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England: A Festival of Riots

On Friday night, July 3, the largely Asian Southall district outside London erupted as Indian and Pakistani youth fought off and sent packing organized and police protected gangs of racist "skinhead" youth who had begun attacking the

people in the community. Both the skinheads and the police took a righteous beating. The people of Southall stood up strong and proud—the rulers of Britain began to worry, but they hadn't seen anything yet.

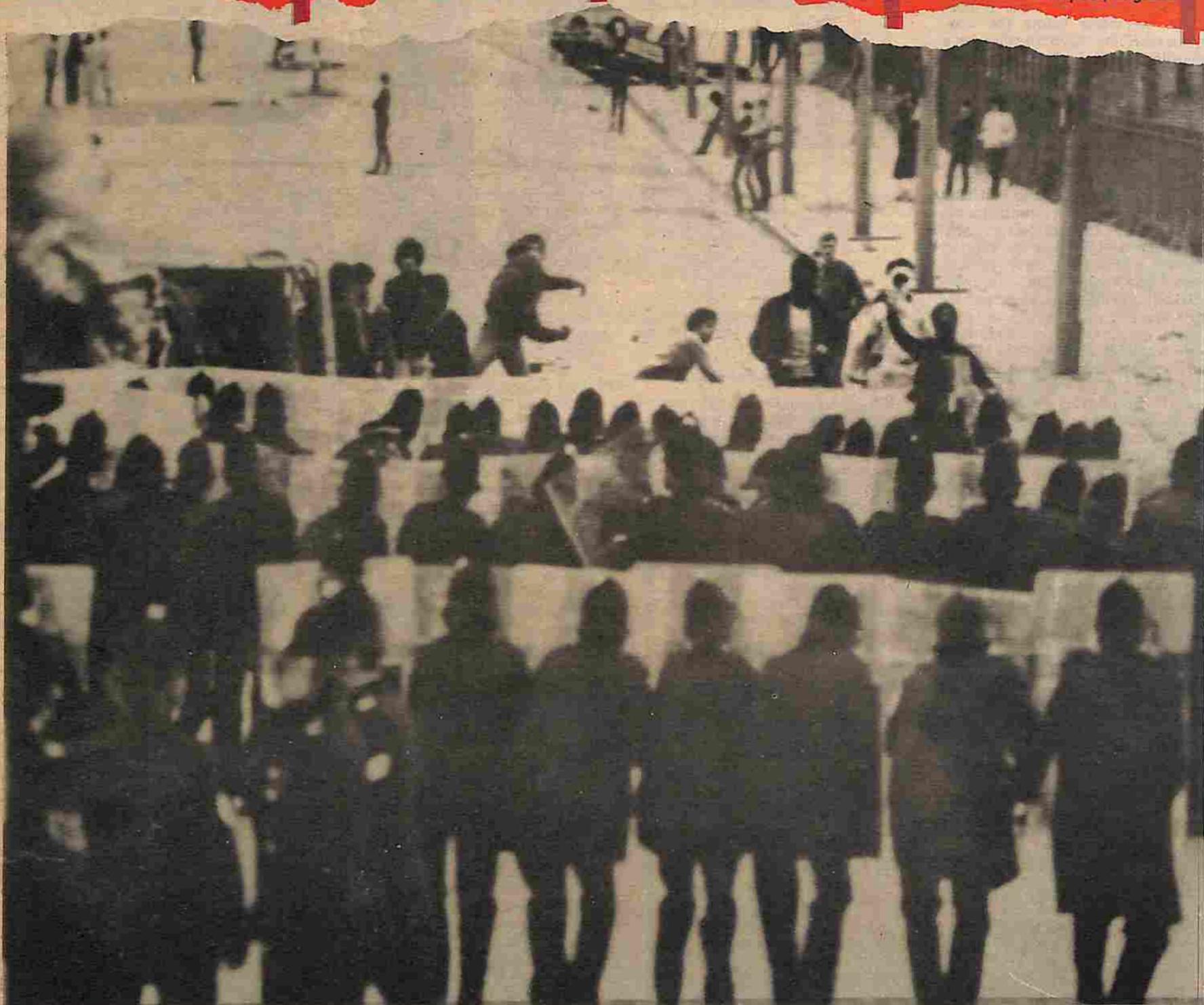
The next day black and white proletarian youth in the Toxteth district

of Liverpool exploded in rebellion, staking the police and sending scores to the hospital as flames from burning buildings lit up the sky. By Monday, hundreds of police had been injured and a ten block area reduced to rubble in what was termed "the worst rioting in British history." As of press time, the rebellion there continues with ebbs and flows.

But still the worries of the British rulers had only begun. Tuesday night, the Wood Green suburb of London went up with black and white youth taking on the police. On

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Liverpool, England



Forces of Revolution in the Coalfields See Page 12

Supreme Court Says: "Prison is Supposed to Be Hell"

For years, the Supreme Court has declined to consider cases challenging inhuman prison conditions as a violation of the constitutional provision against "cruel and unusual punishment," and there have been thousands of such challenges. The Supreme Court's logic in this matter has gone generally unspoken over the last few years, but has also been quite consistent. The barbarous and deadly conditions in the prisons do not, in fact, violate any provision of the bourgeois Constitution of the USA—either the part about "cruel and unusual" or any other. And they've been right—there is absolutely no contradiction here. Now, all this has been formalized in a June 15 ruling by The Brethren.

In the nearly unanimous eight to one ruling, the Supreme Court declared: "The Constitution does not mandate comfortable prisons...persons convicted of serious crimes cannot be free of discomfort." The court says there exists no constitutional requirement to even "aspire toward an ideal" in prison conditions—much less attain it. "To the extent that such conditions are restrictive and even harsh, they are part of the penalty that criminal offenders pay for their offenses against society." And then, dig this, conditions can be ruled cruel and unusual only if they breach the "contemporary standards of decency."

Contemporary standards of decency? We suppose that there was no breach of these standards at Pontiac Correctional Center in Illinois. An *RW* article (10-17-80) describes the scene at Pontiac in the weeks before the now-famous rebellion: "Overcrowding put a tremendous strain on the prisoners and on the ancient facilities at Pontiac. Men were doubled up two to a cell 5-1/2 by 9 feet with no ventilation and in a space so narrow that one would have to turn sideways to let the other pass by. Some of the new men had nowhere to lie but on the floor underneath a double bunk that already had two men in it. Under these conditions, communicable diseases like tuberculosis...could spread like wildfire, but the medical care was reserved for those perhaps minutes away from death. The overcrowding strained the ancient plumbing. Sinks and toilets were constantly broken, overflowing, contributing to the filth and stench of the cell blocks. There were not enough clothes from the laundry or food from the cafeteria, and showers were maybe once a week." This just scratches the surface; but is this "contemporary standards of decency"? Of course it is, in the view of the Supreme Court and the even more supreme capitalist class. But there is a method behind the madness.

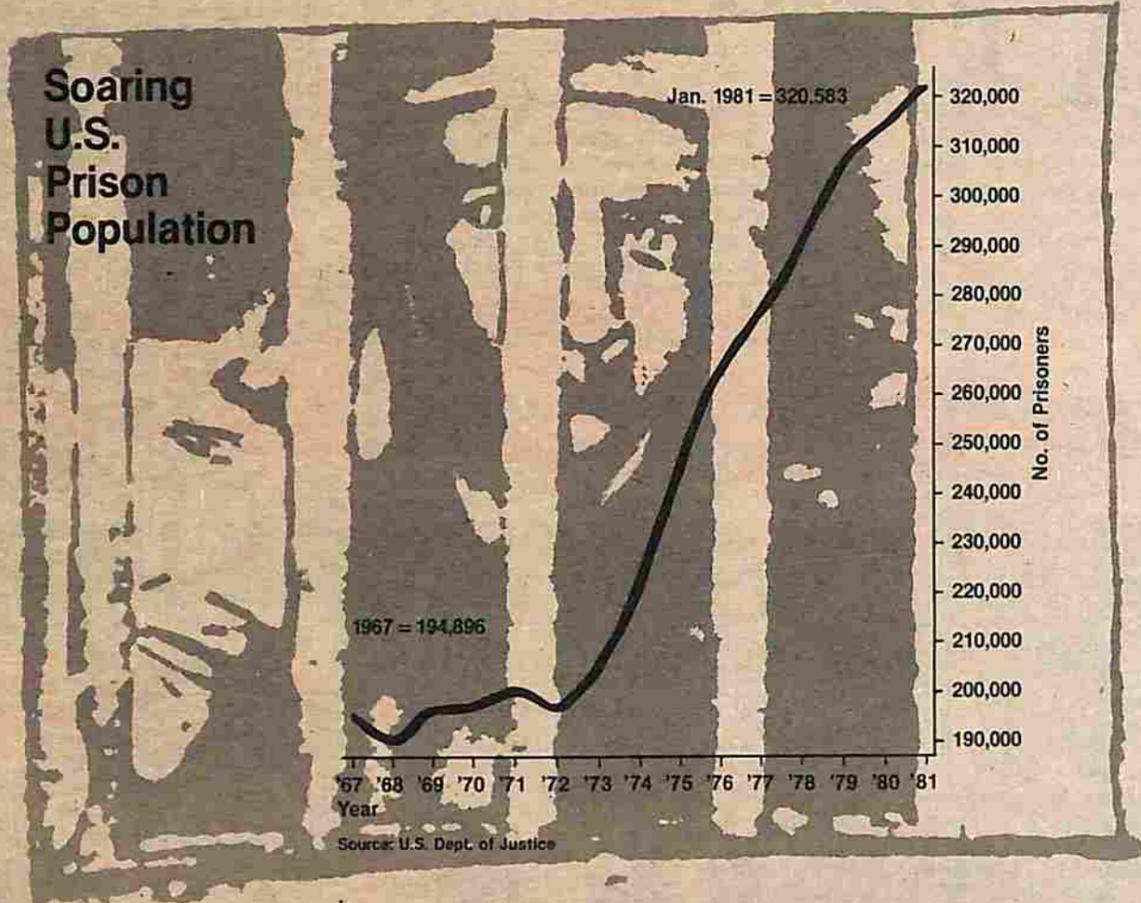
Prison overcrowding is specifically

condoned by the Court's recent ruling. The case under review, *Rhodes vs. Chapman*, entailed a challenge to "double-celling," the prevalent practice of cramming two prisoners into a tiny cage designed to contain only one person. In this case, the State of Ohio was appealing a lower court order to halt a double-celling practice which even violated the federal government's own guidelines for minimum prison conditions. According to the guidelines, every prisoner needs at least 60 square feet of cell space, yet in the Ohio prison in Lucasville, inmates had only 31-1/2 square feet per man—about four by eight feet. And this included bunks and plumbing. With the Supreme Court's ruling, all this is quite fine—even though it may be "harsh." By the same ruling, a prison in Huntsville, Texas,

leap in prison population, unlike any period in history. The chart reproduced here illustrates the dramatic rise from around 195,000 in 1967 to over 278,000 in 1977. The total number of prisoners in state and federal prisons today is around 320,500, and this figure, like those on the chart, doesn't include jails run by local governments, like county jails. (Incidentally, the only time there has been a reduction of prison population in the U.S. is during wartime, a question itself deserving of an article. People have commonly been press-ganged into the military to avoid jail, and eventually on occasion, been released from jail only to defend the bigger prison around them.)

