

REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, U.S.A.

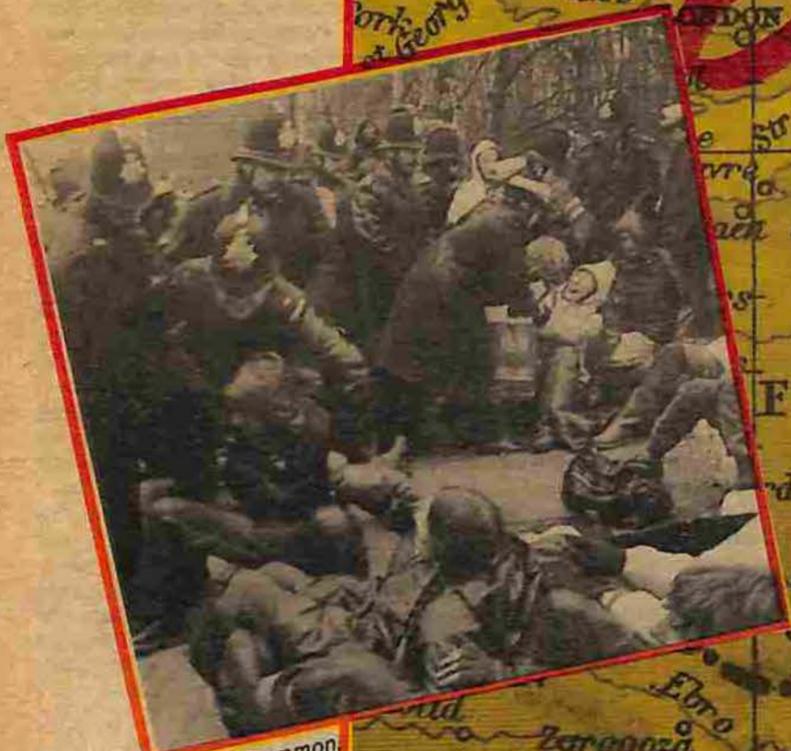
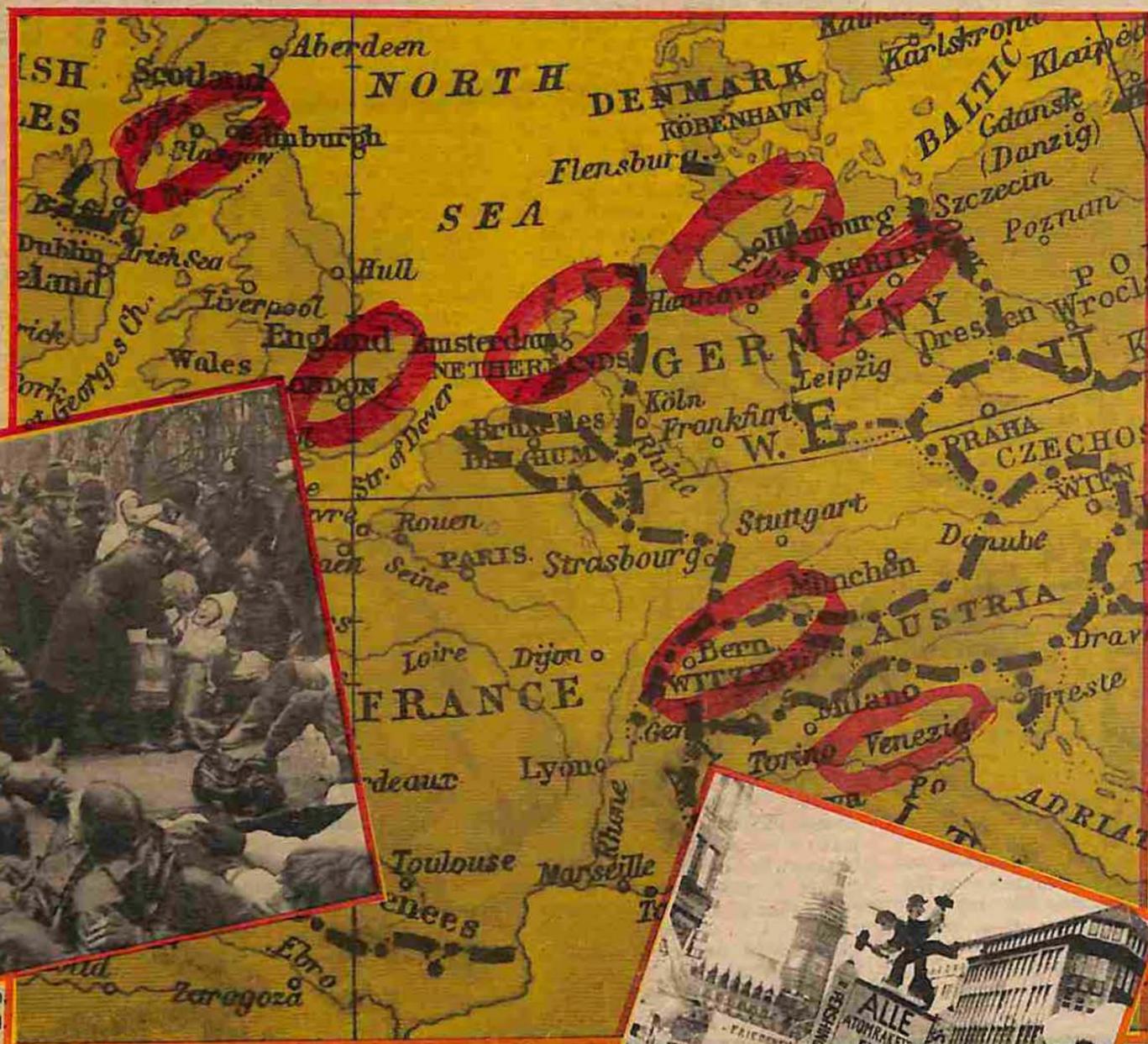
No. 200 (Vol. 4, No. 48) Published weekly in two sections — English Section 1

April 8, 1983

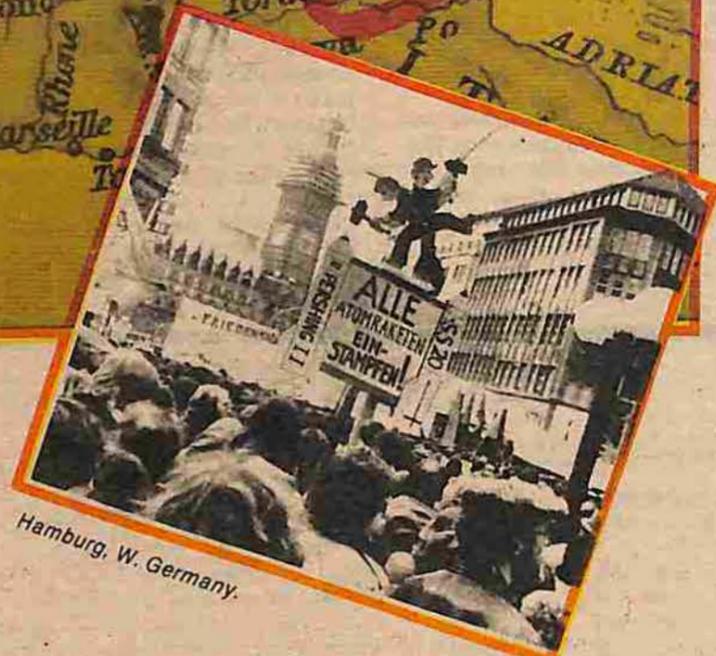
Editions in English, Spanish, Chinese and French ISSN 0193-3485 .50c

Forecast:

Long Hot Summer in Europe



Greenham Common, England



Hamburg, W. Germany

The first weekend in April saw the long-anticipated eruption of widespread protests and demonstrations in Europe against the scheduled deployment of U.S. Pershing II and Cruise missiles this fall. According to estimates in the Western press, some 700,000 to 800,000 people participated over a four-day period in a series of marches, "die-ins" and blockades of numerous U.S. military bases, mainly in Great Britain and West Germany. In Britain, thousands formed a human chain stretching across 14 miles of English countryside from the Greenham Common airbase, which is due to receive the first American Cruise missiles this year, to a nuclear weapons factory in Burghfield. In Scotland, 25,000 marched in Glasgow (one of 150 cities in Great Britain which has passed official anti-nuclear resolutions), where they staged a massive "die-in" in the city center and established a three-mile long human chain surrounding the Faslane nuclear base, targeting the planned basing of nuclear-armed Trident submarines there. In West Germany, no less than 17 U.S. military installations were blockaded in one form or another and a total of hun-

dreds of thousands marched in virtually every major city. Significant protests also took place in the Netherlands, Italy and Switzerland.

Something of the stakes involved for both imperialist blocs in the battle for European public opinion could be seen in the rapid fire "peace wars" conducted in the media by the U.S. and Soviet imperialists, as they tried to upstage each other throughout the weekend. Reagan's speech unveiling the U.S.' latest refurbishment of the zero-option — the new "interim compromise proposal" — had been originally scheduled for the Thursday before the Easter weekend, but was abruptly moved up a day to ensure wide press coverage in Europe as the demos began. Not to be outdone, the Soviets countered with a hastily staged U.S. presidential style TV news conference — something of a rarity for the Soviets — that was broadcast throughout Europe in which Foreign Minister Gromyko sanctimoniously blasted Reagan's compromise proposal as "completely unacceptable." In turn, the U.S. State Department, in what was described as an "unusually quick" response, which ap-

peared right alongside reportage of Gromyko's press conference, shot back that the Soviet reaction was "unconstructive." In fact, this particular State Department response appeared so quickly that the *NY Times* was obliged to note that "the State Department's formal rejoinder was issued and the briefing for reporters was held even before the Government had a complete transcript of Mr. Gromyko's remarks." This was a clear case of the U.S. gangsters making an offer they knew the Soviet gangsters would refuse — a cynical and calculated attempt to show the "peace" side of their "peace through strength" war preparations, including the very necessary positioning of the Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe for the entire U.S. bloc. This point was made quite clear by

the British imperialists: the British Defense Minister Heseltine, who pointedly visited the Berlin Wall over the weekend, denounced the demonstrators for following a "naive and reckless road"; and Prime Minister Thatcher concurred, saying, "It would make more sense for them to go and link hands around the Berlin Wall." The newly elected government of West Germany also opposed the demonstrations and one of the government ministers called the demonstrations "part of a far-reaching plan of action intended to prevent the carrying out of NATO policy through propaganda and the threat of violence" and charged that the anti-nuke movement's message supports "the threatening policies of the Soviets toward our

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May Day Mathematics and the "Strategic Calculus" of Nuclear War

May Day 1983 is occurring in a very specific context. As the "Internationalist Call to May First Action" put it:

"World War and Revolution... The clash of these two trends marks the approach of May First, International Workers Day. This sets the stage — and the stakes — for the actions of revolutionary workers in every country."

And while many contradictions are sharpening in this atmosphere, some stand out internationally. In particular, May First 1983 is taking place as the imperialist powers of both East and West make one relentless step after another in their political and military preparations for war — a war that would literally dissolve hundreds of millions of people in these powers' quests to make the world safe for their particular brand of exploitation. All over the world, especially in Europe and the Western imperialist countries generally, the political climate is seething around the question of nuclear war... Imperialist peace plans... Imperialist war plans... Elections... Demonstrations... Confrontations.

But one thing is notably missing. The mark of the international proletariat is virtually absent from this scene. And this is no minor omission. It brings no honor to the proletariat to stand aside from this, but far more than honor is at stake. For it is only the international proletariat, its forces and its revolutionary programme, that offers a way forward to prevent war by revolution.

May First 1983 is high time to take note of this situation, and more than that, to act to change it. At key points in periods of preparation for revolution it is necessary for the proletariat to mount the political stage in struggle under its revolutionary banner, to take (as Lenin once called it) "independent historical action." Revolutionary May Day stands for precisely this; and therein lies its importance. It is a day of proletarian combat against all oppression and its source, and certainly the battle front against imperialist war demands special attention now.

Wouldn't it be fine — and more than that an event of world significance — if, among their actions in many spheres on and before May First, class-conscious proletarians in the U.S. gave some emphasis to opposing imperialist war preparations? If, where there were

significant actions by others in opposition to nuclear weapons, proletarians and proletarian youth linked up with them bringing revolutionary communist/internationalist politics? If this was among the questions on the minds and banners of proletarians and proletarian youth as they engaged in breakouts and many other forms of struggle around May Day? If the daily order of things inside certain schools and factories were disrupted by debates and discussions, including over what path to take in the face of preparations for war? Actions such as these, even if the numbers of people involved were small, would be of great influence and significance, especially in preparing a section of proletarians to lead far larger forces in the future, as the situation further ripens. And, conversely, failure to take the political stage at key points like this is tantamount to not fighting when the real deal goes down.

It is true that today there are others on the political stage around the question of nuclear war. But this hardly relieves the class-conscious proletarians of responsibility. Some of those in action, in fact those dominating the action at the moment, are class enemies — the imperialists and their spokesmen who are propelling the world toward unprecedented slaughter. Both imperialist blocs aim to gain through the present round of nuclear escalation. The U.S. rulers, and the imperialist bloc they lead, want to carry through their battle for a new round of nuclear weaponry for both military and political reasons. They seek military advantage over their rivals and, no less important, seek to win a political battle, especially in Europe, by going ahead with this weaponry and through this process further tighten the Western war bloc. The Soviet-led imperialist bloc, too, seeks military advantage and by no means are they going to give up their nuclear weaponry. As they increase their own arsenal, they even seek to benefit from another round of Western weapons escalation by winning a political battle in Europe — playing on and working to sharpen the divisions created in Europe by these U.S. moves. This "nuclear diplomacy" is not mere political jockeying for its own sake — it is crucial preparation by both imperialist camps

for actually waging and winning nuclear war. Both blocs will inexorably pursue their course.

But all this imperialist action is bringing many others into motion as well, many of them progressive forces and potential allies of the proletariat. In some countries of Europe, the petty bourgeoisie is in a great deal of political ferment. In West Germany, a progressive/reformist wing of that class has spawned a significant political party, the Greens, while other sections of that class are more radical and take to more militant forms of action, street fighting, etc. (While this latter section especially includes some proletarians, particularly proletarian youth, it is mainly petty-bourgeois in composition and is definitely fighting under the various lines and programmes of that class.) All this, including this kind of a split in progressive petty-bourgeois forces between reformist and left sections, is a sign of the growing maturity of the political situation. But again, what is lacking to move this ahead? Missing is a section of the proletariat organized around a revolutionary internationalist line and programme. For although it is a very good thing these forces are in the field, their class position within these imperialist countries makes them more susceptible than the oppressed sections of the proletariat there to pacifism, reformism, nationalism and the line of so-called "realism," that is of compromise with imperialism and reliance on its "good will" and "better" representatives (as in, "all the better to eat you with").

The fact is there is no reformist way out of this situation; revolution is the only way to prevent world war. Only by overthrowing imperialism and reaction in large and/or strategic parts of the world and establishing revolutionary regimes led by the proletariat can such a war be prevented. And if the imperialists are not stopped by revolution and go ahead and launch this war, then it is only revolution led by the proletariat that can offer a way out that breaks this ever deepening spiral of oppression and war.

The forces of the proletariat, including within the U.S., must begin to enter this field and influence it as a crucial part of their preparation for revolution. True, the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA, as a vanguard party of the pro-

letariat, has been and continues to work in these movements and among all strata to influence them toward the line and programme of proletarian revolution. But as important as this is, this is not enough. The tremendous material force and influence of a class-conscious section of the proletariat must be infused into all this political life. That class, that social base, within U.S. society that has the least basis for being pulled into support for or conciliation with imperialism must come into motion around a revolutionary line and programme. In an overall sense it is this that is going to most strongly draw and influence other progressive classes and strata toward that same revolutionary solution.

Of course May First, International Workers Day, is more than just anti-nuke day. It is a day of struggle against all oppression and for a revolutionary communist future worldwide, a day when old and new forces are fighting for the world's destiny — nothing less. But such an orientation could hardly lead one to stand aside from the struggle against imperialist nuclear war preparations! That would be not only a crime, but a key battle defaulted in the war for that destiny. It is precisely in this spirit, with all this in mind, that this year for May First we have raised the slogan "Revolution in the '80s — Go for it!" While every action of class-conscious proletarians on May First will not be "anti-nuclear" in the most specific or narrow sense, all will take on the features of a living manifesto of proletarian internationalism in the face of the two opposing camps of imperialist powers and will show the class-conscious proletariat's determination to transform that world in every sphere.

In his recent "heavenly wars" laser speech, Reagan spoke of introducing his celestial weapons as a new factor in the "strategic calculus on both sides." Reagan can count two sides but, as always, his equations have left out another factor, the revolutionary struggles of the people. And, to paraphrase the May First Internationalist Call, the revolutionary calculus of the proletariat urgently calls for inserting quite a different factor into their war plans. □

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The *Revolutionary Worker* (ISSN 0193-3485) is published weekly except for the 4th week of December and the 4th week of July, by RCP Publications, 2525 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL 60614. Second Class postage paid at Chicago, IL. Subscriptions and address changes should be sent to RCP Publications, POB 3486, Chicago, IL 60654. Subscriptions are \$20 a year, \$4.00 for 10 weeks in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, \$30.00 for institutions. Foreign subscriptions are \$50/year airmail to Latin America, \$80.00/year airmail to Africa, Asia, Europe, and \$20/year by surface mail.

