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Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Revolutionary Communist Party



Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA

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Leonard Weinglass:

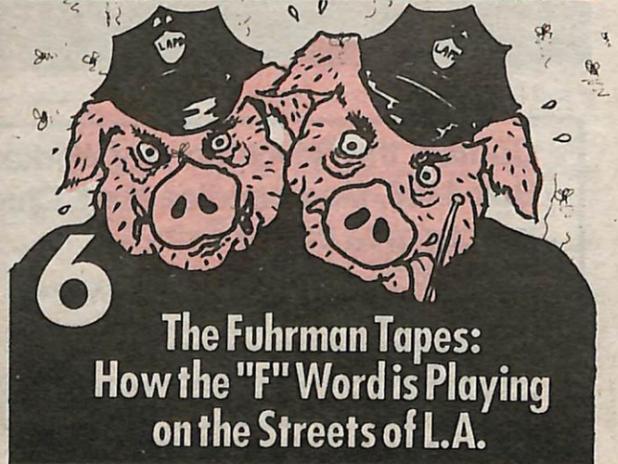
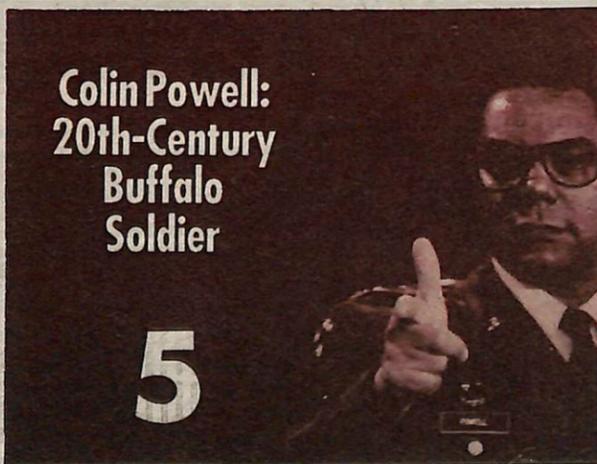
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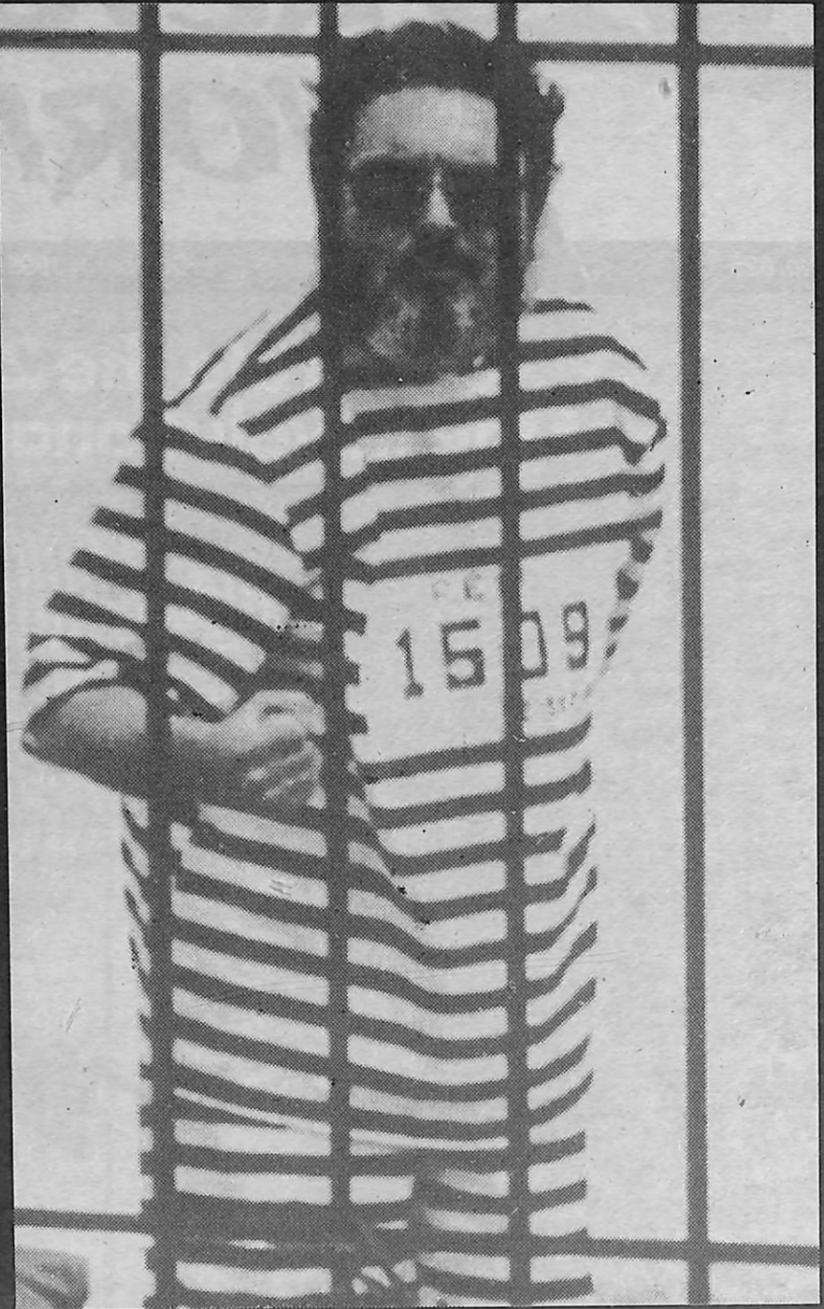
As of September 24, 1995 Chairman Gonzalo (Abimael Guzmán) has been held in isolation for...

2 Years 348 Days

In October 1992, Chairman Gonzalo—leader of the Maoist Communist Party of Peru—was sentenced to life imprisonment by hooded military judges of the U.S.-backed regime in Peru. The fascist regime in Peru is holding this revolutionary leader of the Peruvian people under very brutal conditions in an underground concrete dungeon at a naval base. He is being denied visits by lawyers, doctors and relatives and deprived of proper medical care and reading materials. Peru's President Fujimori has publicly threatened to execute Chairman Gonzalo and boasted of applying psychological torture on him. And a new Constitution, made official last year, reinstates the death penalty which could be used against Chairman Gonzalo and other revolutionary prisoners. The Peruvian regime must be prevented from killing Chairman Gonzalo through the death penalty or by other means.

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

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



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Three Main Points

by Bob Avakian
Chairman of the RCP, USA

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

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

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

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

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

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Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

This October is the 20th anniversary of the RCP,USA.

Without a revolutionary party there can be no revolution. And revolution is the only hope of the hopeless in today's world.

It is a great thing that a Maoist revolutionary party exists today in the U.S.—with more than 20 years of revolutionary experience and testing. But even more important is the fact that this Party is working right now with vision and determination on its mission—to unite and organize the masses to bring to an end this oppressive system, as soon as possible.

The RCP, and its forerunner, the Revolutionary Union, has its earliest roots and experience in the upsurge of the 1960s. Fighting side by side with such revolutionary organizations as the Black Panther Party—fighting as part of all the revolutionary movements of that time—the Maoists went to the basic people, to bring the proletariat to the fore as the leading revolutionary force. Led by Chairman Bob Avakian, the RCP has learned from all of the experiences of the movement of that time—all the accomplishments and all the weaknesses. And the party learned from the worldwide revolutionary storms of the 1960s—from the people's war in Vietnam as it battered and defeated U.S. imperialism, and most of all, from Mao and the great proletarian cultural revolution he was leading in China.

The movement of the '60s and early '70s eventually ebbed, but left behind great lessons which we can see today: This reactionary system is not all-powerful. Its weakness can be hit by the struggle of the people and we can win battles—but unless the job is finished, unless the system is overthrown, any temporary gains and reforms will be reversed by the system.

As a product of all that struggle, in 1975 a vanguard Party was formed—filled with desire for revolution and practicing our revolutionary science, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This party has been steeled and tempered in the ebbs and flows of the movement since then. It is a crucial weapon of the proletariat in carrying forward its struggle to victory.

And today we also have the strength of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM). RIM was formed in 1984 by Maoist parties and organizations from around the world, including the Communist Party of Peru which is continuing today to wage a Maoist

people's war. United around Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the RIM is responding to many challenges of the worldwide revolutionary struggle in theory and action.

Among those challenges is the high-powered bourgeois offensive that "communism has failed." But this Party and the RIM stand as living, growing answers to that big lie and hype. Together with our revolutionary comrades of the RIM, we say "Mao More Than Ever." This system produces horrors without end for the great majority of people in the world, and we know that only communist revolution can bring an end to the horror that is capitalism.

The RCP,USA has kept a revolutionary vision of the future intact—and in fact, through summing up the lessons of the past, the party has deepened our understanding of what real communist revolution is about. This party has never sunk into the mud that is the steady diet and sickening outlook of this imperialist system. This party has kept a firm grip on the fact that oppression breeds resistance, that it is right to rebel, and that the rebellion of the people can and must go forward to revolution. Today, training a new generation of revolutionary fighters, the RCP can lead the hopes and dreams of the oppressed forward into reality—and at the earliest possible moment. This is not just a dream—it is what the party is actively preparing for.

Today, on its 20th anniversary, the RCP,USA has hard-won experience. It has in its ranks a tested core of dedicated revolutionaries, trained in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and dedicated fiercely to overthrowing this system and to a vision of a liberated, communist society. But all that is just a foundation for what we still must build.

Since the beginning, the RCP has been on the path of learning and leading—and learning more while leading more. Together, we are determined to fight through to victory, joining with the people today in resisting the increasing impoverishment and oppression, and organizing in the midst of such resistance for the revolutionary overthrow of this system. Our party must be further strengthened to do this.

So on this occasion, the *Revolutionary Worker* calls on people not only to celebrate, but even more important, to join, build and strengthen the RCP, as a crucial part of preparing to make revolution.



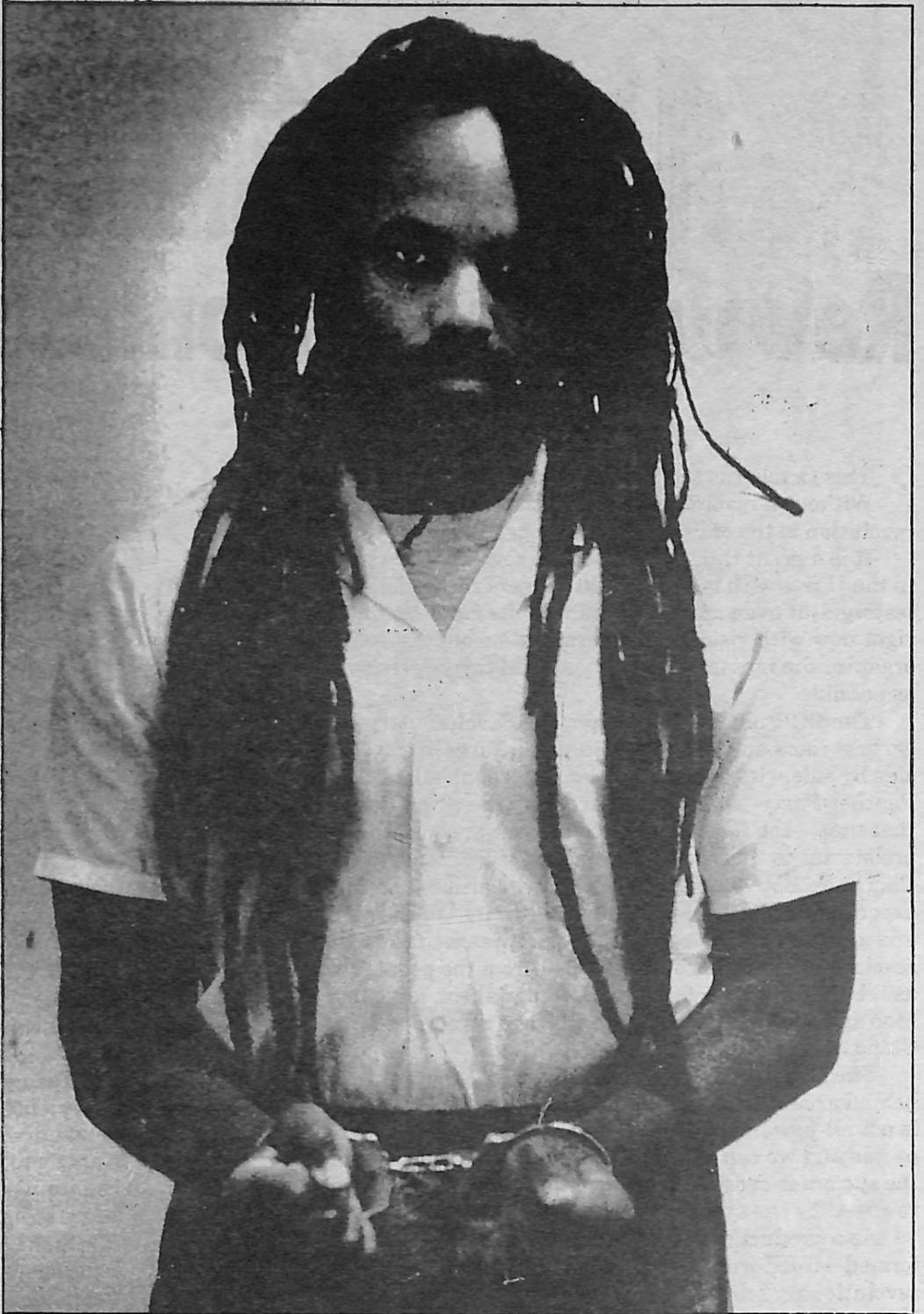
The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA is a party of struggle. A party of slaves who are determined not to be slaves any longer. It's the organized general staff and leadership of our class, to lead it in this historic battle, this historic mission of advancing human society to a completely new stage, to end wage slavery, and all the evils and suffering of this capitalist system. To end exploitation and to rip out for once and for all the weeds and roots of exploitation, so that they can never grow again.

