in 1999—and just a few blocks from where Amadou Diallo was gunned down in a hail of 41 bullets. In a show of defiance at the October 22nd protest, members of the RCYB and youth from the neighborhood marched together with a banner made and signed by dozens of people in the neighborhood that read: “Amadou, Malcolm, PRESENTE! South Bronx Against Police Brutality.”

Continued on page 15



Los Angeles

From the CoRIM

Seize the New Opportunities to Break the Isolation of Chairman Gonzalo

For eight long years now Chairman Gonzalo, leader of the Communist Party of Peru, has been held in the dungeons of the enemy. During this time he has been held in extreme isolation and even denied visits by his lawyers and six distinguished international delegations. His last public statement was on 24 September 1992, when he called on the Party and the revolutionary people in Peru to continue on the revolutionary road. Since then there has been no verifiable communications from Chairman Gonzalo.

This intolerable situation is a direct result of the Peruvian regime's effort to use psychological warfare to undermine the people's revolutionary struggle. While the imperialists and reactionaries of all countries talk louder and louder about "democratic and human rights," the conditions of Chairman Gonzalo's confinement show the barbaric features behind this mask.

Recent events have focused world attention on the reactionary Peruvian regime. In Peru itself, new waves of popular discontent are growing and the People's War led by the PCP continues to be waged heroically. Now is the time to forcefully raise the demand that Chairman Gonzalo's isolation be broken, that he be allowed to express himself in a live television broadcast and that he be able to receive visits from journalists, lawyers and others from Peru and around the world. He must be given the treatment that is internationally guaranteed to all imprisoned combatants. Similarly, we must raise our voices in defence of Comrade Feliciano and demand that he be guaranteed these same elementary rights.

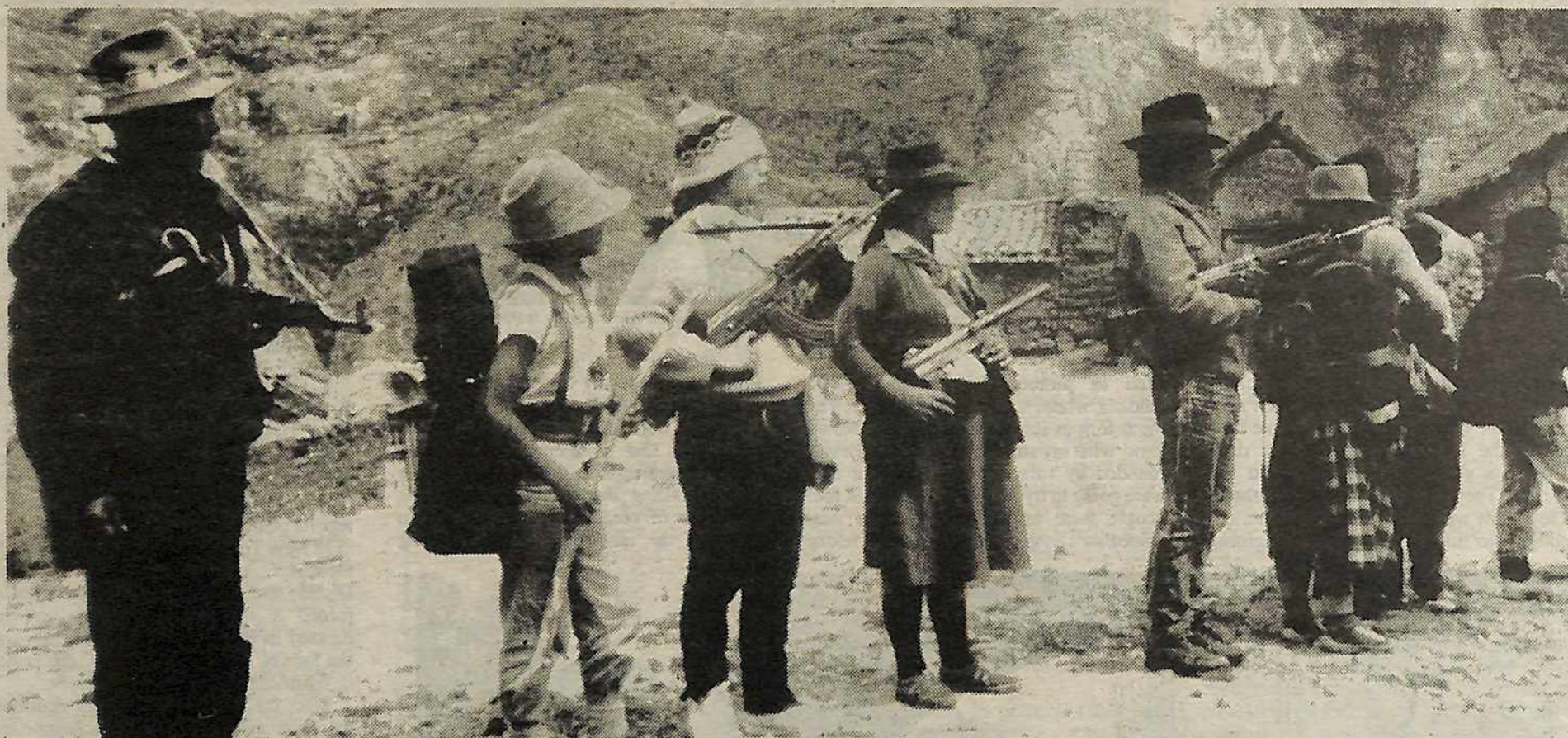
The Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement calls upon the parties and organisations of RIM as well as all other progressive forces and individuals to take up this fight. We must call upon the revolutionary masses of all countries to defend the life of Chairman Gonzalo because he is an outstanding revolutionary communist leader who developed the line for making proletarian revolution in Peru and led the Party in initiating and developing an heroic People's War and has made important contributions to RIM and the whole international communist movement.

Following the capture of Chairman Gonzalo, the struggle in Peru experienced a "bend in the road." Nevertheless, under the leadership of Comrade Feliciano, the Party carried the People's War forward, rebuffing the Right Opportunist Line that called for abandoning the revolutionary struggle. Although Comrade Feliciano himself was captured in 1999, the Party Central Committee has continued to march forward and defend the line developed by Chairman Gonzalo.

Redoubling our efforts to defend the life and break the isolation of Chairman Gonzalo is an important way the revolutionary masses in different countries can express their support for and aid the People's War in Peru.

Defend the Life of Chairman Gonzalo, Break the Isolation!

24 September 2000—Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement



Guerrilla fighters of the Communist Party of Peru.



As of October 29, 2000 Chairman Gonzalo (Abimael Guzmán) has been held in isolation for

8 Years, 16 Days

In October 1992, Chairman Gonzalo—leader of the Maoist Communist Party of Peru—was sentenced to life imprisonment by hooded military judges of the U.S.-backed regime in Peru. The fascist regime in Peru is holding this revolutionary leader of the Peruvian people under very brutal conditions in an underground concrete dungeon at a naval base. He is being denied visits by lawyers, doctors and relatives and deprived of proper medical care and reading materials. Peru's President Fujimori has publicly threatened to execute Chairman Gonzalo and boasted of applying psychological torture on him. Fujimori changed Peru's con-

stitution to legalize the death penalty, which could be used against Chairman Gonzalo and other revolutionary prisoners. The Peruvian regime must be prevented from killing Chairman Gonzalo through the death penalty or by other means.

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

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

stituted to legalize the death penalty, which could be used against Chairman Gonzalo and other revolutionary prisoners. The Peruvian regime must be prevented from killing Chairman Gonzalo through the death penalty or by other means.

NDP 2000

It's Right to Rebel Against Police Brutality

The Voices and Faces of Resistance



Sekou Diallo, father of Amadou Diallo, and other parents at the New York march.

Special to the RWOR

It was 22 months ago that they killed my son Julio, who was only 16 years old. My son was murdered by the racist, corrupt and rotten Sheriffs. I still have pain in my heart. So I say to them, 'You evil bastards.' Without feelings, I call them bastards. That night when they killed my son, I begged them not to kill him, to stop shooting him. I asked them for their mothers, for their fathers, for their children. But they didn't listen to a word. They shoved me around like I was garbage. They shoved me and roughed me up and screamed at me like I was some kind of animal... I demand justice for my son Julio. I demand justice for our loved ones who have been killed with no pity, with no remorse. I demand the maximum punishment and that their soul rot in the thousands of hells. Cowards! Assassins! Murderers!

Gloria Santos, mother of Julio Castillo

I seen Tyisha Miller's body. I seen my niece's bullet-ridden body and it sickened me. I seen she had been shot through her throat and she had been shot in the eye. She had been shot in her back. All the bullets came through her back. And I said that day two years ago that I would dedicate the rest of my life to trying to get some justice. That's why I had Sunday school on Broadway. Today is Sunday. I told the church that I'm going to Sunday school, but it won't be in Riverside, it'll be in Los Angeles down Broadway.