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

I recently came across an article in the *Washington Post* (Dec. 14, 1982) which apparently felt it was reporting something newsworthy when it cited a study concluding that, among other things, for Black people "a major move... into mainstream middle-class America is not imminent." Well, no shit! The article further quotes the study's conclusion that, "To be sure, a middle class is emerging (among Black people — BA), but it remains a minority of the Black population and is far less affluent than the white middle class."

I was tempted to dismiss the thing with another "no shit!", but there is a significant point here, which this article only hints at: the sharpened class polarization among Black people. Despite the fact that they are "far less affluent than the white middle class" — to say nothing of the white ruling class — and despite the fact that the position of large numbers of them is precarious, even seriously threatened in many cases, it is a fact that through and out of the '60s and in large part as a conscious policy of the ruling class, the growth of the "Black middle class" was allowed and officially encouraged and there has been a systematic effort to place and feature more "Black faces in high places." On the other side of this class polarization, however, are the millions and millions of Black proletarians concentrated in the rotting urban centers.

In fact the study cited in the *Washington Post* article lists nine large U.S. cities with a majority Black population, and overwhelmingly these Blacks are not "middle class." The unemployment rate, at a time when it is 9.3 percent for whites, is 20.2 percent for Blacks — and those are the official, known to be understated, figures (as of November, 1982). And a very heavy fact — which the *Washington Post* article did not include — is that for Black youth in the inner-city ghettos the unemployment rate is well over 50 percent; the government itself freely says that most of these youth may never see a job! But, then, the ruling class has other plans for these youth — "being all that they can be..." — and the hopelessness of their situation only makes that army uniform look less drab and depressing — or so the rulers hope and so the recruiters say.

Much of the reality behind these cold facts and dry statistics comes alive in the rap record "The Message" by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. "Don't push me, 'cause I'm close to the edge/ I'm tryin' not to lose my head; ha, ha-ha, ha./ It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder/ how I keep from goin' under." Is this not the situation and sentiments of a lot more of the Black masses — and the youth in particular — than the ruling class cares to admit, or even to know about?

Rapping itself is a style, a form that is the creation of the Black youth on the streets, carrying forward and shaping to today's circumstances the traditions of Black street culture. When I was in school it was the vocal groups that sang on the street corners, in the hallways, in the showers and just about everywhere else. George Carlin, in one of his comedy routines, speaks to this phenomenon that first became a big thing in the '50s:

"We were attracted to the Black music as well, man... It was the groups, it was the beginning of the hallway groups, as I call them. 'Cause, while Perry Como and Kay Starr and Doris Day and Mitch Miller and Guy Mitchell and the Mills Brothers and Vic Damone and Tony Martin and Frankie Lane and Nat Cole were singing in one realm, we had the Diamonds and the Drifters and the Vocaleers and the Five Willows and the Flamingos and the Spaniels and the Orioles and the Crows and the Clovers and the Sapphires and the Five Keys, and it went from there. But this was the original part, before they really ripped off the Black music...."

(from *Occupation: Foole*, 1973)



More Reflections and Sketches

A Message on Hearing "The Message"

by Bob Avakian

Carlin speaks further to the powerful impact of this culture and its influence even beyond the Black masses, including on working class white youth among whom he grew up in the neighborhoods near the Black ghettos:

"But it was very natural to become kind of interested in Black street culture, because it's attractive; it's free; oddly enough, you know, the least free people are the freest to be free in their culture, in their dealings. You get more eye contact from a Black person in the street, they're easier with their body, man, they're more open with their songs, with their troubles, you know, there's a freedom, there's a liberation in it which we saw. Dig, and I noticed, if you take five white guys — and I mean Anglo-Irish-English, kind of my white guys... this really white guy, Jim, you know... So you get five white guys like this, my kinda guys, from my neighborhood... five white guys and put 'em with five Black guys and let 'em hang around together for about a month, and at the end of the month you'll notice that the white guys are *walking and talking and standing* like the Black guys do. You'll never see the Black guys sayin', 'Oh golly, we won the big game today, yes sir...' But you'll see guys with red hair and freckles named Duffy say, 'what's happ-nin', nothin' to it, what you got, hey man that's cool...."

(*Occupation: Foole*)

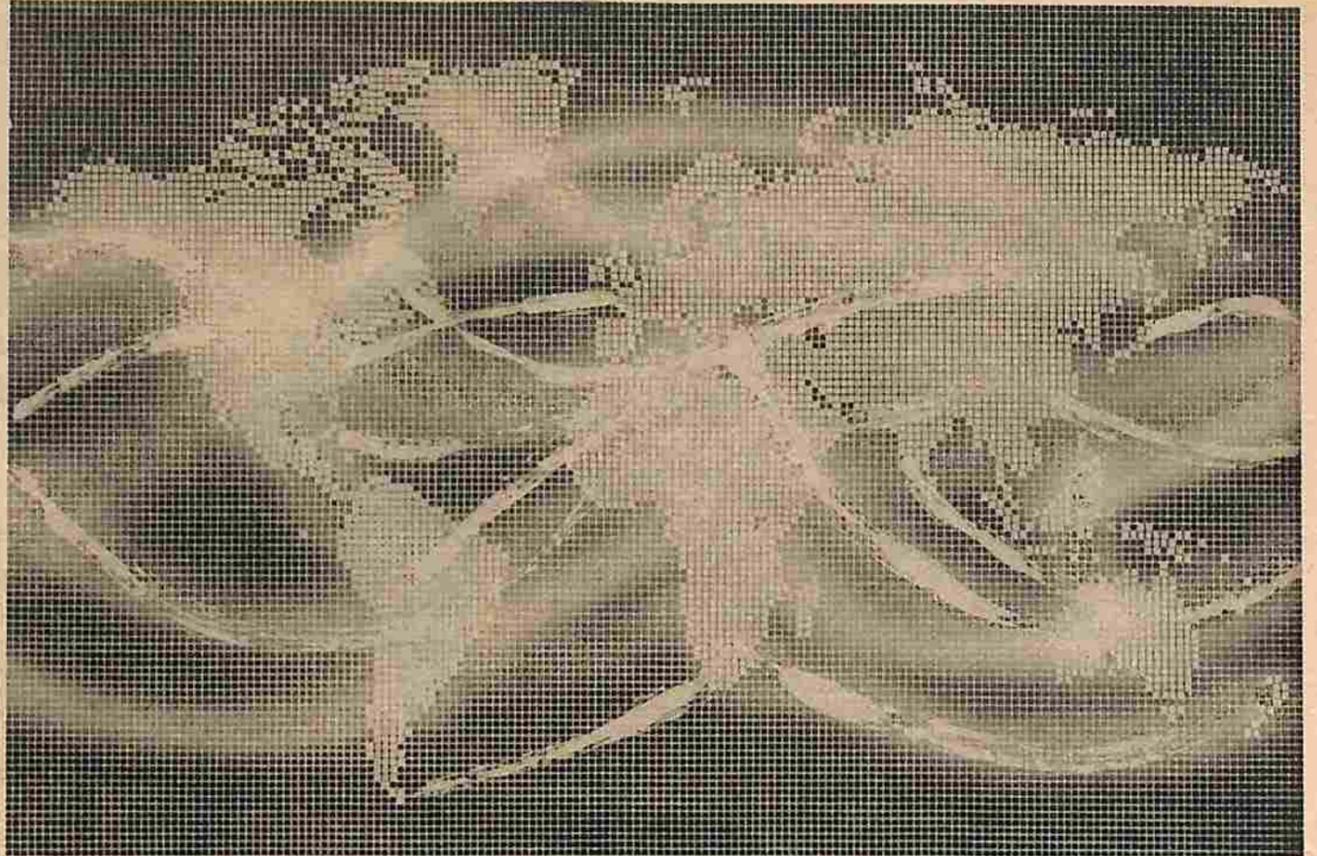
What Carlin has picked up on — "the least free people are the freest to be free..." — is the expression and explosive effect of what a recent *RW* article on the Overtown, Miami rebellion called "the language of nothing to lose." The cultural influences he speaks to in particular, beginning in the '50s, were in some important ways the forerunners and signals of the gathering storm of Black urban rebellion and the Black liberation movement that rocked the entire U.S. and sent shockwaves throughout the world, in the context of the world setting as a whole, particularly the rising tide of national liberation struggles throughout the "third world." Those who are most in the position of having nothing to lose — but their chains — are in the position to exert the most profound impact on society, including on other dissatisfied if less desperate groups in society — this is not only a general law of history, it is a lesson that has been written in fire in recent times in the U.S. as well as throughout the world.

In the naive love songs of the '50s street corner (or hallway) groups and in other Black cultural expressions of the times, while there were notes of protest, sometimes openly sounded, there was a significant element of hopefulness, belief perhaps that long-deferred promises would finally be made good. It was in large part the fact that these hopes were once more shown to be illusions,

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From Vandenberg

May 1st Internationalist Exchange



to the People of the World

This statement was initiated by a woman who was one of the group of more than 250 demonstrators arrested at Vandenberg Air Force Base who refused to give their names to the authorities or cooperate in any way. Many other women in the prison made critiques, comments and additions that were incorporated into the final statement. The statement circulated among the protestors held in both the men's and women's jails and was signed by 46 people who felt that it concentrated their feelings and thinking, many of whom took responsibility to send it to different countries where they had contacts and friends. There was lively discussion over the content of the statement, including over whether revolution necessitates violence, and over just what kind of action on May 1 would best express the politics of this statement.

Internationalist and Revolutionary Greetings to the People of the World

We send our internationalist and revolutionary greetings to the people of the world. During the week of March 21, we took part in occupying Vandenberg Air Force Base. This U.S. military base, center for the launching of the MX missile, had its facade of invincibility shattered. More than 700 people took part in this action, occupying, trespassing, and blockading the base. The MX missile assembly pad, the Minuteman launching pad, and the Space Shuttle were all reached.

We have been inspired by the people in the Marshall Islands who occupied their home island to stop the Minuteman missile firings, as well as the struggle of the people of El Salvador, Native American people in North and South America, Africa, Lebanon, people in Europe protesting the Pershing and Cruise missiles, and many other countries. We want to do our part in contributing to ending this worldwide system of exploitation and plunder.

These moves toward world war, between the U.S. and Soviet imperialists must be taken seriously. It is urgent that we take action now to work towards the abolishment of not only nuclear war, but all war. Our goal is to end war and all the crimes that come from this system: the domination of one nation over another, of men over women, of one race over others, and of the capitalist class over the working class.

We are working together in unity to end this system based on a tiny handful of imperialists over the vast majority of working and oppressed people worldwide. As this system of plunder is international, so must be our struggle. On May 1st (May Day), International Workers Day, we will be taking yet another step towards making the future we envision a reality through revolutionary struggle and action.

Especially as this government is preparing for war, they are trying to whip up a lot of blind patriotism, and an appeal to defend the U.S. national interests. We are totally opposed to patriotism — We will not fight against the oppressed people of the world to maintain the domination of the imperialist nations. We took this action at Vandenberg as part of strengthening that unity between the people of the world. Our solidarity has grown stronger and we are determined to not have it broken.

This statement will be sent to people in the Marshall Islands, Greenham Commons, England, Wales, Russia, Sweden, Germany, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and many other countries.

It was circulated within Lompoc Federal Penitentiary and signed by 46 'Jane & John Does' who participated in the Vandenberg action.

Readers of the RW everywhere send reports now on Internationalist Exchanges (letters, telegrams, banners, photos, etc.) for May 1st, 1983.

Hot Summer in Europe

Continued from page 1
freedom and security." The Soviets, for their part, attempted to get as much mileage as they could from sternly refusing the offer which they called "absurd" — unlike the battery of SS 20s which provide a very "strong" argument for their "peace" talk in Europe!

That the U.S. imperialists are dead set on going ahead with these missile deployments and on having to deal with considerable opposition in the future as they tighten up their war bloc, was indicated by an article which appeared on the front page of the *New York Times* over the Easter weekend, headlined "U.S. Is Planning Bid To Win Over Europe's Young." The article revealed that studies by various U.S. think tanks and policy institutes like the Rand Corporation and the Atlantic Council have uncovered a growing trend toward "anti-American tendencies" and that "European leaders have come under intense political pressure from many of their citizens, especially the young members of the European movements that intensely oppose deployment of American nuclear weapons..." As one Rand researcher put it: "We've got to close the memory gap between older Europeans — whose image of America was shaped by Care packages, Marshall Plan aid and the Berlin airlift — and their children, who have been influenced by Vietnam and

Watergate."

The *Times* revealed a new Reagan administration strategy aimed at what are termed in current think-tank-speak as the European "successor generation elites" by which they mean teachers, press people and younger political party leaders. Clearly much of this effort is being aimed at attempting to win some converts among the progressive petty bourgeoisie in Europe to a fuller appreciation of U.S. leadership in the Western bloc. As part of this new strategy, Charles Wick, director of the U.S. Information Agency, has privately raised several million dollars to double the number of youth exchanges between Europe and the U.S. and the Reagan administration is seeking \$1.5 million in funds for this purpose. While the U.S. imperialists place importance on their own particular brand of "international exchanges," what this plan underscores is the fact that they are preparing for trouble ahead.

Indeed, the Easter protests marked only the beginning of what promises to be a very turbulent summer (and beyond) in Europe.

The protests in Britain were called for by the pacifist Committee For Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and in West Germany they were for the most part under the leadership of the "left" wing of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) along with the Green Party, which successfully entered the West German parliament in the recent elections (see *RW* No. 199) — several Green parliamentary representatives were arrested for participating in various blockades. Not surprisingly, the protests were characterized overall by the political line of these forces — the official theme of the West German Easter actions, for example, was "No nukes in our

country" and the "left" SPD's dominated among the speakers at rallies, where one even called for West Germany to withdraw from NATO since Reagan had "betrayed" fundamental NATO defense doctrine! But within all this, and even visible in the downplayed coverage of these events in the Western press, were the signs of determined and radical resistance on the part of various social forces, which the U.S. and its allies found particularly offensive.

At the Greenham Common airbase in Britain, for example, the largely symbolic character of the protest was suddenly transformed by what was described as "a more stubborn section" of 190 women demonstrators. Sounding an ululating battle cry used by rebellious women in the Middle East, they invaded the base's perimeter, scaling a 10 foot high security fence while another group created a diversion by idyllically decorating the front gate with daffodils. The British press singled out the militant women for particular attack and for going beyond the established bounds of the CND actions. One especially rabid commentary in the *London Sunday Telegraph* noted that, "Little love is lost, it appears between the CND and the grubby disagreeable girls at Greenham" who were "beyond reason." The *Telegraph* editorial of the same day railed against the "increasingly unhealthy feminist hysteria of the 'peace' women" and openly appealed to their reactionary social base warning that if the anti-nuke campaign in Britain escalated into widespread civil disobedience the "voice of the silent majority" would be heard in a backlash that "may set even British standards of tolerance too great a test." Iron Lady Margaret Thatcher displayed

such tolerance when she added a hearty "hear, hear" after one conservative in the House of Commons denounced these women as "blinker and dangerous."

Likewise, in West Germany fierce scenes erupted among the marches and blockades. At the U.S. Army's Wiley Barracks at Neu Elm, Bavaria (one of W. Germany's conservative strongholds) thousands mounted a determined three-day blockade, regrouping again and again in the face of vicious attacks by the authorities. When 200 police brandishing pistols and clubs repeatedly failed to clear the base entrance, attack dogs and tear gas were used against the demonstrators. Another interesting development in the context of what were generally anti-U.S. demonstrations was a fleeting one-line reference in the West German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine* to a blockade by some 500 people directed against a West German military barracks in the Westphalia-Upper Rhine region. As we go to press, there has been little inkling in the bourgeois media concerning the activity of some of the more explosive social forces like the squatters, punks and anarchist youth. Particularly sparse was information on developments in West Berlin (which included at least one demonstration of 30,000) where such trends have done some serious street fighting in past actions. Reports have surfaced, however, of at least 180 people being arrested at the U.S. military radar station on Teufelsberg Mountain as well as hundreds being briefly detained elsewhere in West Berlin.

The *RW* certainly looks forward to reporting on these events in more depth, as news arrives. But one thing is certain: the continental summer will definitely be "long and hot." □

Soviet Debate

On the Political Economy of Soviet Social-Imperialism*

by Raymond Lotta

I
The arguments refuting the very possibility that the Soviet Union could be imperialist start from deep-seated misconceptions of how capitalism functions in this era. To begin with, their operative model is something resembling capitalism in the pre-imperialist epoch. In other words, if capitalism were restored in the Soviet Union, we should expect to find increasing immiseration of the masses, growing unemployment, and cyclical economic crises. Since these phenomena are not readily observable in the Soviet Union... end of argument. In fact, imperialist crisis need not assume the features of a rerun Great Depression. Conventional wisdom of the international communist movement has not been clear on this point. And even in our own previous writings, including "Tarnished," there has been a tendency to assume that the central manifestation of crisis is economic collapse and widespread impoverishment within the imperialist countries themselves. This is a legacy of the erroneous theory of "general crisis."