And with the leadership of our party, the party of our class, and together with hundreds of millions of our class throughout the world, nothing can stop us. We will free ourselves and we will free all mankind.

Bob Avakian, *Bullets*

A talk by Leonard Weinglass

How Mumia Was Framed and Why He Must Have a New Trial



On September 15 hanging judge Albert Sabo rejected Mumia's appeal for a new trial. Mumia's team of lawyers, headed by Leonard Weinglass, now plan on filing an appeal with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

It is going to take a massive, determined struggle by the people to win a new trial for Mumia. Leonard Weinglass has pointed out: "In the entire history of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, no one in Mumia's position—a death row inmate seeking a new trial after his direct appeals have been denied—has ever been granted a new trial. Those are the odds. If Mumia gets a new trial, he'll be the first."

The appeals process is one in which Mumia's enemies can have a lot of initiative. So the people have to be on watch, be vigilant, and get organized and ready to escalate the struggle.

The enemies of Mumia are waging a counteroffensive, spreading all kinds of

misinformation and lies to say Mumia is guilty and should not have a new trial. In response, the people must continue to build a broad, diverse and determined struggle to combat these lies, win Mumia a new trial and stop his execution.

Recently, Leonard Weinglass spoke at Revolution Books in New York City. Weinglass has just published a new book, *Race To Justice*, which is a collection of the legal documents filed on Mumia's behalf. Before Weinglass started his talk he brought greetings from Mumia to the Revolution Books gathering:

"I want to start by saying that I was with Mumia yesterday in Pittsburgh and I told him that the bookstore had moved, and that it was opening tonight and that this was the first program and it was a program talking about his case. And he expressed his gratitude and his thanks not only for tonight's program and the opportunity to discuss this case, but also for the support that he's received from the *Revolutionary Worker* and the bookstore and the Party and Refuse & Resist!, and the many individuals who've shown up and demonstrated and have written and have helped make this case as strong and as solid and as public as it has become. He wanted me to express his thanks to those of you who've helped him in the past and are standing strong with him still."

The opening comments from Weinglass' talk were published in *RW* #823. The following excerpts from the rest of his talk expose how Mumia was framed up and never given a fair trial:

The mayor of Philadelphia in the '70s was Mayor Frank Rizzo, and Mayor Rizzo was a former police commissioner who became the mayor because of his reputation as a tough cop. Mayor Rizzo pointed an accusing finger at Mumia during a press conference when he was mayor—because Mumia was revealing what had happened in

a shootout between the police and the MOVE organization...and Mumia, of all the media in Philadelphia, was the only one to broadcast the MOVE side of events. Mayor Rizzo pointed to Mumia in a press conference and said to him, "Young man, some day you're going to be held accountable for what you're doing."

And that day did arrive on December 9, 1981, when his brother was pulled over by a police officer named Daniel Faulkner at four o'clock in the morning and he got out of the car and the officer got out of the car. The officer was alone. And an argument ensued. And the officer turned the brother around, spread-eagled him over the front of the car and began beating him on the head and shoulders with a flashlight. This is the testimony of the prosecution witnesses. This is the scene that started the chain of events...

Mumia then, who was moonlighting as a cab driver, came upon the scene. He stopped his cab and he ran to the scene where his brother was being beaten. That also is not in dispute. As he got there, gunfire erupted. He was shot through the chest, the bullet piercing his lung, piercing his liver, and lodging in his lower back. The officer also was shot, once through the back and once between the eyes. Both were taken immediately to a hospital. The police arrived within five minutes of the shooting. Both were taken to the hospital, both were operated on. Mumia recovered, although he was in critical condition. The police officer died. Mumia was charged with the murder of the police officer.

Now what evidence did they have that Mumia shot this officer, and what evidence did they have indicating how Mumia was shot? Well this is the truly remarkable thing about this case which no prosecutor has been able to answer. Of all the witnesses that the prosecution produced in the case, not one could say how Mumia was shot or that they saw whether Mumia was shot. Not one. And the prosecution relied on three parts of their case, which I want to address:

They say "we have eyewitnesses," they say "we have the murder weapon" and they say "we have a confession." On the face of this, that looks like a pretty strong case. But when you analyze it, it is an utterly weak case and a very contradictory case.

Unreliable Witnesses for the Prosecution

Let's start with the eyewitnesses. Their main eyewitness was a young woman, an unfortunate woman, who was a prostitute. She had a record of 38 arrests for prostitution. She had three pending charges at the time of the trial and she was serving 18 months in prison for prostitution in Boston. She was brought down to Philadelphia to testify. She, it turns out, is the only one who completely adopts and reports the prosecution's theory that Mumia ran to the scene, drew a pistol, shot the officer, the officer went down and then Mumia stood over the officer and, in a sense, executed him. That was her story. She was the only one to tell it. But she had told five or six other stories earlier and what we found out in the investigation is that she was permitted to continue working as a prostitute in this part of town with police protection. And furthermore, another prostitute came forward to say that she was offered the same deal that this prostitute got—that if she would turn on Mumia and finger him as the shooter, she could work her corner unmolested by the police. So you have a very shaky main witness as the prosecution's critical witness. I don't think any reasonable jury would find her credible.

The other witness they have that they claim is important was a cab driver named Chobert. Chobert said that he saw the shooter shoot the officer when the officer was down. He described the shooter. He said he was 6'2", 225 pounds. Mumia weighed between 160 and 170 pounds. He was barely 6'. But this cab driver told the police that night, immediately when the

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Leonard Weinglass

Special to the RWOR

Colin Powell: 20th-Century Buffalo Soldier

In Colin Powell's French chateau-style mansion, he has a personal museum and office dominated by a large painting of the 10th U.S. Cavalry, the so-called Buffalo Soldiers. Powell considers these troops as his personal role models.

Who were the Buffalo Soldiers?

The 9th and 10th Cavalry were Black soldiers who participated in the final genocidal wars of the 1870s against the Plains Indians. These former slaves signed up with the system to wipe out other oppressed people. Based at Fort Leavenworth, the Buffalo Soldiers helped track down the fighters of the Apaches, Cheyenne and the Lakota.

One historian writes, "The hallmark of the black regiments was loyalty. The men did what was expected of them, whether fighting the Apache in the southwest or taking part in the skirmishing that followed the massacre of the Sioux at Wounded Knee." One Black unit of this period, the 25th Infantry, helped break an early desperate strike by miners at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

There is no way oppressed people can or should honor the Buffalo Soldiers. But General Powell honors them—because he started off like them, as a hired gun determined to serve the oppressors well. And as he rose to powerful positions within the U.S. government, he has carried this symbol with him. Powell's desk at the Pentagon held a statue of Buffalo Soldiers hunting down an Apache warrior.

The Black President

Now Colin Powell is on the presidential campaign trail. Politically, Powell is a Nixon-style Republican who may run as an "independent." His brand of conservatism is called "moderate" these days, because so much of the Republican Party has a more extreme (and even fascist) edge. Recently, Powell told Barbara Walters that he is a "fiscal conservative." This means he supports intense budget cuts and "trickle-down economics." He claims that the key to prosperity is cutting social programs and handing more money over to private capitalists.

On social issues, Powell is close to Bill Clinton. Powell says he opposes abortions, but supports the right of women to have them. He supports the death penalty. He supports mandatory "moments of silence" in schools, but not formal prayer. He says he believes in "equal opportunity" and "affirmative action" as long as quotas aren't used to enforce it. Powell says affirmative action should not become a central issue in national politics.

If this were all there was to Powell, there would be nothing much to say—just another boozehwah candidate.

But Colin Powell is the first African American who seems to have a real chance of becoming President. And this fact raises serious questions among the people. People want to know: What would his campaign mean for the people? Would a President Powell be helpful to Black people and other oppressed people? Some people are saying "yes"—including some prominent progressive Black intellectuals who should know better.

Colin Powell has been declared a "credible candidate" for President *exactly* because he has proven himself useful and loyal to the oppressors. Nowhere, ever has this man done *anything* that shows sympathy or support for oppressed people. As an eager soldier and lifetime careerist, he has sent armed troops to fight the oppressed over and over again. He participated personally in the front lines of Vietnam. He helped to organize the conquest of Grenada, the invasion of Panama and the recent occupation of Haiti. At the peak of his career, Powell masterminded the U.S. war crimes against Iraq—including the mass bombing



Powell, along with Secretary of Defense Weinberger, presents Reagan with an AK-47 rifle captured during the 1983 U.S. invasion of the Afro-Caribbean country of Grenada.

Company B of the 25th Infantry.



of Iraqi cities and the deliberate murder of many thousands of fleeing Iraqi soldiers.

To be blunt, Powell is a blood-stained hitman who is offering to direct this system's crimes on an even grander scale—from the White House.

A Career Started in U.S. Killing Fields of Vietnam

Colin Powell was one of the early U.S. military advisers sent by President John Kennedy to Vietnam in the early '60s to suppress the liberation struggle there. Powell commanded a battalion of ARVN troops (Vietnamese "puppet troops" fighting under U.S. direction). In his new book, *My American Journey*, he describes how he commanded soldiers to burn villages with Zippo lighters, destroy crops by spraying defoliants—he was an eager participant in a genocidal war clearly aimed at the masses of people themselves. Powell writes: "We tried to solve the problem by making the whole sea uninhabitable.... I had no qualms about what we were doing. This was counterinsurgency at the cutting edge."

On his second tour of duty, in the late '60s, Powell says he had to move his cot every night—not just because of guerrilla attacks but because he was afraid of being frayed by his own troops.

Powell played some role in the cover-up of the famous My Lai massacre. The full details of this are not yet known. But in his book he confirmed that this massacre of over 300 Vietnamese civilians was carried out under orders of Captain Ernest Medina

who, at the time the investigations started, was a member of Powell's tactical operations center. Powell argues that the massacre was understandable because the Batangan Peninsula around My Lai was "a rough piece of territory inhabited by VC sympathizers."

Though Powell hated the defeat of the U.S. military in Vietnam—he never had doubts about serving U.S. imperialism. "I believe in the bully's way of going to war," he says.

When the Black liberation struggle rose, Powell writes, "I was not marching, demonstrating, or taking part in sit-ins. My eye was on an Army career for myself and a good life for my family."

At the same time, the struggle of the oppressed opened up doors for his military career. In the mid-1970s, the Pentagon tripled the number of Black generals—to stabilize their control over the lower ranks of their new volunteer army—which was becoming more and more heavily Black. Powell was one of the men promoted.

Powell caught the attention of Frank Carlucci, a top CIA operative. Carlucci is credited with personally organizing the CIA assassination of the Congo's anti-colonialist leader Patrice Lumumba.

When Carlucci became National Security Adviser in Ronald Reagan's White

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In reality, Colin Powell is a recycled and repackaged mass murderer.



Residents of the Chorillo area of Panama City view their neighborhood devastated by the 1989 U.S. invasion.

The Fuhrman Tapes: How the "F" Word Is Playing on the Streets of L.A., Part 3

by Michael Slate

In the early hours of Sunday, September 17 a car turned down a dead-end alley in the Cypress Park neighborhood of northeast L.A. No one really knows exactly what happened next except that when the car left the alley the driver and a two-year-old boy were wounded and a three-year-old girl was dead from a bullet wound in the head.

Within minutes the police were describing the killers of the little girl as "gang members" who coldly shot into a "car full of children." Teary-eyed newscasters denounced the killers for days.

To the power structure and their media this was tragedy as opportunity. Over the last couple of weeks, their law enforcement setup has taken a beating as the LAPD—and all the racist garbage that is a crucial part of police work—have, once again, been dragged out and exposed to the light of day. Never have the police looked so bad to so many.

The enforcers needed some kind of relief and this tragedy was perfect as far as the authorities were concerned. They seized on the death of this child to paint a picture of

When the Fuhrman tapes first aired, people all over the city were sickened and shocked. But for the people who live it everyday, outrage quickly overcame shock. This was especially true when people listened to Fuhrman talk about how routinely he fabricated evidence that sent people off to long terms in jail. At a Police Commission meeting the night after the tapes were first played in court, a middle-aged woman from South Central spoke up for her son who she said was railroaded into prison on trumped-up charges. She explained that her son had been picked out of a photo line up by the victim and that ID was the key evidence against him. Then she showed the photo line-up the police used and explained that her son's picture was blown up to be three or four times the size of everybody else's photo in the line-up. She demanded an explanation from the police and an investigation of the charges her son was convicted on.