Burnell Butler, uncle of Tyisha Miller and spokesperson for her family



Chicago

Special to the RWOR

We are sick and tired and we're no longer allowing you to carry out your terrorizing, death squad activities against the youth of our community and always get off free and continue to go unpunished. We the parents are dedicated to a better future for our children, while you the police are dedicated to stealing the future from the youth, killing them and locking them up on fabricated charges... We the people of Pico-Union and all those who are under the boot of Rampart, will start to raise our voices so that these crimes cannot be forgotten. We, the Pico-Union community, where so many lives have been stolen and ruined—we will never forget, and we will never forgive.

From a statement from the Pico-Union Community, the immigrant barrio occupied by cops from the LAPD Rampart Division

Once, when I was 17, we were just kickin' back on the corner, and there were riot cops. They just happened to be assigned there for whatever reason. There was me and four other guys, one that was in a wheelchair. As soon as they came out of the car, they didn't say nothing to us. They came out with their guns pointed right at us. I put my hands up in the air. They hit the guy in the wheelchair. They dragged me on my knees. I thought I was gonna get shot. This is my second October 22nd. The first time, I ran into it accidentally and I joined it. This time I'm here and I brought my friends. I think this is beautiful! It's powerful! It's the people. It's not just one race but a lot of people together with one voice. People hearing what the cops do here, and it's not right, especially what happened in Rampart. But this is beautiful. This is powerful."

22-year-old youth at the L.A. NDP

These are our brothers and sisters here and we're gonna back them up. The police is trying to separate us, but we ain't gonna be run off. These are the pigs who bring the Migra, they attack these sisters and brothers and deport them back to Mexico. But they ain't leavin' and we ain't leavin'. We're gonna stand with these people. These are our people. These police is trying to run us out. They're like vampires in the night. When the curtains open, you see their fangs, you see what they're really about. We ain't gonna let 'em stop us. We ain't gonna be moved!"

Black woman from L.A. after the police attacked the crowd



Family of Errol Shaw, Sr. and other protesters in Detroit.

I used to live in Pico-Union, and I've seen brutality, how they treat the youth. I've seen them handcuff them and beat them, and that's what they did to us for protesting and

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

demanding our rights. We were also beaten. I've been arrested for protesting, for civil disobedience. I wasn't beaten, but other compañeros were, and the way that they grabbed me and put on the handcuffs — to me that was brutality. I'm a janitor, and in 1990 I was in Century City when they beat our compañeros and what's more one compañero died from the beating and another compañera, Ana Veliz, had a miscarriage because of the beating they gave her. They didn't beat me, but they beat my compañeros, and we say that an injury to one is an injury to all.

Woman with Justice for Janitors

I would like to begin this statement by expressing my deepest condolences to the families gathered here today who have lost loved ones as a result of police violence. I know the pain of losing a loved one and having that pain worsen when the loss goes unrecognized and the injustice of that loss goes without reparations. I send you my love, my strength and my support. Sometimes the only way to deal with this pain is to replace it with the will to change what caused it in the first place. I want to encourage you to continue your efforts to stop police violence because your voices are critical to this struggle. Your stories have the ability to teach and to touch all kinds of people. Your stories reach far beyond barriers of class, race and political ideologies. You have the power to unite society in an effort to end police abuse and violence... I want to thank the October 22nd Coalition for their work on this important issue. I support you and your efforts and applaud your dedication to creating a society where our people do not have to live in fear and where justice is a reality for all communities.

From a statement by Leonard Peltier to NDP

This police brutality that's going on here today has also gone on across this country and it takes people like ourselves to mobilize in order to stop it. A lot of people call on the federal government. I was doing that at one time also. But the federal government has closed many cases back at the end of '99, including my own. I'm not calling on the federal government or federal monitoring of the police officers. I'm calling on the people out here. I'm calling on you people to do this. This is up to us. We need to fight. We need to protest. We need to continue on rallying and organizing."

Nicholas Heyward, Sr., father of Nicholas Heyward, Jr. who was killed by a NY housing cop for having a toy gun

Recently the federal government issued a statement based on a study and investigation that the New York City Police Department does engage in the practice of racial profiling. This report was not new to us. We have long realized that to be the fact. The facts and circumstances surrounding my son's death is an indicator of racial profiling—the same issue as with beating and torturing the other victims and killing Patrick Dorismond and the others... I wish and I pray that one day the death of Amadou will be remembered as a symbol of peace, unity, justice for all people."

Saikou Amadou Diallo, father of Amadou Diallo shot 41 times and killed by the NYPD

We have to let Giuliani know that when he said that these are isolated incidents, that when they murdered my son, it was isolated. We took and we made research and we came up with the Stolen Lives and look how many names, how many isolated incidents there are.

Iris Baez, mother of Anthony Baez, murdered by the NYPD

In 1993, I regret to say that I voted for Rudolph Giuliani when he was running for mayor. I believed that he was going to make the city safer, that he was going to clean the drugs out of our neighborhoods. Having three boys, I was concerned about the drugs around our neighborhood. A year later, on January 12, 1995, my son Anthony Rosario and my nephew Hilton Vega were killed in cold blood by Patrick Brosnan and James Crowe from the 46th Precinct in the Bronx, also bodyguards to Mayor Giuliani... They shot my son 14 times in the back and my nephew eight times in the back. It makes me angry that these two detectives can live their lives with their families without paying for the crime of killing my son and nephew.

Margarita Rosario, mother of Anthony Rosario, murdered by the NYPD

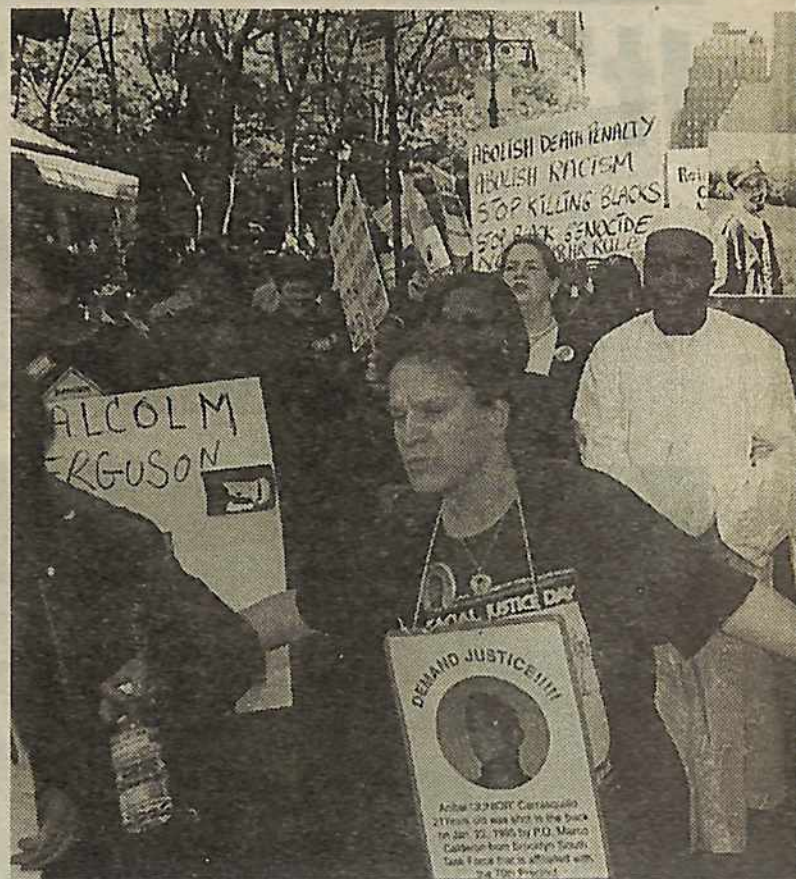
This will happen and it will continue to happen if we don't continue to fight and scream and kick and whatever it takes to make them stop beating our children, murdering our children.

Lucy Turull, mother of Jovan Gonzalez, beaten by a racist gang with ties to the police



Los Angeles.

Photo: Robin Rosenfield



Family members of police murder victims at the New York march.

It's Right to Rebel / Police Brutality

The Voices and F



Houston



Watts Drum Corps.



Teatro Campesino performing a skit in San Francisco.

Photo: Jiny



Seattle



Special to the RWOR



Chicago

Special to the RWOR

I ain't going with none of that bull about he was going for a gun 'cause there was no gun found. These pigs will fabricate anything just to keep themselves a job. Meanwhile, we grievin'. Every single female and male up here grieves. I'm hurt. I'm tired of just not being able to see my brother on the corner, not being able to see him come home, not being able to see him watch TV, not being able to see him in a club with me, not being able to see him hang out with me. I lost my flesh and blood. To the younger generation, join me 'cause it's gonna be on and poppin' real soon."

James Ferguson, brother of Malcolm Ferguson who was killed by NYPD

The cop shot my brother in the back of the head at close range. He was only 16 years old. But the Brooklyn D.A. did nothing to prosecute the officer. He's still working as a cop today like nothing happened. We must remember that many young people are not here today because they were killed by the police officers. We are building a movement against police brutality. I'm five years fighting for justice. We haven't got anything yet. But we are not going to give up until we get justice for all the people who have been killed by the police officers.