Frankly, if one examines the many pages devoted to an empirical "proof" that the manifestations of capitalism are absent in the Soviet Union, one is quickly struck by the fact that the "non-capitalist" features of the Soviet Union are quite typical for modern imperialist metropolises. There are several imperialist countries, notably West Germany and Japan, that sustained economic growth for decades, with negligible unemployment; in West Germany, over twenty years elapsed after the end of World War 2 before it experienced a real downturn. Similarly, the rise in the standard of living of the Soviet masses between the mid-'50s and '70s was both real and not particularly spectacular compared to the achievements of some other imperialist countries. Even on the question of income distribution, the ratio between the top tenth and the bottom tenth in Sweden compares quite favorably with that of the Soviet Union.

When the concept of imperialism is introduced into the discussion, the Soviet Union is stacked up against the United States. Since the external network of the Soviet Union does not match the sprawling empire and string of military bases of U.S. imperialism, then the Soviet Union does not pass muster as an imperialist power. Indeed, the apologists, as "Tarnished" points out, conceptualize imperialism in thoroughly Kautskyite terms, as an external policy (untoward treatment of other countries) or as an external additive (x amount of returns from overseas activity). The relative merits of its "internal" policies and its "external" policies are weighed against each other, as if they were easily separable. Or, alternately, it is claimed that the Soviet Union must surely be socialist since its policies in this or that country seem beneficent enough.

Marxism-Leninism, of course, analyzes imperialism as a specific stage of development of capitalism, as a structural and systemic phenomenon. Accumulation proceeds through *monopoly*, through the *division of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations*, and through *rivalry* between imperialist capitals. Capitalism has operated internationally from its beginnings, but this undergoes a qualitative change in the imperialist era. Underlying this change is the further socialization of production, the internationalization of capital, and the complete partition of the world among the imperialist powers. The world market becomes an integral and determining whole, and national economies are integrated into a *single world process*. A new international dynamic emerges in the imperialist era; it is more determinant of the structures, trend-lines, and barriers to accumulation than is cyclical motion within the imperialist economies. The decisive stimulus to profitable accumula-

tion is international expansion, particularly into the colonial and neocolonial regions of the world. This furnishes the basis for more extended periods of growth in the imperialist countries and for the bribing of substantial layers of their populations.

Monopoly capital is an internationalized mode of production which functions according to an inner compulsion. It remains rooted in national markets, yet requires a global field of operations. These internationalized capitals press up against each other. All this defines a new matrix of accumulation. The contradictions of accumulation become concentrated in the international arena. For the imperialists, crisis can only be resolved through warfare for the redistribution of power and spheres of influence. Thus, major changes in international political alignments have marked the essential qualitative leaps in the process of imperialist accumulation. The basic laws of capitalist accumulation exert themselves in the framework of the relation of forces in the world in which interimperialist wars of redivision have been nodal points.

Politics assumes far greater importance in the imperialist era. The enmeshing of the world in the capitalist mode of production draws the masses of the oppressed nations into the swirl of world history and intertwines the contradictions between imperialism and the oppressed nations and between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries. The intensification of the contradictions of a world system opens new prospects for the subjective factor. At the same time, the centrality of international relations to the accumulation process foists a new calculus on the imperialists. They must make moves and countermoves on the international chessboard; they must defend, extend, or secure integrated empires. The flow of capital, then, is not directly determined by the highest rate of return. Investments, trade and aid have geopolitical determinants as well. The Alliance for Progress cannot be understood outside the impact of the Cuban Revolution; concessionary prices charged by the Soviet Union to its East European allies cannot be understood outside the need to shore up its bloc.

At the same time, the requirements and contradictions of accumulation implicate the state far more pervasively in the reproductive process: the seeding of new, strategic industries, bail-outs, infrastructure development, etc., are integral to the role of the imperialist state. Its warfare and welfare functions express the larger needs of empire, that is, the organization of force to confront rivals and to suppress and intimidate the masses and the organization of concessionary pacification to stabilize the home front. The capacity of the imperialist state to centralize and reallocate surplus value represents a modification of the operation of the law of value.

Arguments that the Soviet Union is not capitalist because capital is steered to the less profitable heavy industrial sectors (which have obvious linkages with the military) or because the Soviets lose money in Cuba (as do the U.S. imperialists in Israel) are rather frivolous in view of the imperatives of empire. One might plausibly argue on such a basis that the war in Vietnam was not an imperialist

war since its costs far outweighed the potential economic benefits that might be derived from Vietnam alone. But if the law of value is mediated through complex mechanisms in the imperialist era and if politics continually and powerfully interacts with economics, these imperialist politics are grounded in the expand-or-die nature of capital, in the regulating role of the law of value.

Only by grasping the specificity of imperialism can the dynamics and particularities of the Soviet social formation be understood. Social-imperialism emerged *out of* the reversal of socialism — and is still making use of many of the forms and structures developed under socialism — and on a foundation of a fairly high degree of development of the productive forces. On the other hand, it emerged *into* a very specific international environment, reflecting, in the main, a division of the world which had its roots in the outcome of World War 2. The Soviet Union faced a vastly more powerful imperialist network dominated by U.S. imperialism. The specific international configuration and relative strengths on a world scale impacted greatly on the structures and necessities of the Soviet Union — on the allocation of capital, the particular forms and policies adopted internally, and on the international strategy pursued by social-imperialism to extend its sway. On the latter point, Khrushchev's open betrayal of revolutionary struggles and the attempt to avoid head-on confrontation with the United States in the late '50s and '60s at the same time that the social-imperialists were making inroads into strategically key regions, corresponded to the needs and possibilities of the period. As the world situation further developed and Soviet strength increased, these policies of collaboration with and capitulation to U.S. imperialism no longer conformed to the needs of the Soviet bourgeoisie.

This international framework and rivalry with a global adversary, interacting with the historical basis of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union (a highly centralized, planned economy) and revisionist ideology itself, has resulted in a massively bureaucratized and militarized economy. Many of the particular current features of the Soviet Union are not necessarily inherent in the nature of a restored capitalism. Had the Soviet Union been less industrially developed, or had it emerged as a junior partner to some other imperialist rather than as a head of its own distinct bloc — it is conceivable that the specific structure of its capitalist economy might have looked different. There has been a long-standing and conscious awareness among the social-imperialists that the only way out of their *cul-de-sac* will be world war, a recognition reflected in the huge military build-up since the mid-1960s. This militarized economy is at once a source of strength and an Achilles heel (greatly lopsided development and lending a certain complexion to crisis within its bloc). The Soviet Union is not an imperialist power out of the contemporary Japanese mold, that is, a highly efficient and organized workshop or trader to the world, although the particularities of Japanese imperialism can also be understood only in the context of the specific political arrangements and international division of labor established on the basis of the

resolution of World War 2 and the international alignment of forces in its aftermath.

If Soviet social-imperialism was contending in a world which was not a "blank slate," where the majority of oppressed nations were, for instance, subjugated by Western imperialism, neither was it "coming from nowhere." The Soviet Union was able to pull an entire part of the world, notably large sections of Eastern Europe which had been in various stages of political transition, into its imperialist orbit, based on the leadership it previously exercised over them in the socialist camp, a critical mass of military strength, and the forms of economic integration previously developed under socialism. Moreover, as suggested above, the Soviet Union entered into and/or transformed its relations with some "third world" countries relatively quickly, and this provided it with certain reserves that could be utilized to its advantage. These factors also impacted on the internal structure of its economy. This ability to forge its own international division of labor combined with far-ranging internal restructuring (effected by various "economic reforms") to generate a certain stimulus and momentum to the Soviet economy (and bloc) — at the same time that it imposed new requirements and created new contradictions.

The Soviet Union has extensive trade, aid and investment ties with many countries in the world, including in the "third world." Its forms of overseas activity are diverse: international banking institutions, joint East-West ventures in the "third world," barter trade, shipping, and international gold sales, to name a few. In other works, the RCP has documented the exploitative character of Soviet relations in the "third world," and another essay in this volume takes India as a case study and shows how Soviet trade and aid reinforces dependency. It must be underscored that the Soviet export of capital to the "third world" often involves complex arrangements, revolving around sale of arms, trade, aid projects, loans — all sometimes tied into "package deals." Here we can only concentrate on an important theoretical point. As an international exploiter, the Soviet Union quite clearly pales beside the United States. While it exports capital, this is not nearly as massive a phenomenon as it is in the West. How, then, is this formation to be understood, particularly in light of the methodological insistence of the apologists of Soviet social-imperialism that if capital is not being exported on a large scale, it is entirely inappropriate to describe the Soviet Union as imperialist?

The imperialist nature of its international relations has to be understood from two sides.

One, these relations are already fundamentally exploitative and involve the export of capital and extraction of surplus value through various mechanisms. Second, in quantitative terms, what characterizes the Soviet position is that it is gripped by an overbearing need to expand the scale of this international exploitation. The Soviet Union does not yet have an empire on the scale of, or with the coherence of, the U.S. empire today. But the point is that it *needs to forge such an empire* and its actions are predicated on doing so.

Let's look at these general points a little more closely:

To begin with, the role of capital export, especially investments in the colonial and neocolonial countries, must be understood in *qualitative* terms. In none of the major imperialist countries do overseas profits represent a large share of total profits. But once this is disaggregated, these profits can be shown to figure much more prominently within the operations of the decisive and leading units of finance capital. The imperialists must go after high profits to stimulate and activate their entire mass of capital, and the higher rates of return, the extra value and particular inputs (e.g., raw materials) entering into the domestic imperialist economies from the "third world," along with the transformations of productive relations possible in these

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*This essay is a slightly edited version of the newly written introduction to the article "The 'Tarnished Socialism' Thesis" which will appear in the forthcoming volume, *The Soviet Union: Socialist or Social-Imperialist? Essays Toward the Debate on the Nature of Soviet Society*.

Motor City: From the Assembly Line to the Soup Line

Losing the "American Dream" and All That Bullshit

At the Capuchin Mission — Detroit's largest "soup kitchen" people start lining up for lunch at 11:00 in the morning. The mission is located on the edge of the city's lower east side — one of the most impoverished and rundown Black neighborhoods in Detroit. On those days towards the end of the month when the foodstamps have already been used up and there is not much left in the cupboards or refrigerators, as many as 500 people a day will come through the large room that has been converted into a cafeteria. The line of people stretches along the wall from the front of the room, where a serving line has been set up, all the way towards a waiting area in the back. This waiting area is filled with people waiting to pick up bags of groceries. The room is jammed with Black people drawn from the neighborhoods to the north and east of the mission site. Scattered through the line are young guys — in their early 20s. Many of them have never worked since getting out of high school in the late '70s. A few have

held down odd jobs landscaping or washing dishes. There are some women with children in the room, mainly waiting to pick up bags of groceries. The great majority going through the line every day are Black men ranging between 30 and 40 years of age. Congregating in small groups on the front steps or hanging out on the street outside there's a clear sense of familiarity among large numbers of these guys. A lot of handslapping and story swapping takes place as individuals greet each other coming in and out of the building. Some know each other from the streets of the east side neighborhoods where they grew up. But more the tie that links them together are the years of common experience many of them have working at the cluster of Chrysler plants that dotted the city's east side. For 8, 10 and sometimes 12 years they worked in places like Dodge Main, Mack Avenue Stamping and Lynch Road Assembly. Plants with well-known names that have long since been shutdown. Many of them were laid off for the last time in 1979 as

Chrysler teetered on the brink of collapse. They have run through the unemployment benefits and are surviving on general assistance, small odd jobs, and hustling. Sometimes all three together. For these men nearly a decade of employment in the high-paying jobs of the auto industry and the conditions of life which that afforded have been wrenched apart in the last few years and from discussions with several of them comes the sense of lives sharply jolted by the economic crisis and a developing yet contradictory mood — mood characterized by a real desire and hope to return to the relative well-being of the late '70s that existed, together with a heightening bitterness and an increasing sense of having less and less to lose.

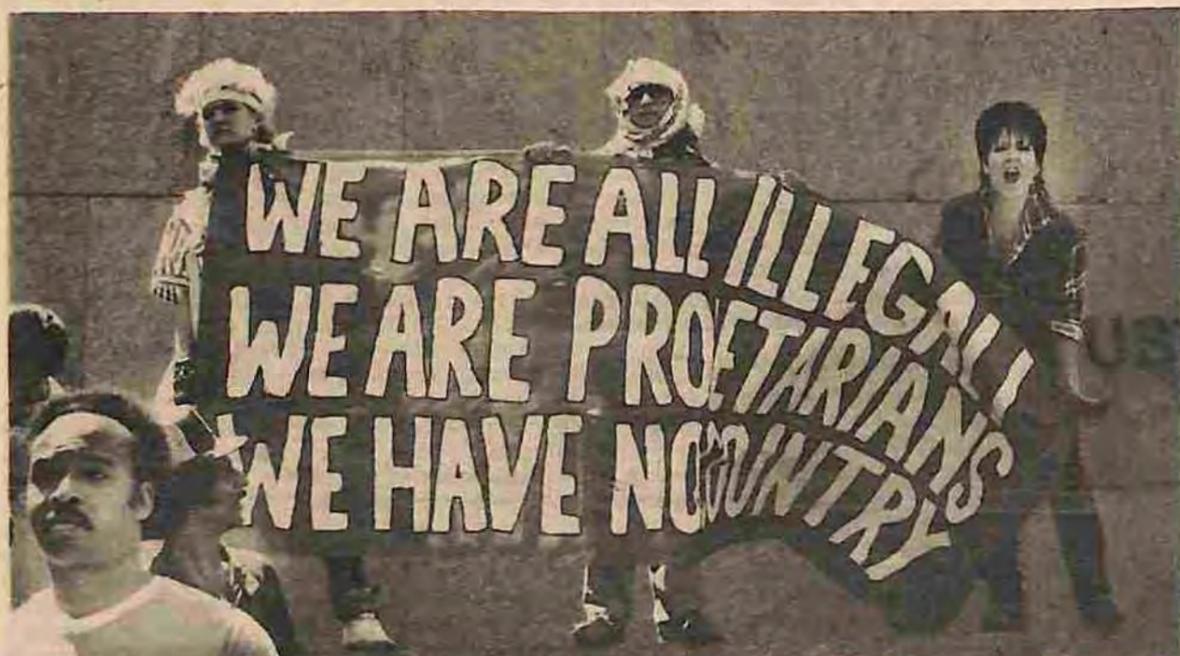
Most of the proletarians were hired on in the auto industry at the end of the '60s and into the early '70s. It was a time when U.S. imperialism was coming to the end of a phase of unprecedented prosperity and strength. And while it was towards the end of this period there was still a

dynamism and an ability to expand. In the automobile industry it was a time of rebounding from the recession of 1957-1958. During that downturn, Black workers in auto lost their jobs at a disproportionately high rate due to low seniority. In a single year, between 1957 and 1958, Black employment at four inner-city Chrysler plants fell from 20.3% to 14.7%. In the auto industry overall, Black employment fell from 13.4% to 9.1%. Starting in the early '60s, car production began climbing and headed towards record levels. Reflecting this expansion, a significant wave of hiring took place in the Detroit area in the late '60s. Black workers were hired on in large numbers and concentrated into the lowest-paying, worst jobs. In the fall of '67 — on the heels of the rebellion that shook Detroit in July of that year — a much ballyhooed effort was made to bring Black workers, especially youth, into the plants. This included youth just out of

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HPD Demonstrates the State of the Art

The Houston Police Department sponsored a rally through downtown Houston April 2. The HPD has refused to release figures on what the costs were though leaflets at the march claimed \$5 million was necessary to protect three dozen KKKers dressed in white robes and camouflage fatigues. But the HPD did reveal proudly the effort they went to to insure the safety of this scam. Three weeks of preparation was done for this march, preparation including practice of military-style formations and refresher courses in the use of riot gear and batons as well as watching film footage of Austin, Texas, where the Klan was trashed by 2,000 people 6 weeks ago. (See RW No. 194) The HPD was joined in these preparations by local, state and federal pigs from Corpus Christi, Austin, San



Antonio and Dallas, and joined on the streets by the Houston district attorney and his assistants, as well as top-ranking HPD on April 2.

As a result of the summation of the mistakes the authorities had made in Austin, the HPD met with the KKK and helped plan the march. The pigs suggested the Klansmen ride in buses with police escorts to and from their bookstore, rather than arrive and leave separately. The pigs suggested that they not march by any construction sites — which had served as ammunition depots for the angry masses in Austin. They suggested that the KKK not take the escorted buses to the publicly announced starting point, but instead arrive a block away

which would catch the people off guard and give them time. The ten city blocks were cordoned off by both ropes and barricades. The complete route was lined with pigs, with as many as several hundred surrounding the KKKers. Uniformed HPD also lined the other side of the sidewalk in the event of any necessary pincer action. All wore flak jackets, visored helmets, had gas masks, and three-foot long riot sticks. The bomb squad dogs were on alert. Pigs were stationed on rooftops photographing and videotaping the crowd. Everyone with bags was searched by the hundreds of undercover pigs in the crowd, making the numerical odds of pigs to people approximately one pig to every two people.