By the next day people everywhere in the city were talking about how the police had framed them and their friends and they were insisting that many of these cases be reopened and reinvestigated. In Watts two close friends, Tony and Joe, from the Imperial Courts projects told the story of Tony's frame-up. Tony was arrested by L.A. County Sheriffs stationed at the Lynwood sheriff's station—a place infamous as the home of the police-based white supremacist gang called the Lynwood Vikings. Tony was accused of a crime and identified by two women victims. Tony

swore he was innocent. Tony's friend Joe knew that Tony was innocent because he did the crime himself. Joe fought to testify at his friend's trial but it did no good at all. The cops called Joe a liar and Tony ended up doing eight years. Joe also had plenty of his own experiences with frame-ups and, as he pointed out, even if you eventually beat the charge most poor people got to spend months and months in jail until things get cleared up.

Abdul Aziz, a Shiite Moslem activist, also has a story to tell about a frame-up. As we sat in Leimert Park Abdul Aziz laid out his son's story. Abdul Aziz and his son, Omar Bilal, have a long history of conflict with the police in Inglewood. According to Abdul Aziz, Inglewood detectives repeatedly threatened this group and even told Omar that they were going to get him. The mosque they belong to was bombed and burned down.

On April 29, 1992—the night of the Los Angeles rebellion—Inglewood cops in an unmarked car swooped down on the complex where Omar, his wife and another member of their group lived. When the cops saw Omar, his wife and friend at the complex they jumped out of their car and shouted "Alright n*ggers, start praying, cuz it's time for you to die."

Omar got away but the police shot his friend twice in the head and left him for dead—he recovered after a year of medical care. Omar's wife was also shot and the Inglewood police recently reached a settlement with her over the shooting. Almost

Latino and Black youth—especially gang members—as animals who need to be hunted down and captured or killed for the good of all. And they played on the grief of the family—white working class people who live in the Cypress Park neighborhood.irate letters to the *L.A. Times* denounced the killers and demanded more police activity in the barrios and ghettos—one letter even demanded that the army be called in to patrol the streets. Even Clinton got into the act, referring to the killing as an example of the lawlessness America needs to clean up. In short, they are saying that whatever the police do to the people, it is ultimately justified because the people deserve it.

As I watched this story unfold, I could hear the voices of all of the people I spoke with after the Fuhrman/LAPD tapes were made public—people telling some version of the same story, again and again, a story of outrageously brutal and racist treatment from the police, 24-7. This is the 3rd installment of a series based on these conversations.

three years later the police nailed Omar. He is being tried in Torrance, a city noted for its racist police and judicial set-up—and praised by Mark Fuhrman as the last bastion of middle class white people in the L.A. area.

"My son is Omar Bilal, or the way they have him in jail—Lamar Bakir. He's been in Super Max at wayside since March of 1995. He is facing two charges, both bogus to us. One, he was with some friends and one of them had some dope and threw it down on the ground when the police were trying to arrest them. The police put the case on my son. The police can't connect this case together though so my son has been in jail just hanging on it.

"He was about ready to be released on that charge when Inglewood detectives came in and said they were gonna put this murder charge on him cuz the survivor of a shooting ID'ed him. He asked how was he ID'ed and first they said it was a line-up. That didn't hold up. They put him in two line-ups but no one identified him. Then they said that one of the survivors of the shooting identified him from a school yearbook. When we asked what yearbook or what school it was, they gave him a school that he didn't never attend.

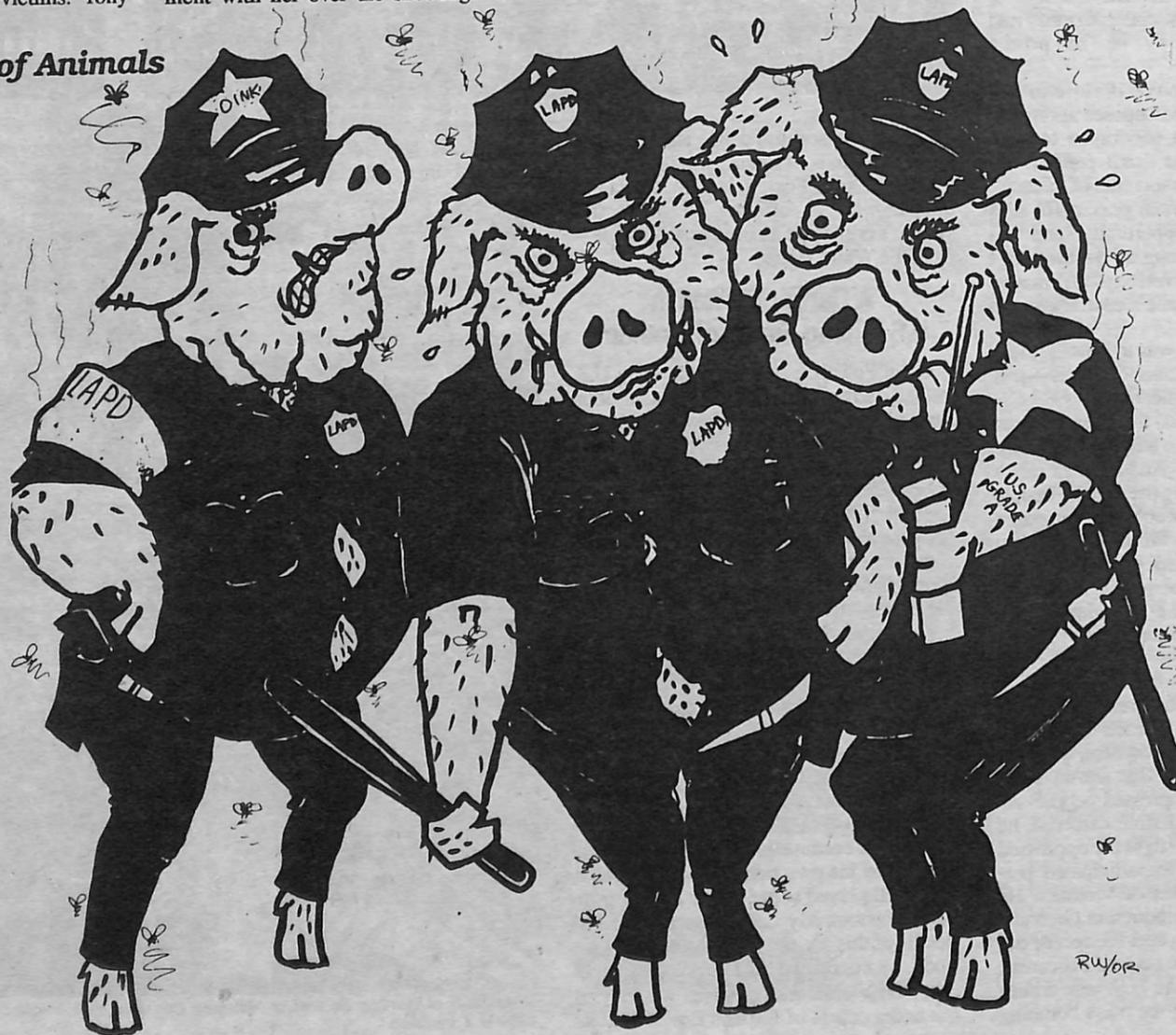
"None of the official police paperwork, the charges and all that, have ever been given to my son. His lawyer says he has them but he won't show my son and he won't show me. I asked this lawyer how he was feeling about the case and he told me he was feeling uncomfortable cuz wit-

nesses for my son aren't coming forward. That's not true. The first pre-trial everybody was there in the courthouse but his witnesses were not allowed in the courtroom. They brought him in for arraignment and all his witnesses were there to prove that he didn't do the killing. But they were stopped at the door and they gave no excuse or reason, they just said they couldn't come into the courtroom.

"This shooting was supposed to have happened at a party on Halloween 1994. My son is supposed to have gone outside in some gang thing and shot these guys, killing one. First of all, my son has alibis proving he was in Long Beach that night and not at this party. Second, the witnesses who did see the shooting do not describe my son, they describe someone else. The police interviewed these witnesses but never went forward with any of this. I did get some of the original report by the Inglewood police—a guy in jail helped my son get this—and on this report it says an anonymous person implicated my son.

"So now they are pushing ahead with the murder charge and I understand that they are also trying to come back with the drug charge. My son has requested a speedy trial and they denied that. He has asked to remove the public defender and they denied that. He's got a Black judge in Torrance who denies everything he tries to do in his own benefit. They got a real nice, tight railroad going on here. □

Just a Bunch of Animals



Some Points on the Question of Revolutionary Leadership and Individual Leaders

On the occasion of the party's 20th anniversary, the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA, has released two important documents, which the *RW* is proud to present for our readers.

Resolution: On Leaders and Leadership is a 1995 resolution of the Central Committee of the RCP on the party and revolutionary leadership; *Some Points on the Question of Revolutionary Leadership and Individual Leaders* addresses a number of questions about the need for revolutionary leadership and how communists view the qualifications for leadership and the relationship of leaders to the movement as a whole.

One of the most important questions for any revolutionary forces anywhere—and for their allies and supporters—is the question of leaders and leadership. Do the revolutionary people even *need* individual leaders? Just what makes a revolutionary a revolutionary *leader* anyway? What makes one leader any “better” at leading than any other? What criteria should we use to evaluate leaders and their roles? If individual leaders are not superhuman and can have weaknesses or make mistakes, should we even be promoting them? Are most individual leaders bound to end up capitulating, broken or dead? Why even bother to put forward and promote individual leaders if this could lead to the masses treating them as gods, and getting set up for possible disappointment and paralysis in the event individual leaders are taken, broken or crushed? Doesn't the promotion of individual leaders possibly discourage the masses from recognizing the need to take initiative and become conscious revolutionary activists and leaders *themselves*? If we are in favor of *collectivity* in our methods of work and are striving for a *communist* spirit and way of life, then why are we highlighting individual leaders? And what about initiative within the Party itself: does the recognition and promotion of individual leaders tend to stymie the initiative and all-rounded participation of basic members or lower level cadre? What is the correct relationship of leadership and led?

The questions listed above are all worth discussing more deeply. People from different strata, and with different life experiences (and different levels of *political* experience) will tend to answer these questions differently.

Most people who are serious about making revolution recognize the need for some structure, organization and leadership in order to guide, coordinate and systematically unfold the revolutionary work, and in order to ultimately seize power and begin building a whole new kind of society. Basic people in particular, because they are often only too familiar with the repressive hand of the enemy, are often quick to point out that the power of the authorities cannot be seriously challenged and defeated without tight organization and clear lines of leadership. And yet there is also among the basic masses—particularly, though not only, in a country like the U.S.—a significant amount of cynicism about revolutionary leaders: the



Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA

view that leaders will “sell out”, or that even if they don't sell out they will be taken from the masses by the enemy and there's just not much that you can do about it. This kind of cynicism is something that should be taken on, by drawing out the connection between the basic masses and leadership, and the responsibilities of each with regard to the other.

It is usually the people from the middle strata, and especially the intellectual types, who have the most “questions” about whether or not it's even “right” to have, and to promote, individual leaders in a communist revolutionary movement. They often look at this question too much in a vacuum or in the abstract, divorced from the material realities and *necessities* of the particular historical era we are part of. But it is a fact of material reality that humanity has not yet reached a stage where it can afford to dispense with a formalized division of labor and leadership structures and hierarchies. The question should be: *what is the nature of these structures and whose interests do these structures serve.*

Minuscule numbers of people trying to discuss and take action around a very few issues, of only limited scope, may sometimes be able to do so through “general consensus”, without a leadership structure and individual leaders. But as soon as the objectives broaden in scope beyond one's backyard to encompass and take responsibility for trying to make fundamental and comprehensive social changes—and certainly to achieve a revolutionary transformation of the whole way society is organized, and on a world scale—then the need for more formalized division of labor, structure and leadership becomes obvious. And all the more so since these efforts to change the world do not go unopposed by those currently in power!

But if all this is true, then the fact that certain individual revolutionaries emerge as a *concentration* of this process, and themselves become a concentrated expression of the best qualities of revolutionary leadership—including a selfless dedication to the revolutionary cause and deep love of the masses, as well as a strong grasp of the scientific methodology needed to unleash the masses and chart the path of revolution in line with their objective interests—then the existence of such an individual leader or leaders is not something to lament but something to welcome and celebrate! It is part of the people's strength.

Ironically, those middle forces who have the most qualms about “accepting” revolutionary leadership

often fail to see the extent to which they are already being “led” in every sphere of life and society by the very functioning of the underlying dynamics of the system and the prevailing oppressive and repressive powers and institutions! They need to recognize that the only real alternative to *that* is to choose to be guided by a radically different form of leadership, with radically different objectives, and to learn to become this kind of leader themselves.