Qinglang Huang, sister of Yong Xin Huang who was shot by NYPD while playing with a toy gun

This was clearly an attack and a tactic to divide the people from the revolutionaries and we're not going to take that shit. We're not going to be scared of their shit. Our Chairman, Bob Avakian, says fear nothing, be down for the whole thing, and that's what we're all about.

Sonya, from the RCYB, speaking about the police raid in the South Bronx three days before 10/22 in which six RCYB members and five people from the neighborhood were arrested

This cop, he was trigger happy. He killed my son. He didn't have a chance. My son had his hands in the air and, he was giving himself up. He took off his T-shirt to show them that he didn't have no weapons. And the cops and the newspapers they changed the story around. They said that my son had a knife. How can my son have a knife when he took off his T-shirt? He didn't have nothing. He was surrendering himself. For what? He didn't do no crime. My son was sick, and he needed help. That's why we called the 911. The police has to pay for the crime he did. And all of us, my daughter, my son, and my nephew, we're going to get justice for my son.

Jenny Garcia, mother of Danny Garcia, killed by San Jose police

The way in which they took Alberto from us was the most cowardly of acts and they call it an accident. Please continue on with your protest. We unfortunately cannot be with you today because they still will not let my husband leave the county. I hope at the next protest that we can be with you. We need to raise all of our voices together so that the police will stop hurting and killing our children in their own homes. Our family, the Sepulveda family, we appreciate your support and please keep moving forward. Don't be afraid. They are the crazy ones not us.

Letter from the Sepulveda family, read at SF NDP. On September 17, the police raided the Sepulveda home and shot 11-year-old Alberto in the back, killing him.

Anywhere one looks across the country, it's not hard to find communities ravaged by the epidemic of police brutality and killings. Broken bones, devastated families whose loved ones' lives have been stolen from them by law enforcement. Innocent youth lined up, spread-eagle, and incarcerated. And time after time this system refuses to punish these brutal enforcers. The pain in these broken hearts give rise to the anger so deep! That if not contained will surely burst out and drive the people to find a real solution!

Danny Garcia, brother of Mark Garcia who was murdered by SFPD

How does it stop? You have to roll out of bed every morning and say "I'm not going to give up!" And if times get hard, and you want to just tuck your head under the cover, just come out and come out fighting. My mother told me, she said, "You know what, you fight 'til your last dying breath." And she said, "When you're on the ground and with your lasting dying breath you look up in their face and you spit in it."

Glen Hull, whose son was shot in the back by Oakland police in 1993

My niece, Sheila Detoy, was killed by the police a couple years ago — 17 years old. She touched many lives, and we're all still in pain and feel the loss of Sheila Detoy... It's difficult

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Against Police Brutality Voices of Resistance

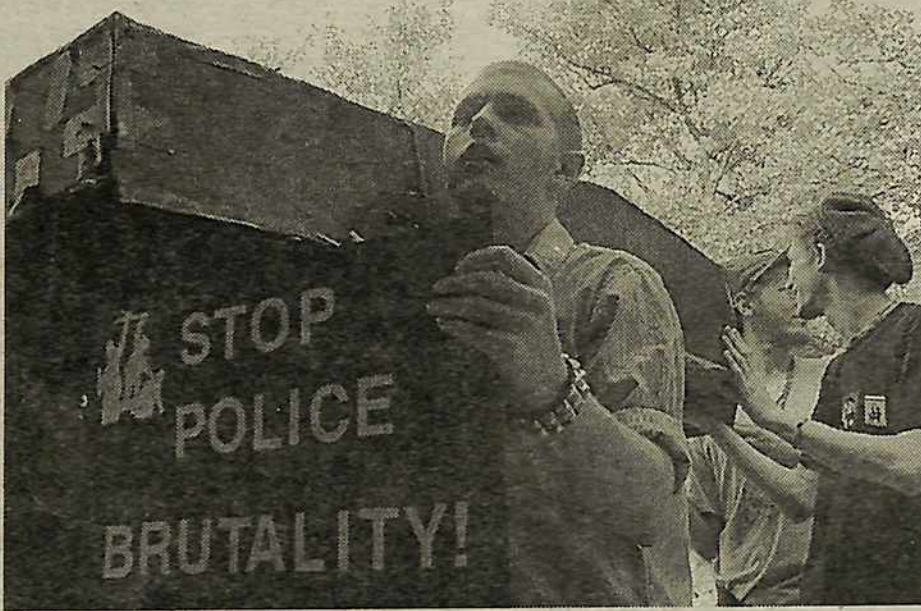


RWOR photo

Latonya Dykes and her children at the San Francisco march. Her husband was killed by a West Oakland cop.



Photo: Emico



Atlanta



Special to the RWOR



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Refuse & Resist! contingent in Los Angeles.

NDP 2000



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RCYB members, New York.



RWOR photo

Changing a street sign to remember a victim of police murder, Chicago.

Continued from previous page
for me to speak here, there's pain involved, and I just want to thank all of you. The ILWU is here backing up Stolen Lives, and against police brutality. Sheila Detoy's father was a longshoreman, as well as myself. And we been championing human rights from the beginning.
Bob Karcey, uncle of Sheila Detoy

The Oakland police department managed to destroy one-third of my family in 20 minutes. All over a dog. They claim that my son refused to surrender his dog... He failed the "attitude test." A lot of our family members fail the "attitude test" put out by the police. What that really means is that you have dignity, that you have rights. That's failing the attitude test. That will get you hurt, and that will get you killed. As long as this system remains the way it is.

Rashidah Grinage

The police on our little reservation murdered our tribal member Acorn Peters. So number one I'm here out of honor and in memory of Acorn. Secondly, I'm sick of police abuse. The police treat Indian people like we are not human so how ever you treat a dog is the treatment that the Indian people receive. I know first hand.

Cora Lee Simmons,
Round Valley Indians for Justice

It's not just a couple of bad apples or some cops who took things too far. They ain't got nothing against locking people up. You can get life in this jail for stealing a piece of pizza. And they keep murdering our people. So why is it that time after time these pigs get off? It's because these capitalists couldn't last a day without their brutalizing enforcers to hold them up. Police brutality is part of the lifeblood of this system. It's how they enforce their class dictatorship over the people. So if we want to get rid of these brutal murdering police and every other social injustice we got to get rid of this capitalist, imperialist system. And its going to take proletarian revolution to do it.

Roberto, from the RCYB speaking at the SF NDP

We're skateboarders, we're hip-hop, we're students, we're people of color. All of us are affected. Police have brutalized us many a time. Illegal searches, DWB, malicious acts like that. We've been accused of many things from robbing banks to vandalism. It feels good to be out here but also to know that it's a national day not just here but that people all over the country are taking action today so hopefully it will have some effect.

Black student from UC Berkeley

I hope our voices will be heard. That the police in the city could see that the citizens of the city and the youth and everybody's just fed up with their bullshit—all these cop's fucking corruption, fucking beating people, racial profiling. That all the movements that are against police have joined together to march and let their voices be heard by the city and by the police. They could know that we're out there and we're resisting.

17-year-old youth at NDP in Chicago



RWOR photo

Danny Garcia, brother of police murder victim Mark Garcia, at 24th and Mission, San Francisco.

He was talking to his friend, with my son. I came to pick him up to come and eat dinner when the police approached us and started chasing him. The cops told him to stop. When he put his hands up in the air and he turned around the cops shot him three feet away. The police said that he had a gun in his hand—and all he had was a lighter."

Nancy Figueroa, wife of John Figueroa who was gunned down by Chicago police 11 years ago

I am a professor of African American history and in particular, African American resistance; so I deal with evidence, and I can tell you, this book is EVIDENCE!"

Ella Forbes, whose son Erin was murdered by the Lower Merion, PA police on January 10, 2000, talking about the Stolen Lives book

We have a system in place where people are trained to kill, people are trained to maim. And that's what they do. And there's a whole system behind them, a judicial system that protects these people when they do that.