After this extensive military planning, the march lasted 18 minutes, the rally and exit 15 minutes.

The close relationship of the Klan to the HPD is not a new development. Years ago, when confronted with a *London Times* photograph of a robed Klansman emerging from a marked HPD squad car, the Houston police chief remarked that there is no contradiction between being a member of the KKK and a member of the HPD. A new twist in this relationship was the decision made nationally to move Lee Brown from Atlanta, where he had presided during the Atlanta child murders, to the department that had a well-established history of murder of Black and Chicano people, and had made

famous the routine practice of covering these murders with a throw-down gun. But a Black man being chief pig who doesn't mouth the expected white supremacy that has been part of the scene was too much for the Klan, both on and off the force. Major resistance to his appointment has been raging for months within the HPD and police organizations have openly challenged his leadership and policies.

The Klan regionally has made the large influx of immigrants a central focus of both their ideological attacks as well as actual terror. That was also a focus of political poison spewing out in their march in Houston, but prominent in se-

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What's Really Shakin' In Chicago...

Due to the level of national attention fixed on Chicago these days, most readers are probably familiar with events leading up to this eve of the April 12 election. The victor of the Democratic party mayoral primary is traditionally the *de facto* victor of the general election in this city where the Republican party has been considered "a joke" for decades past. This year, it was different. A sharply divided Democratic party machine set incumbent Jane Byrne and State's Attorney Richard Daley against each other, resulting in a split of the white vote. Harold Washington, a Black Congressman from the city's south side, emerged as the primary winner. The chances of nominal Republican candidate, Bernard Epton, who racked up a pitiful 10,000 votes in the primary, mushroomed overnight.

The mayoral contest was now a "racial issue." And why? Because a Black man might win it! Never was a "racial issue" when it was only whites in the contest! If Chicago's Nazis remained indefinite — forced to choose between the "lesser evil" of a Black man and a Jew — it wasn't for the lack of reactionary juices stirring all over the city's northwest and southwest sides. Horror stalked these white wards. No one could be sure of what the 'morrow would bring. The seeming threat to the stability of the Streets and Sanitation Department, alarming enough, was by far less consequential than worries typified by one female office employee who shrieked across the room to her compatriots, "If Washington wins, there'll be Black people running all over city hall!" ... treating us the same way we've treated them all these years.

Caught between the feeling that something was indeed being "shaken up" — possibly their own greasy careers — and the knowledge that selling a Black candidate to their constituencies would be no easy task, long time Democratic party machine hacks began deserting to the Epton camp. Alderman Roman Pucinski — who gained a national reputation for his holy war against "Soviet Communist Tyranny" after martial law was declared in Poland — was among those who led a "grassroots rebellion" against a Democratic party which "sold its people out" by running two white candidates and allowing a Washington victory. "Politicians are all a bunch of goddamned crooks," concluded one maintenance mechanic who joined the "rebellion." "The fuckin' peckerheads should have known this would happen."

A real hero was found in the person of Bernard Epton: decorated WW2 veteran, distinguished state legislator, and, and... But Bernie doesn't want to "take advantage" of his color in this election — oh, no. This is clear from the highly ambiguous message conveyed in his campaign slogan: "Vote for Epton, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE."

Rallies for Epton were sponsored all over the city, including one particularly virulent outpouring on Palm Sunday in front of a Catholic church Washington tried to visit. Quizzical talk show hosts conducted a series of "informal polls," prefaced by remarks like, "Now, we're all against racism, white or Black..." And, of course, so were Chicago's housewives, who responded in droves: "Race isn't the issue here, Epton's more qualified and Washington didn't pay his taxes." While "race politics" can hardly be considered all that newsworthy in Chicago, this rising Eptonite agitation for clean government (seizing on Washington's prior tax difficulties) should stop the presses. Imagine — possible corruption in Chicago's city hall! If the terms of this election really were Washington's "criminal past" — he'd be a guaranteed shoo-in.

But, of course, this isn't even the public terms of the election — which itself has been testimony to the whole "democratic process." Epton told one rally, "I'm not ashamed of being white. If Harold Washington can take pride in his ethnicity, so can you." And the New

York Times, for its own pernicious reasons, noted that, "Republicans sense an inexpensive opportunity to seize the political top spot in the nation's second largest city..." True enough: Victory is sweet which comes cheap — and comes white. What is all this if not an open admission of designs to clutch at any opportunity to mobilize a reactionary social base, and of the grounds on which this will be done?

The same Times article gave some glimpse of the breeding areas of the Epton campaign. These neighborhoods are "insular island wards where the children of European immigrants are born, grow up and die on the same street... In some ways, these areas, with an emphasis on family and property values, have been a source of stability for Chicago. The city was able to maintain strong middle class neighborhoods that have resisted, so far, the kind of white flight to the suburbs that hollowed many Middle Western cities, such as Cleveland and Detroit. Mayor Daley's machine catered to these loyal residents..."

The Epton campaign is certainly "race politics" — and more. It is the political expression of the strivings and interests of an encrusted layer of middle class and labor aristocrats. It is a demand for a reactionary *status quo*, a demand that not only the privileged position of this layer be guaranteed against encroachment, but guaranteed in comparison and direct opposition to people they regard as "the enemy." If "it" spreads to city hall, they fear, "it" will soon be right next door. Not only do these people want to be on top, they want "the enemy" below them to know it. And they want all the ideological trappings that accompany "the rightful place of the white man." The "white cops for Epton movement" is a related reflection of all this.

It may be necessary to point out here that we're not talking about all white people. In fact, it is rather amusing to note that Washington has strong support in the largely white "YUP buffer" — that is, among the "Young Urban Professionals" who have flowed in numbers into the condos and rehabilitated housing which rings the central city. Ironically, this area (as in other cities) was consciously built up with the intention of driving poor Black people and other oppressed nationalities out, thus creating a petty-bourgeois, mainly white, buffer zone around the downtown Loop. Contradictions, contradictions.

But neither are we only talking about petty-bourgeois white people. A report from some comrades in Chicago reads in part: "The open racist shit has been so severe that even some of the most intermediate to backward white people have felt compelled to 'say something good about Washington' in order to disassociate themselves from the bullshit. An example: a restaurant where things have gotten very sharp around the election. One waitress, who is kind of backward, said that after the primary she realized for the first time in her life that she consciously voted along racial lines (white). It really freaked her out, and made her think about a lot of things. Shortly after this, the restaurant had its regular 'waitress meeting.' In the middle of a discussion, completely unrelated, this same waitress stood up and said, 'Well, what I want to know is when are we going to hire our first Black waitress?' It caused quite a stir. Stories like this are everywhere."

"Stories like this are everywhere!" — and, we might add, to the great dismay of those who have cast "their lot" with Epton. But as regards these racists, one can only welcome their venomous presence. It is, after all, Chicago — and it's not like the existence of these people has been any big secret. A desire to smooth over the rough edges on the northwest and southwest sides will prove illusory in any case. Better to have it out there. Why? Because these politics of white supremacy have been an important part of the politics that have always ruled Chicago, generally with quiet efficiency (though this suf-

focusing calm has been punctuated from time to time, for example by the Panthers and the riots). Now this is just more open and some jagged cracks are showing.

Background to Washington Campaign

Between the panic which has swept over "Chicago's traditional ethnic neighborhoods" and the sight of a sharp stick thrust up the asses of a few gangster politicians, one is tempted to contribute to the current run on the city's supply of Harold Washington buttons. Unfortunately, however, this is something we can't advise.

The Washington campaign — and the Congressman's "progressive program" against "Reaganomics," his stated intention to clean up the city, the patronage system, and especially the police department — has obviously drawn the support of large number of Black people. And needless to say, even among some who see through this, the outpouring of white racism has tended to firm up their support for Washington. Among these people, there are those whose aspirations actually are concentrated in the politics of a figure like Washington, and there are those whose aspirations aren't.

One Black man told us, "If you go into an area where many of the people have no other income than aid, they uphold Washington, although they may not be so demonstrative about it. But you do hear, 'I ain't going to the polls because it won't make no damn difference.' They are more hip to the thing that it's bullshit to some degree. It's like Atlanta. A lot of petty-bourgeois Blacks say 'Williams might have done it.' But the proletariat says, 'Hey, there's something being hidden here!'"

All things considered — and for a variety of reasons — this Chicago election has had the effect of rattling the social fabric in a number of positive ways. There is, though, "something being hidden" about the nature of the contradictions that are coming sharply to the fore around this election.

The Chicago machine isn't what it used to be under the late Richard Daley — that solid bastion of united Democratic party power which "decided" the "cliff-hanger" 1960 presidential election in favor of John Kennedy through massive ballot box stuffing. (It is likely that dead voters brought Kennedy into power, ushering in the short-lived era of Camelot.) The machine began to fall into some degree of national disfavor after its infamous handling of the 1968 Democratic party convention — to the extent that "da Mayor's" delegation was refused seating at the next convention in 1972.

Both the demise of Daley in 1976 — and with him, the personal glue that held the whole grotesque machinery together — and the severe shocks of the imperialist crisis which gripped the northern industrial cities with particular impact through the '70s, provided the basis for increasingly numerous and bitter disputes in the "city that works" — and always "worked" on the backs of the oppressed.

Local Democratic party politics have more and more come to be characterized by charges and counter charges, scandals and counter scandals, indictments, trials and convictions of politicians and even gangland executions of former officials. Of course, these methods have never been strangers to Chicago, and they merely reproduce the methods of the larger ruling democracy. But the infighting has grown visibly more acute leading, most recently for example, to certain loyalties — and votes — largely being split between Daley, Jr. and Jane Byrne in the last primary.

Side by side with quarrels and fissures of this nature, many signs indicate moves against the machine by overall ruling interests. Chicago — a principal center of finance, commerce and industry. Chicago — a decisive link in the larger rule of capital. And Chicago — a city of hundreds of thousands of proletarian wage slaves whose marginal existence will provide combustible material in any great crisis. Some of this showed itself in the '60s — and despite the flexibility of the

Daley machine, which allowed some more slots for Black politicians — this is the time when the machine began to run into real trouble. Think about it: if the survival of the whole system was on your mind, would you entrust this city to a pack of grease-palmed, self-serving, sleaze-balls who were increasingly unable even to unify themselves? Probably not, and especially not in the kind of period ahead.

While much remains to be seen, the Washington campaign has all the earmarks of being part of a high-level effort — probably not to "smash the machine," but at least to pull in the reins to a significant degree. And, of course, if the Republican Epton wins, many of the same things will have been accomplished. Some of Washington's specific ideas of "reform" dovetail quite neatly with particular federal efforts to remind Chicago that the city (let alone each of its neighborhoods) is not an autonomous region.

To illustrate this, we'll cite a few examples of federal probing and prying into the workings of the machine over the past few years, with the (hopefully unnecessary) foreword that all of this has not served to alleviate the brutal oppression of the masses of people, but to strengthen it.

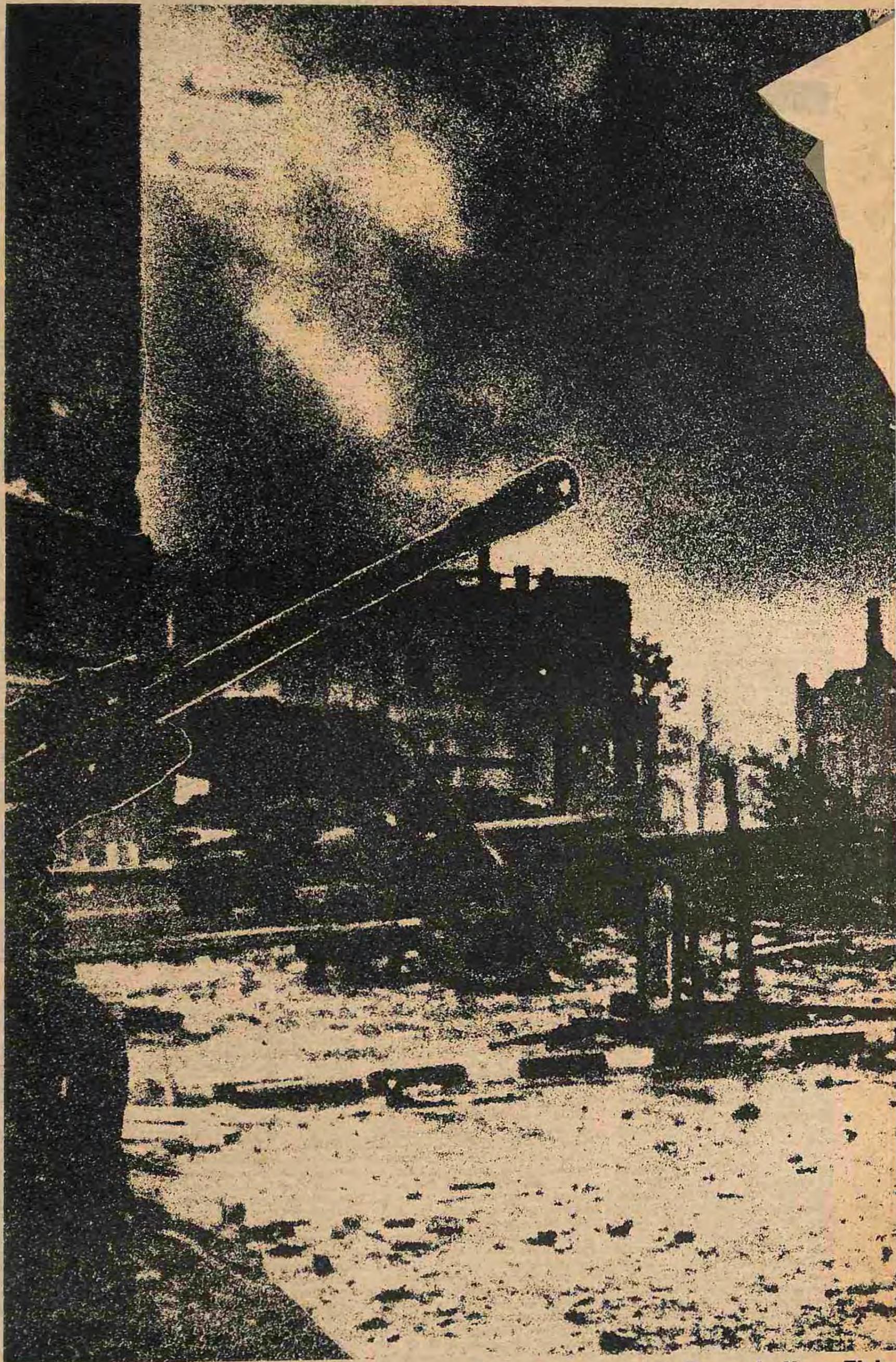
There were four major cases of police corruption prosecuted by the Feds between 1973 and 1981, and just last year, ten cops from the Marquette District were indicted and convicted of assisting a continuing criminal enterprise, conspiracy, racketeering and extortion. It came out in court that they had taken over \$250,000 from dope dealers in protection money. The government relied on inside testimony of dope dealers in exchange for reduced prison sentences. An overhaul in the Federal Court system for the Northern Illinois District, which began under Nixon and Ford — designed to weed out machine cronies — had Senator Charles Percy playing a key role in the appointment of new judges. The *Chicago Lawyer* magazine notes that Percy's efforts "had the effect of turning the Chicago court from one of the least respected to one of the most respected in the nation." Conflicts with the machine came quickly. After a suit was filed by the Afro-American Patrolman's League, U.S. Judge Prentice Marshall ordered massive remedial action against racial discrimination by the Chicago Police Dept. (which had thoroughly resisted hiring more Black cops), and this decision was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals. The courts also undertook a number of vigorous prosecutions of machine figures, shepherded by then U.S. Attorney (now Governor) James Thompson. A bunch of hacks were tried and/or jailed on various charges, including a couple of Aldermen, Edward Barret (the County Clerk), Tom Keane (Daley Sr.'s right-hand man), and former Illinois Governor, Otto Kerner, also a machine creature. The Federal Shakman Decree of 1972 made it illegal to require political campaign work as a pre-condition for employment with the city. According to Tom Keane in an interview last year, the Shakman Decree marked the beginning of the end of the machine. Interestingly enough, this very decree was *strengthened* by the courts only last week, days before the election and right in line with Washington's claims that if elected, he would overturn the patronage system.