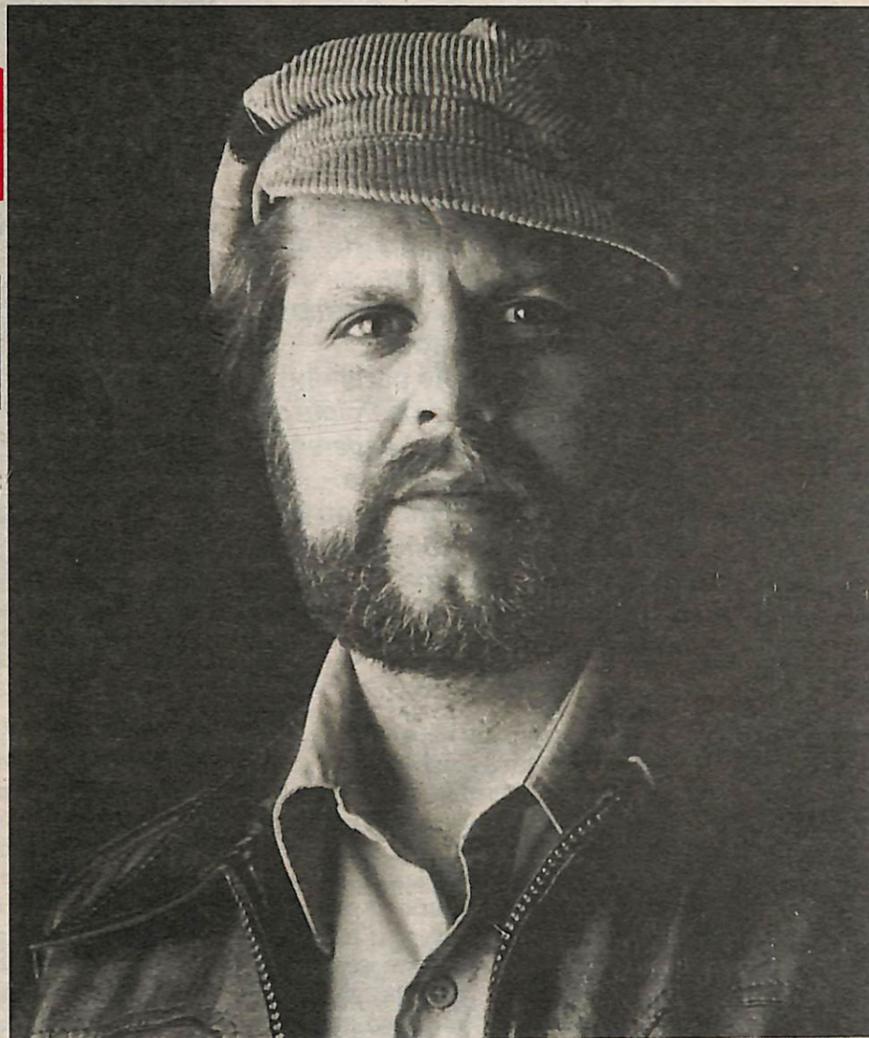
Such people also usually fail to think through sufficiently the practical implications of the *fact* that there is *uneven* development in all processes and things, including people. This is true among the vanguard forces and among the masses of people in general. How could it be otherwise? But this unevenness is not a bad thing: correctly understood from the perspective of dialectical materialism, unevenness is *itself* a source of growth and development and a catalyst for advance.

But that is not to say that the questions posed by many intellectuals about leadership and the promotion of individual leaders in revolutionary parties and movements are not worthy of serious discussion. There are for instance in the revolutionary movement real practical questions that pose themselves (and that must be addressed repeatedly in practice) concerning how to most fully unleash the conscious initiative of the masses of people and combat any tendencies they might have to want to “leave the driving to others”. Similarly, inside the revolutionary ranks it is important to guard against the development of any kind of “employee mentality” of people who would just as soon accept, in uncritical and in uninspired fashion, any lines and policies emanating from “above”.

In regard to this it is important to recall a point that has been repeatedly stressed by Comrade Avakian: where leadership is genuinely *revolutionary* leadership, the more it plays its leadership role correctly, in accordance with MLM principles, the *greater* will be the conscious initiative of the masses.

There are also real questions about how to best build unity on a revolutionary basis, among the masses and among the organized revolutionary forces. There is always bound to be unevenness of development and differences on a number of questions, with the terrain often being further complicated by the effects of enemy attacks and the possibility of setbacks and defeats.

But to correctly deal with the question of leader-
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Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA

Some Points...

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ship, as in all else, we all have to ground ourselves firmly in the science and methodology of MLM: on *that* basis, and no other, we have to evaluate lines and policies and determine what can push things forward in a good direction and separate it from that which cannot. And then we have to find the ways to promote those lines and policies which advance things in a revolutionary direction, and concretely support those individuals and organizations which concentrate and embody them at any given time.

No one is born a revolutionary leader, and there is no one set formula for how people become revolutionary leaders. Each revolutionary leader is a complex mix of personal life experiences and broader social experience, particularly in the revolutionary movement, and revolutionary leaders can be of any race, nationality, either gender, and come from many different backgrounds. The same objective criteria for determining that an individual is particularly suited to the role and responsibilities of revolutionary leadership should apply to all: the essential thing is that they demonstrate the greatest ability to take up and apply the stand, viewpoint, and methodology of the international proletariat. This has been shown by the experience of the international communist movement; today MLM parties and organizations throughout the world have brought forward—and will continue to bring forward—a number of leaders, who represent a

great force for the advance of the world proletarian revolution.

The basic masses usually know, from deep life experience, that the concentrated power of the enemy cannot be seriously challenged with just “good ideas” and “good intentions” and a vague “general consensus” of the revolutionary ranks. It takes real tight organization and real political, ideological and organizational leadership to bring forth, to guide and to wield the newly emerging power and combativity of the people.

So the revolutionary masses recognize the need for leaders. But that’s not enough. Real revolutionary leaders are brought forth, developed, nourished and sustained by the revolutionary people, and the revolutionary people must more fully understand that connection themselves. Revolutionary leaders are in a real sense the flower and fruit of the revolutionary people, who are themselves the roots and shoots of the revolution.

Without the revolutionary people the leaders are nothing. And without genuine revolutionary leaders to chart the course through the minefields, the people will not find the way to make real revolutionary breakthroughs when these are possible. Without revolutionary leadership the people’s resistance will be crushed over and over again and will not succeed in “getting over to the other side.”

Individual leaders are not gods or superhumans. They have their individual failings like anyone else, and they will make mistakes even when they are overall doing a good job of leading the revolution.

Some of them will even do worse than that and will at some point be broken, or in some way capitulate to the enemy and betray the revolution. And some will be taken from us by the enemy and jailed or killed.

Everyone must understand that such things can happen and must prepare for such eventualities, to minimize the possibility that such blows can fundamentally derail a revolutionary process and direction. But these possibilities cannot make us cynical or despair in the possibility of revolution. Because the hard-core strength of the revolution is the revolutionary *base*, the revolutionary people themselves. And it is true that as long as there is oppression the people will in time bring forth new revolutionary leaders to replace those who have fallen or been taken from us. But it must also be stressed that in a very real sense it is the responsibility of the party, together with the revolutionary masses, to minimize such losses, *as well as* to deal with the situation when such losses do occur.

Revolutionary leaders themselves should pay attention to fostering the greatest possible revolutionary collectivity and the greatest possible growth and all-rounded development of the revolutionary ranks and of many veteran and newly emerging leaders, so that, to the greatest extent possible, if they are taken from us, others will be ready to take their place.

On the other hand, there is no denying it: The loss of a true revolutionary leader—and all the more so if this is an individual who plays a key and critical leadership role—is like having a heart ripped out of

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RESOLUTION:

On Leaders and Leadership

The Party Exists for No Other Reason than to Serve the Masses, to Make Revolution

More than anything, we need proletarian revolution: we need to overthrow the bourgeois class in power by defeating their armed enforcers through revolutionary warfare, smash their whole state apparatus, and begin to build up a new and radically different society in which the masses of people will take center stage.

There is no way to accomplish that without seriously applying the basic principles and scientific methodology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), within each country and on a world scale. Historical sweep and vision and concrete analysis of the ever-changing social conditions must be combined and consistently applied in order to guide revolutionary practice and correctly resolve the practical problems of the revolutionary movement.

All this takes more than good ideas and good intentions. It takes real revolutionary organization, and a real revolutionary leadership which is solidly grounded in those basic principles and that basic methodology. A leadership which can, at all times, keep strategic objectives firmly in the forefront of revolutionary practice. A leadership which can consistently and effectively keep the revolutionary movement from straying off course and which can recognize and take advantage of openings for action and advance.

Our Party was birthed through the struggles of the revolutionary-minded people, quite a few years ago. Over the years we have learned a great deal, and we have persevered on the revolutionary road. Today our Party continues to be an evolving *expression*, *distillation*, and *concentration* of the strivings of the masses of people for revolutionary change.

The Party exists for no other reason than to serve the masses of people, to enable them to make revolution and transform the world. And the masses of people themselves are really the roots and the lifeblood of the Party. Without the masses the Party would be nothing.

Our Collectivity Is Our Power

Our Party is a *collective* organization, not just a collection of individuals. We decide things collectively and we act collectively. Our power resides in our collectivity—this enables us to correctly link with, unleash, and lead the initiative of the masses and give it its most powerful revolutionary expression in conformity with the fundamental interests of the masses. This collectivity is expressed and realized through the collective functioning of the units of the Party on the various levels, and through the Party's chain of knowledge and of command up and down throughout the Party.

Our Party is organized on the basis of democratic centralism, a method which allows us to combine a high degree of individual input and initiative (from individuals and from units of the Party on all levels) with a high degree of unity of will and action and enables us to fight the enemy in an organized and disciplined way. It makes possible the functioning of the Party's chain of knowledge and of command in a way that links the Party with the masses to lead them in fighting for their revolutionary interests. Democratic centralism is an organizational expression of mass line.

Both aspects of democratic centralism are essential to the application of the *mass line*, the process through which we call forth and draw from the varied ideas, experiences and contributions of the masses of people (both inside and outside the Party) and bring these together with the summed up lessons of history, and the most sweeping vision of what the future could be, in order to concentrate the best of the masses' collective knowledge and experience over time and return it to the masses in the form of revolutionary line and policies and practical revolutionary guidance. And we do so while maintaining the strongest possible wall of unity and discipline which is difficult for the enemy to breach.

All our Party members are revolutionary leaders in their own right, of different abilities and levels of development. All of them are invaluable: they serve the people and should be supported and defended from attack.

Inside the Party, comrades share the good and the bad, and look out for each other: this too is an expression of our collectivity and our revolutionary outlook. Inside the Party there is (and should always be) much collective discussion and wrangling over what to do, over right and wrong in the development of the revolutionary theory and practice to which all comrades contribute.

The Party organization consists of various small groupings and units, each with its own leadership, which funnel into various higher leading bodies. The collectivity of the Party *as a whole* is most concentrated, and best represented, in our Central Committee.

Like all Party bodies, the Central Committee functions collectively. Composed of comrades of proven dedication to the masses and to the revolutionary cause, who are themselves well-grounded in the fundamental principles and basic methodology of MLM, the Central Committee collectively recognizes that individual leader who is best suited to lead the Central Committee itself, and through it the entire Party.

Bob Avakian Is This Leader of the Leaders of our Party

Of all the leaders of our Party, Bob Avakian is the individual leader the Central Committee deems:

- best able to lead the collectivity of the Central Committee and its Standing Bodies and, in this way and through the collective structures of the Party and its leading bodies, lead the Party and the masses.
- best able to draw on the Party's collectivity to distill and concentrate what has come up from below, from the masses of people inside and outside the Party.
- best able to distill and concentrate the lessons of history and of the revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat in particular.
- best able to distill and concentrate the most fundamental political, ideological and organizational principles of MLM to date, and to lead in applying them.
- best able to grasp and consciously wield the key scientific *method* that is *dialectical and historical materialism* with regard to every sphere of social practice and theory, in order to chart the uncharted path and continually bring revolutionary work into closer concordance with the objective interests and overall strategic objectives of our class.
- best able to combine and *connect* great historical sweep and vision and a developed ideological and methodological grounding *with* a real sense of the sentiments of the masses and a deep understanding of the problems of the practical revolutionary movement.
- best able to lead the revolutionary forces of our Party in two-line struggle against revisionism and opportunism and in going against all incorrect tides.
- best able to set a standard for genuine proletarian internationalism and to lead our Party in carrying out its internationalist responsibilities as one contingent of the international communist movement, as one part of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement.

The greater collectivity that is the RCP's Central Committee considers that the individual who best meets these criteria—and who has proven this over and over again, including at critical junctures in the history of our Party and the international movement—is clearly Bob Avakian.

Comrade Avakian is the complete opposite of a bourgeois leader: he is known for being extremely principled and having tremendous personal and political integrity; he has put serving the people above all else in his life, living and breathing for the masses of people; he has been a model in applying the MLM method of criticism and *self-criticism*; he has remained steadfastly revolutionary in the face of great personal risk; he has played a crucial role in grasping and propagating the science of MLM and charted new ground in its application to revolutionary practice; he has led the Party in seeking out the roots of, learning from, and correcting errors; he has shown himself to be very capable of drawing from, concentrating and wielding the collective power of our revolutionary organization; and he has never even lost his sense of humor! In short, he is a highly developed revolutionary communist comrade!