To deal with the rapid rise in the prison population, government at all levels has launched an unprecedented

stylistic mixture of old fashioned *Reader's Digest* moralism and literary pretensions. *Punishing Criminals* advocates the death penalty, longer sentences, 'post-punishment incapacitation,' banishment, exile, house arrest and other less imaginative weapons in the 'war on crime'... The candor of his viciousness is unusual. No sheep's clothing for him. Substantively, however, he is in the mainstream of a new school of 'realist' thought. While there are considerable tactical and procedural differences among the 'realists' they are united around their demand for tougher state repression against the working class in general and blacks in particular." This is true, and the much-lauded "public demand" raised by *U.S. News*, and echoed one-hundred fold throughout the '70s to the present, is



where thousands of inmates lived outside in tents rather than sleeping on the concrete floors, is also fine.

Rise in Prison Population

But if contemporary standards of decency are at issue, so are contemporary standards of legality—in the sense that they reflect the actual objective conditions faced by our rulers and serve as reactionary declarations of The Man's intentions. The last decade has seen an extraordinarily unprecedented

building boom in new prison construction. During the last six years alone 86 new prisons have been built. A total of 557 new jails, state penitentiaries and federal prisons are planned or actually underway at a total cost of almost \$5 billion. But because of a wave of new, repressive laws and harsher prison sentences across the country all of this cannot possibly keep pace with the rise in the prison population.

Why the sharp increase in prison population in the first place? Naturally, the authorities (at least publicly) forever point to an alleged equally sharp "increase in crime" as the source of the problem. "The basic cause, the experts say, has been the dramatic rise in crime in recent years. This in turn sparked a public demand to get tough on criminals. Police and prosecutors have been doing so. Increasingly, state legislatures are...pushing through laws requiring stiffer sentences." (*U.S. News and World Report*, 8-7-78.)

Who are these "experts"? One is Ernest van den Haag, a criminologist who wrote in a 1975 article titled *Punishing Criminals*: "Crime will always remain with us, just as fires will be with us, or weeds...Those less favored by nature or society are more tempted to violate laws and therefore suffer punishment for doing so more often...There has been a worldwide decline in punishment and therefore of respect for law." When Haag's article appeared, observe Tony Platt and Paul Takagi in a 1977 edition of *Crime and Social Justice*, "It was regarded as a criminological aberration, a radical departure from the prevailing liberal consensus. Filled with factual and methodological errors, a curious

nothing else than the "demand" by the bourgeoisie, its reactionary ideologues like Haag, and—yes—a section of the people as well, for the sharpening of the weapons of repression. And this did not remain simply a "demand."

Repression

"Dramatic increase in crime"? Please, please—once and for all—give us a break. Let's cite a few somewhat less publicized—to understate the matter—statements directly from the horse's mouth. In 1976 there was a report published by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) authored by the National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. The report, called "Disorders and Terrorism," was sponsored by the federal government and was a rather sweeping presentation of the tasks of the bourgeois state during the period in which it was written, but in preparation for a period all knew was to come. It deals with many departments, the criminal justice system on all levels, the police, the relationship between these and other branches, and even gives tactical advice on a number of points. But the basic political orientation is set out in the introduction:

"It would be tempting to dismiss the serious disorders of the 1960's as non-recurrent products of a particularly turbulent era, of a nation divided by deep ideological issues during a period of rapid social transformation... However, because the deeper dissatisfactions remain, there is always a likelihood that new controversies and compelling issues may one day precipitate other outbursts of violence.

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Attack,

Counter-Attack

in Iran

The *Revolutionary Worker* has recently received a number of reports from Marxist-Leninist newspapers in Iran which describe the political situation in the first part of June, and shed further light on the situation developing in the major cities and towns of Iran to date (see last week's *RW*). News of the struggle in Iran's vast countryside, where more than half the population lives, has been extremely difficult to obtain, and we hope to report on developments there in the future.

Repression and Resistance

While the U.S. press has painted a one-sided picture of the Iranian government as ruthlessly and efficiently crushing all opposition, a number of incidents over the past several weeks show not only the escalating viciousness of the government repression, but how the masses have risen up in response.

In Tabriz, a group of teenagers were playing soccer in the streets recently when their ball hit a local IRP mullah in the head as he was passing by. The boys laughingly apologized. However, this man of religion was not satisfied, for he went straight to the local komiteh and sent a group of Pasdaran to arrest the 19-year-old who had kicked the ball. Several days later, the jail warden called the boy's family and told them to come and pick up their son's body. The local IRP had ordered him executed for "homosexuality." And to further crush resistance and terrorize the masses, the authorities have begun to enforce, more widely than ever before, their own barbaric version of traditional "Islamic law." For example, one man who stole an egg had his fingers cut off; a man who stole a small bag of rice had one of his hands cut off in public.

This kind of fascistic terror under the banner of pure Islam has been applied especially systematically in working-class and other neighborhoods where the revolutionary forces are known to have a strong base of support. Anyone suspected of being a leftist—especially men without the traditional Moslem beard, or women who are not wearing the long black chador—is being stopped

on the streets at gunpoint by reactionary gangs and told to yell "Down with Bani-Sadr" and slogans against the Left. If they refuse or even hesitate in the slightest, they can be arrested or executed on the spot. But these tactics very often have the exact opposite effect from that intended, as large crowds of outraged people gather in the streets within a few minutes.

After a number of Pasdaran attacked a group of young women Mojahadeen supporters in mid-Tehran and began to assault them, a large crowd quickly assembled. They proceeded to disarm these "revolutionary" guards, tie them up, and then dragged them through the streets behind a couple of motorcycles, denouncing them to the whole neighborhood.

In another incident, a group of 50-60 Hesbollahi attacked a leftist woman selling revolutionary literature in southwest Tehran. After ripping away at her clothing and trying to rape her on the street, they started to take her away with them for more assaults and/or execution. Just at this point, a lone Pasdaran who had been watching the scene drove up in his jeep and hit the brakes right in between the Hesbollahi and the injured woman. Pointing the machine gun mounted on the back of his jeep straight at these fascist thugs, he yelled

out, "I piss on the kind of Islam that commits these filthy acts!" He then tore off his uniform and burned his Pasdaran card, and drove away with the woman, leaving behind the Hesbollahi frozen in fear and bewilderment.

In recent weeks the reactionary ruling clerics have been especially vicious in attacking women, and have further exposed themselves in the eyes of tens of thousands by attempting to utilize Islam to justify their foul deeds. According to Gilani, head of Tehran's "revolutionary" courts, who has specialized in turning over Mojahadeen and leftists to the firing squads in Evin prison, "By the Islamic canon, a nine-year-old girl is mature, so there is no difference for us between a nine-year-old and a 40-year-old man." Such a statement not only points to the fundamentally weak position occupied by the IRP and their growing desperation; even more they are being forced to unleash such savagery because of the powerful role that women, especially young women, are playing in the current struggle, especially around distributing the revolutionary press.

Battles For the Revolutionary Press

As a crucial part of its attempts to crush the masses and the revolutionary

forces, the reactionary authorities are making great efforts to disrupt and stop the distribution of the revolutionary press throughout the country. Iran's revolutionary organizations, Marxist and Moslem alike, are also concentrating forces on producing and distributing their newspapers and leaflets, exposing the countless outrages being committed against the masses, portraying the true reactionary nature of the IRP-led regime, and calling on the people to resist and rise up in revolutionary struggle.

The power of revolutionary exposure has become all the more apparent in recent weeks, as in the case of the publication of the actual coup plot being hatched by the IRP leadership last month in an issue of *Haghighat*, the newspaper of the Union of Iranian Communists (an exposure which Khomeini personally attacked in a speech soon afterwards). Or, for example, many of the revolutionary papers have started publishing the license plate numbers of cars belonging to plainclothes members of the Pasdaran, and as a result, more than a few of these undercover agents have been attacked with stones, bottles and gunfire while on the prowl through Tehran's working class districts.

Especially coming in the face of the

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Bomb Fallout in IRP

A very favorable situation for the Iranian masses has developed through recent weeks of fighting and the explosion that ripped apart the ruling hierarchy of the Islamic Republic Party. One element of this is that the infighting within the IRP has itself intensified greatly. Much of it is still being conducted behind the scenes, but a number of clear signs of the extent of it are already starting to appear.

For example, last week the ruling reactionaries quickly announced that presidential elections would be held on July 24 in order to pick a successor to Bani-Sadr (who is still refusing to give up his title). Then only a few days later the IRP was forced to postpone the elections. This appears to be for two reasons. First, they are quite nervous about the prospect of a popular boycott of the elections, and possibly much worse, if the mass resistance continues to sharpen. This would only serve to further delegitimize their rule. Secondly, the revolutionary struggle (and only secondarily the explosion itself) has widened the splits within their own ranks. Such splits are generally characteristic of them as a bourgeois-feudal ruling class. However, in today's world, in

which the U.S. and the Soviet Union and the imperialist blocs they head up are feverishly preparing to go to war for a new redivision of the globe, these two superpowers are locked in struggle to land Iran in their own blocs, and they are pulling on the bourgeois forces in Iran much like powerful magnets drawing out iron filings.

U.S. Moves Rapidly

Particularly in the wake of the bombing that permanently removed the chief U.S. man in the IRP, Ayatollah Beheshti, from the scene, there has been a big scramble on to fill the positions opening up in the government, especially pitting the pro-U.S. and Western factions against the pro-Soviet (often called "pro-Syrian") grouping inside the IRP. Two of the high-ranking reactionaries who were actively involved in the coup-plotting of the IRP's pro-U.S. section were immediately catapulted into Beheshti's former positions. Prosecutor-general Ardebili took over the Supreme Court post, and Hojitolislam Bahonar became the new secretary-general of the IRP. Bahonar is a long-time reactionary who has a political history similar to that of Beheshti (see last week's

RW for more on Beheshti). Bahonar served under the Shah in the Ministry of Education, helped found and organize the IRP in early 1979, and is now both the Minister of Education and the head director of the Islamic Export-Import Bank—posts that mark him as an important figure in the developing comprador, bureaucratic bourgeoisie in Iran.

What the U.S. imperialists expect from men like these can be gauged somewhat from an article written just before the bomb blast by William Sullivan, the last U.S. ambassador to Iran under the Shah. Sullivan writes approvingly of Beheshti's political astuteness and "cleverness," explaining that he had the "dual task" of eliminating all leftist and other opposition to the IRP (Sullivan is including both genuine revolutionary forces and pro-Soviet elements when he talks about "leftists"), and of "modernizing" the IRP (that is, bringing Iran fully into the Western imperialist camp). As proof of the kind of trustworthy fellow that Beheshti was, Sullivan recounted that during the insurrection in Tehran in February 1979, an army base had been surrounded by the people—trapping 20 U.S. advisers in-

side. Sullivan immediately called up Beheshti, and he personally sent armed units through the lines to "capture" the American advisers from the revolutionaries and take them back to safety in the U.S. embassy compound.

There are other signs that the U.S. imperialists are stepping up their activity in Iran, particularly tightening up their ties with their allies inside the IRP. According to sources inside Iran, at least 15 American advisers have recently arrived in Iran in various guises. Another sure tip-off of U.S. forces on the move inside Iran is that within days after the death of Beheshti, former Prime Minister Bazargan and ex-Foreign Minister Yazdi ended their boycott of the Majlis (Parliament) in protest over the removal of Bani-Sadr. There can be no doubt that this move was made in order to get more pro-Western forces into position to influence things, and particularly to deal with the recent gains being made by pro-Soviet forces in both the IRP and the government.