Raul Miranda, uncle of Robert Wayne Guy Jr.—killed in 1997 by King County Jail guards in Seattle

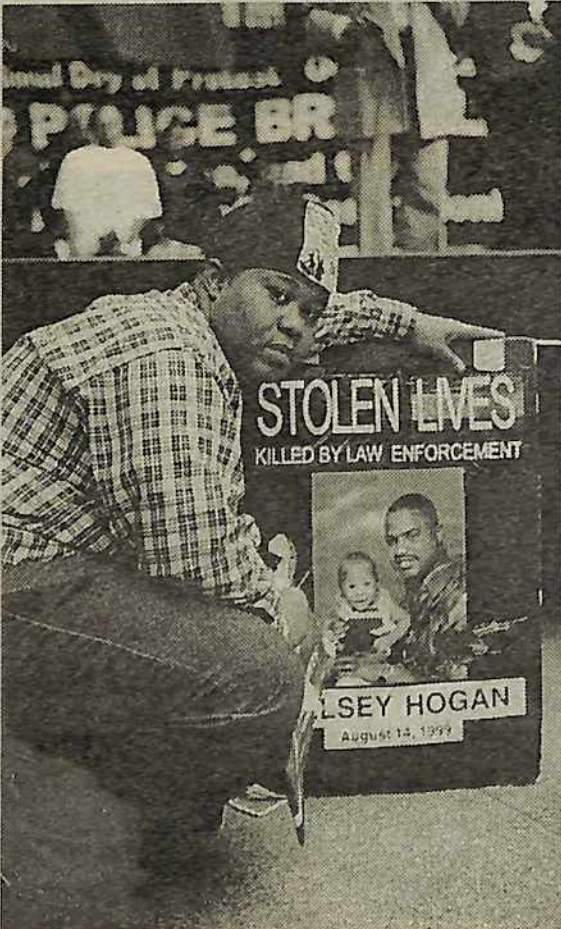
If I die fighting for what is right, I don't care. I will die fighting for what I think is right. I believe people are dying today. It is wrong, and every time I open my mouth I'm going to say what it is and I'm going to tell the truth about it.

Ophelia Ealy, mother of Michael Ealy—murdered by Seattle police in 1998



Special to the RWOR

Greg Jordan, father of John Jordan, Los Angeles.



RWOR photo

Chicago

Palestine: Occupation and Resistance

Beit Jalla is a Palestinian town in the West Bank, next to Bethlehem. As in other Palestinian communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Beit Jalla's residents are mostly poor—and are living in the shadows of the vicious Israeli occupiers.

On October 22, some gunshots reportedly were fired from Beit Jalla into Gilo, an Israeli area in Jerusalem. The shots left a few bullet holes in some of the Gilo buildings, but there were no casualties. Then the Israeli troops entered the scene. Their helicopter gunships fired rockets into Beit Jalla, setting off explosions. The attack continued the next day when Israeli tanks positioned in Gilo hit Beit Jalla with several rounds of shells and long bursts of heavy machine-gun fire. Several people were injured when a shell landed near an ambulance. One tank round destroyed a children's bedroom just after the parents had moved the kids to another part of the house. Other buildings were destroyed or heavily damaged.

The local Israeli military commander warned, "Every house from which there is firing will simply be destroyed. Every vehicle from which there is firing will be destroyed."

This assault on Beit Jalla is typical of the Israeli actions in the past few weeks. Every act of resistance on the part of the Palestinians has been met with a massive military response by the Israeli occupiers. Israeli troops have fired rubber bullets and live ammunition at rock-throwing youth. Israeli tanks and helicopter gunships have "retaliated" against small-arms fire with rockets and shells. Israeli soldiers often shoot dum-dum bullets—ammunition that explodes inside the body.

Some Palestinians killed by Israeli bullets did not even have a rock in their hands—like 11-year-old Mohammed al-Durrah, shot as he and his father walked back to their home in Gaza. Among those injured are a six-month-old child and a two-year-old kid.

Israeli troops and armed settlers have attacked ambulances carrying wounded Palestinians. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society reported on October 24, "Live ammunition, rubber bullets, and/or stones thrown by Israeli settlers in 63 separate attacks have hit to date 34 ambulances. Forty emergency medical technicians have been injured, and one killed." In many cases, Israeli military checkpoints have refused to let ambulances through.

As of October 28, more than 130 Palestinians have been killed and at least 4,000 injured by Israeli troops and settlers since the end of September. A United Nations investigation found that about 40 percent of the Palestinians injured by the Israeli forces were under the age of 18 and that at least half of the injuries resulted from the use of live ammunition. The report said that Israeli forces "appear to have indiscriminately used excessive force in cases where there was no imminent threat to their lives."

These are ugly actions of an occupying army. The rulers of Israel hope that by using overwhelming firepower—and by threatening to unleash even greater military violence—they can put out the fires of resistance among the Palestinian people. The deadly methods of the Israeli army reflect their unjust mission: carrying out the interests of a settler state whose very foundation rests on the dispossession and domination of the oppressed Palestinian nation.

Behind the Israeli occupiers are their main backers, the U.S. The weapons used by the Israeli troops against the Palestinians are stamped "Made in the USA" or are paid for by the U.S. imperialists. The U.S. sends over \$3 billion a year in military and economic aid to Israel. On October 3, the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* reported the latest U.S. military transfer to Israel—an agreement to provide 35 Blackhawk military helicopters and spare parts costing \$525 million. The *Ha'aretz* said this was "the largest purchase of military helicopters by the Israeli Air Force in a decade." And the



Palestinian youth throwing stones at Israeli troops in Bethlehem, October 23.

Jerusalem Post described the Blackhawks as "the newest and most advanced multi-mission attack helicopters in the U.S. inventory."

Blaming the Victims for the Israeli Brutality

During the current upsurge in Palestine, U.S. President Clinton has been constantly calling for a "cease-fire" and a "stop to the violence." But when Clinton and other U.S. officials talk of a "cease-fire," they are not demanding that the Israeli army—the side that has the overwhelming firepower—stop their attacks on the Palestinian people. Instead, they are blaming the Palestinians and holding them responsible for the savage violence they are subjected to at the hands of the Israeli forces.

Poor and oppressed people in the U.S. know what it's like to be victimized by the violence of the official enforcers—and then be told that it's "their fault." How many police murders have been declared "justified"—because the victims supposedly "brought it upon themselves" by "acting suspicious," by running away from cops, or by carrying objects like wallets that cops supposedly mistook for guns? In the Middle East, the U.S. is blaming the whole Palestinian nation for "provoking" the Israeli military.

On October 16, Clinton conducted a "summit" at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat. At the end of the summit, Clinton announced that the participants had agreed to take steps to "minimize the violence."

What exactly was discussed and agreed to behind closed doors at the summit is unclear. But one revealing aspect of the summit was that the CIA played a major role—with CIA Director George Tenet himself in attendance. Under a 1998 agreement in the U.S.-directed "peace process," the CIA was assigned a direct role in the "security arrangements" between Israel and Arafat's Palestinian Authority. Under the agreement, Arafat was supposed to step up efforts to combat "terrorism" and "weapons trafficking"—which, in reality, meant that Arafat was supposed to increase the crackdown on Palestinian opposition to Israel and the "peace process." And the CIA—notorious for crimes and intrigues around the world—was given the task of monitoring these "arrangements."

The U.S. Master and the Israeli Attack Dog

The clashes have continued since the Sharm summit. And the U.S. has continued to hold the Palestinians responsible for the bloodshed caused by the Israeli military. A White House official quoted by the *New York Times* said, "The clear thrust of the call [out of the summit] was that we need to see more progress on getting the Palestinian security forces to stop the violence." And Clinton—while saying he hoped to see the "peace process" resume—declared, "I do think Chairman Arafat can dramatically reduce the level of violence."

Such statements point to the reality behind the "peace process" that the U.S. has overseen since the early 1990s. In the wake of the war against Iraq and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. moved to strengthen its position in the Middle East—a region that the U.S. must dominate in order to stay the top imperialist power in the world. This move by the U.S. has involved different factors, including more direct presence of U.S. military forces in some parts of the region. But the key to the U.S. plans for the Middle East continues to be—as it has been for many decades—the existence of the state of Israel in occupied Palestine.

As the October 16, 2000, statement from the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (CoRIM) pointed out, "Israel is a dog on an American leash. Its job is to lash out violently against the masses of Palestine as well as the neighbouring countries and the whole region in order to protect U.S. imperialist interests." (The entire statement is available in *RW* #1076 or online at rwr.org)

Behind all the talk and promises about a "lasting solution" is the actual purpose of the "peace process": to gain stability for Israel—and its imperialist backers—by stamping out Palestinian resistance. But these plans now threaten to blow up in the faces of the U.S. imperialists. The fake promises of the "peace process" and the reality of continuing life under occupation have given rise to a renewed upsurge of mass resistance among the Palestinian people. And all around the Middle East, the events of recent weeks have intensified the masses' support for the Palestinian struggle and opposition to the U.S. and its Israeli attack dog.

On October 24, tens of thousands of

people in Jordan marched toward the border with the West Bank, demanding an end to Jordan's diplomatic and economic ties to Israel and condemning U.S. backing of Israel. The marchers clashed with Jordanian police, who tear-gassed and beat the protesters. On the same day, the Jordanian king was attending a ceremony at the Clinton White House to sign a new trade pact with the U.S. The trade pact is aimed at helping to stabilize the pro-U.S. regime in Jordan. But now the U.S. imperialists worry that developments in Palestine could touch off increased instability and anti-government opposition in the countries around the region.

Apartheid Under Israeli Occupation

Less than a week after the Sharm el-Sheikh summit, Barak said that Israel is starting to lay the groundwork for a "unilateral separation" of the Palestinian areas of the West Bank and Gaza if the Palestinians do not "stop the violence." Essentially, this is a threat to create huge concentration camps to imprison the three million Palestinians in various enclaves in the West Bank and Gaza Strip—surrounded by the Israeli military, armed settlements, and border walls.