The Central Committee of the RCP hereby *enthusiastically* reaffirms its respect, love, and firm support for Comrade Avakian and his role as Chair of the Central Committee of the RCP, USA.

As part of stepping up our collective struggle to better meet the challenges and opportunities of these times, the Central Committee hereby urges all Party members and revolutionary-minded people to further ponder and discuss what exactly constitutes genuine revolutionary leadership, and to reflect on, and learn from, the particular role and contributions of the Chairman of our Central Committee in that context.

The Central Committee also hereby reaffirms our determination to prevent the enemy from silencing Chairman Avakian's crucial revolutionary voice or denying the revolutionary masses his revolutionary leadership, and our renewed determination to ensure that his guidance and methodology will reach an ever widening audience.

The Central Committee of the RCP, USA hereby urges all revolutionary-minded people to join us in this dedication.

Some Points...

Continued from page 8

our collective chest. When such things happen, we should deal with it—new leaders must step forward and be brought forward to continue to guide the revolutionary cause. But we should first of all do everything in our power to *prevent* such things from happening.

Key revolutionary leaders must be defended and protected with everything we've got. They are, in fact, the revolutionary people in concentrated form. They embody the very best that the people have to offer, that the people have given rise to and brought forward at a given point in history. To respect, protect and defend such revolutionary leaders is to respect, protect and defend the people themselves.

Within the revolutionary ranks there will always be (and always should be) discussion and wrangling about many different things and about just what is the right way to go forward. This is very healthy and important and an expression of the mass line within the revolutionary ranks and it will in many ways be the "juice" of the revolution and of the future society we will build.

But vis a vis the enemy we close our ranks tightly, and present them with a strong and unfissured wall of unity and allegiance to leadership. This makes it all the more difficult for them to breach our ranks.

We have to make the enemy feel this very sharply: come after our revolutionary leaders, and you will first have to come through us and the revolutionary people. We're that serious.

What does it mean to be a revolutionary communist leader? The revolutionary party has many leaders of different levels and abilities. They embody a variety of different strengths. All of them are visionaries as well as practitioners of revolutionary struggle, but not one of them can embody *all* the best characteristics of the revolutionary people today or of the future new society that we are struggling to bring into being. This is another expression of the fact that the party's strength and power is best expressed through its collectivity.

Yet every single leader is an important part of the process of making the revolution and the new society a reality. Each one brings to the revolution his or her particular mix of strengths and abilities. Each struggles to study and apply the scientific methodology of dialectical and historical materialism to the problems of making revolution. Each does many things right and some things wrong, and hopefully we all learn through experience to become stronger and better at the art of making revolution.

Each one is motivated not by petty concerns and self-interest but by a vision of how things could be done to better meet the needs of the great majority of humanity. Each one gets tired sometimes, but then struggles to once again work hard. Each one is afraid sometimes, but then struggles once again to be brave and have no fear.

Above all the most fundamental feature all genuine revolutionary communist leaders have in common is this: their strategic confidence in the masses of people, grounded in dialectical materialism.

The life of a revolutionary leader is one of sacrifice and hard work, frequent frustrations, self-doubts, and significant risks, and yet selfless dedication to the masses and to struggle for a better world. And it is also something else: especially in those times when the masses of people more readily shed their cynicism, fear or despair, and come forward with enthusiasm and life-affirming defiance to join the revolutionary movement, the all-conquering spirit and powerful

unity of the people and its revolutionary expression courses through the revolutionary ranks and buoys the spirits of every genuine revolutionary like nothing else! It is a tremendous thing and something the cold and heartless bourgeois—who feed on the basic people but who can never be nourished or sustained by their growing emancipation—will never be able to enjoy, and in fact dread. But for us it makes it all worthwhile.

Revolutionary comrades: we should defend, support and *celebrate* our Party, our revolutionary leaders, our revolutionary people, and our vision of a revolutionary future. For they are in fact inseparable!

On Bob Avakian, the Chair of the Central Committee of our Party:

How do we really know that Comrade Avakian, the Chair of our Central Committee, is a great revolutionary leader? This is a fair question and one which we should be bold and forthright in answering.

We know that ultimately it will be the course of history and the actions of the masses which will bring forth the proof of this. But meanwhile it's not like there aren't already many indications!

It says something for instance that the collectivity that is the Central Committee of the Party, the best and most concentrated representation of the entire collectivity of our Party, has continued to select him over these many years to lead the C.C. and through it the whole of the Party.

It says something as well that he has accumulated so many years of consistent revolutionary practice, in a changing society and world, that he has never given up, sold out, or fallen off the revolutionary path. Whatever specific circumstances he has found himself in, he has always found the ways to have a sense of the key political and ideological questions and of the sentiments of the masses—precisely by relying on the Party.

It says something that he has been tested and proven at a number of *key junctures*: He has withstood being hounded and threatened by the bourgeois enemy. He has withstood personal and political attacks of opportunists and counterrevolutionary forces within the revolutionary movement. In fact these attacks have only succeeded in making him, and the Party he leads, stronger.

His position of leadership has not given him a swollen head and he has never lost his basic love for the people nor forgotten that a revolutionary leader—and the revolution itself—are only as good and as far-reaching as the people who bring them forth.

But he has never abdicated responsibility. In hard times there are some who give up, whine a lot, or resort to blaming others—the leaders, the masses, or both—for those difficulties. This is not what Comrade Avakian does: when there are problems, his attitude is first to maintain his strategic confidence in the Party and the masses and second to try even harder to use the methodology of MLM to figure out even better what to do. This is something we can all learn from!

In times of mass upsurge and revolutionary advance, Comrade Avakian applies himself with tremendous energy and enthusiasm to help maximize the gains, both in the immediate battle and above all for our long term strategic goals, and at the same time he seeks in the midst of such upsurge and advance to "step back" and look at the broader trends and bigger questions that are posed or sharpened by this upsurge. We should all learn from this as well.

Guiding the revolution is a little like piloting a boat through a coral reef, or leading a platoon through a minefield. Every day there are choices and decisions to be made: What priorities to set, what pitfalls to avoid, what openings to go for. How to successfully thwart the attacks of the enemy while doing the maximum to advance and strengthen the revolutionary forces and keep our sights focused on the future with the greatest possible sweep and vision.

There have been a number of times—again *critical* junctures in the development of the revolutionary road in the U.S. and internationally—when Comrade Avakian has stood out in his ability to wield the methodology of MLM to correctly analyze changing conditions and on that basis provide crucial direction and guidance to the revolutionary forces. The analysis of the counterrevolutionary character of the events in China following the death of Mao, and of how they were bound to lead to the restoration of capitalism in that former stronghold of revolution, cut through a time of great confusion, disorientation and disarray in the international revolutionary ranks and is one striking example of this.

On a number of other occasions Comrade Avakian has been able to steer the revolutionary forces away from potentially deadly mines appearing in the form of economism, reformism of various sorts, adventurism, social chauvinism, and various other forms of capitulation to the overt enemy or to counterrevolutionary political lines and trends emerging within the ranks of the revolution.

But Comrade Avakian did not do this through some sort of "magic." He did it by systematically and consistently wielding his particular ability to distill and concentrate the lessons of history and to apply the basic principles and scientific methodology of MLM to the analysis of ever-changing objective and subjective conditions, including the developing requirements of the revolutionary movement. With his particular ability to *connect* historical sweep and vision and very sharp MLM methodology with a deep sense of the sentiments of the masses and a deep understanding of the problems of the practical revolutionary movement, Comrade Avakian has repeatedly led others to distinguish revolutionary from counter-revolutionary lines and trends and to determine what, in practice, could and should be *done* to advance towards our overall strategic objectives. Applying the stand, viewpoint and method of MLM, Comrade Avakian has repeatedly dared to go against incorrect tides no matter how powerful they might be at a given time, and has led the revolutionary forces of our Party in waging the two-line struggle and in uniting all who can be united around the correct line.

Nobody does this better than Comrade Avakian.

And this, perhaps more than anything, is why he commands tremendous love and respect throughout our Party. He is without exaggeration our Party's single greatest individual resource and weapon. At the same time he understands, and has given leadership in understanding, that this is rooted in, is nurtured by, and must serve, the collectivity of the Party and ultimately of the masses of people. □

Chicago: Henry Horner Homes

Mae Johnson: She Will Not Be Moved

"They come up and said, 'you got to get out of here, cause if you don't, this building is gonna fall down and you in danger.' They was telling everybody they had to move. They took all the families out in one day, near about. Every one of them. All except two families. We're supposed to leave today at 8:30. But I'm not going to move, because it's too short notice. And they ain't giving me no apartment big enough to put my clothes and stuff in. They ain't giving me nothing."

Mae Francis Johnson, who refused to be moved out of her home in the Henry Horner projects

On Saturday morning, September 16, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) planned to move the last family out of 2051 W. Lake, one of the mid-rise buildings slated for demolition at the Horner Homes Extension on Chicago's west side. Once home for 60 families, the building was boarded up, the water shut off and the main entrance locked. The CHA moved out more than a dozen families the day before, and they thought they could kick out the last family quickly and easily. But they were seriously mistaken. Mae Johnson and her family had no intention of leaving.

Like other buildings at Horner, 2051 had slowly decayed over the years due to CHA neglect. Sinks backed up and toilets overflowed. One woman waited three years for a sink repair. These conditions gradually forced families out, and vacancies were left unfilled. By last year less than 20 families remained. The Horner residents refer to this tactic by the CHA to force people out as "defacto demolition." They filed a lawsuit in 1991. The suit was settled with a "consent decree," a court-ordered agreement that authorized the demolition of some Horner high and mid-rises in return for promises of rehabbed and replacement housing. Originally 2051 was one of three mid-rises to be rehabbed. But the "consent decree" was revised. In exchange for promises of additional replacement housing, 2051 and the other two buildings became slated for demolition. Two Horner highrises have already been demolished.

Congress is now slashing funds for public housing, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has plans for widespread demolition. But some Horner residents still feel that the "consent decree" is the best of a bad situation. Other residents have little faith in it. Mae Johnson said, "When they get you out of here, you out of here. You ain't coming back." She believes that this will happen through the CHA's "screening" of residents who want to return. A big concern for her is being separated from her sons and daughters. 2051 has been her home for almost a quarter of a century. She and her 12 grown children remain closeknit. Some of them still live with her and help her out. Once she moves, that could change. The CHA has told her that she can't get any Section 8 (subsidized) housing with grown sons and daughters.

At the end of August, Mae was told she had to be out of the apartment by October 1. After the first week of September, the CHA pulled its contract security guards from a number of housing developments as a "cost cutting" measure. Since 2051 W. Lake was 70 percent vacant and widely known as being slated for demolition, it became a target of scavenging. Pipes and toilets were snatched from abandoned units, and the usual leaks and water damage became what one resident described as "Niagara Falls."

The effect on residents was disastrous. The flood in Mae's apartment left her clothes drenched, carpet soaked and stinking, dresser damaged and TV blown out. Then she tripped, fell and injured her eye. One of Mae's daughters described the CHA's heartless ways: "When she went down to housing and told them the water was running, they told her 'The building is damaged, it's gonna be torn down,' and laughed about it. They went in their office, and ain't shit they did about it. That's when

she hurt herself." Like other residents, Mae felt that the CHA had a hand in the flooding: "I believe they wanted it to happen, where they can get everybody out of here. People's going too slow for them, and they want everybody out of this apartment quick."

The residents wanted the CHA to fix up the situation. But the CHA instead used it to their advantage. Despite the fact that inspectors did not consider the building to be in danger, the CHA took the position that people could no longer remain there and launched a surprise removal of residents.

Turning Back the Eviction Attempt

On Friday, September 14, all but two families were removed from 2051 and relocated in 124 N. Hoyne, a nearby mid-rise. Since the "consent decree" calls for this building to be vacated by the end of



FW/OJ photo

Mae Johnson

Johnson family members outside the apartment on the day the CHA attempted to evict them.

November and then demolished, families from 2051 might end up having to move twice in a matter of weeks. The CHA claims people moved out voluntarily. But the residents had another take on the matter. "They just came up to me," said a mother of five. "They seen me coming out the car and they said we have to move." She had to move the next day.

On Saturday morning the CHA was ready with the moving trucks, but Mae and her family weren't going anywhere. Friends, family members and revolutionaries arrived at the Johnson's front door. A banner hung from the apartment's upstairs window: "Stop the War on People in Public Housing! Stop the Sweeps, Swarms, B.I.T.E. Raids & Evictions! Stop the Demolitions!" (B.I.T.E. are special police squads that target people in the projects.) A member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade who had come in support of Mae said, "What they're doing is wrong, and we have to stop it."