There are further examples in the more immediate period leading up to the election. In the spring of 1982, a scandal erupted when the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development issued a political bombshell of a report that demanded the ouster of Chicago Housing Authority head, Charles Swibel, a lowlife real estate dealer and key Jane Byrne ally. In an unprecedented action, HUD, which labeled the CHA grossly mismanaged and in debt, threatened to withhold \$14.5 million in aid until Byrne would agree to fire Swibel. The HUD report pinpointed Swibel and the patronage system as the root of the CHA's troubles:

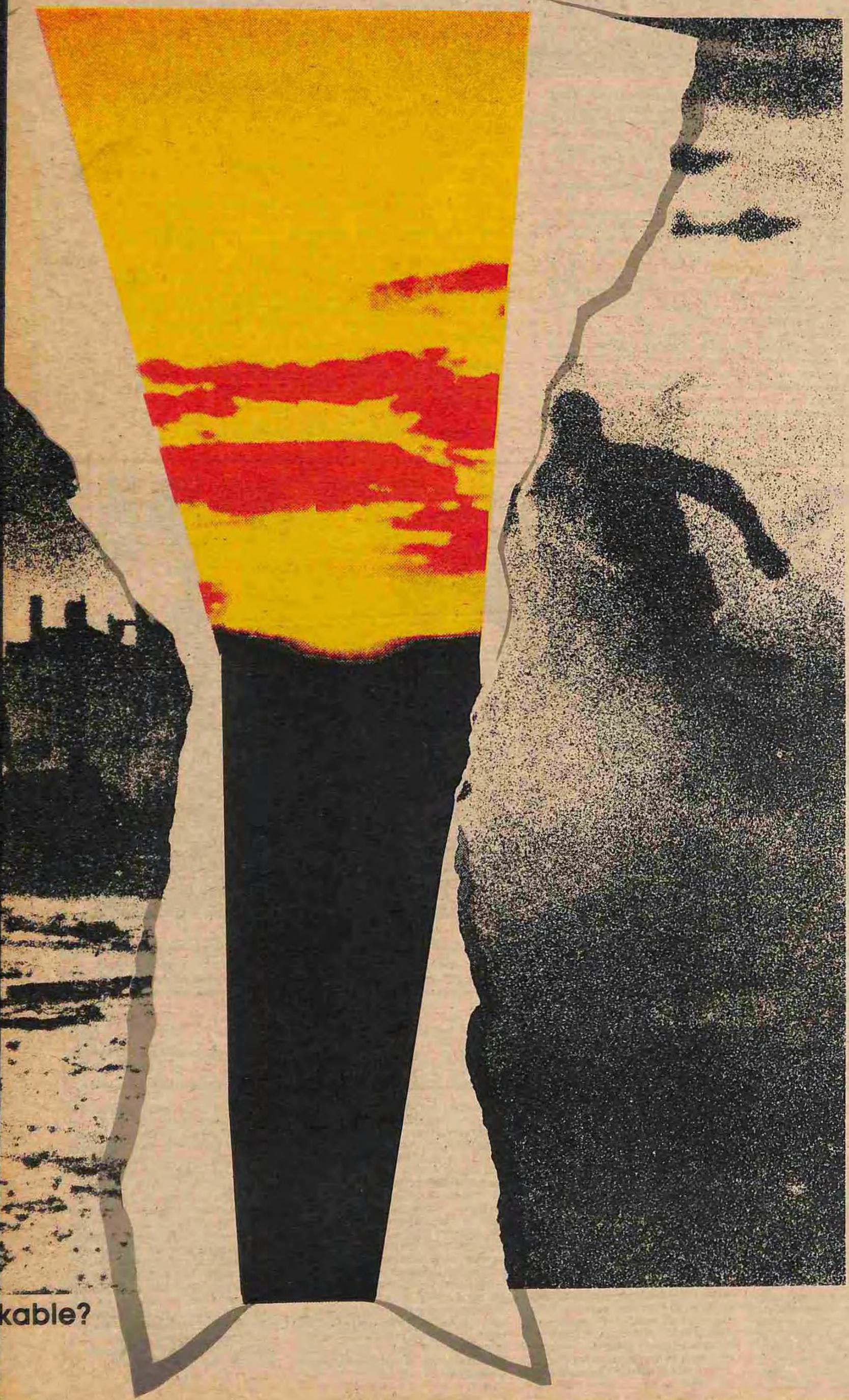
"Why has the CHA made so little effort to improve its circumstances?" wrote HUD. "The answer lies in giving

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If Nuclear War Is "Thinkable" . . .



Then Why Isn't Revolution Thinkable?



kable?

"The Message"

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were once more cynically dashed by the ruling class, that fueled the explosion of Black people's struggle in the '60s.

In the face of that the ruling class has devoted serious efforts to co-opting and controlling Black culture and suffocating rebellious currents within it. The ripping off of Black music — which meant many things, including watering it down while taking it over in large part through the large established record companies — was not done only for economic reasons but at least as much for political ones. The ruling class has seen the subversive effect of seemingly innocent street corner love songs; from now on the content (including the musical composition as well as the words) must not be free of the consistent attention and the ultimate control of that ruling class.

In the late '70s and into the '80s, against the backdrop of serious and deepening crisis and the growing prospect of world war, the ruling class, through the cultural sphere as well as in other ways, has actually fed and given its own meaning to the growing sense of hopelessness among masses of people and has promoted as the answer to this — to go along with building up and joining the armed forces — hedonism (pleasure-seeking as an end in itself and the pursuit of cheap thrills) and what has been called narcissism (Narcissus was a man in Greek mythology who fell in love with his own reflection in a stream — narcissism = love of self). Hedonism and narcissism — there's no hope for anything better and we may all get blown away soon anyhow, so — go for yourself and get what you can get for yourself now, while you still can. On one level, it might seem ridiculous that such a line can get over when there is even less than usual to "go for" or "get"; but it does get over to a considerable degree, much as liquor (and dope) sales tend to go up the less people actually have to spend — the poorer, and more despairing, they are. The poor are forever condemned from on high for wasting their money on drink or drug when they don't even have enough for food and clothes, but the fact that many actually do this just shows that they know, or feel, that there is no hope of a de-

cent life anyway.

In the Black culture today — both that fostered and controlled by the ruling class and that arising more spontaneously from the masses themselves* — while there is a great deal of upward mobility mythology, there is not the naive hopefulness of the early post-World War 2 years; there is a great deal of cynicism and despair (often under the cover of hedonism and narcissism) — or at least a raw, desperate edge. Rapping is a rare form today in that it is one which has not (yet) been overwhelmingly co-opted by the ruling class, it has emerged through the cracks deepening in society. It does include a large dose of empty, especially macho man, braggadocio, but it also includes songs that are saying something, like "The Message."

"Don't push me, 'cause I'm close to the edge. . . ." But the system and its ruling class will continue to not only push but to drag masses of Black youth and other oppressed masses toward the edge. Imperialism and the bourgeoisie will be compelled to not only grind these masses further down but to grind them up in their war machine. But things are far from hopeless. We have the experience and lessons of the '60s, including the powerful impact of those most having nothing to lose. We have a vanguard party, the Revolutionary Communist Party, building on those experiences and lessons, not only in the U.S. but throughout the world. Exactly because the situation is more extreme, more desperate now, it is more strategically favorable for the proletariat, the class throughout the world that has nothing to lose but its chains — and has a world to win. Joining with and strengthening that party and that force of the international proletariat means actively preparing for when all this finally comes to a head, when masses of people are ready to go over the edge and when the question comes up for grabs, just who it is — which class it is — that can't keep from going under. □

*I am not attempting here to make any kind of thorough analysis of this culture, of course; such an analysis, including of major trends and influences such as reggae, is beyond the scope of this article, although it is a very important question that should be, and is being, taken up elsewhere.

NEXT WEEK: The "City Game" — And The City, No Game



**Revolution in the '80s.
Go For It!**

Bourgeois revolutions . . . storm swiftly from success to success; their dramatic effects outdo each other; men and things seem set in sparkling brilliants; ecstasy is the everyday spirit; but they are short-lived; soon they have attained their zenith, and a long crapulent depression lays hold of society before it learns soberly to assimilate the results of its storm-and-stress period. On the other hand, proletarian revolutions . . . criticise themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin it afresh, deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltrinesses of their first attempts, seem to throw

down their adversary only in order that he may draw new strength from the earth and rise again, more gigantic, before them, recoil ever and anon from the indefinite prodigiousness of their own aims, until a situation has been created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves cry out:

**Hic Rhodus, hic salta!
Here is the rose, here dance!**

**Karl Marx
The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte
1852**

HPD

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cond place was their demand to get rid of Brown.

Brown's reputation was on the line. Would he be able to prove himself in the tradition which had made the Houston Police Department nationally known; a tradition which accounted for the widespread translation among the oppressed of the HPD bumpersticker "the badge means you care" to its real meaning — "the badge means you can kill." Brown not only rose to the occasion, but advanced that tradition to new heights. As he himself put it in a meeting he called following the 33-minute display of the KKK, "We set the state of the art for policing such events" and "the city of Houston can take pride in the professionalism of its police department today."

An important part of the police work was in the realm of public opinion that preceded the march. Summing up that keeping the planned march as quiet as possible would allow it to happen most successfully, Brown personally congratulated the press on following these instructions. But as it was evident in the last 10 days that large numbers of people were planning to be there, new tactics were needed. A grand jury in Austin was convened four days before the Houston march, threatening indictments against those who had trashed the Klan there. It reviewed the widely-televised police beatings of anti-Klan forces and concluded that the police behaved in a "superlative" manner. The grand jury went on to reveal that the KKK had had weapons in Austin in the trunks of their cars, with police approval—not a very subtle threat of another "Greensboro" if the people dared to go on the offensive once again. Two nights before the march,

the Houston Red Squad did a raid of one of the most popular punk clubs that was having a fundraiser for the John Brown anti-Klan Committee. Thirty-five pig cars arrived at closing time and together with four undercover cops on the inside (including one with green hair), arrested eight people, including the managers of the club — mostly on "public intoxication" charges. Lee Brown and the City Council in Houston continuously repeated that anyone who went downtown will be causing violence and is looking to get arrested.

Despite all threats, thousands of people came out to oppose the KKK and these reactionary attacks on the foreign born. People once again traveled from various Texas cities to be there. A significant number of people from Mexico, Guatemala and El Salvador, risking deportation on top of all the other threats, were on the frontlines with youth of all nationalities born in this country. In

the midst of a very tense situation that was not quite under control by the pigs for all of their effort, dozens of *Revolutionary Workers* were sold, with many people asking for them as the debate over "what can we really do to stop the KKK once and for all" raged in the streets. Some punks took up the Spanish and English banners that read: "We Are All Illegals, We are Proletarians, We Have No Country," jumping to the top of a wall so all could see it and agitating about how the KKK was exactly what America was all about. The bourgeoisie's press summed it up by saying that, "The sheer number of officers seemed to be the most effective deterrent as protesters were kept well away from the marchers." But that isn't all that happened that day. As a youth said, pointing to the hundreds of pigs after they hustled the KKKers on buses, "We want to thank you for teaching us some important lessons today." □

"Now, the cable, I mean the envelope...please"

When the nominations for the 1983 Academy Awards were announced on Feb. 18, conspicuously absent from the list was *Yol* by the revolutionary filmmaker from Turkey, Yilmaz Güney. *Yol* was one of several films considered "shoo-ins" for nomination in the Best Foreign Film category. After all, this masterpiece did win the Palme D'Or, Best Picture, the International Critics Prize, Best Film and the International Catholic Film Prize at the most prestigious international film festival in the Western imperialist bloc, the Cannes Film Festival.

So what happened? Well, in the Feb. 4 edition of the *Washington Post* Jack Anderson, well-known CIA leak (perhaps "flood" would be a better word) wrote an article sharply laying out some of the

political stakes involved in the potential nomination of *Yol* for an Oscar. Entitled "Everyone's a Critic," he bluntly stated, "Oscar time is approaching, but if the Turkish movie '*Yol*' wins any recognition from Hollywood the Reagan administration and the Turkish government will be equally unhappy." Describing Yilmaz Güney as "a fugitive Turkish leftist" he went on to describe how "confidential cables have been crackling between Ankara and Washington over '*Yol*' and especially about its director," around whom it seems a worrisome "romantic mythology" has grown up, which needs to be "debunked". Strong stuff. In fact if this isn't a call to thumbs-down this movie for a nomination then what else is it?

This is a rare event indeed; seldom in the land of "artistic freedom" and "anything

goes but nothing matters" is so blatant a display made of imperialist plotting and scheming against revolutionary art and artists. Of course such goings-on in the sphere of art do not come as a total shock to those who have followed the bloody tracks of imperialism through the hallowed ground of the art world, but still it's refreshing when they just come right out with it!

What may also be a little surprising is the seeming inconsistency of a film that cleans up in the Cannes Festival not even getting nominated for an Oscar. What was pointed out in the *RW* review of *Yol* (No. 192) was that what enabled this film to win at Cannes was both the ideological and political power of the line of Yilmaz Güney and his comrades AND the fact that "there are some differences within

the U.S. bloc on how to deal with the current government of Turkey." That these differences exist is evidenced by the fact that this film was even submitted to the Academy Awards in the first place. A requirement of the foreign film award is that each country gets to submit one film to the nominating committee. Of course Turkey, where *Yol* is officially banned, was not about to submit it; and the film was ultimately entered by Switzerland.

While we are not privy to the decision-making process of the 160-member panel that picked the nominations from about 30 different entries, and don't know exactly what all they took into account, we must admit that we have been left wondering along with certain progressive people in the film industry, "Where the hell do those people get their taste?" □

Chicago...

Continued from page 11

due consideration to the CHA as a vehicle for patronage. This more than anything, may explain why the CHA has been unwilling, possibly even unable, to implement the recommended changes."

The controversy around the CHA played an important role in galvanizing opposition among Black people to Byrne in the spring and summer.

Of more long-ranging significance was a recent federal court decision that redrew the ward maps for virtually the entire city of Chicago in order to ensure electoral representation for Black people and Latinos (Under Daley, many wards had been systematically gerrymandered to ensure white representation. A map drawn up by the City Council under Byrne was ruled in violation of the Voting Rights Act.) Re-maps are the usual practice in the wake of census reports; but what was unusual in this case was that the Justice Department intervened on the side of the plaintiffs in the suit which initiated the process, which included many Black and Latino community organizations, actually becoming a party in the suit against the city of Chicago. Among other changes, the suit resulted in the creation of two new wards with majority Latino populations.

The Feds' efforts to curtail the strength of the Byrne campaign — and in the long run to help shake the machine out of its entrenched position — came to a head around the election itself when U.S. Attorney Dan Webb promised a massive federal presence to oversee the balloting for the first time in a local Chicago election. Since resurrecting the dead to go to the polls, persuasion to vote the "right way" from goon squads, \$5 payoffs and wine have been machine election practices for decades, this sudden concern over "a fair election" is somewhat belated. But no matter, off of last November's election, Dan Webb began an investigation into vote fraud that resulted in five timely indictments just three days before the primary. On election day itself, Chicago was overrun by a small army patrolling the polling places — 90 federal prosecutors backed up federal marshalls and FBI agents. Webb also announced that federal protection would be extended to all voting records in the mayoral primary, meaning that anyone committing vote fraud could be subjected to federal charges.

Now, given all this, the emergence of the Washington campaign would appear to be hardly coincidental, certainly not the simple product of a "progressive coalition" of rank and file citizens, as some have argued. Before the primary, *Crane's Chicago Business*, a kind of local version of the *Wall Street Journal*, ran a favorable article on Washington, pitched toward the business community. After praising Washington's effectiveness as a legislator, the article concludes: "It is clear from a wide-ranging interview last week and from Rep. Washington's record that while the Congressman wants to rock the boat in Chicago, he doesn't want to sink it." This is accurate. It isn't a question of "overthrowing" the machine: it's a question of roping it in. Some heads may roll in the process, but at the

same time, it has been and will be fully necessary to come to terms with large numbers of Democratic party hacks — both Black and white.

Even in the event that Washington doesn't win, the forays by the Feds will continue, and the campaign will still have elevated all this bourgeois maneuvering to the pedestal of "popular demands." And besides this, it will have stimulated what's referred to as "voter interest," so vital to democracy, especially these days, especially as regards the dispossessed.

"Commitment to the Ballot"

In an October 11, 1982 editorial entitled "The Rush to Register," the *Chicago Tribune* proclaimed, "One fact about the coming elections is hard to explain and impossible to ignore: the astonishing success of a voter registration drive among the black and poor Chicagoans... This is exciting news. It hints at a new age for Chicago politics — one in which no race, no ethnic grouping, no economic class can be taken for granted by any party, and leaders have to win their own votes instead of taking title to them. Anything can happen in a city where elections are decided by conscious choice instead of automatic habit."

The voter registration drive isn't really all that hard to explain. Even before the entry of the credible "independent" Black candidate Washington, many creative methods were employed in the voter registration drives: The El Rukn street gang combed the projects, turning out voters. A Black southside priest (the Church is a powerful institution in Chicago's Black areas as well as white) threatened to ban non-registrants from his church. An army of activists, even a number of so-called revolutionaries, signed up for the effort.

In a post-primary column entitled "Blacks Show Faith in the Ballot Box," *Tribune* writer Vernon Jarrett summed the results up as follows: "What a magnificent rally. The historic coming together of supporters of Harold Washington for mayor of Chicago. Regardless of the outcome of the February 22 primary election, history was made on this city's once riot-torn West side last Sunday afternoon when a largely black crowd collectively voiced its commitment to the use of the ballot."