Soviet Gains

Soviet gains, too, have been real enough. First, the Soviet social-impe-

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England: A Festival of Riots

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Wednesday night, youth in Manchester erupted with over 1,000 attacking and heavily damaging the police station. The rebellion there continues. On Thursday and Friday night, 11 working class neighborhoods in London, including again in Brixton, Woolwich, Fulham, and Lambeth (just across the Thames river from Parliament) exploded with rebellion as immigrant and white youth fought police. As of press time much of the rioting in London continues with the addition of a powerful outbreak in the heavily industrial city of Birmingham. A "hot weekend" is expected. All these outbreaks of struggle are in heavily working class areas with large concentrations of immigrants, and the bulk of the fighting is by the youth of all nationalities in these areas where the decay and stagnation gripping British imperialism is the most strikingly evident.

The ruling class of England is now facing a situation such as it has never had to face before and is scrambling to try to deal with it. On Thursday, the floor of the Parliament became a wild scene as Labor and Conservative party members jumped at each other's throats in political infighting, among the ranks of the British bourgeoisie, over how to deal with what one cabinet member termed, "the most worrying situation of its kind this country has ever seen." Maggie Thatcher had to shout to be heard. One Labor MP could not be restrained by his colleagues as he repeatedly yelled, "You stupid woman! You stupid woman!" MP Enoch Powell delivered one of his calls for attacks against England's two million immigrants along the same lines as his famous "rivers of blood" speech of 1963. A Labor member called for Powell's ouster pleading, "Is there now a case for the whole House to examine carefully the lunatic utterances of Mr. Powell..." Another Labor MP screamed at Thatcher, "You are being portrayed as the biggest vandal in the country and the Government and are regularly mugging the taxpayer." The debate raged over typically lame and cynical Labor Party calls for more government money to "solve the problems of the inner cities," and the recruitment of police from among "ethnic minorities," vs. the Conservatives' main call for the arming and re-equipping of police, the employment of water cannons and the possibility of calling out the army.

All were aware that promises for reform would do little and that the bottom line was how to put down the spreading rebellions by force and intimidation. But precisely how to do this was not at all clear, with many political dangers on all sides. They were in a tizzy and still are, as of this writing; the British bourgeoisie has not come to terms on exactly what military and political steps to take to restore order to their isle. What has been put forward are the following possible steps: 1) passing a law making parents more responsible for "their children's crimes"; 2) water cannons; 3) rubber and plastic bullets, and 4) bringing the army—in that order. The emphasis here is clear. Home Secretary William Whitelaw made a statement on Friday, saying that "Troops might have to patrol British cities," and that he was "perfectly prepared to reintroduce the riot act." The riot act is a 1719 law repealed 14 years ago which permits troops to open fire on crowds one hour after a magistrate reads the act to the crowd and provides for sentences of life imprisonment for anyone arrested after this time. Also part of the act is the authorization for arrests of people before the fact.

A Festival of the Oppressed

While it would be impossible to describe the events in each of the areas where these outbreaks have occurred, certain general features stand out. What is going down is a true festival of the oppressed. This festival mainly, but not entirely, involves youth sometimes

as young as 10, 11 and 12 years old. While the Southall rebellion was a situation that pitted Indian and Pakistani masses against the police and mobilized reactionary white youth, the character of the other rebellions has been very multinational with large numbers of blacks and other oppressed nationalities joined by white working class youth. In short, those rising up are important sections of the basic proletarian people in England. While initially the riots were billed by the bourgeois press as "race riots," this was quickly dropped as it became impossible to keep up this lie. The main forms of activity are burning, looting and fighting the police. In many cases, a particular focus of the struggle is the police. This was especially the case in Liverpool and Manchester where more organized and offensive actions against her majesty's thugs have taken place. The Chief Constable of Merseyside described the situation in Liverpool this way: "The hooligans were hellbent on attacking police, who are so readily identified as symbols of law and order. Their fight was with us."

The domino theory was again proved correct by the events in the past week in England. As the outbreaks spread, the masses in many more areas sensed a real opportunity to strike out against the established order. As one London youth told reporters, "I hope this counts as a big riot like Liverpool." Within the more or less spontaneous organization that develops in mass struggles such as these, there were many cases of more conscious elements coming to the fore to pull together more planned assaults on more politically significant targets. While the masses who participated reflected a broad range of political consciousness, the more politically advanced and experienced have played an important role in fanning the flames of people's hatred for British imperialism and leading people forward. And certainly the struggle in Northern Ireland, as well as elsewhere internationally, has had an important affect in sparking this upsurge of struggle.

Focusing on the outbreaks in three areas—Southall, Liverpool and/Manchester—provides a vivid picture of what has transpired in the past week.

The Defense of Southall

As mentioned earlier in Southall, Indian and Pakistani youths righteously took head on attacks by white "skinheads" (named for their closely cropped hair)—attacks which had all the earmarks of being organized by the white-supremacist National Front, which organizes among white youth in Britain just as the Nazis and KKK do here in the U.S.

Lately, reactionary assaults on non-white immigrants have been increasing all over England and meeting with resistance among the masses. (In the city of Coventry, for example, where an Indian doctor was murdered a few weeks ago, an unidentified black group sent an anonymous and well-publicized letter to the Lord Mayor declaring their solidarity with the Asians and stating that, "Anyone who attacks us will be attacked in return with every means at our disposal.")

The fighting began after coaches and vans carrying two hundred skinheads arrived at the Hamrough Tavern in Southall for a rock and disco concert. A group of skinheads began abusing an Asian shopkeeper's wife and smashed out the windows of his store. They then proceeded up the street, kicking an Asian woman to the ground and smashing more windows of Asian shops as they went. As word of this outrage spread, Indian and Pakistani youths began to gather to defend the community, arming themselves with sticks and hammers and chasing skinheads into the tavern.

The skinheads began chanting racial insults and breaking up chairs to use for weapons. Suddenly the police (who claimed they had been tipped off by an informant that trouble was brewing but

directed them to the wrong neighborhood) arrived to "separate the two sides"—i.e., to protect the skinheads.

By this time, however, hundreds of Asian youth had surrounded the pub and began lofting bricks and petrol bombs through the windows and into police ranks. As the tavern burned to the ground, police spirited a group of 50 skinheads to safety behind police lines where they then let them loose to run amok in a quiet residential district. "They were running up and down asking where the Indians lived," according to one witness, an 80-year old white woman who had a 2x4 thrown through her window. A spokesman for the Southall Youth Association said that "The skinheads were wearing National Front gear, swastikas everywhere and National Front written on their jackets. They sheltered behind police barricades and threw stones at the crowd. Instead of arresting them, the police just pushed them back. It's not surprising people started to retaliate."

Indeed, these "skins" and their cop protectors paid dearly for their night's activities. As the *New York Times* put it: "Many Britons were shocked today as they watched television, waiting for the start of the Wimbledon tennis final, to see film of a pitched battle in the London streets, with fire engines and police vans burning along with buildings."

Liverpool Explodes

The spark that touched off the revolt in Liverpool early last week was an all too familiar one. On Saturday, July 4th, the cops stopped a black youth on "suspicion of stealing a motorcycle," part of their nightly routine of enforcing their national oppression in the Toxteth slum, as well as their general check, control and suppression of the masses—including many white working class youth—in an area where the streets are filled with large numbers of unemployed. Within minutes, an angry crowd of 50 people had formed, quickly surrounding the police, driving them off and injuring 5. Hours later, police patrols sweeping the streets were met by groups of youth hurling stones, bricks, bottles and molotov cocktails, resulting in a nine hour battle that left 70 cops battered and limping into police ambulances.

But the fires in Liverpool had only been stoked as what began as resistance to national oppression quickly went over to a powerful rebellion against the whole established order. As police reinforcements poured into the area the next day they were attacked from all sides by multi-national crowds of jeering youths. An inkling of what was to follow was indicated by one eyewitness account printed in the *London Times*: "Toxteth in the early hours presented an awful picture of anarchy... We saw looters of all ages and both sexes. Youths, both black and white, wearing balaclava masks and handkerchiefs and black plastic bags tied cowboy style across their faces rushed up to within yards of lines of police to hurl petrol bombs, bricks, bottles and links of uprooted iron railing at the police shields. Some involved were only children... The lines were forced apart until the greater length of Upper Parliament Street was left in the control of the rioters... The savagery of the pitched battle went beyond anything most experienced observers had ever seen before. The mob screamed, the buildings roared in flames and a hail of missiles beat a non-stop drum roll on the police shield wall. Few mobs can have got so close to a determined police line without faltering at the last. Not so at Toxteth... A commandeered cement mixer was used as a battering ram, driven into police ranks... The retreat began, foot by foot, the police taking their injured with them... Exhausted police lay on the pavement, mute but glad to accept tea and sandwiches from the Salvation Army..."

By Monday morning, a ten block area in Toxteth had been reduced to ruins with over 150 businesses, including the Westminster National Bank, gutted by fires, millions in damage and with some 275 cops injured, many of them ending up in the hospital. Fearful that they could not defend the center of downtown Liverpool,

the authorities dropped the facade of "peaceful, unarmed and helpless bobbies" as some two thousand police summoned from surrounding areas and led by Special Patrol Group goon squads swept through the streets firing hundreds of canisters of choking CS tear gas to break up the crowds. Reportedly this was the first time ever in mainland Britain that tear gas had been brought out to deal with a domestic disturbance (though, of course, it is used daily in Northern Ireland).

In fact the fears of the British government of having a situation like that in Northern Ireland develop right at home were expressed by the Chief Constable of Liverpool: "I am going to maintain law and order in the area. I am not going to have no-go areas in Liverpool. There is no way I am going to withdraw the police presence from Toxteth."

Manchester

By Wednesday, a harried Margaret Thatcher had been forced to go on nationwide TV and beg for an end to the rioting. "It will destroy everything we value," she said. "A free society will only survive if we, its citizens, obey the law and teach our children to do so." Meanwhile, Prince Charles even got in to the act, asking the directors of his special Prince's Trust Charity to try to help the "Liverpool youngsters" out with a bit of cash if they would just please stop rioting—no doubt providing all of England with a needed bit of comic relief. "He is very concerned," a Buckingham Palace spokesman said. However, the press noted, no definite sum was mentioned. Ah, the unrestrained benevolence of Britain's imperial rulers!