This is a cold-blooded threat from the Israeli occupiers. But the "peace process" has already forced the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza into an apartheid-like situation. The "autonomous" areas—which supposedly would become a Palestinian "state" at some future point—are small, separate pieces of territory broken up by land under open Israeli control, Israeli settlements which act as armed fortresses, and "security roads" that link the settlements to each other and to Israel. The Israelis can easily carry out "closure" of the Palestinian areas—preventing any movement and strangling the people economically. In fact, Israel has set up such "closures" in recent weeks as a form of "collective punishment" against the Palestinians.

The Israeli occupation of Palestine is fundamentally and thoroughly unjust—and this is made even clearer by the bloody actions of the Israeli forces in the recent weeks. The Palestinian people have justice on their side. It is right for Palestinians to defend themselves against the brutal occupiers and to struggle for liberation.

The Harsh Reality of

Laura Morales is sick. She suffered excruciating pain from migraine headaches. Laura, 34 years old, was also on welfare in New York City. And, as a result, she was forced to participate in the Work Experience Program (WEP); working in the basement kitchen of a church shelter. The heat aggravated the pain. All around her, other people were thrown out of the program and lost their checks for minor things like showing up late or missing work without a doctor's note. Laura, who had three children to feed, was simply afraid to miss work. No matter how sick she felt, she kept showing up for WEP, for her \$489-a-month check, until the day in August when a co-worker found her sitting in a chair, dead.

People were outraged. Demonstrations have been held in Laura's name. New York Mayor Giuliani argued it wasn't the city's fault that she went to work rather than to see a doctor. Laura's sister, Luz Cruz, told *Newsday*, "They didn't care. Now she's just one less person on welfare."

NATIONAL CUTS— LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

The welfare system, which in theory was supposed to be a "safety net" for people, has become an instrument for making the poor un-safe—for driving them into the workforce where they can be profitably exploited. In the U.S., "welfare reform" is the official name for the drive to make poor people desperate enough to work for whatever wages and under whatever working conditions they are offered. For those unable to work, the attack on welfare means the bottom can simply drop out from under them.

An often hidden fact about welfare is that the majority of the people receiving help are children. For decades, the federal program called Aid to Families with Dependent Children supported the families of millions of single women who needed help feeding their kids. The core of the "welfare reform" plan was to force these women to accept whatever low-wage jobs are available by cutting off support to their children. And welfare before the cuts was a bitter existence—in 1994 when 14 million people (or 5.5 percent of the population) were receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the national average (median) check was \$366 for a family of three (or \$4,392 a year).

After the 1996 federal "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act," children were no longer guaranteed even this thin safety net—their mothers would be kicked off welfare after two years (in many cases) and would be permanently denied welfare after they had received help for a lifetime maximum of five years. This 1996 law cut \$56 billion dollars from the federal welfare program—which was used to pay off federal debts to the finance capitalists. Aid to Families with Dependent Children was pointedly renamed "Temporary Assistance to Needy Families."

Since 1996, the number of people receiving welfare help has been cut almost in half, from 12.2 million in 1996 to 6.6 million in 1999. From Los Angeles to New York, people are systematically being cut off welfare and thrown into the depths of impoverishment. In Wisconsin, which is seen as a national model in welfare cuts, the figures are even more extreme: In the mid-1980s 98,000 people received assistance in Wisconsin; today just over 7,000 do.

THE CUT

As welfare was cut, there was a huge official campaign about "moving people from a culture of dependency to a culture of work." This propaganda hid the fact that most women on welfare have, in huge numbers, gotten themselves jobs over and over. Before the 1996 welfare cuts, the overwhelming majority of women on welfare found jobs within two years. At the same time, many women who left welfare for work often could not care for their families on the minimum wage jobs that were available, and so were often forced back on welfare by the harsh realities in the bottom section of the working class.

The wage level in the bottom of the working class averages \$2 an hour less than it did 20 years ago—and it simply does not pay enough to raise a family. It is certainly not enough to pay for private child care. Forcing people to take jobs at starvation wages does not "help them out of the welfare trap"—it means forcing them and their children deeper into the most desperate poverty and the illegal economy.

Today, four years later, the initial impact of these cuts can now be seen.

One report by the Urban Institute reported that one-third to one-half of the women forced off welfare experienced serious difficulties simply feeding their children. Nearly 40 percent reported being unable to pay rent or utilities in the preceding year. Thirty-nine percent of former recipients remained unemployed, and a quarter lived in households where no one was working. Of those working, only 20 percent got health insurance at their job.

A national survey by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities reported that the average disposable income of the poorest fifth of single-mother families fell by \$580 per family between 1995 and 1997. While the government talks of "unprecedented prosperity," the income of the poorest tenth of the population has dropped 14 percent. Meanwhile the Children's Defense Fund documented that between 1995 and 1997 there was a rise in the number of children living in "extreme poverty" (meaning less than half of the amount defined as "poverty line"). The government has cut food to these kids while energetically building the prison cells where many will eventually be imprisoned.

In Arizona a state report documented that the number of hungry people in the state doubled in the last ten years—to

900,000 people. Food pantries across the country are routinely running out of food because of the swelling numbers of hungry showing up for relief. Soup kitchens, that once served mainly single men now find families and senior citizens queuing up for a meal.

In Los Angeles a study of single adults cut off benefits was conducted by researchers at UCLA and the nonprofit Shelter Partnership. It showed that 15 percent lived on the streets before the cut-backs, but that after the cuts the number who were homeless had soared to 38 percent.

Federal guidelines pressured state governments to drive people off welfare. States no longer get a set percentage of the money they spend on welfare, instead they get a fixed amount of money (a so-called "block grant"). If they don't spend the whole grant on poor people, they get to spend it on something else. As of September 1999, 45 states and the District of Columbia had stockpiled \$7 billion in federal funds (according to a study by the National Campaign for Jobs and Income), money that had accumulated by denying it to poor people. In some states like Wisconsin those funds were used to finance tax cuts for property owners—a transfer of money from those with nothing to those with something. Meanwhile, in the country as a whole, more and more wealth has been moved into the bank accounts of the upper classes. Between 1997 and 1999, the wealth of the 400 richest U.S. families increased by an average of \$940 million each."

"WELFARE TO WORK"— THE WISCONSIN STORY

In September 1997, the Wisconsin state government instituted a program that claimed to "move people from welfare to work." The state law eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children and replaced it with "Wisconsin Works" (W-2). In order to get benefits in Wisconsin you have to work in a community service job like cleaning schools or answering phones at a non-profit agency. It gives no cash assistance and only allows for things like childcare and transportation.

Since the mid-'60s, the number of people receiving help in Wisconsin has dropped 90 percent to 7,000. Most of those who are now working have been forced into jobs that pay little more than minimum wage—generally \$6.50 to \$7.50 an hour. Nearly one-third of former welfare recipients in Milwaukee work for temp agencies. According to a *New York Times* analysis of Wisconsin's welfare to work program, "Among those who went to work in 1998, average annual earnings were just \$7,700. That is \$400 less than they would have received by staying on welfare. And it is just 59 percent of the \$13,100 the government says a family needs to escape poverty."

Since W-2 began, 16 percent of the people who have left the welfare roles have neither work nor benefits. Half of them have found support living with partners, or in disability payments, the other half have no recorded "means of support."

What happens to people in this situation? Many suffer with deeper and more intense poverty. Families break up because of homelessness and inability to feed the children. And poor women are often forced into the illegal economy of prostitution and drug trade.

Journalist Phil Wilayto documented that, in the first year of "Wisconsin Works," the infant mortality rate in Milwaukee rose 17.6 percent. The number of forced evictions in Milwaukee County increased from 700, in the year before "Wisconsin Works," to over 2,000. The homeless shelters in the county are full, with mainly women using them, and the number of children taken into foster-care programs has skyrocketed. [*Minneapolis Star Tribune*, June 4, 2000]

Mayretta McLaine, director of a women's homeless shelter in Racine, told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "I keep hearing about what an incredible success W-2 is, how much the numbers of people

on welfare have gone down and that there are 2,000 families that can't be accounted for. If they want to know where those people are, they should come see me because a lot of them have come through here."

Hard-Hearted Harassment— The New York Story

Georgina Bonilla is a 59-year-old woman with serious health problems. She suffers from high blood pressure, seizures, pain, and tremors in her arms. She has medical prescriptions for these problems but has had no money to fill them. For years, she relied on her son for support. But when his work was cut, he simply could no longer support her.

In November 1998 she went to apply for emergency public assistance at the Hamilton Job Center. She was told she couldn't file the application until she first filled out a Participant Job Profile, which she did. She was then told to wait and she would be called. At the end of the day her name was finally called—but only to tell her to come back the following morning. She came back the next day and was then told to come back in six days. She waited the six days and came back. When she did, a caseworker refused her request and gave her the address of a food pantry.