Without question, this is a major concern. An entire study was devoted to the issue by the Urban League, a Rockefeller funded outfit, entitled "Why Chicago's Blacks Do Not Register and Vote." Published in September, 1981, the study is specifically looking toward the 1983 mayoral race. The study found that 73% of the potential Black electorate was registered to vote, but generally only 50-60% of these actually turn out in an election. More recently, the Urban League estimated that the Chicago voter registration drives lifted the number of registered voters by 175,000 to a total of 600,000, while the number unregistered stands at 175,000. The study contains the typical moanings that, "Many Blacks do not participate (in the electoral process) both because they are young, poorly educated, and lack pertinent knowledge, relevant experience, and to some extent interest."

What all this adds up to is that there was some shrewd, cynical thinking behind a statement made by Jesse Jackson on the

Who Gets Hung on this Rope?

For a bizarre, "Leninist" twist on the "support Washington" line, we turn to Amiri Baraka, speaking before the primary at a conference in Chicago entitled: "Black People and Politics; The Mayoral and Presidential Elections." In his speech, Baraka criticized himself for his own naiveté in working for the election of Black mayor Kenneth Gibson of Newark. He criticizes Gibson as a representative of "white racist monopoly capitalism" — but then he turns right around to urge Black people to work for the election of Black candidates in general!

"Too often in these Black enclaves with all-white power structures, nationalist misanalysis can be encouraged. But once a Black bureaucratic bourgeois and petit-bourgeois elite assume formal political administration and management of these Black majority and plurality cities, then not only the most advanced elements of the Black Liberation movement, but even many of the middle forces, will come to see the basic importance of class analysis rather than race politics or simple nationalism in the face of the blatant abuse of the Black masses that these Black management elites perpetuate."

This is a take-off on certain arguments Lenin made in his famous book, "Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder. The thought is a bit distorted in service of Baraka's particular political niche, but the basic idea is clear enough: Washington must be supported "like a rope supports a hanging man." Other people around Chicago made this argument explicitly. The idea is that Washington should be supported by revolutionaries who — in the course of voter registration drives, the campaign, and what not — maintain their "right to criticize" and an "independent revolutionary line." When Washington gets elected, his class nature will be exposed to the masses because his solutions will have proved to be bankrupt. Then, the solutions of the revolutionaries will be right on the agenda.

Well, for one thing, there seems to have been precious little criticism by these revolutionaries around Chicago over the

last couple months. Submersion into the campaign, yes — but "independence"? Mainly, though, Baraka's whole argument is deadly; it is nothing but the never-ending treadmill logic of picking the "lesser of the two evils."

The result of the last Chicago mayoral election was hailed by a number of so-called "Leninist" leftists as a victory for the working class against the "shoot-to-kill" Daley machine. The CP, for example, told its readers that they "had a stake" in Byrne's victory in that election and then in "finishing the job." Did the bourgeoisie hang with the election of Jane Byrne? The particularities of the present election do not change the essential content of this supposedly "revolutionary" strategy one bit — unless, perhaps, these so-called revolutionaries view with approval the efforts of the Justice Dept., et al. A close associate of Washington's, interviewed on the Chicago National Public Radio affiliate, stated: "Harold Washington told me just the other day that he thinks that 97% of the police are good..." Washington publicly described "most" of the Chicago pigs as "first rate people." Even allowing for the crude opportunism here, who do the so-called revolutionaries think will be hanging this time next year if either Washington or Epton is in office? They are training the masses of people exactly in the logic of choosing the "lesser of two evils," a well-worn rope with which the masses of oppressed are regularly lynched under bourgeois democracy.

As Lenin used it, the "rope supports a hanging man" argument is not applicable under today's conditions. It may or may not have application, depending on a very particular set of circumstances, in the future, in stages of the revolutionary process which are immediately potentially transitional to a move for the seizure of power by the proletariat. Even then, of course, if made constantly and needlessly applicable, there will always be another bourgeois politician to support "like a hanging man" until we can hang up the revolutionary opportunity which will pass by. The bourgeoisie will never completely run out of alternatives with some credibility among the masses. Lenin himself recognized this, knowing how to compromise, to tack and veer when necessary, and also knowing how not to when necessary. Unfortunately, political opportunists of the "revolutionary" type will also never run out of attempts to sell people on bourgeois politics in the name of Leninism. □

night of Washington's primary victory: "Tonight, Fred Hampton can rest easy."

The Biggies Visit Chicago

"The Big Capitalists," wrote the revisionist CPUSA in a recent edition of *Political Affairs*, "will stop at nothing to prevent Harold Washington from winning the mayoral election." This assertion is laughable on the face of it. Whether or not Washington actually wins, it is clear he hasn't exactly been bucking an avalanche of "big capital" opposition.

The Congressman has won the endorsement of both major Chicago newspapers, the accolades of no less than the

New York Times and the *Wall Street Journal*. An almost unbelievable stream of national Democratic party leaders — Kennedy, Mondale, you name it — have paraded through town, stumping for Washington. This is, of course, tied in with the 1984 presidential elections, at which time, according to the CP (for lack of a better witness), an "anti-Reagan tidal wave" will crash down on the White House.

It has all just gotten a little bit bizarre. The *Chicago Sun-Times* reports on a luncheon organized for Washington, where he was flanked on one side by Ted-

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Tennis Anyone?

U.S. Takes a Shot at Chinese Revisionists

Hu Na, a 19-year-old Chinese tennis player who defected from China's national team during an international tournament in California last July, was granted political asylum by the U.S. government on April 4. Her case received prominent coverage in the U.S. media, including articles in major newspapers and a segment on ABC's *Nightline*. Indeed, Hu Na has proved very useful to the U.S. imperialists in delivering some ideological smash volleys against "communist totalitarianism" as well as in sending a reminder to the Chinese revisionists that they are after all only junior partners in the U.S. war team and had better follow the dictates of the team's captain.

In applying for political asylum, Hu Na, the top-rated woman tennis player in China, contended that she was being pressured to join the Communist Party and to attribute her successes on the court to the party. Because she refused to join the party, she claimed, she feared political persecution. So to the rescue comes the U.S., the torch bearer of freedom and democracy, whose athletes can pursue perfection of their skills, fame and multi-million dollar contracts and prize money without worrying about political interference and pressure, in contrast to places like China where athletes are mere political pawns. As a syndicated columnist George Will declared, asylum for Hu Na "is clear comment on China's ugly, irrational

totalitarianism... It clearly expresses this belief concerning China's assurances that Hu would not be persecuted were she to return."

Perish the thought that athletes in the U.S. are subject to such political and ideological pressures to avail themselves for the interest of U.S. imperialism! Never mind that John Carlos and Tommie Smith were blacklisted from the sports world and harassed for years after they defiantly turned their backs to the American flag and raised clenched fists at the awards ceremony during the 1968 Mexico City Olympics. Or that the national oppression that exists in society is perfectly mirrored in college and professional sports, for example in the lopsidedly white composition of managerial and coaching staffs and "skill" positions on the field, which is consciously and systematically maintained. The boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics as a retaliation for the invasion of Afghanistan—that is somehow different from how the other side uses sports as a political weapon.

Actually Hu Na herself is a product of the bourgeois ideology and politics promoted by the revisionist rulers in China, including in the sphere of sports. In an interview, she suggested that one of the reasons the Chinese regime wants her back is that she often played doubles with Wan Li, a member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese CP Politburo and a close associate of Deng Xiaoping, who

would lecture her on "communist ideology" after their play. (The U.S. imperialists were not to be outdone. While in Washington, D.C., lobbying for her cause, Hu Na played doubles with the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs and Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Adviser.) Undoubtedly, the "communist ideology" that the top-dog revisionists tried to instill in her was not the spirit of "friendship first, competition second" that was encouraged when China was socialist, but rather chauvinism and individualism along the lines of "become a world class superstar, smash the opponent to pieces and win fame and glory for China as well as yourself." As this personal attention from a highly placed revisionist shows, Hu Na was a valuable commodity for them, and Deng himself is said to have taken the "unusual" step of personally demanding her return in meetings with several visiting U.S. officials. With such training, it is not surprising that as she traveled the tennis circuits in places like Japan, Hong Kong, France and the U.S., she became mightily impressed with "how good it is" in the West and decided her individual interests were better served in the U.S. rather than in China. Her case is not unique; as many as 10% of the estimated 10,000-11,000 Chinese on extended visas in the U.S. have applied for political asylum.

It seems that the Hu Na case, because of the broad publicity given to it and the embarrassment it has caused, has stung the Chinese revisionists more than some of the other slaps that they have received from the U.S. lately. They announced that all remaining cultural exchanges for 1983 will be immediately halted. They could not let the theft of their top-rated tennis star—a theft which was widely known to be instigated by Taiwan and consummated by the U.S.—without doing something. But the feebleness of their "strong protest" is apparent if one looks at the reality of the U.S.-China relationship. Many of the top revisionists themselves send their sons and daughters to study in the U.S. and learn from the "advanced" ways of the West. And in general they desperately thirst for infusions of technology and capital from the West to pursue their "modernization." They may halt a few cultural exchanges, but in the end they will also swallow the necessary humiliation that goes along with being on the short end of relations with an imperialist power.

In announcing the approval of Hu Na's political asylum, a Justice Department spokesman said that, "relations with China were not a factor to be considered on this case." But such a statement only underscores the fact that the Hu Na case was very much connected with the U.S.-China relations. It was

reported that there were some differences of opinion within the U.S. government over the handling of the case. Of course, had Hu Na been a defector from the Soviet bloc countries there would have been no questions raised about granting her a speedy political asylum and making full use of this to score some points against their rival Soviet imperialists. However, while both the Chinese and Soviet bourgeoisies are revisionists parading under a phony signboard of "communism," China is part of the U.S. camp and allied against the Soviet bloc in the present international situation. There has been an ongoing debate within the U.S. ruling class over the reliability of the "China card" and over how best to use the carrot and stick to keep the Chinese revisionists in line in the war bloc. This debate surfaced again around the Hu Na case.

According to the *New York Times*, the State Department's China Desk, concerned about the effects on relations with China, recommended against granting asylum but was overruled. There was also concern within the Immigration Service that giving Hu Na asylum would set a precedent for other Chinese who have applied for asylum. According to the Justice Department, the final decision was made "at the highest levels" of the Immigration Service and the Attorney General was consulted at every point and was "extremely pleased with the decision." Clearly, the U.S. imperialists see a need to pull the leash and apply some whip to the Chinese revisionists, especially since the Sino-Soviet talks that started last October are in part an effort by the Chinese to create some more maneuvering room for themselves by flashing their "Soviet card" at the U.S. The Hu Na case is one of a series of recent moves by the U.S. directed at China, like public statements by Reagan emphasizing friendship with Taiwan, quotas against imported Chinese textiles or a \$41 million judgment against the Chinese government in a federal court in favor of a group of Americans who have sued to get back the principle and interest on a 1911 railroad bond issued by the Qing dynasty. These also serve as scraps of meat thrown to the Kuomintang regime in Taiwan to keep them happy. At the same time, Hu Na was quoted as saying that she believes "it is in the best interests of China and the U.S. for the relations between the two countries to improve and grow," thus keeping the underlying anti-Soviet strategic relationship between the U.S. and China in perspective.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* in its editorial wishes Hu Na "a quietly successful continuation of her education in democracy." Her political asylum case has already provided quite an education in the workings of U.S. imperialism. □

Chicago

Continued from page 11

dy Kennedy and, interestingly, on the other by Cook County Democratic Chairman, "Fast Eddy" Vrdolyak. (Vrdolyak, a Byrne ally, had bucked the Washington victory earlier, but now had seen the light. We have received reports that he has attempted to assuage his constituency by spreading the word throughout his ward that "publicly" he is for Washington, but "privately" he is for Epton!) The same day as the luncheon, the *Sun-Times* reports, Washington got another boost from curious quarters. "In a symbolic gesture, 12 Southern Democratic state chairmen also appeared to stump for Washington... the Southern Democratic officials, who had been organized by Georgia chairman Bert Lance, endorsed Washington." The Dixiecrats! A symbolic gesture indeed—and one intended to keep the racists in the Democratic party. While we overheard no private discussions, one can imagine the approach: "For Christ's sake y'all—at least he's a Democrat."

Beyond these facts, we would simply like to point out that among the many well connected people on the transition team that Washington recently announced, three names deserve special attention: John Perkins, chairman of Continental Bank; Barry Sullivan, chairman of First National Bank; and Robert Wilmouth, chairman of La Salle National Bank.

It's important to take stock of the fact that the turmoil which has come about (though set into motion by the bourgeoisie) is, as mentioned earlier, not without its positive aspects. Things have been shaken loose to some degree, and a generally stultifying atmosphere thrown into a certain amount of turmoil. Everybody is talking about racism, for example. They are not talking on revolutionary terms, obviously. But splits, cracks and contradictions have set them talking—and thinking—nonetheless. In the future, in some remotely analogous situation, it may not be as easy to keep the fallout from internecine disputes within the bourgeois limits they have been confined to in this case. Then things could really get interesting.

Revolutionaries should not only take stock of this present turmoil, but they should also take advantage of it—to do revolutionary work!

Unfortunately, though, the Washington campaign itself has drawn the active support of a number of people inclined toward revolutionary politics, many of

whom in the past have had an easier time avoiding the temptations of the electoral trap. This election, it is said, is different.

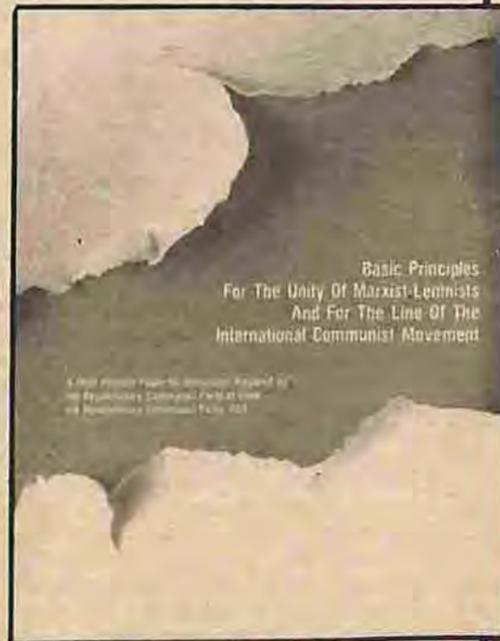
More than anything, the overt racist reaction has been rallying progressive people to Washington. Analysis of the actual forces at work, though, makes it clear that rather than sticking it to the racists, such support for any of the candidates in this election simply turns one into a pawn in the strategies of the big bourgeoisie. Even without all that has been said above about the particular features of the Washington campaign, given the last 15 years of history in this country, it would hardly seem necessary to show that the election of Black mayors doesn't mean any less brutality heaped down on the masses of people. Can anybody seriously argue differently about Detroit, L.A., or—for god's sake—Atlanta? Does this have to be demonstrated in every single city where Black people live before any conclusions are drawn?

Working for Washington isn't working for revolution. Ironically, some people reject work which is genuinely preparation for revolution on the basis that the activity of a relatively small number of politically advanced people can't "make a difference." On the other hand, here are the same people—a relatively small number of politically advanced people—stumping for Washington! Evidently they think they can "make a difference" here.

But the difference made by spreading the illusion that the election of Harold Washington will in any way change things for the masses of people is the difference between fighting to sustain the life of this putrid system and fighting to end it. Why? Because until the proletariat learns to recognize and distinguish its own class interests, it will be the continual victim of any and every demagogue that comes along, the constant victim of deception and the unconscious tool of every bourgeois scheme that comes down the pipe. As long as the system exists, the bourgeoisie will never run out of demagogues. And as long as the advanced in society insist on handing over the masses to these demagogues, then these same masses will be enslaved: They will grope in the dark for cynical promises that offer the smallest reform, as is mainly the case today—or, when things sharpen up in the future, they will still be fooled and unable to recognize that during a revolutionary crisis, as Lenin put it, "every scoundrel becomes a revolutionary." □

A draft document from the Revolutionary Communist Party of Chile and the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA for discussion in the international communist movement and within their respective Parties. The document was submitted to the autumn 1980 international conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and organizations, which held that, "on the whole, the text is a positive contribution toward the elaboration of a correct general line for the international communist movement. With this perspective, the text should be circulated and discussed not only in the ranks of those organizations who have signed this communique, but throughout the ranks of the international communist movement."