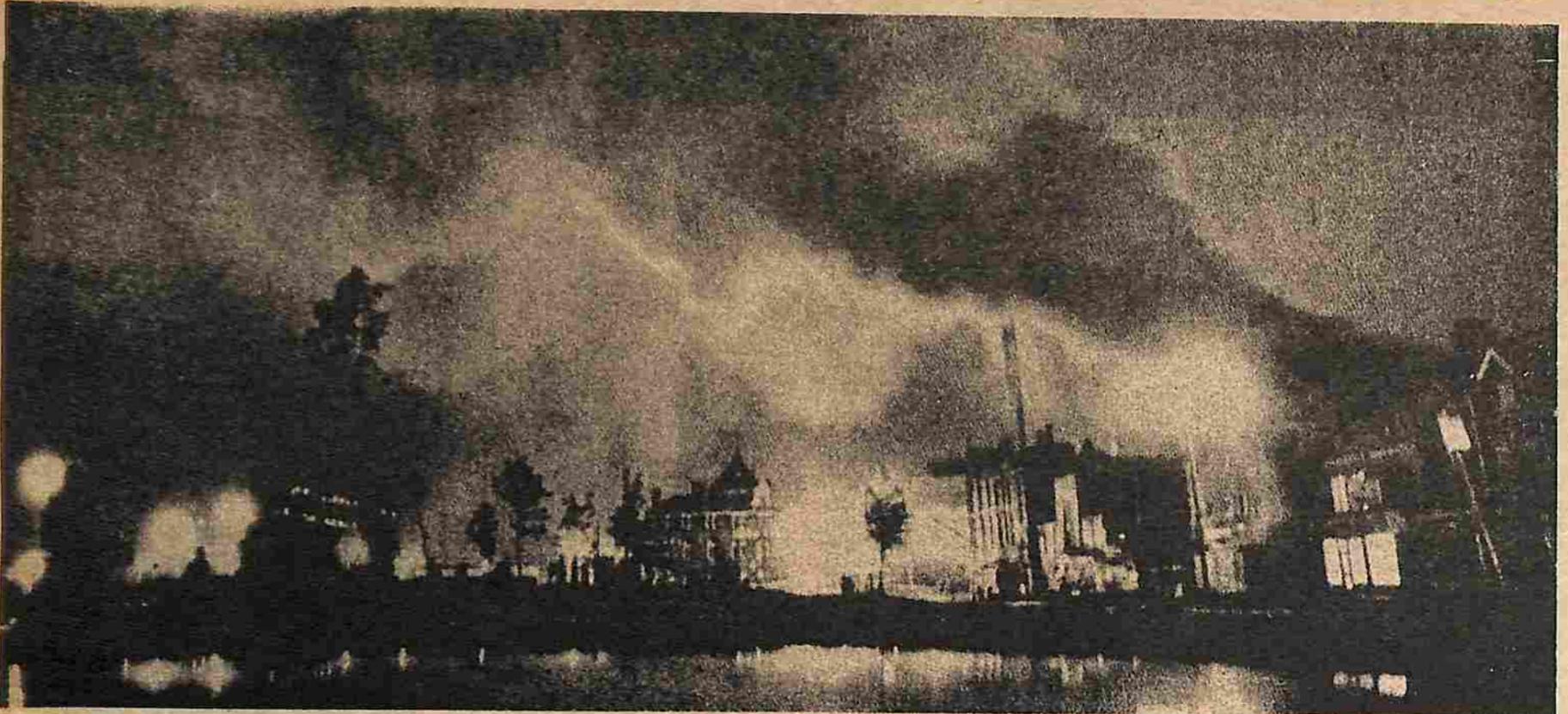
The response from the masses was not long in coming, as new upheavals broke out in seemingly endless multiplication. In the northern industrial city of Manchester there was a second night of explosions as a crowd of more than a thousand black and white youths chanting anti-police slogans surrounded a police station in the Moss Side district, pelted it with rocks and bottles and smashed the windows in with crowbars (a second attack on the station was launched the next day). Hundreds more youth, some using CB radios for communication, roamed throughout the boroughs of greater Manchester and Salford (a suburb) battling police in what were described by police as, "simultaneous and well-coordinated attacks." Manchester police claimed that they were joined by youths from as far away as Brixton, Birmingham, London and Liverpool in the fighting. Meanwhile, the rioting returned full circle to London as 500 youths—mainly West Indians but including a significant number of "white lads and a number of Cypriots"—fought police in the Wood Green district.

Rips in the Fabric of British Imperialism

As the streets in a number of cities in England continue to burn with the spreading flames of rebellion and even as the British government is frantically trying to get a handle on the situation, summations of the causes and supposed solutions for this tremendous upheaval are being advanced from various imperialist quarters, including from the U.S. The other Western imperialists are just as worried by the recent events in Britain both for their possible immediate effects in the other countries as well as for what they portend for the not too distant future as regards the political health of their bloc. Clearly, the stagnation, decay and parasitism of an imperialist system increasingly engulfed and being eaten away from the inside by its own inherent contradictions that it is so evident in the case of Britain is not unique to it. And it is this reality that underlies the serious turmoil British imperialism is now facing. Things may be more acute there right now than in other countries in the U.S. bloc, but all the bloc members are staring similar and very fundamental problems right in the face, with the only way out being to achieve a favorable redivision of the world by winning a world war against the Soviet Union and its bloc.

The troubles in England hit very close

Continued on page 5



Manchester, England at night

England:

Continued from page 4

to home, and all are viewing the situation with alarm and close attention. Already on Thursday, the *New York Times* obliquely criticized the British for covering the riots too much in the media, saying in an article, "There are strong suggestions that some of the incidents have been organized by frustrated people who have seen newspaper and television accounts of earlier disturbances—in other words, that a chain reaction is taking place." The U.S. has already adopted a conscious policy of not putting "disturbances" on TV in order to inhibit this process. The U.S. press has also given firm support to Britain's plans for arming and re-equipping the British police, expressing incredulity at the fact that they are not riot-equipped in this day and age.

The same *Times* article mentioned above goes on to point out that, "Like the riots themselves, the emerging political debate (in England—*RW*) and the national soul-searching have direct parallels to developments in the United States in the 1960s. The report of the National Commission on the Cause and Prevention of Violence in the United States—the Kerner Commission—has suddenly become required reading for politicians. Excerpts have been published in several national newspapers." In Britain, the Labor Party, especially, is throwing around much of the same kind of liberal rhetoric from the '60s about throwing out some crumbs for the riot-torn areas in the form of money for jobs, housing, education and so

forth, to "solve the problem of hopelessness," etc. This is all, of course, simply cynical rhetoric. All sections of the British bourgeoisie as well as the U.S. bourgeoisie are well aware that the 1980s are not the same at all as the '60s for imperialism. Even the crumbs are not there to give as all the social conditions for the masses of people continue to deteriorate. In England things are in an advanced state of decay.

Between summer 1979 and fall 1980, total manufacturing fell by an unprecedented figure of something like 14%, a rate reportedly higher than during the 1930s Depression. Whole towns and communities had the rug pulled out from under them and thousands have been thrown into the unemployment lines. Liverpool, in particular, is a prime example of what has been wrought by the inexorable laws of capitalism in its most decadent and rotting imperialist stage. While unemployment has almost doubled in Britain in the past two years to over 11%, the general rate in Liverpool, for example, is 17% due to the collapse of the shipbuilding industry and hundreds of factory closings. Beyond this, a recent study done at Liverpool University showed that in the particular district that includes Toxteth, white unemployment was 43%. For blacks—nearly half of whom in Liverpool are not immigrants but British citizens descended from slaves brought to this port town a century ago—the figure is 47%. For youth the figures are even more astounding—something like 60-70%! In the Toxteth ghetto, literally thousands of these desperate and unemployed hang out on streets lined with rotting buildings, many of which lack toilets or running water, and empty lots filled with rubble from aborted slum-clearance operations that have lost funding, subject to constant abuse and

harassment by the police, whose function it is to control and suppress these "outcast" strata. And these conditions are not different from those in a host of other English cities.

Not surprisingly, Liverpool was the starting point in May for a large and reformist People's March for Jobs—a march notable for its conspicuous absence of blacks, Asians, women and other of the most oppressed sections of the masses who, undoubtedly, are less inclined than the better-off sections and the British labor aristocracy to have illusions about being able to fight the various effects of capitalism with respectable demands for changes and reforms. This month-long march, organized by the Labor Party, trade union hacks and various revisionists like the British CP, began with about 500 people and picked up support as it moved across the country, ending up in London's Trafalgar Square, where the crowd swelled to 100,000 people who listened to harangues and promises of Labor leaders and other assorted "left-wingers." It is quite fitting that only a few weeks later, the proletarian youth of Liverpool and other cities, who have nothing to lose but their slave-chains, should rise up in rebellions directed against the state, giving Britain's rulers yet another frightening portent of what they have in store in the future, and indicating some of the basic forces seething beneath the surface of imperialist society.

National oppression in England has grown increasingly severe. General living conditions are the worst of the worst. In addition to the daily police harassment and terror unleashed on the immigrant communities, organized fascist groups like the National Front are being unleashed more and more frequently amid widespread calls from many quar-

ters in the bourgeoisie to send the immigrants home, and Parliament has steadily tried to limit people even from bringing their families into the country. Certainly, liberal calls for "race relations and community development programs" will do nothing and are not intended to do anything about all of this.

In short, the problems facing England are not simply high unemployment which needs some improvement, squalid housing conditions which need rectifying, mean police who need better training, or "racial tensions" that need "race relations programs." The problem is that the whole set-up is worthless and is sinking everyday. Thus, one Labor Party-ite accused Margaret Thatcher of "ripping away the fabric of our society." But it is not Thatcher as an individual who is ripping apart the social fabric of England. The fabric is being torn apart by the development of the very contradictions that imperialism is enmeshed in. It is against this backdrop that the current rebellions in England are breaking out. And they are not taking place in a situation that is similar to the '60s, when imperialism generally had more material and political strength and reserves. This was pointed to by the *New York Times* in its comparison of the current riots with those in the U.S. in the '60s: "But there are important differences here (in Britain—*RW*) as well. In some of the riots here, only whites have taken part; in others, only blacks; and in still others, members of all three groups (Asians included—*RW*) have fought shoulder to shoulder against the police. In addition, the British violence comes against a background of record unemployment and of deep Government cuts in welfare

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Prince Charles, Lady Di and Slaughtered Bears

The word has gone out, in no uncertain terms, from Buckingham Palace. There can be no obstacle, no cost too great that might hamper the pursuit of a marvelously regal wedding befitting the likes of His Highness Prince Charles and the aristocracy's darling, Lady Di. For, what would the assorted and assembled heads of state say if the absolute perfectness of the ceremony was even ever so slightly marred by some disgraceful social *faux pas*? Indeed, what would all those men and women of the propertied classes say if, for example, the Royal Horse Guard Regiment came prancing haughtily through the streets of London wearing last year's (or even the year's before that) furry bearskin "busby" helmets!

Could mere "commoners," such as the likes of us, even begin to comprehend the effects of the scandalous whispers and snickerings that would ripple through the gatherings of

bluebloods on "the Continent" (Europe, that is), and in "the States." Imagine the Queen Mother trying to cleanse the shameful stain that would be smeared on the portals of Buckingham Palace, much less explaining and apologizing for such a disgusting lack of social awareness? Nor would the explaining to members of the Royal Family why they couldn't (for awhile anyway) show their faces in places around the world, be very pleasant either. It's bad enough, isn't it, that this is already starting to happen as a result of the Irish "problem." And then, if something of *this* magnitude is tossed into the hopper... Well, really, it could be quite damaging; perhaps irretrievably!

But enough of this nightmarish conjecture. There will be no shamefaced apologies or sordid behind-the-back goings-on of the sort that these *kinds* of "incidents" so very often give rise to. Indeed, the Royal Horse Guard Regi-

ment will prance and promenade in the style that the likes of Charles and Lady Di are accustomed to. And yes, their furry, bearskin "busby" helmets will be smashing. In fact some may even still be a bit warm—fresh from the massive slaughter of 600 Canadian brown bears, whose hides went into fashioning them!