The CHA ignored Mae Johnson's repeated requests for help with the flooding. But the resistance to the eviction quickly brought a force of 15 CHA security guards and police. They ordered the banner removed and said that any protest must be approved by CHA management. They

demanded an ID from one of Mae's sons—whose name is on the lease. He refused. The cops and security claimed that the revolutionaries who came in support of the Johnsons were there to start "violence" and cause "damage." This hypocrisy came from the mouths of the same authorities who are responsible for the daily police violence against the residents and the intolerable living conditions. One of Mae's sons compared the CHA's mentality to slaveholders who want people on their plantation to only say "yes suh" and "yes

Across the street there were some unin- vited and unwanted drop-ins—three CHA cop cars, a paddy wagon and an official from HUD. Mae said with disgust, "So many cars and paddy wagons like you're doing a crime." Her son said, "When the gangs start shooting, the cops come around and start picking up the bodies—but when you out here having a good time showing unity, they come around and break that up."

The cops ordered family members to take the banner down. They even ordered the little kids to take down the balloons, but one of Mae's daughters put a stop to it. Referring to the revolutionaries there, the HUD official told the family that they shouldn't "mix" with whites and told Mae to get rid of them. She refused—they were guests and they had stood with her and her family. Once again, the authorities had to back down in the face of resistance.

One of Mae's daughters felt that the authorities acted the way they did because "they feel we gonna plan a strategy on them. We stick together, and we do what we got to do, we can overpower them. That's what they scared of." A family friend pointed out, "They didn't want the world to see that this woman is standing up for her rights."

The authorities lost no time in trying to get revenge. Two of Mae's kids were followed by police when they left Horner on Sunday night. Mae began receiving crank phone calls—silence on the line or anonymous voices telling her to leave. And at 11 p.m. on the night of the bar-b-que, a CHA cop walked into her apartment—without permission—and demanded that Mae give him a list of all family members on the lease. Mae refused to knuckle under to the cowardly scare tactics.

On Monday, the courts put the city government's request to condemn the building on hold, preventing the CHA from forcing Mae to leave for the time being. The CHA was instructed to find suitable housing for the Johnsons to relocate to. In a week the judge will review the situation. Lawyers from the Legal Assistance Foundation intend to take the CHA to federal court to argue that the forced removals are a violation of the "consent decree."

Despite the pressure by the CHA, including the absence of heat in the building, Mae says she intends for now to remain where she is until she has the apartment she needs. Family members pointed out that Mae's defiance of the CHA has had an impact beyond her own immediate living situation. It showed that the CHA and HUD can not be trusted to carry out their promises. Some of the people relocated to 124 N. Hoyne have raised the possibility that they will refuse to leave in November.

This was a small, beginning victory, but one that has the potential to grow into something larger. One of Mae's sons commented, "People think gangs is power, people think drugs is power. People coming together as one, that's strength, that's power." □

maam." His attitude was, "That's the way they want it, but I'm not standing for that."

Since HUD took over the CHA earlier this year, they have tried to present an image of being concerned for the interests of the residents. But the way the Johnsons and other residents of 2051 were treated once again showed that the authorities care nothing about the people.

As the morning wore on, more family members and neighbors came by—including those who had been moved out on Friday. Lawyers from the Legal Assistance Foundation, and even the state Senator from that area, arrived. By noon, the CHA backed off. They agreed to postpone their attempt to remove the Johnsons.

Victory Celebration

One of Mae's sons said, "That was a small victory, by my mother standing there and telling them, you're not going to think for me or make a decision for me today." Word of the victory spread. A celebration bar-b-que was held the next day. A grill was setup in the playground, streamers and balloons hung from the climbing bars and a banner reading "We won the victory" was draped on a jungle gym. Family members and friends dropped by, and neighbors proudly congratulated Mae for her stand.

How Mumia Was Framed and Why He Must Have a New Trial

Continued from page 4

police arrived, within minutes of the shooting, that the guy ran away, the shooter ran away. Mumia was down on the sidewalk, having been shot. They then took Chobert down to the police station and he wrote out a report of what he saw. He said the shooter ran 35 steps down the street. There's an alleyway that intersects the street at that point. And so he has the shooter running away in his reports to the police and he describes a person who is different than Mumia. But when he took the stand to testify, he completely changed his testimony. He said I was mistaken. He said the shooter didn't run away. The shooter just fell down right away. I guess I made an error that night, not once, but twice.

Well this is rather strange. But then you look at this individual's background. He had been convicted of throwing a molotov cocktail into a public school for pay. Judge Sabo, the judge who tried the case, felt that that didn't reflect on his character. So that was kept from the jury. What we didn't know but found out within the last month when we put him on the stand in the hearing in Philadelphia, was that Chobert was driving a cab that night without a license, and that the police knew it, and the prosecutor who prosecuted the case told him, when he was informed of this, that he would look into it and assist him in getting his license back. And he continued to drive a cab for 10 more years without a license and he was never charged with that offense or violation. So you can imagine what he was promised and offered and given for his testimony...

The So-Called "Confession"

They claim that when Mumia was brought to the hospital for treatment, he said, as loud as he could say, so everyone could hear him, that he had shot the police officer and that he had hoped the officer died...

But the curious thing is no one reported hearing that, even though the room he was in was filled with police. No one reported hearing him say that until 64 days later, after Mumia had filed charges against the police in that room for abusing him, physically and verbally. One of the nurses in the hospital, Carol Young, came forward to report that after Mumia was operated on and in critical condition and he was laying there and fluids were being drained from his body into a bag that was off on the side, two police officers stepped on the bag and stood on it, which in my book is attempted murder, knowing that he was in such serious condition, presumably hoping he would die. But the nurse ordered them off and they got off. But she is the only one to report that.

But the police officers in that room, no one reported it for 64 days. But then they remembered. And one police officer, the officer who was shot, his partner came forward and said, "Yes, I heard Mumia say he shot my partner," and a security guard at the hospital also came forward and she said she heard the same thing, and both of them testified to the jury that they heard this confession.

But the interesting thing was, there was one officer who had arrested Mumia that night who was with him throughout the entire time. He wrote an official report that night and in his official report he said, very specifically, "the male Negro made no comment." Well didn't that influence the jury? The answer is no, because when the defense went to call him as a witness, the prosecutor said he was on vacation and unavailable and the judge refused a continuance for him to be brought in, so he never testified before the jury. But when we held a hearing last month, what did we find out? We found out that he was technically listed as being on vacation, but, in fact, he was home in Philadelphia, 15 minutes from the courthouse and he could have been brought in immediately but wasn't.

This is indicative of how their whole case was structured, put together and tried because the prosecutors point out that later, after the other two came forward 64 days later and said they heard the confession, this officer, named Wakshul, also came forward, and he said yes, now I remember. I also heard the confession and he was asked well why didn't you put it in your report

that night? And his answer was, "I didn't think it was very important." [laughter in the audience] In the shooting of a police officer. If the jury had heard that answer, their reaction would have been the same as yours. It would have colored the entire case. It would have given them insight into what's going on here, into how a case is being manufactured.

Lies About the "Murder Weapon"

Mumia had a gun that night. It was a licensed gun that he purchased, a legal weapon. He was working as a cab driver. He had been robbed three times. He armed himself for his own protection and he had a .38 caliber gun. The fact that he had a gun with him that night they used to great advantage. But the problem is they were never able to connect that gun to the murder. They were only able to assert that that gun was there. When the medical examiner conducted the autopsy on the dead police officer, he removed the bullet, one bullet, the only one found in the officer, from his brain and he wrote on his report the bullet was a .44 caliber bullet. You cannot fire a .44 caliber bullet from a .38 caliber gun.

Didn't that influence the jury? No, because the jury was never told that. The prosecutor put the medical examiner who did the autopsy on the stand and never asked him about the caliber of the bullet he removed from the officer's brain and Mumia's attorney—unprepared, unwilling to take the case, asking to be removed from the case—never read the medical report so he never asked the question. So the jury never heard that. But what they did hear is that the police laboratory reports that it was a .38 caliber bullet and so they heard that the bullet that was removed from the officer's brain matched, by caliber, Mumia's gun.

But the police had that gun within minutes and they never tested it, they said, to see if it had been recently fired, and the test is a very simple test. Any of us could perform it. You simply pick up the gun and you put the nozzle to your nose and you smell. The unmistakable odor of gunpowder remains in the barrel of a gun for between four to six hours after the gun is fired. They said no police officers for the next four to six hours ever smelled the gun, even though it was delivered to the police laboratory within two hours. And furthermore, they had Mumia's hands, immediately. He was down on the ground, writhing in pain in a pool of blood. They had his hands and you can test someone's hands by putting a cotton swab across the surface of the hand to see if there are residues of powder in the hands, because if you fire a weapon, particularly a revolver, the powder spills out over the hand and you pick up that powder or that residue on a cotton swab and you send it to the FBI headquarters in Washington and they run it through a radioactive machine called neutron activation process and they can tell you if that hand recently fired a gun.

Did they do that test? It's done in almost all homicides where they capture the suspect within hours. Here they had the "suspect" within minutes in a police shooting and they never tested the hand, they say. They never tested the gun and they never

tested the hands. It's quite remarkable in this kind of a case.

Hanging Judge Sabo

So when you look at the three points of their case—the eyewitnesses, the gun and the confession—you see what an extraordinarily weak case it is. Well how did they get a conviction? They got a conviction, number one, because Mumia was tried before Judge Sabo, who is responsible for more people on death row than any judge in the United States by far. He has put 31 people on death row. The person in second place has only put 14.

He is reported by the Bar Association in Philadelphia to be incompetent. Thirty percent of the members of the bar in a poll indicated that he was not qualified to even sit as a judge. Six former prosecutors came forward and signed affidavits saying that no defendant could get a fair trial in this courtroom. Six prosecutors, not defense lawyers. And the leading prosecutor in Philadelphia during that period of time, a gentleman by the name of Richard Sprague, also had his associate file an affidavit in which he referred to Judge Sabo as "a prosecutor in robes." So that was the nature of the judge who heard this case.

And the prosecutor is a gentleman who had distinguished himself earlier by gaining a conviction against a young man named Connor who was convicted of a serious rape murder that occurred in the projects. A young woman was raped and murdered on the roof of the projects. She was found with over 100 puncture wounds on her body. They arrested Connor, who lived in the project, because he had a shotgun and they said this was a shotgun slaying, and they had two witnesses who saw him coming down from the roof with a shotgun and he was convicted. And after he did 12 years, they reopened the case at the insistence of a new lawyer. And what did they find? They found out that the victim wasn't shot at all, but she was stabbed over 100 times with an ice pick, and that the police had recovered the ice pick that night and they had it all along. The district attorney had to petition the court to release Connor and he was released. But Joe McGill, who prosecuted Mumia, was the prosecutor of Connor and that's how he had distinguished himself before Mumia's case.

Mumia's lawyer took the stand last month in Philadelphia to confess that he hadn't prepared the case, that he had put only two witnesses on the stand who were eyewitnesses and he had never talked to either of them before they took the stand. You would not try a traffic ticket that way. He also acknowledged that that night and within one week, the police had interviewed four people who were in different parts of that street at four o'clock in the morning or above it in a hotel, who all reported the same thing, that after the shooting ended, they saw an individual flee down the street on the south side of the street going east. Mumia was down on the ground. Either these four people, who weren't together and didn't know each other and didn't know Mumia, were all hallucinating about the exact same event or the shooter actually did flee. But Mumia's attorney never put that together and didn't call these witnesses. He only called one of them belatedly, whom he had never talked to before, and the young man, who was a student at Temple, testified. But he had never been in a courtroom before and he was unfairly treated in that courtroom and [was] not effective. But there was no one

else to back him up.

Unfair Trial

Mumia didn't have a defense attorney. He had a prosecutor who had wrongly prosecuted an innocent man earlier and he had a judge who's put more people on death row than any judge. The combination of all this produced a trial that was a sham and a farce. Any lawyer reading the trial record would be convinced completely that Mumia needs a new trial.

So Mumia's case, undefended, unprotected, the judge allocated \$150 for an investigator, the prosecution had interviewed 140 people—his investigator interviewed two and quit the case because he had no money, allocated \$150 for a forensic pathologist who Mumia needed. They were unable to hire one at that rate. \$150 for a firearms expert. No firearms expert would take the case. So he went to trial without a lawyer, without experts, without an investigation. The prosecution had everything going for it, including the judge.

The jury was picked through a process of racial exclusion. The prosecution eliminated 11 qualified African-American jurors out of the 15 challenges it used, clearly a violation of what's called the Batson rule. But the jury that was picked in a city that's 50 percent African-American included 10 white jurors and two African-American jurors. The judge removed one African-American juror. There were originally three. He removed one in Mumia's absence in the privacy of his chambers. She was the first and the only juror that Mumia had selected when he was acting as his own attorney. She was eliminated by the judge and Mumia wasn't there. She was replaced by an elderly white man who said that he didn't think he could be fair to Mumia. But nonetheless he sat as juror number one...

The judge sent the jury out to deliberate Friday afternoon on the July 4th weekend...and they came back after about an hour. And what did they come back for? Not with a verdict of guilty. They came back and they asked the judge, "Could you reinstruct us on the law of manslaughter?" Manslaughter. Mumia would have been out about 10 years ago. And why did the jury in this undefined case talk about manslaughter? Because to their common sense view, there was no premeditation here. If Mumia shot the officer, even if he did it, even if he was guilty, he ran to a scene where his brother was being beaten up, gunfire erupted, he got shot, the officer got shot. That's a shootout by a fight that was provoked by the police officer and that is, at most, manslaughter.