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We really must thank U.S. Ambassador to the UN Jeane Kirkpatrick for the lesson in imperial political "science" she recently delivered on an ABC *Nightline* show. In a discussion centering on the wave of reactionary assaults currently taking place in Nicaragua (for more on this, see last week's *RW*), Kirkpatrick was asked if the U.S. was trying to overthrow the Sandinista regime. After a brief look down her nose to study her fingernails — a pose that she managed to repeat several times during the interview — the Madam Ambassador replied that Lord knows the U.S. had tried to get the Sandinistas to cooperate and hold U.S.-style elections, replace Cuban and other Soviet-bloc advisers with the U.S.-bloc kind, and otherwise join in the benefits and privileges that come with being a U.S. lackey regime in Central America. But Nicaragua's rulers had stubbornly refused and continued to gravitate towards the Soviet bloc. Now, class, governments (of a certain type) try economic pressure and political pressure to get their way, and if none of that works, *military* pressure is certainly quite available to them. However, none of this

should be seen as an admission that the U.S. is, in fact, actually engaged in an effort to *overthrow* the Sandinistas; why, nothing could be further from the truth — especially when there is no chance of success right now. In the first place, the U.S. is officially admitting nothing — and in the second place they are officially admitting that it is all *harassment* to get the Sandinistas to cooperate. Class dismissed.

Students of history will note that all obsolete classes manage to put forward fitting representatives — from the French feudal monarchy's "let them eat cake" queen Marie Antoinette, to the U.S. imperialist bureaucracy's "let them eat bullets" death squad queen, Jeane Kirkpatrick. But Kirkpatrick should be given some credit. When the Nicaraguan foreign minister, in the course of his offers to take Nicaragua's case to the UN, the "American Congress and American people" and any other imperial forum, managed to characterize Kirkpatrick's comments as "sick logic," it became clear that the death squad queen had accomplished a difficult task — she almost made the revisionists look *good*. □

A Clarification By The Death Squad Queen

Soviet

Continued from page 5

backward regions, play a disproportionately important role in imperialist accumulation. On the other hand, a given imperialist country may be cut out from such opportunities. Germany, for instance, in the interwar period was not able to export massive amounts of capital. Its economy did not immediately fall apart... but it had to go to war, and it was certainly no less an imperialist power than Great Britain.

The Soviet Union is gripped by the compulsion of an internationalized mode of production. There are forces pulling capital outward, yet the present division of the world and structure of world capital does not permit either the volume of such flows or the requisite reorganization of capital internationally to fuel an expansionary process. There is a specific dynamic of crisis within the Soviet bloc — it involves a division of labor turning into its opposite, historic difficulties in agriculture, the reverberations of military spending, among other factors. This in turn interacts with the crisis in the West. Lacking the ability to expand on a new basis, the structure of capital in that bloc turns ever more wrenchingly in on itself, heightening all its contradictions.

The interplay between rivalry and crisis can be briefly illustrated. The Soviet Union has been able to make some inroads into various "third world" countries. In Egypt, it could offer military assistance and aid in the construction of the Aswan Dam. Yet the relative economic weakness of Soviet social-imperialism, *vis-à-vis* the U.S., showed itself in this particular instance of rivalry. The Soviet Union lost Egypt back to the U.S. bloc, in part, because it lacked comparable reserves and international networks (I.M.F. and World Bank-type institutions) to tear the Egyptian economy decisively away from the West and to successfully carry out the kind of imperialist-sponsored restructuring that might buoy it up temporarily. The faster growth Egypt experienced once it fell back into the Western orbit has, of course, led to more serious economic dislocations. And this speaks to a related point. The Soviet Union often makes gains in such countries at U.S. expense after several decades of distorted and disarticulated development and at a time when the world is convulsed by an unprecedented crisis. It can and does provide substantial military support and some project aid. But experiences as diverse as those of Egypt and Vietnam reveal that outside a complete recasting of international relations, the Soviet Union runs into insurmountable problems in their attempts to consummate these gains.

In Poland, a serious economic and political crisis has virtually paralyzed that country and has presented the Soviet bloc with a dilemma. On the one hand, the Soviet Union lacks the capacity to produce any significant measures and initiatives to even paper over the cracks of that economy. The situation can only grow worse. Indeed, Western financial

assistance has been relied on, and this in turn increases Western leverage while compounding an already serious financial crisis in the West. On the other hand, despite a potential challenge to revisionist rule, the Soviets have gingerly avoided sending troops in, as this would not only detonate mass resistance but also jeopardize their attempts to woo some of the West European imperialists (as part of their larger strategic plans). And so, the crisis intensifies.

The point is that the Soviets cannot resolve the crisis in their own bloc within the bounds of the existing division of the world. Nor can they allow the U.S. bloc to obtain the more favorable division of the world which it just as desperately needs. This is the compulsion they face, and the same applies to the U.S.-led bloc. The severity of crisis in the Soviet Union and its bloc, like that of the western bloc, cannot be measured chiefly in terms of indices of industrial output or unemployment — although these are by no means insignificant. Rather one must look to the explosive interaction of political and economic crisis with global rivalry, to the necessities these contradictions foist on the imperialist powers.

In short, it is the presently existing division of the world that confronts the USSR as *the* central obstacle to a resolution of any of the major strands of its crisis.

II

In capitalist society, the labor process, purposive activity through which human beings make use of and transform nature, is subordinate to the value-creation process. Labor is socially useful (and employable) only insofar as it is capable of producing surplus value and meeting the demands of profitability. Efficiency and technical progress are measured in terms of their contribution to profitability. The average social profit rate on invested funds sets the norm for enterprise performance and viability, as mediated by the political factors spoken of earlier and by monopoly. Historically, revisionist political economy has held that the overarching task of socialist society is to produce in a planned way the maximum amount of products to satisfy social needs with minimum consumption of social labor: the right combination of technical efficiency and incentives (to spur greater efficiency) will lead to abundance which is the key to advancing society to a higher level. But economy of time is achieved within and serves definite production and class relations. In capitalist society, the urge to produce more with less labor is the requirement of maximizing profit with a minimum of capital. In a genuine socialist economy, the value-creation process is subordinate to the socialist labor process and the conscious activity of the masses, exchange value is subordinate to use value, and economy of time is subordinate to and governed by revolutionary, proletarian politics. What, then, is meant by the capital relation and its dominance?

In 1981, Bob Avakian posited this definition of capital in a ground-breaking work summing up the historical experience of the international proletariat:

"Capital is a social relation and a process, whose essence is indeed the domination by alien, antagonistic interests over labor power and the continual (and extended) reproduction of that... It means that... labor power is controlled and utilized on an expanded basis to reproduce relationships which are alien to them [the workers] and opposed to them."

As applied to socialist society:

"If ownership has been (in the main) socialized, if a correct line is in command... which means that the division of labor as well as differences in distribution are being restricted to the greatest degree possible... if the motion is toward eliminating these things, then how can it be said that a force opposed to the proletariat has domination over its labor power or even a force alien to it, in the fundamental sense?"*

This understanding is crucial if we are to evaluate what actually goes on in a society. The RCP has long emphasized that the existence of socialism is a question of the socialist road rather than a question of certain fixed attributes. It is a question of the direction society is moving in. In other words, in determining whether the capital relation is dominant in the Soviet Union, it is necessary, first and foremost, to examine what social labor is in the service of, whether the masses are being mobilized to transform society in the direction of communism and for the purpose of contributing to world revolution. That some of the institutional forms of monopoly capitalism in the West (juridically private ownership of means of production, stock exchanges, etc.) are absent, tells us very little. That some of the social "insecurities" of premonopoly capitalism have been attenuated, that some sections of the working class have seen their living standards rise for extended periods, that some workers may even be "happy" with their lot, is scarcely proof that socialism exists.

For the revisionists, socialism turns on a *quid pro quo*, a kind of social compact — in exchange for their labor power the workers receive a social wage: cradle-to-grave security enlivened by some perfunctory "worker participation." For those theorists who reduce the capital relation to the mere existence of commodity relations and the division of labor inherited from capitalism, a position strongly implied in the recent writings of Charles Bettelheim, the acid test of the dominance or nondominance of that relation is worker control in factories. Now the persistence and reproduction of commodity relations and a division of labor still marked by inequalities are part of the material basis for the restoration of capitalism. But the existence of these relations as such is not tantamount to capitalism. Again, capital is a *societal* relation: "what are you working for, what is your labor power being applied

to?"

This brings into sharper relief the central role of the superstructure and the decisiveness of ideological and political line in socialist society. Socialism is a contradictory entity in which newly developing production and social relations are in conflict with regenerated capitalist relations. Socialism, as "Tarnished" stresses, is a coherent system and yet, at the same time, a checkerboard of contested zones, with bourgeois forces in control here and proletarian forces in control there. What makes such a society socialist is the fact that a proletarian line is overall in command, that society is on the socialist road, overcoming bourgeois relations, and, most important, functioning as a base area for world revolution.

III

The task of proletarian revolution is to abolish class distinctions generally, to abolish all the relations of production on which they rest, to abolish all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, and to revolutionize all the ideas that result from these social relations. Chang Chun-chiao, in summarizing Marx on this point, concludes:

"In all the four cases, Marx means *all*. Not a part, a greater part, or even the greatest part, but all! This is nothing surprising, for only by emancipating all mankind can the proletariat achieve its own final emancipation. The only way to attain this goal is to exercise all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie and carry the continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through to the end, until the above-mentioned four *alls* are banished from the earth so that it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes to exist or for new ones to arise..."*

The material, social and ideological underpinnings of capitalism cannot be eliminated in one stroke. Further, capitalism can adapt itself to any variety of institutional forms (capitalism exists as kibbutz in Israel, workers' "self-administration" in Yugoslavia, and Committees to Defend the Revolution in Cuba). This is not because capital thrives in the celestial mists, but exactly in the "deep structure" of society. Capitalism does not reside in any single legal property relation between individual men and the means of production. In the real world it consists of a network of relations between social classes, relations which have a material foundation in commodity production, in the differences between mental and manual labor, town and country, etc., and which are expressed through the complex, dialectical interaction between base and superstructure. Thus, there is no form or structure which, by dint of its "innate characteristics," is impervious to capitalism. For these

*Chang Chun-chiao, "On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie," in Raymond Lotta, *And Mao Makes Five* (Chicago: Banner Press, 1978) pp. 216-17.

*Bob Avakian, *Conquer the World? The International Proletariat Must and Will*, special issue of *Revolution*, No. 50 (December 1981), p. 29.

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Soviet Social-Imperialism

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reasons, society must be repeatedly "sprung into the air," the most thoroughgoing process of revolution is necessary if communism is to be achieved. Indeed, unless this happens, capitalism reemerges.

But all the necessary transformations of society toward communism cannot be conducted in one country alone. The contradictions between forces and relations of production and between base and superstructure and the class struggle in socialist society are rooted in the contradiction between socialized production and private appropriation, which has international motion and development. This brings us back to the dominance of the bourgeois mode of production in the world as a whole, the role of the world market, and the concentration of imperialism's contradictions in the world arena. We live in a period of worldwide transition from the bourgeois epoch to the epoch of world communism. The socialist countries that come into being in this period are integrated into this overall process of transition. The international context sets the basic parameters for revolutionary struggle. Thus, the contradictions of the world imperialist system and the international class struggle react back upon the socialist countries.

The period of proletarian rule in China furnishes some useful examples of the influence of an international dynamic. The Chinese road to socialism was associated with the policies of combining small and medium industry with large industry, of encouraging agricultural self-sufficiency and local self-reliance in industry, and saw millions go into the countryside. These policies contributed profoundly to narrowing the differences between town and country and between worker and peasant; they were seeds of the future insofar as Mao was consciously striving to avoid the trajectory of lopsided industrial development, with all its oppressive social consequences, characteristic of the West. But these policies were also influenced by the necessity of preparing to fight a people's war against imperialism on the most favorable ground. Similarly, the terms of the struggle within the Chinese Communist Party in the early 1970s were very much conditioned by the intensifying drive toward war between

the two imperialist blocs. This interpenetrated with questions of economic and military strategy — how far to restrict and narrow social differences, monetary policy, etc. The real danger of war and invasion by imperialist powers with vastly more sophisticated military arsenals objectively strengthened the position of the capitulationist forces within the CPC, who eventually won out.

At the same time, a backward country like China was forced to develop within the confines of a world economy dominated by imperialism. More generally, the socialist revolutions of the twentieth century have faced enormous economic strains. Even when China's direct commercial contacts with the West were minimal, it was, nonetheless, affected by the objective structure of world capital and the international division of labor. The fact that there was a real opportunity to open its oil fields to Japanese capital, that finance capital's ability to centralize and reallocate capital results in "newly industrializing countries," à la Brazil — in a word, that internationalized movements of capital and real differences in productive efficiencies exist in the world — all this impacted on the struggle over the allocation of China's resources. The revolutionaries struggled to stick to the Chinese road to socialism while the revisionists, particularly as China ran up against certain economic difficulties, could argue for some "practical" alternatives. Which raises a far more profound question.

Since communism can only be established on a world scale, there are limits to the transformations that can be carried out in particular socialist countries. In the essay referred to earlier, Bob Avakian analyzed why breakthroughs in a socialist country can ultimately turn into their opposite unless the international proletariat seizes new ground in the world:

"In terms of maintaining power and advancing further on the socialist road — and not just from the standpoint of a socialist state but in particular from the standpoint of the international proletariat — the question is much more that there is a limit...to how far you can go in transforming the base and superstructure within the socialist

country without making further advances in winning and transforming more of the world; not in terms of conquering more resources or people as the imperialists do, but in terms of making revolutionary transformations...[F]irst of all...there is the ideological influence, as well as the actual military and political and other pressure, from the imperialist encirclement. But there's also the fact that this is the era of a single world process and that has a material foundation, it's not just an idea. What may be rational in terms of the production, even, and utilization of labor power and resources within a single country, carried beyond a certain point, while it may seem rational for that country, is irrational if you actually look upon a world scale. And that reacts upon that country and becomes an incorrect policy, not the best utilization of things even within that country, and begins to work not only against the development of the productive forces but, dialectically related to that, against the further transformation in the production relations (or the economic base) and the superstructure..."

The imperialists, of course, have their own versions of international rationality: theories of comparative advantage, neocolonial "new economic orders," the social-imperialist "socialist division of labor," *ad nauseam*. But these are merely vehicles to export capital and dominate the oppressed nations. Avakian is talking about the transformation of the world in the image of the international proletariat.

The imperialists operate according to compulsion rooted in the expand-or-die character of capital. The proletariat has its own, qualitatively different, compulsion, rooted in the historic necessity of abolishing the four "alls" on a world scale. This is why the main energies and efforts of a socialist country must be bent towards promoting world revolution and why, during those moments when the contradictions of the imperialist system come to a head on a world scale and when it becomes possible for the international proletariat to make qualitative breakthroughs, it must be prepared to "put everything on the line."

That the proletarian revolution is in its historic infancy and aims at nothing less than transforming all exploitative relations and ideas means that this is an era of

*Avakian, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

revolution and counterrevolution on a world scale, of protracted and tortuous struggle. This view exists in opposition to the mechanical notion, now proven incorrect by historical experience, that the ultimate victory of world revolution is an arithmetic sum of separate national revolutions where socialism was simply and decisively "secured" in one country after another. The revisionists inveigh against Maoist "pessimism," and blast us for refusing to accept that there is some elixir that "locks" a society into socialism. Needless to say, not only is this not possible, it is not desirable, in the sense that socialism is not an end in itself, but a transit point to communism and a base area for world revolution. In point of fact, no social order is "stable" in this epoch. The internationalization and intensification of capital's contradictions stamp this era as the most violent and turbulent in human history. Capitalist restoration is not the inevitable inheritor of any given revolutionary process in any given country. But if we look on a world scale, the epoch we live in is, as the Chinese revolutionaries emphasized, one of restoration and counterrestoration. Imperialism can only lead to more devastating crises and wars; capitalist roaders in power can only make a mess of things; and counterrevolution begets revolution.

Not only does oppression inevitably produce resistance, but each new advance does not start from square one. The world is not standing still. Historical development continually ripens the material basis for classless society. And with each new decisive contest, there is a deepening of the scientific understanding of the subjective forces. In a spiral-like motion passing through both victory and defeat, and punctuated on an international level by intense periods of revolutionary storms, a real historic world process is propelled forward towards communism.

The revisionists tar us with the brush of "utopianism," ascribing to us the insistence that communism be established immediately. The claim is absurd... then again if napalm in Afghanistan and the stultification of social life in the Soviet Union are socialism, the confusion is perhaps understandable. Nevertheless, the dialectics of the epoch are such that unless the proletariat dares to scale the heights, unless it dares to keep advancing and win more of the world, communism can just as well be written off as a utopian dream.