Lakisha Reynolds is a 25-year-old woman who was laid off from her job. Her unemployment insurance ran out. She had only one temp job in the month when she went to apply for food stamps for herself and her 3-year-old son. She was told emergency food stamps were no longer available—which is a lie. Instead she was given a referral to a food pantry. She was also told she needed to complete a 30-day job search program, and a number of appointments were set up. She then went to the food pantry and was told it was out of food. On her next visit, a few days later, she got there early enough to get food, but as a result she was late for her "job" appointment at the "Job center" and was told she would have to start the application process all over again.

New York City, which was once famous for its liberal welfare system, has become ground zero for the drive to inject desperation into the lives of the most poor. The heart of the New York program is to make getting welfare checks and food stamps so difficult and humiliating that people simply give up trying. The results have been staggering. In 1994 there were 1.1 million people on welfare in New York City, today there are just over 560,000. More than half a million people—the vast majority of them children—have been driven off public assistance, in a city where one in four people live in poverty and four of every ten children are poor.

A battering ram for driving people off welfare in New York City has been the Work Experience Program (WEP). WEP is not a program of permanent jobs for people. It is a mandatory program of work for benefits, or welfare. On average there have been 40,000 people in the WEP program at any given time—performing jobs ranging from sweeping courthouses to picking up trash on the side of highways to cleaning the restrooms in the city's parks.

WEP is a program to force people to work at terrible jobs for incredibly low wages—so that they will give up on welfare and take jobs in the regular economy or find other ways to survive. At the same time WEP workers have been put to work at minimum wage in jobs once done by unionized city workers—who have higher wages, benefits, pensions and negotiated contracts.

WEP workers have been introduced alongside job cuts in the Parks department, Sanitation, and in the very welfare offices responsible for cutting benefits. In that sense WEP has been a tool for undermining the situation of city workers—which in turn impacts negatively on the overall conditions of the working class in the city. And the crude exploitation of this WEP labor has been financially lucrative for the local government. According to the *New York Times*, "a former Giuliani aide has valued the labor contributed by the welfare workers at more than \$500 million



Protesters put up a memorial to Laura Morales in front of the Human Resources Administration headquarters in New York City, August 30.

Welfare Cuts

a year."

WEP's most immediate effects have been to drive people off welfare, exerting harsh control over those that remain. Even before getting into WEP (or to get any kind of benefits) a person has to get through intensive police-state scrutiny. The city has 1,500 "fraud investigators" who screen every applicant twice, first in a Brooklyn office and then in a home visit. Along with this are finger and video imaging—electronically taking people's fingerprints and pictures.

Once in WEP, people are thrown off the rolls for the most minor work infraction—missing a single hour of work can result in being "sanctioned"—meaning you are denied benefits.

In 1997 fully 69 percent of the home relief (single adults) in the program were "sanctioned" off the rolls. The threat of sanctions means putting up with the worst conditions for pitifully small benefits, as in the case Anderson Carter. Carter, 49, with heart trouble, diabetes and high blood pressure, was working a WEP job in 100 degree weather last July when he suffered a stroke on the job and died eight days later.

One New York study showed that six months after leaving welfare in 1997, nearly half of the people had not found steady, permanent work and nearly a third had not found any work at all.

WEP has not been the only way people have been kept from getting assistance. In 1997 Jason Turner was brought to New York from Wisconsin to head up the City's welfare agency, the Human Resources Administration. In line with the "Wisconsin model," welfare offices were renamed "Job Centers."

In December 1998 a class action lawsuit was filed against the city because of the systematic denial of benefits going on in these centers. In the complaint filed in court, similar stories are told over and over again. People—desperate, without food, whose children are sick—told of facing city authorities determined to drive them out of the welfare offices. The practices were so extreme that in January 1999 a federal court found that New York City was illegally deterring people from applying for food stamps, Medicaid, and emergency assistance. Often the officials blatantly lied—telling people they were not eligible for benefits like food stamps that they were entitled to. The court ruling changed nothing. In July 2000, the judge in this case said he found no reliable evidence that the city had stopped its practice of illegally denying emergency benefits.

WHEN THE BOOM ENDS

The impact of welfare cuts would have been even more cruel and intense if significant numbers of former welfare recipients had not been able to at least find some temporary low-paying jobs. The dismantling of the welfare system is happening in an economy where the overall number of low-paying jobs is increasing, and where the capitalists in some areas report a relative "labor shortage."

However, this also means that the real impact of these cuts will not fully hit until the economy hits a recession—when unemployment rises and the number of jobs shrinks. Under those conditions, millions of the poorest working women will be thrown out of their jobs—and will not find new work. And for the first time in decades, they and their children will not be guaranteed emergency assistance.

The national welfare cuts have driven millions of people deeper into poverty. This has enriched the capitalists by expanding the pool of the lowest paid workers. It has worked to drag down the wages of the working class as a whole. And it has injected even more insecurity, fear and desperation into the lives of poor women and their children. Much of this has been hidden in the reports on welfare cuts—and it is certainly hidden in the presidential election campaign of 2000 where the politicians of both parties congratulate themselves for their roles in the attack on the poor. But, there is an even more intense impact to come: when the economy falters, when millions of people will need that "safety net," when more and

more poor women will have passed their "five-year limit," and when criminal and calculated heartlessness of this system will produce an even larger wave of suffering, desperation and anger within most oppressed sections of the working class.

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Angela Engel, in wheelchair, who was forced to work at Goodwill in Milwaukee in order to receive welfare benefits.



A welfare worker in New York City.



A crowded homeless shelter in Milwaukee.

The Realism of Revolution and the Fantasy of Elections

Continued from page 3

entering the workforce—and rebelling against the system. And only *after* the system legalized abortion did a section of the system's politicians openly declare their support for this right.

This is worth remembering now—because the right to choose abortion is one of the areas where the major parties and candidates have clear differences. Some people argue that this alone is reason to support Al Gore.

However for the last eight years, these Democrats have *been in power* and presided over the restricting of abortion rights. They have called for “keeping abortion legal, and making it rare.” They have supported parental consent laws and opposed using federal funding to make abortions available to poor women. Gore's running mate, Senator Lieberman, even sponsored a bill to ban abortion completely in the last months of pregnancy.

During this same period, this policy of supporting the Democratic administration worked to *demobilize* the struggle of women in support of abortion rights.

A Trap

The electoral system—its parties and campaigns—is a terrible place to try to organize the people for struggle and change. It is a place completely and tightly controlled by the system—by its laws, institutions, and media.

When the people get drawn in there, their struggle gets tamed. It is an arena where people get trained to accept the limits and framework of capitalism as “realistic.” They are schooled in the political methods most useful (and least challenging) to their oppressors. Their organizations get tied to the structures, institutions, personalities and policies of this system and its chosen representatives. It is quicksand.

And that's why the system loves to see new voters brought in. *All the better to eat you with, my dear.*

The whole strategy of the Nader campaign is based on an elaborate electoral fantasy. And despite the best intentions of many people involved, it will overall have negative effects on the struggle for social change. At every campaign stop and in practically every interview, Nader explains that he intends to pull official politics in progressive directions by renewing the faith of millions of people in the electoral process. He calls on progressive and disaffected people to put aside their distaste for this process—and “retake our democracy.”

Lots of people listen to Al Gore rant about “I will fight for you,” and mutter “Yeah, right.” They laugh at Bush's talk of “compassionate conservatism” and see it as obvious bullshit. But is Nader's vision of a compassionate, reformed capitalism any more realistic?

His claims demand some tough questions. We'd like to ask: Exactly *when* was this supposedly “our democracy”? When was it *not* controlled by capitalists and

slave owners? When were politicians *not* bought and sold like race horses?

There are no “good old days.” U.S. electoral democracy never served and represented oppressed people. This electoral system was invented, designed and refined by capitalist merchants and slaveowners from the beginning. And it has served the ruling class well—by elevating reliable political figures to serve their class, by tying sections of the people into their state structure and political machines, and by enabling them to disguise a capitalist dictatorship as “democratic rule of the people.”

Is it really possible to remove “corporate control of government” by building an electoral third party and passing some campaign finance reform laws? If you could really do that, they'd make voting illegal.

What will happen to the forces who follow Nader on his crusade to the ballot box? Nader talks about turning the Green Party into a serious national contender for the election of 2004. This is highly unlikely. Not because there aren't millions of people who want a new kind of politics. But because *this* system was designed to absorb and demoralize the forces who try this. The whole history of electoral third parties in this century shows this.

Will Nader inject “new ideas into the process,” as some people hope? Here too you can see the system in full effect: In 1992, Ross Perot was allowed to “inject new ideas”—because the ruling class *needed* someone to argue for major social cuts, in a campaign where neither major candidate could be the first to bring it up. But in Nader's case in 2000, the same ruling class is not interested to give a national platform for his proposals for universal health care or pro-unionization laws or opposition to NAFTA and similar agreements—and so they simply don't allow his voice to be heard much in the official channels. They have kept him out of the debates, and (for the most part) out of the media. And so his “new ideas” (which are really old, tired ideas lifted from European and Canadian social democracy) are kept outside the allowed spectrum of policy debate.