The bears have been butchered, packaged, sent to be made into helmets, dyed black, and distributed amongst Her Majesty's Royal Horse Guard Regiment especially for *the* wedding. It should be a smashingly neat affair, wouldn't you say? Certainly no extravaganza can be spared for such an historic occasion.

As word of the British government's actions got out, outraged voices were raised instantly. The Swiss League for Animal Rights called the episode "scandalous." But, as the residents of Buckingham Palace know what a *true* scandal really is, these protests fell

upon deaf ears. Well, if there's no satisfactory response from those quarters, then the appeal must be taken to a higher body. A letter registering the Swiss group's outrage was dispatched to the World Wildlife Fund. Surely *this* responsible organization would respond. And respond they did, claiming that "the pelts did not come from endangered species" and therefore they "have no objection to the commercial use of the fur from these bears." And furthermore, the World Wildlife Fund is of the opinion that these bears *should* be killed anyway, seeing as they "are so numerous they are considered pests and thus hunted." But then, could one really expect the president of the World Wildlife Fund to criticize the preparations and arrangements for Charles' and Lady Di's marriage? Certainly not when the president is none other than Prince Philip—Prince Charles' daddy! □

Native American Reports Impact of War Crimes Tribunal

Following is a letter from a longtime activist in the Native American struggle and an AIM supporter:

The recent Mass Proletarian War Crimes Tribunal in Los Angeles had major input from three Native American leaders, two of whom later took part in a Big Mountain Survival Gathering, also in Los Angeles (June 26 and 27—RW). Unfortunately, a couple of revisionists drew up the plans, and tried to narrow the scope of the gathering, narrowing the area to just Big Mountain.

Thomas Banyacya, Hopi elder and interpreter of prophecy, discussed the need for non-Indian Americans to hold just such a tribunal and try the American government. Thomas had been unaware that such a tribunal had been held, and was quite pleased that it had been, and even more so that there had been extensive and dramatic native input. He also discussed the Hopi prophecy and what it means—he told us we are on the road of destruction, rushing fast upon it, headed toward the Third Great War, with America and the multi-nationals being a major instigator—the same multi-nationals which are stealing and poisoning the Indian lands and forcing the relocation of the Dine' people. He also said that the third great war is not inevitable—that the native people, by acting in unity with other forces which will rise out of the west, have the power to stop it.

Ernie Peters Longwalker gave a strong talk about the Indian people being in the vanguard of the resistance, on the front lines. Larry Anderson brought up the Mormon Church and its disastrous policies for native people, besides being part of several multi-nationals anxious to steal Indian land for coal and uranium. This must have

severely upset the CP followers, since they had vociferously opposed any unfavorable mention of the Mormon Church on the grounds that "They oppose the MX missile." This incident occurred at an earlier planning meeting.

There was excitement from several native people upon hearing of the tribunal and regret at having missed it. They quickly bought RW's with several areas of testimony in them. One white man called the tribunal "very good" and left his leaflet on a chair—upon seeing it, a native elder asked if he could have one too. Any attempt to broadly talk of the tribunal was hampered by revisionist minds, who were so timid about revolution that neither *Voices From Wounded Knee*, *Great Sioux Nation*, nor a compilation of Big Mountain articles from the RW could be openly sold, especially if Revolution Books was doing the selling. Some shopping bags of literature got passed, and despite revisionist threats, those who were known to be sympathetic were able to talk about the tribunal and other matters. One middle-aged lady thought the revisionists' call for letter-writing to congressmen was of no use and loved the idea of the tribunal. She said she has a dislike for most organizations, especially when they fly the red, white and blue, as at Survival Sunday (a local anti-nuke gathering—RW), and the Christopher Street West Parade (a Los Angeles parade for homosexual rights—RW). She has seen the RW before and agreed that the article, "You Can't Beat the Enemy While Raising His Flag," was correct. This had particular significance at this event, since the revisionists had passed out an L.A. *Times* article on Big Mountain with a picture, also from the *Times*, of Navajos waving American flags—flags that had

been put in their hands by U.S. puppet, Navajo tribal Chairman, Peter MacDonald (see RW No. 106).

One young man who came to the gathering from a conviction that the Indian leaders would lead us into the "aquarian age," had his mind stepped on by the militant stand of the native people—not much love and peace, but resistance and comrades, and of being in the vanguard, all of this is the real material spirituality of the native people. He said to me, "The Indian leaders are so rough and militant! I came for religion." I replied, "That is a religion." Then he asked, "What happened to peace and harmony?" I said, "oh, that went out the window with the coming of the bourgeoisie." Before he left he picked up the RW and asked about the tribunal mentioned there, and about some of the other RW articles, which seemed to be just like the native speakers. He took a number of RW's back to his home town, Chicago, saying he would get more there.

In his final talk, Ernie stepped on more toes, mostly revisionist. He again reminded all that the natives are in the vanguard of resistance to this system and that all must be prepared to fight. His closing statement was, "See you on the battlefield!" I don't know how advanced the masses present could have been in standing with Ernie on this; certainly, the revisionists never thought the people could be this advanced and did their utmost to keep them behind. Still the message was received loud and clear, and talk of the tribunal permeated the entire two days of the gathering, even hearing of panelist Archie Fire in Oklahoma talking to the elders and youth of the Indian nation about it.

It appears the tribunal word is just

going out and everywhere, as were the Native Americans. It is as Thomas asked for, and immediately saw, indeed this system is being tried by a People's Mass Proletarian War Crimes Tribunal. They are seeing their elders and spiritual advisors taking a strong line and telling all that today is a good day to die, especially in the defense of the native struggle, which is the struggle of all peoples who are oppressed—and who stand up and resist.

The next hearings of the Mass Proletarian War Crimes Tribunal are scheduled for Chicago, Atlanta and New York City. For further information contact:

War Crimes Tribunal
P.O. Box 582
6520 Selma Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90028
or call: (213) 384-7840



"The Cruise missile makes no noise and the only inconvenience the local population will experience is the occasional sight of the missile launchers on the roads." (Daily Telegraph, 11/10/79)

Slightly altered version of a painting by Constable, an 18th-century English landscape artist

Book Review: "American Tongue and Cheek"

American Tongue and Cheek: A Populist Guide to Our Language, Jim Quinn, Pantheon Books, New York, 1980

Black children "have no language at all." Unlike middle-class white children, Black children come to school without a proper language, able to communicate only by "gestures, single words, and a series of badly connected words or phrases." "The language of culturally deprived children... is not merely an underdeveloped version of standard English, but is a basically non-logical mode of expressive behavior," and "incidental deprivation," this "language deficit," is to be found in the home: lower-class and Black families don't really speak to one another.

The ravings of some isolated, racist crackpot? No. The theories paraphrased above represent the distilled poison of "liberal" educational psychology, the established doctrines which, for example, inspired the massive "Operation Headstart" programs of the 1960s, which were supposedly designed to teach Black pre-school children "basic skills" so they would be able to successfully compete with white children in the schools. Such so-called intervention programs as Headstart were designed, above all, to punish the Black child for speaking in his own dialect, which was condemned as a "non-language," and to force him to adopt the speech pattern of standard English. In such programs, a Black child, if asked by an interviewer, "Whose toys are these?", would not be allowed to respond "They mine." He must say, "These toys are mine." Asked, "Where is the squirrel?", if a child answers "...with the illogical vernacular form, 'in the tree,' they will be reprehended by various means and made to say, 'The squirrel is in the tree.'"

Since Headstart and similar educational intervention programs have all been based on the vicious premise that it is necessary to stomp out the dialect of Black English, and that those who speak it are "incapable of logical thought or expression," it is not surprising that all of these Great Society programs massively failed to achieve their stated goal: to "assimilate" Black children successfully on the terms set by the imperialist oppressor. It was predictable, too, that the collapse of such pro-

The Mother Tongue and Other Evils Like That

grams would serve as the occasion for a chorus of reactionary psychologists and sociologists to throw up their hands and declare that, having "tried everything," there is nothing left to do but accept the "inevitable hypothesis" of the genetic inferiority of Black people. Arthur Jensen, a leading "scholarly" exponent of the racist "genetic hypothesis," was in fact a leading figure in the formulation of the theories of "language deprivation" in the 1960s. The theory that Black English is inferior, a debased form of standard English, and "incapable of logical or cognitive expression" is at best a mistake, and, more to the point, it shares the same ultimate source as the rabid genetic doctrines which are now being accorded great respectability and fanfare in bourgeois academic circles.

The impact of the Black liberation struggle and the student rebellions of the '60s and early '70s also exerted considerable influence among progressive forces in the fields of psychology, sociology and linguistics. The work and research conducted by activists in these fields has provided vast new evidence of the wholesale atrocities of the U.S. educational system, many of them committed under the name of chauvinist,

racist, obscurantist myths which identify some supposedly objective—in fact class-marked—standard of "correct English" as the hallmark of intellectual precision and the prerequisite for any kind of logical speech. Tens of thousands have been remanded to classes for the "educably retarded" on the basis of short interviews which establish nothing but that they do not speak the same dialect as the upper and middle-class "standard" of the dominant white nation.

In recent years, the ruling class has been making a concerted effort to popularize reactionary myths on language in general. The most visible mass-scale form of this has been the sprouting of numerous "pop" grammarians who bewail "the decline of the English language" and make a great show of battling to preserve the "purity, the beauty, the elegance" of the mother tongue. Edwin Newman, a former network news correspondent; former Nixon speech writer and reactionary columnist William Safire; *New York Times* theater critic John Simon, among others, have been churning out books and weekly columns in middle-brow magazines which instruct those seeking enlightenment on matters of

"civilized grammar." The main appeal of these pundits is to those sections of the white middle-class susceptible to the general neoconservative claptrap which identifies every reactionary cultural prejudice and banal aspiration of the petty-bourgeois philistine as a "striving for excellence" and a "defense of high standards."

These gentlemen profess a great "love of language," but what is most striking in their writings is a deep fear of language as a living, changing, dynamic tool of social intercourse, which is shaped and changed by those who speak it. John Simon is typical in heaping scorn on scientific linguistics, "that statistical, populist, sociological approach, whose adherents claim to be merely recording and describing the language as it was used by anyone and everyone, without imposing elitist judgments upon it. Whatever came out of the untutored mouths and unsharpened pencil stubs of the people—sorry, The People—was held legitimate if not sacrosanct by these new lexicon artists." Simon, in common with all his fellow defenders of "intellect" and "elegance," constantly reveals breathtaking depths of ugliness, narrowness, and racism, as when he rails against "the notion that in a democratic society language must accommodate itself to the whims, idiosyncracies, dialects, and sheer ignorance of underprivileged minorities, especially if these happen to be Black, Hispanic, and, later on, female or homosexual."