But the judge reinstructed them away from that and they came back about an hour later and said no, it's first degree murder. But the prosecution was worried because this jury was thinking manslaughter and he wanted the death penalty, not just first degree murder. So in the second part of the case, the jury decides whether Mumia is to be executed or whether he's to be given life without parole and in that hearing, all the wraps came off. In that hearing, the prosecution put into evidence Mumia's political history and his political past, that he was a Black Panther when he was 16 years old, 12 years earlier, he was a Black Panther. And they put that before the jury and they put before the jury a quotation that Mumia had used when he was 16 years old and when he was interviewed by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Quoting from Chairman Mao Tsetung of the People's Republic of China, he said, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun," referring to why the Black Panther Party insisted on arming itself in self-defense.

The prosecution played that over and over to the jury as if to convince them that on this particular night what Mumia was doing is he was exercising some kind of political power by shooting a policeman, as ludicrous and crazy as that was. But this jury, which had trouble with first degree murder, within an hour came back with the death penalty because the prosecution had convinced them that Mumia was a militant dangerous individual who would kill again. And that's how he got the death penalty and that's why it's been said that he's the only political prisoner on death row. I maintain everyone on death row is a political prisoner, but he is the only one who got the death penalty because of his politics, that were overtly played to the jury, a largely elderly, middle class, white jury that was uptight in the city of Philadelphia at the particular time, and that's how it happened and that's why he got the death penalty. □



Mumia Abu-Jamal in the hospital after he was shot by police in 1981.

F.O.P.—Fraternal Order of Pillagers

©1995 Mumia Abu-Jamal

"...THE SYSTEM HAS FAILED YOU YESTERDAY, FAILED YOU TODAY AND HAVE CREATED THE CONDITIONS FOR FAILURE TOMORROW. FOR SOCIETY IS WRONG, THE SYSTEM IS REELIN', THE COURTS OF THIS COMPLEX ARE FILLED WITH IMBALANCE, COPS ARE INSANE, THE JUDGES ENSLAVIN'. THE LAWYERS ARE JUST AS THE JUDGES THEY CONFRONT, THEY ARE HARVARD AND PRINCETON AND CORNELL AND YALE AND TRAINED AS THE JUDGE TO DECEIVE THE IMPOVERISHED, TRAINED AS THE JUDGE TO PROTECT THE ESTABLISHED, TRAINED BY THE SYSTEM TO BE AS THE SYSTEM, TO DO FOR THE SYSTEM, EXPLICIT WITH THE SYSTEM AND MOVE AINT GONNA CLOSE OUR EYES TO THIS MONSTER..."

John Africa, *The Judges Letter*

Within a matter of days, August 1995 in Philadelphia marked millions of minds as the month police scandal emerged from the city sewers.

To readers across America, the ugly, evil pustule of police criminality in Philadelphia burst open, echoed by similar burstings in L.A. and New Orleans, causing shock, horror and revulsion at those usually deemed 'the finest' by corporate media.

One wonders—"The finest" WHAT?

The finest thieves, the finest drug merchants, the finest stick-up artists, the finest drug fiends and the finest killers?

Isn't that what they actually do, in Black, Latino and poor communities across this vast nation?

For over a decade, in Philadelphia alone, cops acted more like vampires than 'servants' for they sucked the life-blood from Black Philadelphia, under the rubric, under the cape of 'fighting crime' in those areas.

In North Philly's 39th district alone, they stole, pocketed and pillaged hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars, not only from drug dealers, but from anyone unlucky enough to have some dough when they or their property were searched. They, by their own admission (in court guilty pleas) set up innocent people by planting drugs on them, threatened others with death if they didn't 'come up' with \$ fast enough, used drugs to gain snitches against targets, filed false reports and swore on bibles that their lies were true.

Their 'union,' the F.O.P. had only words of criticism for federal prosecutors, *not the cops who pleaded guilt*, and are snitchin on other cops! (Perhaps there is honor among thieves, huh?)

Here's the main point: For Black, in Philly, in Compton, in New Orleans, this "news" isn't news; there is no surprise.

Cops stealing money? Cops setting folks up?

Cops holding deeply racist, violent anti-Black views? Cops 'niggering' people?

Cops killing poor folks?

And?

For far too many Blacks this is daily reality.

The foul mouthings of a Fuhrman are heard not on TV, but on a daily basis in every cop station in America.

I first heard it when I was 13.

But the fact that thousands of people were framed, lied on, and sent to prison by criminal cops points not only to cops, but to the entire system, as John Africa noted years ago in the *Judges Letter*.

How could tens, hundreds and thousands of people be tried, convicted, fined and sent to prison if judges are supposed to protect their rights?

How could hundreds be unjustly imprisoned if D.A.s truly believed in 'justice'?

How could so many be wrongly convicted if their lawyers (most court-appointed) had truly tried to defend them?

Doesn't it seem like the entire system is corrupt, instead of just slimy cops?

MOVE Revolutionary Teacher, *John Africa* put his finger right on the button almost 20 years ago when he wrote how poor people are perceived by this system: "...Poor folks is just like dead wood to the courts, they're cut up and burnt and set out as trash, you judges ain't gettin' away with none of this stuff.... You have jailed poor folks despite innocence, freed rich folks despite guilt, collected your salary from both and made poor folks pay the bulk of it; this system is rotten from end to end..." (*The Judges Letter*)

Long Live John Africa!

Right on the button!

MAJAMAL c 1995

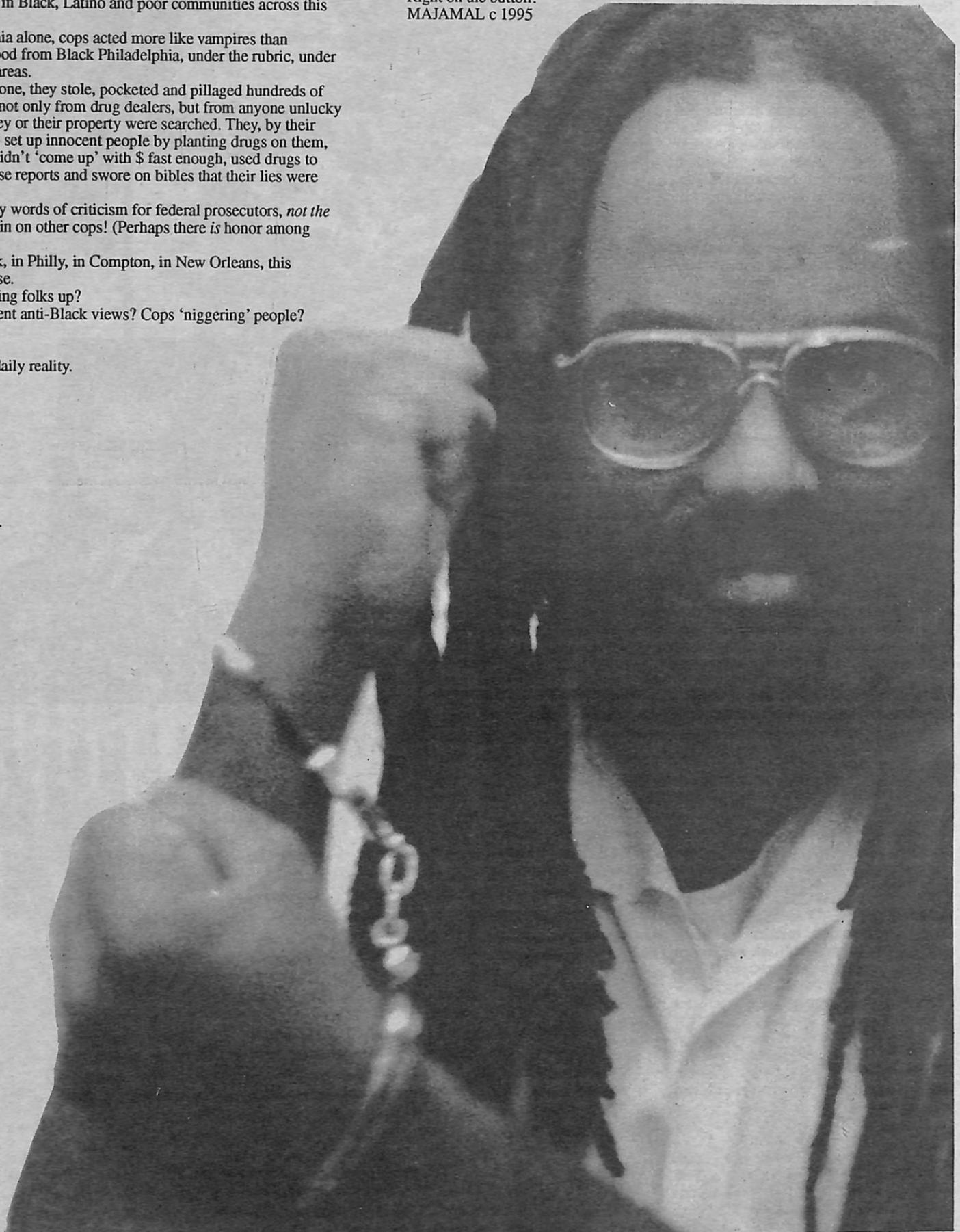


Photo: COC Productions

Revolutionaries, who embody the highest interests of the people and inspire the masses in fighting for these interests, are very precious to the people. And, particularly where revolutionaries hold firm to their principles in the face of persecution at the hands of the oppressors—including long years in jail and the threat of execution—it is extremely important for the people to rally to the defense of such revolutionaries and to refuse to accept the "right" of the oppressor to carry out this persecution and "legalized

murder." This is the case with people like Geronimo Pratt, who has been held in prison for years and years as a result of a frame-up and a continuing cover-up from the highest levels of government; and, in a very sharp and urgent way, this is the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, whom the government is moving to execute in the near future, on the basis of another frame-up and cover-up.

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee, RCP, USA, July 1995

Colin Powell: 20th-Century Buffalo Soldier

Continued from page 5

House in the early 1980s, Powell went along, and participated in all kinds of Reagan-era plots—including a mission to Central America with Oliver North and Caspar Weinberger in 1983 when illegal aid to the Nicaraguan contras was being organized. Powell was involved in the planning for the conquest of the African-Caribbean nation of Grenada—when U.S. soldiers invaded this black Caribbean island and overthrew an anti-U.S. government. These were times of intense U.S. aggressions and all-out preparations for nuclear war with the Soviet Union—and Powell proved himself a valuable operative in all of these war crimes.

In 1987 Powell's big career break came when Carlucci appointed Powell to help reorganize the National Security Council after the Iran-Contra scandal. On November 20, 1987 Powell became Reagan's National Security Adviser—the top presidential aide for military and strategic operations.

In 1989, after Bush became President, Powell was appointed as the top general in the military—the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In that post he organized the U.S. invasion of Panama—and turned one neighborhood of Panama City into a smoking ruin nicknamed "Little Hiroshima."

From this post he masterminded the brutal 1992 U.S. war against Iraq. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis died in this war for U.S. control of Mideast oil. Under his command, U.S. planes pounded Iraqi cities to rubble. Thousands of civilians and Iraqi soldiers were trapped on the highway north of Kuwait city and were massacred—as they fled the battlefield. It was an unforgivable and deliberate war crime.

In 1992 a new Democrat president, Clinton, came to power. Clinton kept Powell at his top Pentagon post—which just goes to show that the U.S. ruling class has fundamental unity in its bloody efforts to dominate the world.

Powell's role models, the Buffalo Soldiers, were just grunts. But Powell hired on in a different era—and could take advantage of the times to climb much higher. By the late 1980s Powell was promoted to be an honorary member of the ruling class at its highest circles. Henry Louis Gates Jr. writes in the *New Yorker*, "No other black American has been such an integral part of the structures and processes of power." Powell is an imperialist, a war criminal and a big-time oppressor of the people. And that's essence of this matter.

There's No Progress Connected to Powell

Some people think that *any* Black man in the White House would represent a step forward. Some think "Even if the man is a reactionary, it would represent breaking down some ultimate barriers for Black people." The prominent Black intellectual Cornel West even fantasized to Henry Louis Gates Jr. that Powell was a compassionate man who might be open to the idea of a "Marshall Plan for the cities."

Powell is smooth—on the campaign trail, he will be capable of seeming humane. But anyone who expects "a break" from him needs a dose of materialist class analysis.

Powell himself says, "I don't want to be the poster child for the brothers."

Would a President Powell help break down barriers for Black people? No. That will not be the effect of the Powell candidacy. The Powell candidacy has become a way for the system to claim that there are no longer any obstacles facing Black people that need to be knocked down. Colin Powell is being used in the mainstream political arena as a way to claim that there is no longer any racism in the U.S.

Powell is being made into a symbol that says "Black people *could* make it in the U.S. if they would only stop thinking they are victims, give up their anger, buckle down, and play by the rules."

And Powell's candidacy serves this argument—even if Powell himself doesn't make it.