At the same time, the ruling class, the media, and the electoral apparatus *has* allowed Nader to recruit, and has allowed him (with some conflict) on the ballot in 44 states. The prominent Texas populist John Hightower argued for the Nader campaign on the evening news saying, “There are tons of people who are angry and fed up, and if they don't have this candidacy, they may start some real revolt.” This is an honest statement to the ruling class about the value of the Nader campaign *to the stability of this system.*

Prominent forces within Nader's own campaign openly say that *their* intentions are not to draw people out of the Democratic Party—but to play “hard to get” *this year*, in hopes of getting more respect in future years. And, if the history of electoral third party races is any indication, many of the forces “energized” by

Nader will end up voting for Gore and Democratic congressional candidates when this year's November 7 actually comes. Once people have swallowed Nader's arguments—that the election process is where the action is, that their votes “count” etc.—the larger logic of the system will take many of them on the next step, toward voting for the mainstream “lesser evil.”

The discontent and resistance of the masses of people is a precious thing. For example, fresh new forces have joined the struggle in Seattle, at the conventions of Philadelphia and Los Angeles. Will a new generation of rebels now get sucked into the demoralizing ritual of electoral campaigns?

Protest votes for Nader send a message of disgust with Gore and Bush—and express the sentiments of people who feel betrayed by the Democratic Party. But such votes are a public statement of faith in the system—that it somehow represents the people and can be a vehicle for real change. Such votes legitimize the ultimate winner of the election, his future government and the power structures of this system.

Nader claims that voting is the power of the people. But climbing into a voting booth doesn't make you powerful—any more than climbing into the back of a squad car makes you a cop.

Getting Real

“People say what is your alternative? What are you offering instead? To me this is like somebody who has been out in the desert for days without water, and their throat is parched and dry and they're desperate for water. And they come across a place where there's some water holes, just as we've been out in this desert for so long, desperate, thirsting after some kind of decent life and a better future for our kids.

And you come up on these two water holes. And one of them is muddy and murky and has all kinds of foul things in it, and it stinks. And it's pretty clear to see that it is poisonous. And there is a man there telling you, ‘Don't drink out of that one, that other one over there is the one that is good.’

And yet there's an older fellow there, who's been around a little longer, he's not drinking out of the one that appears to be a little bit cleaner. He's down on his hands and knees, digging down in the dirt, and he says, ‘Don't drink out of that water hole, that one's poison too. It might look better but it ain't no better for you.’

And you say to him, ‘What's your solution then? What are you offering instead?’

And he says, ‘We've got to get together and do what I'm starting to do here now. We've got to dig down with our own hands, to where we can get some fresh, some pure water, drink some of that, draw some more of that up, and keep on digging till we can not only get enough water, but until we can make this whole place fertile and create the kind of situation where we can live a decent life for the first time.’

And that's our alternative.”

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA

How does real change happen? It comes through struggle: through uniting people—from their different points of view—to do what needs to be done for the people. It comes through creative exposures of all the forces that abuse the people. It comes through diverse forms of resistance. But fundamentally, ultimately and finally, real change comes when the crisis in society is so deep and the struggle, organization and consciousness of the people is at the point where a real all-the-way revolution is possible—when power is seized and old structures are torn down and uprooted and something new and truly liberating can be born.

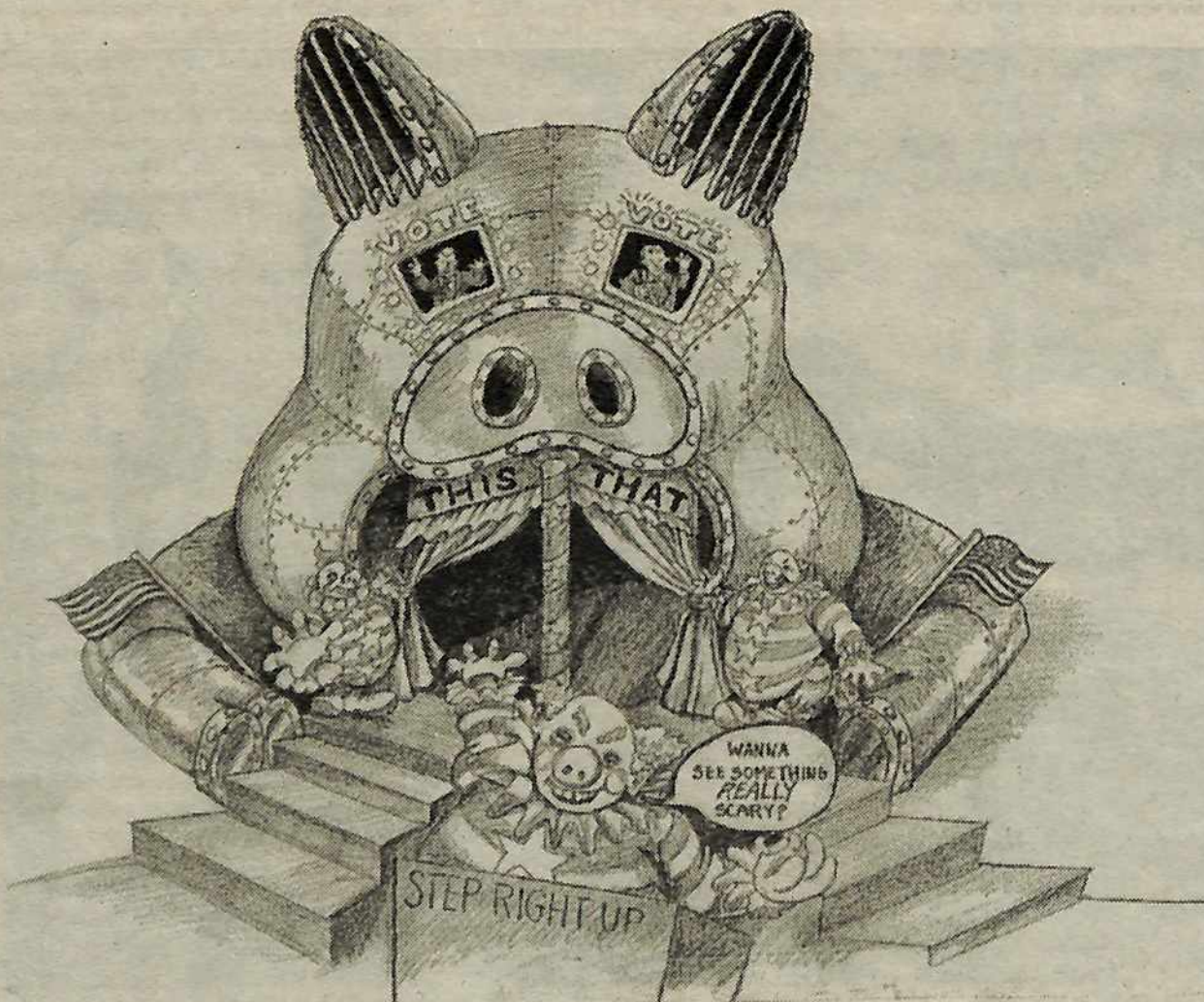
There is a lot of history and understanding behind our viewpoint that: “Elections are the wrong arena. It's going to come down to revolutionary war.” Is that practical? Is it realistic? The answer is YES.

Revolution is infinitely more practical and realistic than Nader's idea of voting out the corporations or expecting Al Gore to “fight for working families.” Nothing less than revolution will solve the problems of the present—or make a better future. Nothing is more worth living, planning, fighting and dying for.

Oppressed people need a massive, determined movement of resistance to take on and beat back their oppressors today. And they need a revolutionary movement and a revolutionary communist party preparing to launch and win a mass armed revolution when the time is right.

Many people have taken important steps away from the traditional “liberal-conservative” politics of this system. They have seen through the lies and rhetoric of the two major parties—and can't bring themselves to vote for the disgusting, reactionary “lesser of two evils” they are offered.

To those people we say: Step *all the way* out of this system's political circus. Hook up with the revolution and help humanity get free.





Special to the RWOR



Special to the RWOR

Carl Dix, speaking at the New York rally.

We're up against a determined foe that ain't gonna give up easy. So what is it that we gotta do? My answer to that is on two levels. One level is we gotta build even more mass and massive resistance. If you're somebody who thinks police brutality is foul and needs to be stopped, then get down with the October 22nd Coalition. Join in the fight for justice for all the victims of these brutal murdering cops. Take the *Stolen Lives* and with it help break through the lies of Giuliani and the others, that police brutality is isolated incidents. Join the fight to stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Get down and fight for justice, sisters and brothers. That's what we've gotta do to put brutal murdering cops in check.

But we've gotta go beyond putting police brutality in check. We've gotta go to getting rid of the system that spawns police brutality because police brutality is built into the fabric of this rotten capitalist system. That means we need a revolution—millions of people from the bottom of society gathering many other allies to their side, rising up, getting rid of this system through revolution, going on to build a whole new world on the ashes of this fucked-up one. That's what it's going to take to get rid of police brutality once and for all. And the resistance we're building today has everything to do with being ready and in position to be able to rise up and make revolution when the time is right.