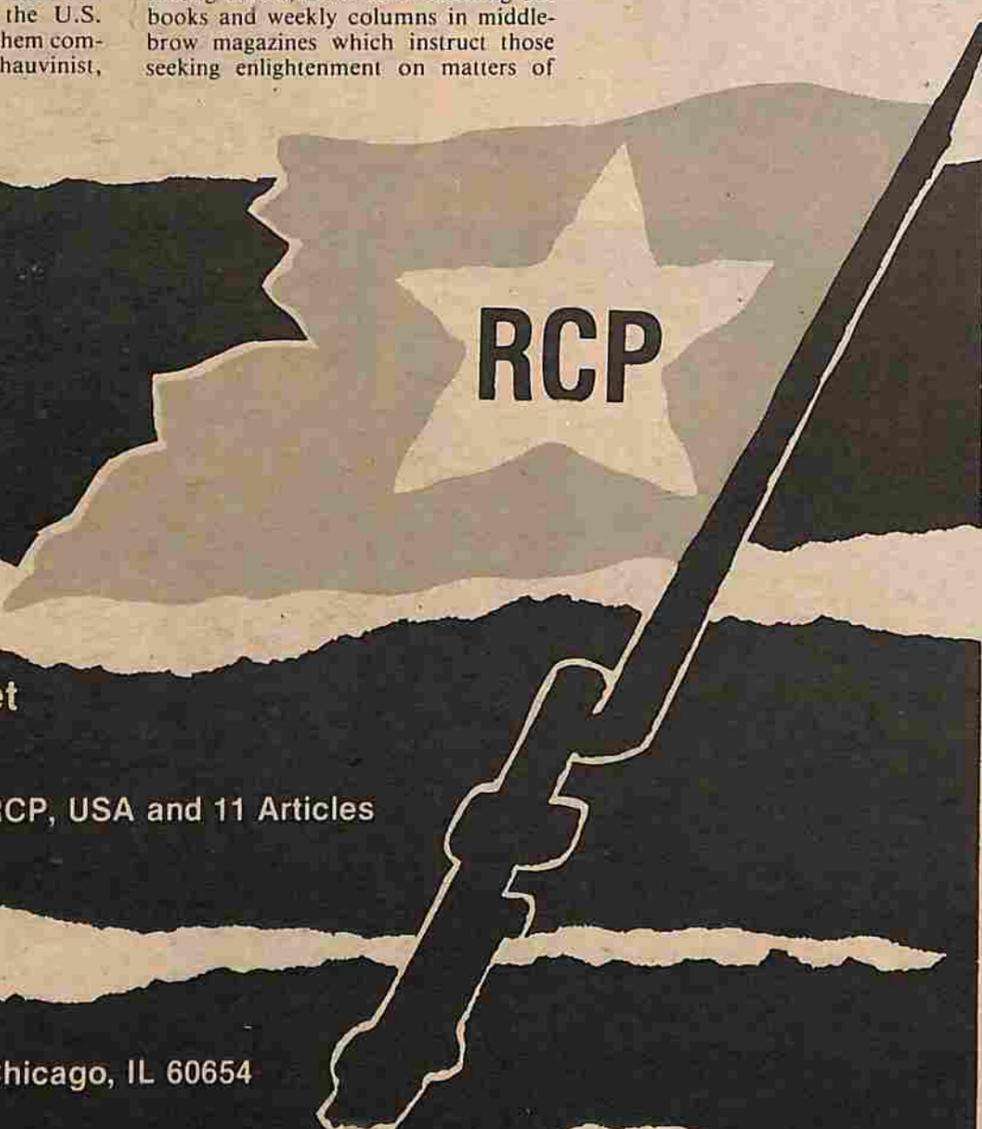
The Expert Ignoramuses

Even many who instinctively rebel against the pedantic tyranny and petty snobbery of those who try to wield "proper grammar" as a club to beat people down are probably unaware of the extent of genuine ignorance concealed by such affected, "authoritative" posturing. A recently published book, *American Tongue and Cheek: A Populist Guide to Our Language*, is devoted to examining this characteristic feature of the "pop" grammarians and subjecting it to merciless exposure and ridicule. Author Jim Quinn sets out to prove that "popular language experts—pop

Continued on page 20

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U.S. Concentration



"In the end, the evacuees are loaded on to trucks along with their handbaggage and driven to their new quarters; there each group who will live together is left to survey a room 20 by 25 feet with bare boards, knot-holes through the floor and into the next apartment, heaps of dust, and for each person an army cot, a blanket and a sack which can be filled with straw to make a mattress. There is nothing else. No shelves, closets, chairs, tables or screens. In this space 5 to 7 people, and in a few cases 8 men, women and their children, are to live indefinitely."

Over 9000 people herded into a barbed-wire surrounded camp—watch towers with armed guards and machine guns. People who before had been living normal lives rounded up in the middle of the night; citizens and non-citizens alike "relocated" because of their race.

Of course this must be a description of Auschwitz or Buchenwald, right? Wrong. It is only part of a vivid account of one of the Japanese Relocation Centers at Poston, Arizona. Almost immediately following the Japanese invasion of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, over 110,000 Japanese-Americans were first terrorized by a wave of government and media-inspired chauvinism and then forced into 10 concentration camps located throughout the west and midwest U.S. The source of the previous description and much more exposure of U.S. crimes against the Japanese people is a book published in 1945 called *The Governing of Men* by Alexander H. Leighton, Lieutenant Commander, U.S.N.R.

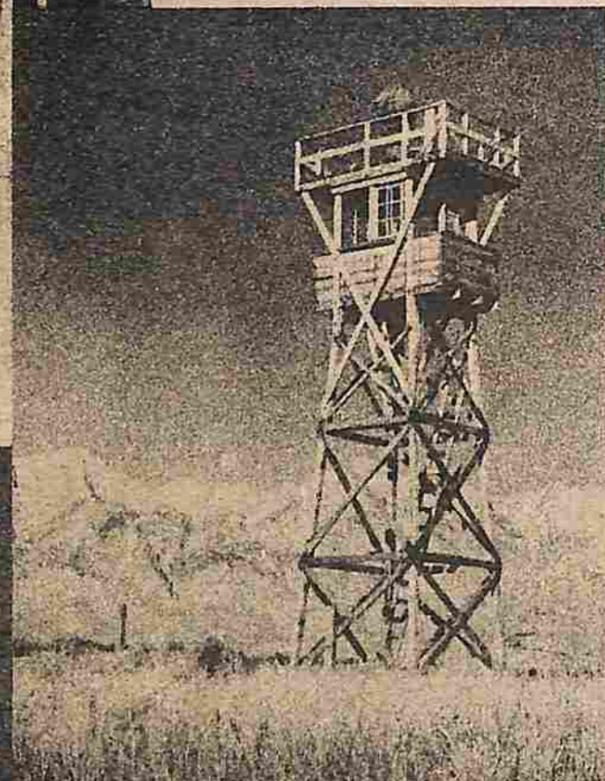
Far from being intended as exposure,

this book was the result of a deliberate social "science" study done for the benefit of future reservation and other concentration camp administrators. Experts with previous experience in this type of work were brought in. As the Preface explains: "The Hon. John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, was associated with the project from the start because of his extensive experience in the administration of many different kind of communities (sic). He believed that research and observation through applied psychology and social anthropology should accompany the enterprise from the beginning, since the problems presented by the Japanese relocation were a challenge to democratic principles and an opportunity to gain experience and improve methods. The results, Mr. Collier thought, would have value later in the government of occupied areas..."

This branch of imperialist pseudo-"science" has been vastly deepened over the past 35 years through the "experience" gained in such varied "communities" as the Vietnamese "strategic hamlets" and the famous Tiger Cages, the new peasant communities created by the Shah of Iran's "White Revolution" or the "death to the tiller" land reform program today in El Salvador. But leaving aside the obvious hypocritical double-talk in such a "scientific" study, Leighton's book reveals the particular problems facing the U.S. government in carrying out such a measure. Here was the U.S., posing as worldwide champion of freedom and democracy, and setting up concentration camps right within its own borders. For the imperialist gentlemen, that posed a real "challenge to democratic principles"!

The nature of the challenge, however, was not that there is anything inconsistent between bourgeois democracy and such camps. As Lenin pointed out in *The Proletarian Revolution and The Renegade Kautsky*: "The more highly developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie." The real challenge was how to keep the reality of these camps from exposing the essence of American democracy—the naked armed dictatorship of an exploiting and world-grabbing class, no different fundamentally from the rival bloc of Axis imperialists.

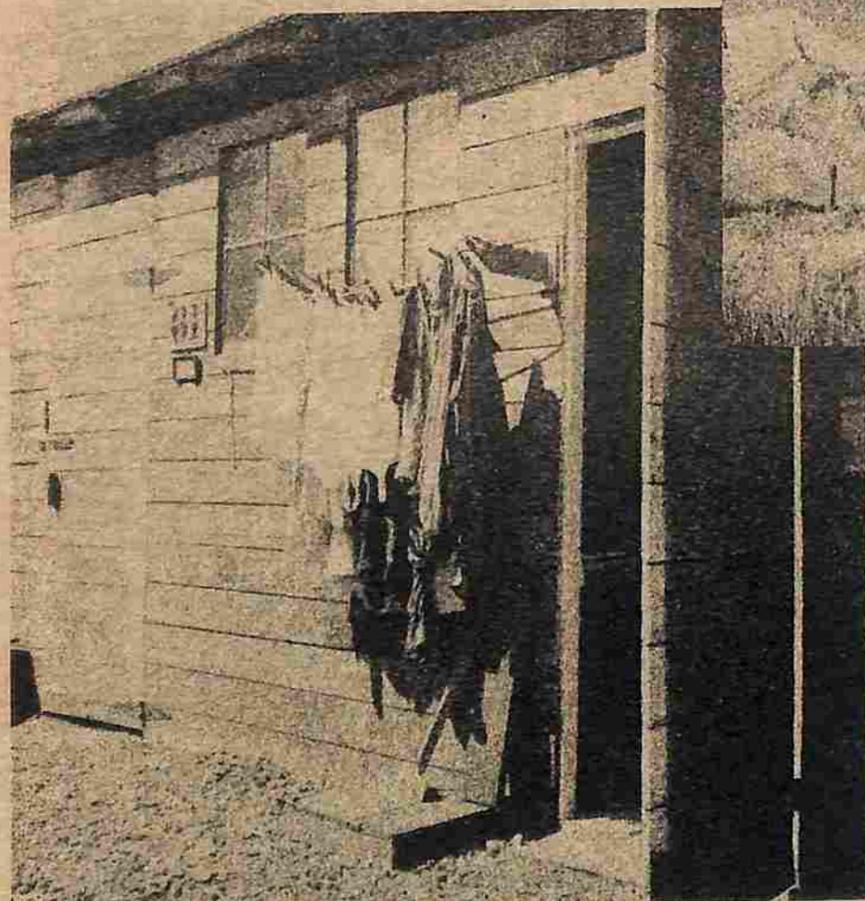
As point 4 of the general policy of the Japanese concentration camps stated: "It was most important to show that the United States could carry out a program of evacuation and relocation in a democratic manner that would provide the greatest possible contrast to population shifts in Axis countries." And Leighton clearly sees the potential international embarrassment and danger of U.S. concentration camps when he points out: "We have told the world that we fight for principles of justice in which creed and skin color carry no weight. However, other nations, even those fighting most closely with us, look on our promises with skeptical eyes and judge us by our deeds, rather than our words. The management of evacuated American citizens of Japanese ancestry is a straw in the wind by which our policies in matters of race can be seen in action by Chinese, Indians, Filipinos and the people of the East Indies, as well as by Japan." Here Leighton, in 1945, has an eye to the future as well as the alliances in the war itself, and in particular to the redivision of the world sought by the U.S. imperialists who aimed to muscle in on the old-line colonialism of Britain and France—in particular the British empire—replacing the old overlords with a slightly more disguised neo-colonial form of rule. This inter-imperialist



(Top) March 30, 1942: "Evacuation Day," Bainbridge Island, Washington

(Above) Guard Tower at Manzanar "Relocation Center"

(Left) These barracks at the Tanforan Assembly Center used to be horse stalls—the inner one without door or window



Camps in WW2

rivalry was mainly carried out in the form of allying with Britain against Germany and Japan, as the article "Some Notes on the Military and Diplomatic History of World War 2" in the June 1981 issue of *Revolution* magazine has pointed out.