This General Powell is a man soaked in blood from crimes he committed for this system. His candidacy can produce nothing good for oppressed people. If the U.S. ruling class promotes him as a presidential candidate it will only be because it serves them. □



Powell in Vietnam, 1963.



My Lai Massacre, Vietnam, 1968.



Powell at a news conference during the U.S. war on Iraq, 1991.



Identifying the bodies of some of the hundreds of people killed when U.S. bombs struck an air raid shelter in the Al-Amiriya district of Baghdad, Iraq, 1991.

People Confront Chicago Power Structure on Cold-Blooded Murder of Joseph Gould

Protests in Chicago have continued over the murder of Joseph Gould by a white cop. Two months ago, the 36-year-old homeless Black man was shot in the head at point blank range and left to die on the street by Gregory Becker, who was off-duty at the time. On September 6 Becker walked out of a preliminary hearing with only two counts of official misconduct against him—for

failing to report that his weapon fired.

"It's a double standard at work with Joseph, not only in this town, in a lot of towns," said a woman who was one of the more than 100 at a September 18 protest. "It's what the police do and get away with all the time, and I have seen beatings myself where they got away with it. It wasn't justice, it definitely wasn't justice." The action was called by a group of ministers from the Black community and U.S. Congressman Bobby Rush. An impromptu speaker and a vigil was held near the site where Joseph was gunned down by Becker. There were comments by a member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, an activist minister, a representative from *StreetWise* newspaper, and a friend of Joseph Gould. A number of Black ministers led prayers demanding justice. At least 45 cops surrounded the vigil. The protesters then took to the streets, marched downtown and held another rally across from City Hall. That evening, news reports announced that prosecutors were interviewing new witnesses in the case.

At every protest around this case, people have raised that if Joseph had shot the cop, he would have been up on charges of first degree murder in a minute. A recent incident in Chicago was a concrete example of this racist double standard. On September 16, an off-duty cop's friend had her purse snatched by someone in a car. The cop jumped into his four-wheeler, trailed the

suspects and pulled them over. A shootout erupted between the cop and the young Black man who was driving the car. Both were killed. A 14-year-old Black youth who was a passenger in the car was then arrested and charged with murder, with prosecutors seeking to try him as an adult. The way the system is treating this Black youth is in stark contrast to how Becker has been handled.

On September 20, hundreds marched downtown and into the City Hall building. Most of those demonstrating were Black youth mobilized by 21st Century V.O.T.E. There were also a number of vendors and representatives from *StreetWise* newspaper. Joseph, like many other homeless people in Chicago, sold *StreetWise* to earn some money.

A hearing had been scheduled for that day in City Council chambers, and State's Attorney O'Malley was supposed to answer charges that by neglect or intent, his office botched the case against Becker. The gallery was packed with demonstrators. One man stood up and spoke out in a loud voice: "If it was any other citizen in the city of Chicago, he would be charged with murder. We want the police charged. If a white man can kill a Black man in the city of Chicago, we're going back to slave times, and that ain't right."

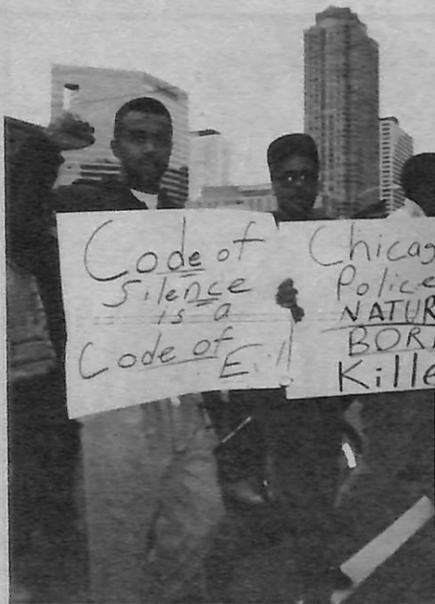
O'Malley spent the entire Council hearing defending his office's handling of Joseph's murder. Meanwhile, most of the

aldermen tried to keep the issue focused narrowly on O'Malley's role in the matter. One alderman even praised the judge who cut Becker loose, in order to heap more blame on O'Malley.

In fact, the few facts that did emerge at the City Council hearing indicted not only O'Malley, but the entire so-called "justice" system. It involved the bond court judge who had declined to hold Becker on murder charges; the police who did not perform basic tests for evidence, such as checking Becker's gun for prints and Joseph's hands for powder burns—tests which could have further discredited the claim by Becker's lawyer that Joseph had been shot in a struggle for the cop's gun; the judge who ruled there was "no probable cause" to believe that Becker knew Joseph was shot and refused to even charge the cop with leaving the scene of a crime—despite clear medical evidence that Becker's gun was placed on Joseph's skull when the trigger was pulled; the State's Attorney who declined to take the case to a grand jury, which usually goes along with the prosecutor's request for murder indictments; O'Malley's prosecution team which failed to seriously challenge the testimony of Becker's girlfriend whose story, backing up the cop, contradicted other witnesses.

The City Council hearing gave a small glimpse of the insidious workings of a "justice" system that indicts and convicts Black, Latino and poor defendants with clockwork regularity—while police brutalizers and killers are let free or given mere slaps on the wrist.

After nearly three hours, the alderman chairing the hearing closed the meeting by saying that whether Becker was indicted or not, the important thing was that for the sake of being "fair," Becker's case should be brought before a grand jury. That may satisfy those concerned only with the appearance of fairness. But it will not satisfy those demanding real justice. A *StreetWise* vendor remarked at an earlier rally, "We're not satisfied with just bringing the case up for a grand jury indictment, we want a conviction. He's the one that pulled the trigger. First degree murder, that's what it was." Justice for Joseph won't come from the courts, the state's attorney or city council, but from the struggle of the people. □



Chicago, September 18.



A march to demand justice for Joseph Gould in downtown Chicago, September 18.

San Francisco Ingleside Community Denounces Police Murder of William Hankston

We received this correspondence from a comrade in the San Francisco Bay Area:

On Wednesday, September 6, a 29-year-old Black man was gunned down in cold blood by cops in the Ingleside district of San Francisco. SFPD undercover cops arrived at a neighborhood playground and commenced to detain two men. One of the men was William Hankston, known to his friends and family as "Squeeg."

A youth who saw much of what went down said, "The cops walked up on William, one had a shotgun. William got on his bike, tried to run away. One cop run up on him, tried to hit him and hollered, 'Hey, n*gger.' William tried to ride away and the cop yelled at him to stop the bike. He was running after William, reached out, pulled out his pistol and shot him." William was shot 12 inches from the back of his head. The blood soaked into the pavement.

A large group of outraged people gathered immediately, and dozens of cops were called to the scene. A sergeant complained that "the crowd surrounded the officers, crying, screaming and cursing."

After the killing, the neighborhood seethed with anger. People gathered to denounce the murder and speak out to the press. A brother said, "He was a much loved man out here. They shot my homeboy in the back of the head. We're all mad now; we're all hurting. We want to know what reason did they have for killing him?" William's father said his son's death was an "outright assassination."

The next day, when people spotted an undercover car riding around in the neighborhood, things began to blow again. Rocks and bottles were thrown at the cops, and squad cars were shaken. The cops retreated. Later when the crowd thinned, riot cops went in to make arrests, and the light-rail streetcars were replaced with buses since they could "maneuver around any blocked streets."

The cops who shot William were conducting a dragnet under the guise of the "war on drugs." This murder is typical of what the "war on drugs" is about—nothing but a war on the people. What was not typical were the skirmishes between the people and the cops, which freaked out the authorities. The commander of the Potrero police station said, "I didn't want to see any riots or massive demonstrations in San Francisco."

The mayor (and ex-police chief) Frank Jordan defends Jesse Washington, the Black cop who shot William Hankston, saying he "has an outstanding record" and is "highly regarded by the community." Washington claims that the gun "went off" accidentally. The press paints him as being "distracted" and "devastated" about the killing. A headline on the front page of the *SF Examiner* read: "One dead, the other living his worst nightmare." The article claimed that Washington was just as much a "victim" as Hankston and said that the men were similar—both Black and from neighborhoods in San Francisco.

Washington has a long career of oppressing the people and proving himself to the authorities. He was a jail guard before joining the SFPD. He volunteered for the Gulf War. He was sent to L.A. to help in putting down the rebellion in 1992. He became a narcotics officer in 1992 and was assigned to undercover work in the communities where he had grown up. Some people in the neighborhood are now calling Washington the "Black Fuhrman." When the people gathered and surrounded Washington after the murder, his own brother was one of the angriest and loudest in that crowd!

The District Attorney said that this case will be referred to the grand jury for investigation, and there are plans for an FBI investigation. Many people are wary of cooperating with the "official investigations." The D.A. complained that "some witnesses are unwilling to come forward to a police agency of any kind." And why should they? At a church meeting some residents said that the police were harassing witnesses. More than 200 San Francisco law enforcement officers gathered on September 18 to announce that they are "100 percent behind" Washington.

The newspapers and TV quoted Mayor Jordan saying that he "fears 'outside agitators,' including the Revolutionary Communist Party." Jordan claims the masses of people are "confused." But the truth is that the people have pinned the blame for this murder right where it belongs—on the police. Neighborhood

residents placed the statement by Joe Veale, RCP spokesperson in L.A., on the Fuhrman tapes among the flowers and 40-ounce bottles marking the site of William's murder.

Black community leaders, activists, neighbors and relatives have called for the formation of a "Hankston Commission" to conduct an independent investigation of the murder. On September 13, 75 people descended on City Hall to demand a meeting with Mayor Jordan. Jordan met with 15 community group leaders in an attempt to cool the anger. Over 200 people attended a meeting called by the Nation of Islam, and 100 people came to a vigil honoring Hankston and others who had died at the hands of the cops.

The murder of William Hankston is one of a series of recent police executions in S.F. On July 4, 12 cops beat Aaron Williams, pepper sprayed him and left him to die in a paddy wagon. The cops who killed him were never suspended, with the exception of two pigs that quit. Official investigations concluded that Aaron's murder was a "justifiable homicide."

Hundreds of people turned out for the William's funeral. The people remembered a man who was "soft-spoken" and "fun loving." The funeral was also a statement of protest from the community. The people came together to take action against a brutal police murder. And the struggle is not over—there is still much anger and people still want justice. □

Information As Weaponry in the Fight to Save the Life of Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a hero of the people—a conscious uncompromising voice who refuses to make peace with the system. He was framed up, convicted in a corrupt and unjust trial, and sentenced to death because of his work as a revolutionary journalist and his history as a Black Panther.

Across the U.S.—and in many countries—people rallied hard to Mumia's defense and forced the notorious hanging judge Sabo and the governor of Pennsylvania to back off the August 17 execution date.

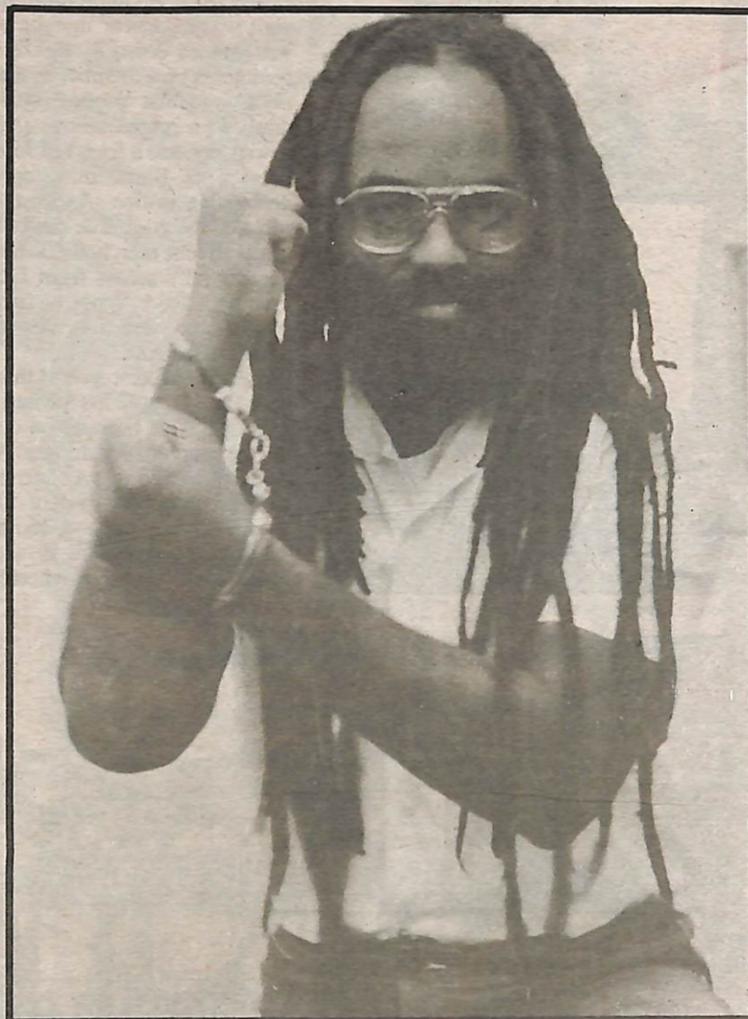
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Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee, RCP, USA, July 1995

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