So if you're somebody who hates this shit as much as I do and wants to see it ended, then get down with the Revolutionary Communist Party and its youth arm, the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade. Run with us. Together with us make trouble for these bloodsuckers that rule over us. Get a hold of a *Revolutionary Worker* and use it to expose the nature of the system. Build the areas where you live and where you work into strongholds of revolutionary resistance, areas where the enemy knows that if he comes in and attacks, he's going to pay a price. Get down on this fight, sisters and brothers. If revolution is too much for you, fight for justice in the hardest way you can. But I think revolution is the solution.

Carl Dix, National Spokesperson, Revolutionary Communist Party, at NY NDP 2000

Chicago

In the Streets for Justice

Continued from page 5

Organizers from the October 22nd Coalition report that protests this year were marked by intense participation of families who have lost their loved ones. In Detroit, Arnetta Grable, who is on the executive board of the coalition, indicted the local and federal authorities in the murder of her son and the nationwide epidemic. In San Francisco, veteran fighter Danny Garcia stood blocks away from the spot where police murdered his brother

Mark, and set a powerful tone for the day: "No more stolen lives!" In Chicago, the father of Earl Hutchinson—killed for reportedly "threatening" police with a plastic fork—told the crowd, "The problem is that we are at war and some of us don't even know it." And in cities like Wichita, Salt Lake City, Cherokee and Hendersonville, North Carolina, family members of police murder victims were the principle organizers for the day.

In several cities, family members drew a moving connection between the police murders of their children and the scenes of Israeli military firing on Palestinians in occupied territory. The case of revolutionary journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal—rail-

roaded to death row after years of exposing police brutality—was a major theme of the protests.

On this 5th annual day of protest, plans for the publication of the Spanish translation of the *Stolen Lives* book, documenting more than 2000 cases of police murder, signaled a deeper connection with immigrant proletarians who are facing an intense and murderous situation in the Southwest and on the Mexican border—and police terror in their neighborhoods. Immigrants from Puerto Rico to Haiti to South Asia to the Philippines infused an international spirit into the protests. And, in many cities, immigrants rights organizations took part in the national day of

protest.

Everywhere the outrage of the youth manifested at how they are treated like criminals. As the anger of the youth exploded in front of the Mission District police station in San Francisco, a Black student told the *RW*: "We come here because we're involved in different urban subcultures that make us *involved* in police brutality. We're skateboarders, we're hip-hop, we're students, we're people of color. All of us are affected. Police have brutalized us many a time: illegal searches, DWB, malicious acts like that. We've been accused of many things from robbing banks to vandalism. It feels good to be out here but also to know that it's a national day, not just here, but that people all over the country are taking action today, so hopefully it will have some effect."

In cities and neighborhoods known for an intense level of police brutality and intimidation, people took the streets and took their anger right to the doors of the police stations. In Philadelphia, women whose children had been murdered and railroaded to jail stepped into the street on October 22 for the first time to denounce the police—emboldened by youth who drew chalk outlines of bodies and wrote the names of the *Stolen Lives* on the streets. In Cleveland, people took their anger to the 4th District police station, infamous for killing people inside and outside the jail. There have been several hangings there and many more that are being found out by the families. And it is a common feeling that if someone's kin gets arrested at the 4th District they get should get there as quickly as possible to try to prevent them from being beaten or murdered. But on October 22, in a scene repeated in many ways around the country, the people of this neighborhood stood together with a new generation of resisters and vowed to end this systematic plague on the people.

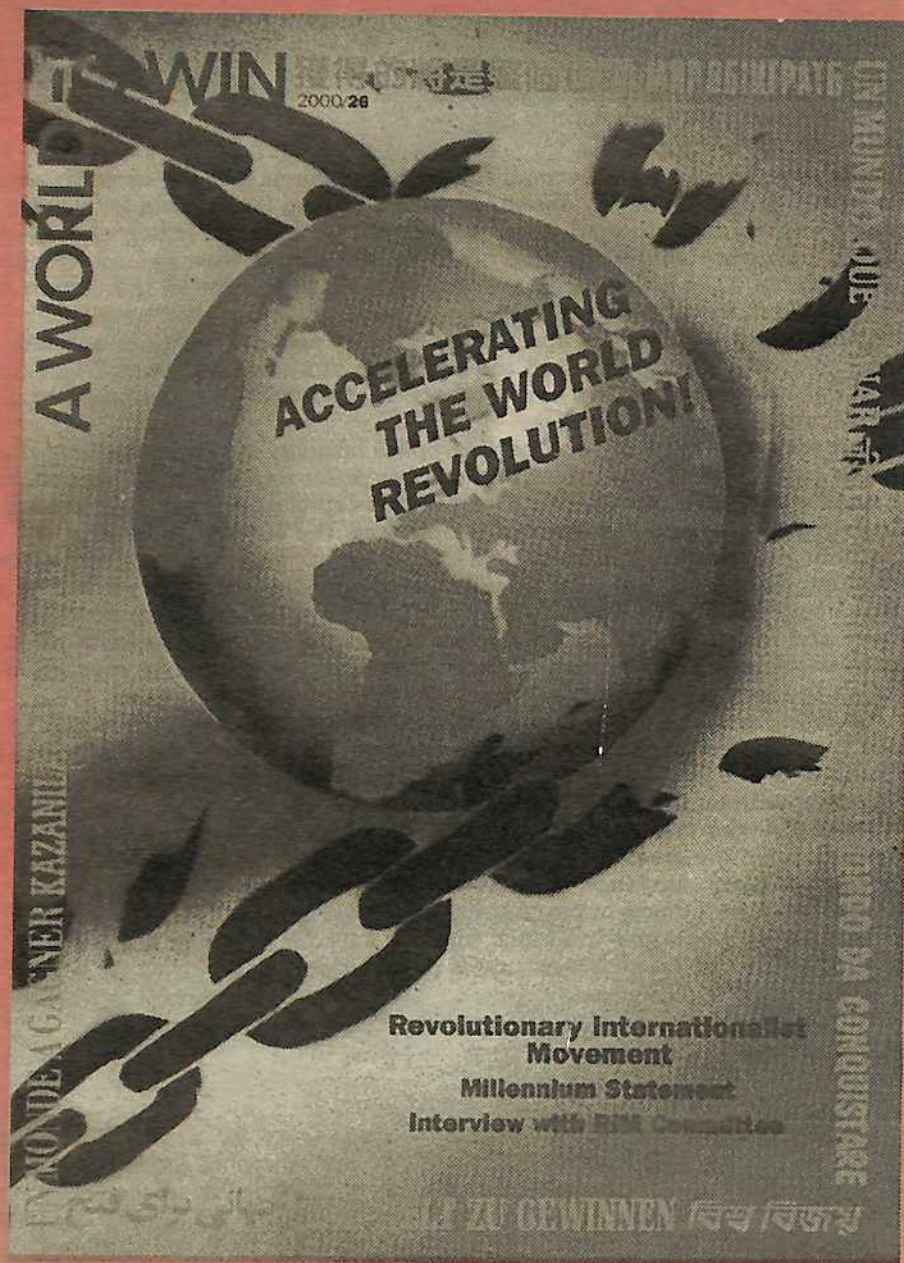
Reports reaching the *RW* indicate that this year there was a deep sense that only the determined action of the masses of people will be able to stop this epidemic and that this National Day of Protest is a time to bring it all together—and prepare for the resistance ahead.



Cleveland

New Issue of Revolutionary Internationalist Magazine Now Available!

A World to Win



Featured in Issue # 26

Accelerating the World Proletarian Revolution

As the new millennium begins, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement is uniting Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties that are waging or preparing people's war. RIM's Millennium Statement expresses its determination to make the new century one that will go down in history as the turning point in the battle to put an end to the millennia-old exploitation of class society and hasten the dawn of communist society. An interview with a member of the RIM Committee explores the situation of the world proletarian revolution today and RIM's role in advancing it.

Pages from the History of Class Struggle

A photo essay giving voice in verse and image to the rebels of yesterday and today, from slaves like Spartacus, who dreamed and fought for a different life before such dreams could become real, to the wage-slaves of today, who dream and fight for a world revolution that is now very much on history's agenda.

The International Communist Movement: What Path?

The RIM Committee comments on resolutions from a recent conference of Marxist-Leninist parties, emphasizing how the key to advancing proletarian revolution is the understanding that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is a new, third and higher stage of Marxism-Leninism.

On the Strategy for People's War in India

How should the Maoist strategy of people's war be applied to the second most populous country on earth? A provocative article dissects some erroneous views put forward there and offers some basic guidelines for the future.

Also in this issue:

Peru: Encirclement and Counter-Encirclement

Free Trade: Engine of Growth or Plunder?

Art and Politics: Reviews of the novels *The God of Small Things* and *Poisonwood Bible*

Resolutions of the 4th Regional Conference of RIM. South Asian Parties and Organizations

On the Founding of the Maoist Communist Party in Italy

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