March 1983

Dream

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high school as well as veterans returning from Vietnam. By 1970, Black employment was up to 13.8% nationwide in auto, with 9 of every 20 Black workers in the industry employed in the Detroit metropolitan area. Just two months after the Detroit rebellion, Henry Ford announced that the Ford Motor Company would open special offices in areas hardest hit by the uprising to hire on 5,000 Blacks. He promised to waive the normal hiring practices in order to bring "hard-core unemployed" into the automobile industry. The offices that were set up were swamped with thousands of applicants. GM (which had formerly had the smallest percentage of Black workers due to some very overtly racist hiring practices) announced at the end of 1967 that, of the 12,000 hires brought on in the period since July, 5,000 were Black. And Chrysler, which had the highest percentage of Black workers due to the inner city locations of many of its plants, set up a federally funded training program with the objective of training and hiring 4,000 Black workers from the inner-city over a two-year period. It was a time of a lot of hiring and firing. It was not unusual for young workers hired on then to quit one job in the morning and hire on at another company that same day. And while the increased Black employment was deliberately overstated for purposes of public opinion there were significant numbers of young Black proletarians hired on in the auto plants. Some of these had been unemployed for several years, others had recently gotten out of the military and some others came out of the low-paying menial jobs long reserved for Blacks. And even at that date, many were drawn up from the south

by the prospect of the auto industry jobs. One guy now in his early 30s told the *RW* a story typical of those who came from out of state at that time:

"I was growing up in Arkansas in the late '60s, my folks were sharecroppers. They had some land of their own but lost it. It was pretty slow down there in 1971 when I was 17. The only thing open to me was chopping cotton from sun up to sun down for \$6 a day. If I got lucky maybe I could have landed a job driving a tractor. We had some family who had moved up to Detroit and the word filtered back home that the auto industry was booming. I was never afraid of hard work. I figured I could get a job easy and help out the old parents at home. Things got off to a smooth enough start. I got connected with the Chrysler training program whose purpose was supposed to help you get prepared for a job. A relative, a cousin, had gone through it and got on at Chrysler. They were supposed to train you how to work on an assembly line, testing you for speed and accuracy at different jobs; and they did have part of a real assembly line in the building. But the real point of the program was 'job orientation.' Why not to be late, why not to call in sick, how to keep alert — a brain-wash. I got through the program in 6 weeks. Getting hired was like going to the old slave market. The bigshots from the plant personnel would come down. They would go through your paperwork and check your attendance record. Then they would interview you and pick you out, like 'I'll take this one over here.' I got placed in Department 9110, the body shop at Lynch Road Plant."

While employment in auto increased in this period the strains of a U.S. imperialism beginning to decline made themselves evident in intensifying exploitation inside the plant. The companies were stepping up efforts to boost

productivity. GM reorganized its assembly division into the trimmed down GMAD structure which was responsible for turning out 100 cars an hour at the Lordstown, Ohio plant. This was the period marked by intense speedup, massive overtime and conditions which sparked a flurry of strikes, including wildcats. There was a certain revolving door to hiring — only a small percentage of the new hires would actually make it through their probationary period — either laid off before then or quitting in disgust. For Black workers there was the additional strain of being forced into the dirtiest, most dangerous and lowest paying jobs. This same brother went on to talk about what it was like inside Lynch Road:

"In Department 9110, only the floor of the car had been built up. And I was a spot welder. It was like hell. There was nothing but sparks and you'd be breathing all these fumes. They called it the jungle because all these big welding guns hung down from the ceiling. They would speed up the line and then the union officials would deny it. They said, 'You're new here, you don't know what you're talking about.' But your body knew, you would get adjusted to the speed and when they raised it you felt it. There was a lot of racist shit going on. I figured, 'nothing new for a Black man.' But the foreman would take these white guys and the day they started would put them on a job in inspection. Now inspection is a clean, easy job but they would get it because they were white. They were firing Blacks for the hell of it, left and right. The foreman would get some of his suck-asses together and they would set you up. I was 'coping' with it the best I could. That was a big part of the Chrysler training program — teaching you how to 'cope' with the work environment. I was working 6, sometimes 7 days a week. I

just about lived in the plant. But the other side of it was I was a young man and the money I was making, well that was something else. They squeezed everything they could out of us in 89 days. The foreman would assign us to one of their favorites who was supposed to break us in on a new job. They just got over on us; we busted our ass and they goofed off. They would stick us on jobs nobody wanted and a lot of guys wouldn't do. We always got the worst ones. I remember messing with these big drums of grease that would burn your skin. Or having to pick up the top of those big suburban stationwagons they used to build over there. That metal would cut your hands up! But it was my bread and butter and I was so determined to hold onto that job I ignored how much I was being used. I was like a go-for — anything they told me to do I would try to do. You had to eat shit to hold onto the job. When they have the power and privilege to eliminate you, you're gonna bend. Especially when you have a couple of strikes against you to begin with — you're Black. Finally I couldn't 'cope' anymore and I started to complain. I put in for a transfer. And they did transfer me. On my 89th day I got laid off."

A lot of the guys who went through that revolving door were either recently returned from Vietnam or about to be drafted and sent there. One such "89-day wonder" told the *RW*: "I got hired on in '68. They were building those Mustangs like crazy at the Rouge and hiring hundreds a day. I got laid off before getting seniority. Two weeks later I got drafted and spent a year in Nam. That changed a lot of shit around in my head. I got discharged, got that old job back, and we raised hell in there."

While the decade of the '70s was interrupted by the sharp downturn of '74-'75,

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Vietnam Veteran Writes on May 1st

Being a proletarian within this bastion of the imperialist USA, I find the urgency of all proletarians participating in the forthcoming May 1st holiday celebration throughout the world in denouncing all forms of oppression inflicted upon us worldwide by the menaces produced from capitalism in its highest stage of imperialism. I am angry and impatient as many others to bring down the hypocritical nature of the capitalist slavedrivers — to expose their evil against the people of the world. May 1st, 1983, May Day, is such a day in expressing our anger and frustration against this capitalist beast of an oppressor. To let them (the oppressors internationally) know that we will not fall in line for the hardships they offer. That we will not submit to the crumbs they offer — for we as an international family of proletarians are in need of the whole pie. That May Day 1983 is important for the oppressed people to know who and why they are being jobless,

discriminated against on every level by this greedy nature of capitalism. That the oppressed need to realize the benefit of socialism and socialism, at that, on the road to communism worldwide. That capital in the long run benefits no one anywhere because of its greedy nature. Greed that creates unnecessary wars solely for the benefit of the few.

Now, in the '80s, the international hope of human survival is threatened by the two world imperialist blocs — the USA and the Soviet Union fighting for world domination by a third world war, a nuclear holocaust.

The nationalist seems only concerned with the homeland of which they feel they will be secure and at peace. But this is a narrowness of mind when they fail to see the imperialist shadow of death hanging over the entire human society with the arms race.

May Day '83 is a time for the advanced revolutionaries to step up and step

out — to hold high the red flag of the proletariat international in preparing ourselves politically for the seizure of power when the time has ripened to tear the roof off this motherfucking greedy system.

In 1967 I was confined to the third MAF brig in Da Nang for refusing to continue as a slave in the oppression of the Vietnamese people. In 1968 I was confined for refusing to stand guard at a nearby armory at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Later I was charged by the civilian authorities of attempted armed robbery and was convicted and sentenced for 6-10 years in the state penitentiary, which was where I was first introduced to Marxism and the *Communist Manifesto*. From my civil conviction, I was discharged from active military duty with only 12 days left with a bad conduct discharge. In other words, I was punished because I refused to fall in line. I knew in Vietnam that I and many others were ignorant slaves

— chained to carry out the execution propelled by this monstrous imperialist system. And now as I prepare politically for May Day '83 and the inevitable revolution, I have nothing to lose but my chains. The May Day '83 call is out — especially to the advanced men and women revolutionaries to arm yourselves with political preparedness to be ready when the time is right to lead the angry masses of proletarians worldwide. Special note: We are all aware of the contradictions concerning the role of the women in revolution. But let us understand this — that without the full participation and partnership of the proletarian women, there will certainly be no revolution of profound credibility. Truly women are capable as has been proven in past revolutions.

—from a Vietnam vet building for a revolutionary internationalist
May Day in Detroit

"American Dream"

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most everyone laid off in that period got back on and some additional hiring was done in '76 and '77. This period of employment represented a significant change in the conditions of life and aspirations for many who before had been locked into low-paying service jobs or just plain unemployed. Another guy laid off in '79 told us: "I started working at Chrysler in '70. Before that I never really had anything I could call my own. And then it was like the big dream was coming true. I bought my own house and for the first time there were really no big problems in my life. I was starting to get used to living a certain way." The brother from Arkansas continued:

"I thought I had made it into a different, higher bracket. I was living the poor man's dream. I was doing a lot of overtime but the money was rolling in. I thought I was at the peak, I had some finances in the bank and that gave me a sense of some backup. I was able for the first time in life to get just about what I wanted. I got a big late-model car and was buying a house. I took stock of my situation. I thought I was in this higher bracket now and as a young man I was set for life. I figured I would retire after 30 years and I'd be 48. I planned to relocate back in Arkansas, grow a garden and watch my kids get big. I'd have that big UAW retirement check coming every month and I'd just transfer the good life down there. This was every American's dream, a chicken in every pot, etc., in the land of opportunity and the rest of that bullshit."

This situation began to crack in 1979; as Chrysler teetered on the brink of collapse that year, they cut half the work force. Whole plants were wiped out on Detroit's east side — Dodge Main, Lynch Road, and Mack Avenue Stamping. While the first wave of layoffs was concentrated at Chrysler, and not GM and Ford, the depth of the crisis at Chrysler portended a more serious situation to come. In 1980 layoffs began to spread in a big way into GM and Ford. By early '80 indefinite layoffs in the auto industry passed the 200,000 mark. By December 1980 they had reached 265,000 according to UAW estimates. At the Ford Rouge complex, layoffs had gone back 11 years in certain plants and departments. Layoffs of this scale ushered in some major changes in the lives of these workers and the status quo they were used to was wrenched apart. The complacency and expectation that things were just going to keep on keepin' on was sharply jolted. When it came to describing the situation that unfolded after '79 the voices of those gathered outside the Capuchin Mission grew more bitter.

"I worked for Chrysler for 9 years. My wife worked there for 2. '78 was the last full year we both worked. We had a combined income of \$33,000. Now our combined income is zero. We lost everything we had over that stretch. We had to give up our house and move in with her sister. There are 3 families staying there now. If somebody had told me 5 years ago that I

would be collecting pop bottles to scrape together grocery money or be going down to those damn cheese giveaways I would have said they were crazy. Now I'm filled with all this pressure. I have no money and a couple of kids. What are you gonna do? You have to go out and do something. You wind up yelling at your kids and arguing with your wife over nothing. You get separated or divorced. This hell gets wrapped up inside you. You get used to having certain things, living the good life and then you lose it all and you're back to zero. It makes you madder than hell. What can you say to a man who started off with nothing, gained a little something and then lost it all?" (When the *RW* contacted this brother a few weeks later, he had suffered a heart attack.)

Another guy started up: "Back in '78 they brought the Chrysler 'Fifth Avenue' car over to the Lynch Road plant from Jefferson Avenue. That was when gas prices were at about their highest. Nobody was buying those big Chrysler cars — they couldn't afford to drive them. Sales went way down. Everyone knew that was going to happen. At the end of '78 they built the last 'Fifth Avenue' and closed the plant down. There were rumors this was going to happen, and it wasn't only at Lynch Road — there were big layoffs at the Huber Avenue Foundry, Eldon Gear and Axle and at Detroit Forge. A whole lot of guys from the east side were hit real hard. I was laid off in early '79. I was told that I would eventually be relocated at Dodge Truck. But when they mailed the notices, it came to my old address and I missed it. I finally got relocated at the Jefferson Avenue plant where they were making a big deal about building Chrysler's K-Car. That was in October of 1981. I worked 8 days and was laid off again. I haven't worked since."

The brother from Arkansas went on: "The material things I had acquired over the years I began to lose them one at a time. At first I figured that because I had some savings in the bank I was in a better position than most other guys. With me like most everybody else I didn't figure things would get this bad. I started thinking to myself, 'Damn if I'd only made that move to buy that gas station or take that loan on that party store (liquor store in Detroit — *RW*), but then I realized the system had dropped a bomb on everybody and that wouldn't have made any difference. Shit started to come apart. When you have a job and you're bringing home a paycheck you got friends and people around you. When you lose the job and don't have any money you see who really are your friends. People start talking about you differently. Then, my house got broken into. Someone had me timed pretty good and I lost a couple of TVs, a stereo and some furniture sets I was still paying on. I couldn't believe it. When you get used to working you forget how to deal in the streets and it will whip your ass. I just kept taking money out of the bank and never putting anything in. Now that won't work. I exhausted my savings and had to sell the car — I couldn't keep up with the note. One by one I sold off the possessions that we had. By the time I got my last unemployment check in January everything was gone.

The house, the car, a beautiful family. Me and my old lady split up. Even the dog walked off kind of looking at me like 'Why the hell should I stick around here.' It starts to go rat-tat-tat inside you. You feel like Atlas trying to hold the whole world up. The feeling that once you had things pretty good and now it's gone — you want to scream. It's a hurting thing. You realize you don't have anything, it's all gone. Now it's to the point for me and a lot of others like me that we have nothing to lose. You can't take my house away from me because I don't have a house anymore. You're at the point where you've lost your dreams and things aren't getting any better. You have two choices — either you go down to Social Services or as some brothers have done, you get into crime. I thought I had made it clear of all that red tape and bureaucracy at the Welfare Office. Now I have to stoop down and eat that shit all over again. They give you a 20-page information form you have to fill out asking all about who your momma is. You could starve to death waiting for that first check to come. And then after you get done paying your essentials there's about \$24 left to hold you over for 2 weeks. I took the last little bit of money I had and bought an old AMX Javelin. I figured I'd become a jitney driver, driving people around and making enough money to survive. Since I had the car, I began sleeping and eating in it. I had to get out of the neighborhood I was staying in. There was a lot of dope around. People were trying to talk me into a lot of shit knowing that I didn't have any money. I didn't want to get mixed up with it. Since the weather wasn't bad I started sleeping in the car. I'd pull the car into a lot off the street and sleep for a couple of hours and then move on to another spot. I had to keep moving because I didn't want the police to see me and I didn't want to get robbed. Sometimes when it was real cold I'd go down to the emergency room at Detroit Receiving Hospital and sleep in a chair there. But things started to get hot up in the neighborhood after that police sergeant got shot up on Gratiot. They really started doing a job on Blacks. Driving up and down harassing people, just cruising, trying to provoke somebody into doing something. That's the way they did me. One night I was checking out a place to sleep and all of a sudden a car pulls up on my bumper with high beams flashing through the rear window. I didn't have any friends around there, I didn't know who it was, and I didn't want to get shot, so I kept on riding. Then a blue light starts going round and round and it turns out to be the police. They jump out — two white cops — with a .38 ready to blow my head off. 'Put your hands up and don't move.' They had that gun right on me and I won't lie, I was shaking like Don Knotts. They tore my car up looking for dope. They didn't find any, so they wound up giving me a ticket for reckless driving. A couple of days later they stopped me again and I find out I owe on a ticket from 1981 that I'd never heard of. Now where was I supposed to come up with the money for the ticket? I never had any tickets or misdemeanors against me and now I have two tickets to pay. You can't go down there with no money — they'll put you in jail, so I had to sell the

last thing I owned — that old Javelin that was going to be my livelihood."

One of the main questions debated and discussed by those we talked to at the Mission is the future and in particular the much-ballyhooed recovery. There is a tension over what the future will bring: recovery or perhaps upheaval. There is a lot of thinking that things will "pick up" and there are many theories as to why that will happen. One guy told the *RW*:

"Look, I've been on the bottom and I've been on the top. I've had steak and potatoes and I've had bread and water. But it's seeing what I had in the past that has kept me going. I think things are gonna pick up. I mean I hope they do. Reagan is gonna have to ease up off some of these cutbacks. It's an election year and that's what they do — come up with some jobs. Nixon did it back in '72 to get re-elected. And oil prices are coming down, that's bringing a whole lot of prices down with it. People could start buying cars again. If that happens most people will get back to work. If not? If not, there's gonna be a whole lot more robberies and a whole lot more crime. How long are people gonna be squeezed like this? How long are people gonna be lied to? Folks out here wondering what the hell do they have? What do they have to live for? I think a fuse is lit and it's burning."

Another guy who introduced himself as an ex-supporter of the Black Panther Party put it like this: "For a long time Detroit has been a symbol of progress and process for Black people. And people have been lulled to sleep here. But that's changing. A few years ago a lot of people followed the mayor just because he was Black. So what, you have a Black mayor but what does that solve? Where does that put the hundreds of thousands of others? As far as poor Black people are concerned that's not benefiting us. That symbol of progress is breaking down and the man knows that. That's why they do this bullshit with these big cheese giveaways and all. They figure they need to pacify people. It might work for a little while because people's backs are touching the wall but they're not all the way up against it yet. But the shit is gonna sharpen up when the recovery that people are banking on takes place. And people are gonna realize that they're supposed to have recovered and they're still out on the street with no hope of a job or even a place to live. People are gonna realize they've been had."

George, the brother from Arkansas put it this way: "Look let's be for real. It's never gonna be like the 'good ole days,' it's never gonna return to that. This place is gonna be hell, it's gonna bring out a lot of hatred and prejudice right up front. You can see it already with the police. I'm out here in the street all the time and my antenna tells me that things are gonna get loose around here. There's a lot of talk about the good old days, etc., etc., but when I hear people talking about that all I see is sugar turned to shit. When I came up here I figured it would be a great accomplishment for a young dude like me from the country to be able to return down home with a good check and an easy life. Right now I think if I get through this alive that will be a great accomplishment." □

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ISBN 0-89851-062-7

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