Whip Up War Hysteria

As the article also reveals, "There is significant evidence that the U.S. imperialists not only knew in advance that the attack (on Pearl Harbor) was coming, but welcomed it as a way to arouse a distinctly unwilling population in the U.S. into support of their imperialist war efforts." This gave them the opening to enter the war for a redivision of the world, which the U.S. imperialists sought as desperately as any imperialist power; and while Roosevelt met with Churchill to discuss that the defeat of Germany was their first aim, the U.S. imperialists in reality turned their attention to the defeat of Japan and the gobbling up of the British Far East and Pacific empire as their first priority.

The attack on Pearl Harbor also became the premise on which the U.S. government launched their attack on the Japanese and Japanese-Americans living in the U.S. as a way to further arouse the masses in the U.S. to the war effort by creating a war climate at home. It was official government policy that the concentration camps be restricted to the Japanese:

"Washington, February 19, 1942—By executive order today President Roosevelt gave the Army authority to establish military zones anywhere in the United States from which any persons, citizen or alien, may be evacuated and excluded.

"Those chiefly affected are American citizens of Japanese parentage.

"Citizens of German and Italian descent will not be involved except for specific cause."

The round-up of Japanese people, while it posed certain problems for the U.S., was necessary politically to create an atmosphere of war hysteria. Given the racist superstructure of the "American way of life" it could certainly be accomplished more easily than an attempt to round-up people of German or Italian descent, which would have profound political implications from every major U.S. city to the cornfields of Iowa, likely to be interpreted as an attack by the government on "real" Americans, and do real damage to the "American democratic" banner under which the U.S. was trying to whip up this war hysteria. Thus, much of the reactionary public opinion whipped up to support the concentration camps played on white chauvinism and equated the concept of "enemy" with "race."

With the current alignment of forces in the world, this episode of U.S. imperialist ugliness is posing a bit of a problem for the U.S., since Japan is now part of the Western bloc, headed by the U.S. It is now politically expedient for the government to do something cosmetic after 40 years to clear up this particular blot and mollify the Japanese and the influential Japanese-Americans, who are demanding reparations. To this end the Senate is holding an inquiry into the Japanese concentration camps next week, where they will be faced with the dilemma of criticizing some of their atrocities while at the same time upholding the right to carry out such policies in the future. Much of the argument will undoubtedly hinge on the fact that in actuality the majority of Japanese-Americans interred in the camps posed no immediate threat to the U.S. government and in fact did consider themselves "good Americans." It was the experience of the concentration camps themselves which exposed the

nature of American democracy to the imprisoned Japanese-Americans, many of whom had bought the myth of American democracy, and this exposure now threatens to come to light. (There is also debate over the terms of the Senate inquiry since the government does not favor paying out the \$3 billion in reparations which is part of one proposal for paying for past sins.)

Principally, however, the problem is a political one, only now the dilemma is how to mend fences with the Japanese in preparation for the next inter-imperialist conflict while maintaining the democratic right to put citizens in prison camps, whereas in 1942 the dilemma was how to imprison them and maintain the mask of democracy. Leighton's book is not only interesting to examine for the particular exposure it sheds on this outrage perpetrated on the Japanese people but it affords further insight into how every move the imperialists make out of political necessity furnishes ample exposure of the class nature of their rule and how every act of oppression breeds resistance.

Racist Campaign Starts

The opening part of Leighton's book describes in detail with eyewitness accounts and press clippings the all-round economic and political campaign whipped up by the bourgeoisie against the Japanese living in this country. Creating reactionary public opinion and whipping up racist hysteria was of the utmost importance, with the *L.A. Times* playing a vanguard role. *L.A. Times*, Feb. 2, 1942—"A viper is nonetheless a viper wherever the egg is hatched... So, a Japanese American born of Japanese parents, nurtured upon Japanese Traditions, living in a transplanted Japanese atmosphere and thoroughly inoculated with Japanese ideals, notwithstanding his nominal

brand of accidental citizenship, almost inevitably and with the rarest exceptions grows up to be a Japanese and not an American in his ideas, and is menacing unless hamstrung. Thus, while it might cause injustice to a few to treat them all as potential enemies... I cannot escape the conclusion... that such treatment... should be accorded to each and all of them while we are at war with their race."

The day after the invasion of Pearl Harbor, all Japanese funds were frozen. Creditors, landlords, banks swooped down like vultures refusing credit or any delays in payment. People were forced out of their homes, farmers off their land, small businessmen quickly went under. A Treasury Dept. employee was quoted as saying: "We

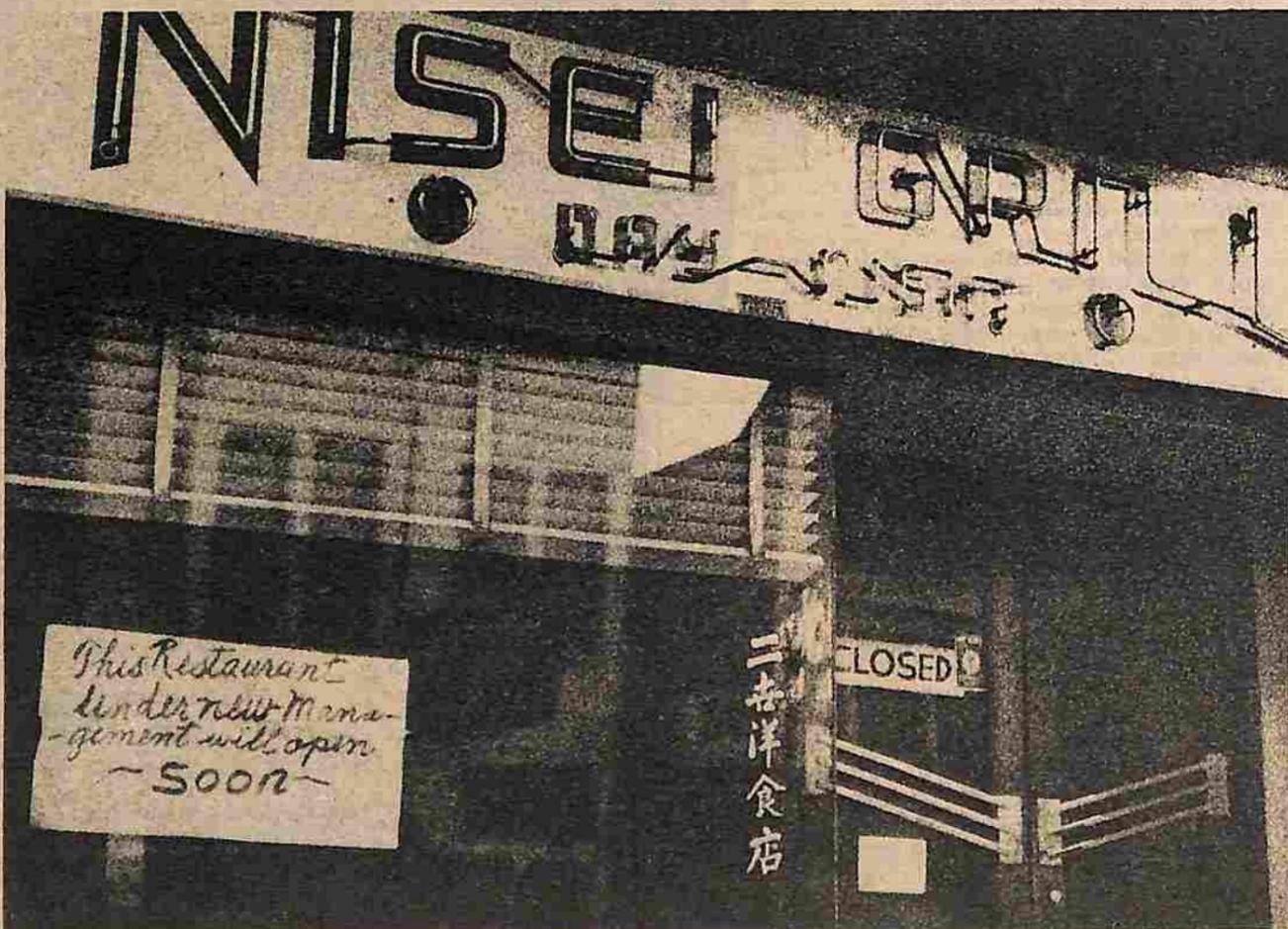
are glad that our measure (freezing order) is working so well. We did not want you folks to have money to help the enemy. Perhaps your friends, your societies or the Red Cross will help you with your sustenance." At the very same time the government was making pious and hypocritical official statements that no loyal Japanese would suffer discrimination. No pretext or lie was too foul or low to justify and whip up more attacks on the Japanese people. Quickly the FBI started making sweeping raids, dragging off many of the men from the Japanese communities with little or no warning. Then as one resident explained: "When men were picked up by the FBI, the women and children couldn't run the farms or

Continued on page 21



(Right) May 8, 1942: A grandfather and his grandchildren waiting for the evacuation bus. He had operated a dyeing and cleaning business

(Below) San Francisco, April 7, 1942



Suburban July 4th Remedy

Evanston, Illinois is a quiet, tree-lined suburb of Chicago. This year's traditional July 4th parade was celebrated with the down-home theme of "An Old-Fashioned Fourth." The Army Recruiting contingent, the VFW, the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts all passed in appropriately respectable succession but then—smack dab in the middle of this patriotic celebration stepped the fabulous All-Amerika Marching Drum and Bugle Corpse with its own variation of the parade's theme. With "A 21-Megaton Salute to an Old-Fissioned Fourth" emblazoned on their banner, the Corpses went through their paces.

Hundreds of people applauded as the Nukettes made their debut in gruesome black makeup and black tights, dancing a freaky kind of nuclear can-can; other Corpse members sported the latest in radiation suits; and three more performed the traditional military presentation of arms with mannequin limbs. While other bands played "My Country 'Tis of Thee," the Corpses blared out the theme song from the "Bonjour Action Jeans" commercial. As the Corpses passed the reviewing stand where the mayor and general Crowe and his wife stood as spectators, all fell down dead in the streets for their grand finale to enthusiastic applause.

The Corpses had this to say to the RW:

RW: How'd you get started?

Corpse: We started 14 years ago. We actually used to march up and down Central Street. Just us. Finally a group of citizens from Evanston came to us one year and said, "It would be nice if we could build a parade around you guys." We figured what the hell...

RW: Are you Evanston residents, Northwestern University alumni?

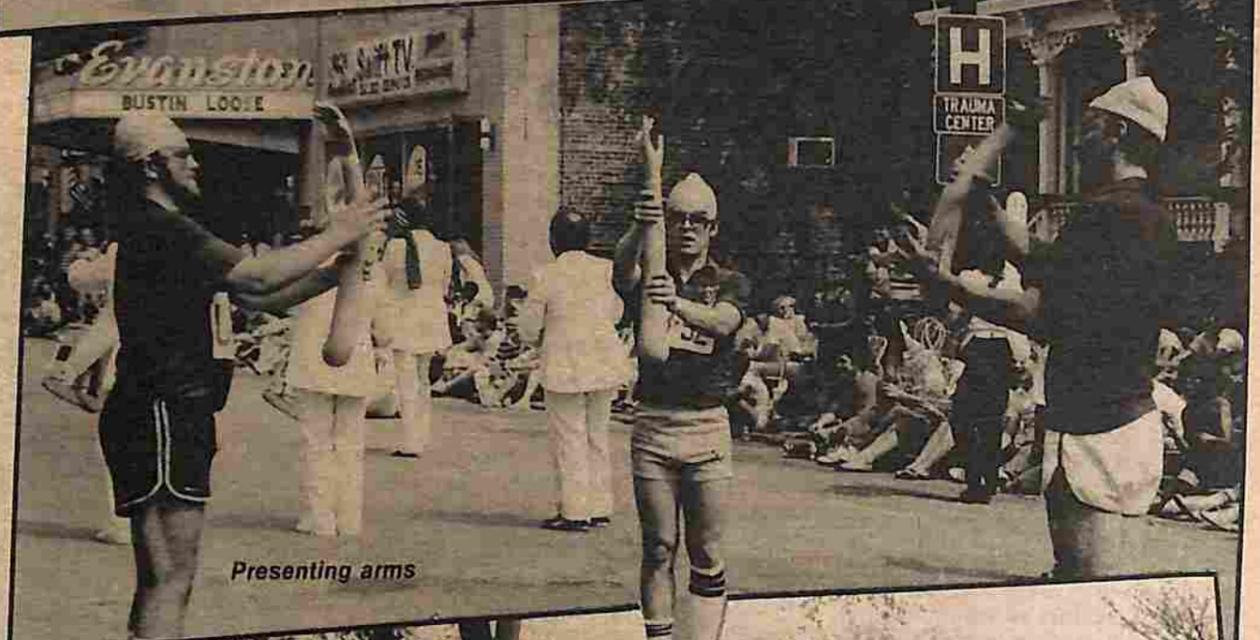
Corpse: This was originally a RYM 1 faction of the Weathermen. We went underground for a period of about 9 years. We were gonna blow up the Continental Divide and sever the country right down the middle. We thought in that position the government would have to capitulate and declare us the autocracy of the country. We also do it for sex—mainly this is a sex cult...

2nd Corpse: We would like to educate the people of America, specifically the people of the North Evanston Homeowner's Association because they need a little left-wing in their life. We call ourselves "white Blacks"...

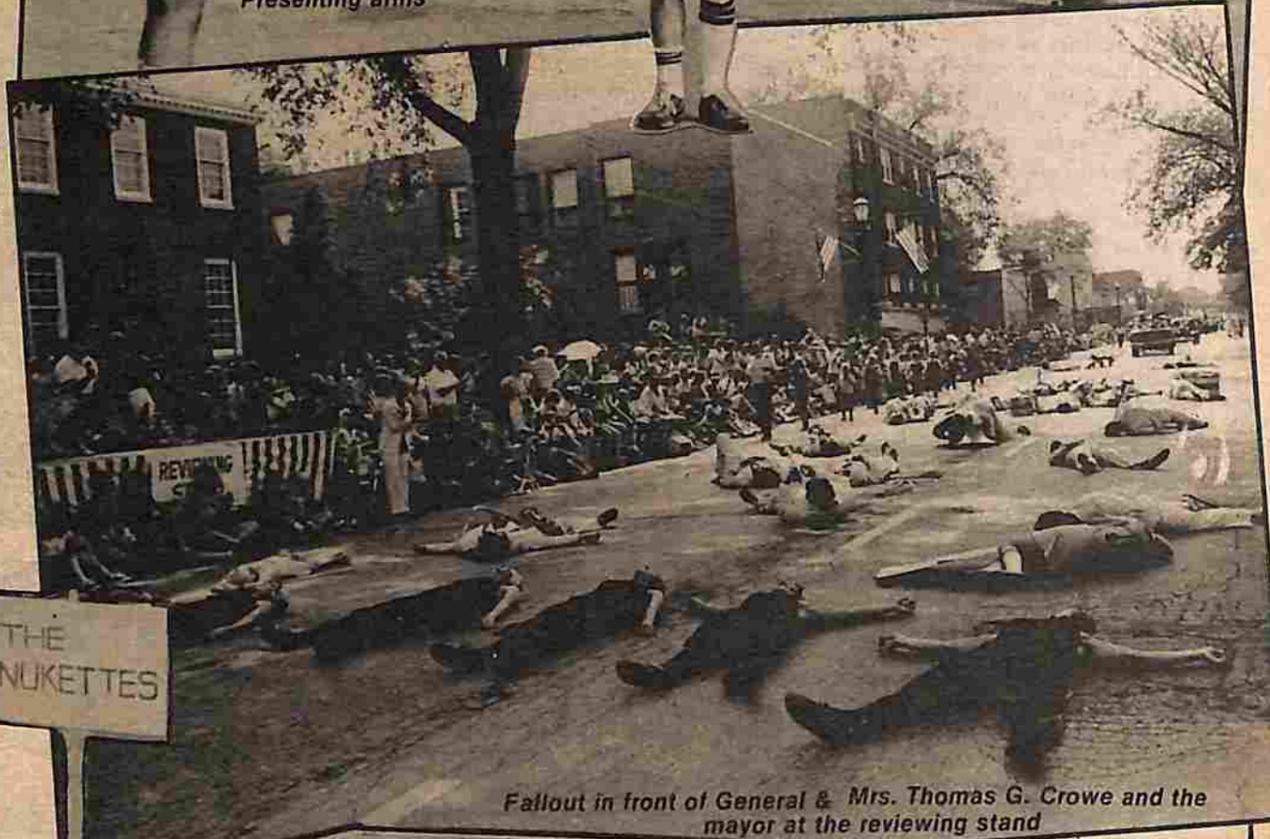
We started out with about six guys. Now we've got about 45 permanent members. It's grown quite a bit, every year it gets a little more bizarre. That's our goal, really, is to offend as many people as possible. We feel that we can be offensive to every man, woman and child regardless of race, creed or national origin. It's our kind of egalitarianism, if you will, to insult virtually every one in the crowd, to defend our title as most offensive band in North America...

RW: It seems to be very popular.

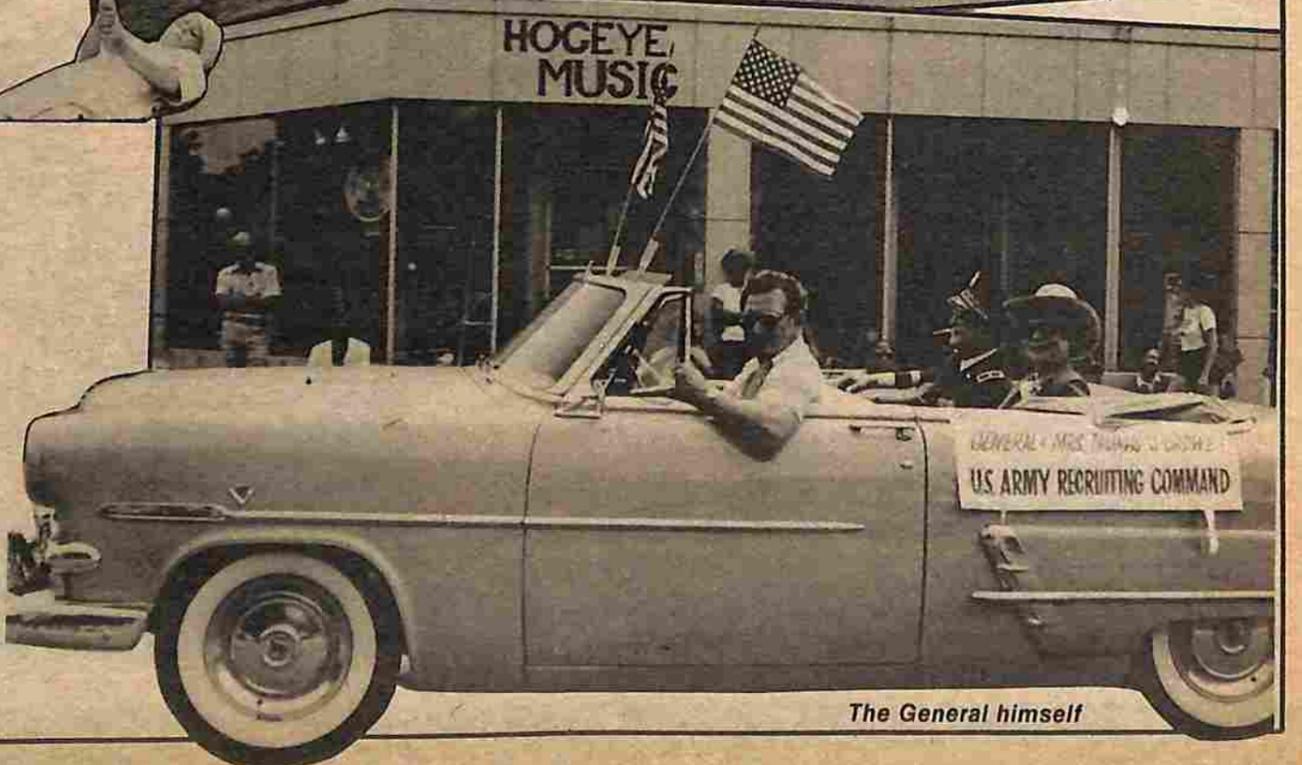
Corpse: We seem to have come into vogue with that. We were considered the snot-nosed Marxist pigs the first few years. People threw beer cans at us. People got really p.o.'d, ya know, long hair and all. Then we cleaned up our act. We finally sold out in 1977. That year our float was a \$97,000 house and black negligees. You can fill in the rest of the interview as long as you emphasize our finer offensive qualities. Consider yourself culturally violated. Come back next year. □



Presenting arms



Fallout in front of General & Mrs. Thomas G. Crowe and the mayor at the reviewing stand



The General himself

TESTIMONY ON POLITICAL PERSECUTION

Beatrice Dong

The refusal to grant Bob Avakian political refugee status on the grounds that America is a democracy with political freedom is a sham and a ruse. Do you really think people worldwide go for that old lie unquestioning after Vietnam, Chile, Iran, and now El Salvador?

The covert and undercover violent persecution of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA on the part of the U.S. ruling powers becomes more visible through the frameup trial of Bob Avakian and the Mao Tsetung Defendants.

I am now writing this testimony from a hospital where I've been since January 21, 1981, after being shot in the back from an assassination attempt that was part of this covert activity of the U.S. government against the RCP.

On that day after actively distributing the *Revolutionary Worker*, newspaper of the RCP, in Newark, New Jersey, I was on my way to the subway. This was the regular route I travel after selling in that part of town. I was ambushed at the station, shot point blank in the spine and immediately paralyzed.

The person who was accused of shooting me turned out to be a woman recently released from a mental institution in Kentucky who conveniently didn't know how or why she ended up in Newark thousands of miles away. The Newark police closed the case without an investigation. To this day the police department has not contacted me in any way. The accused assailant was charged with aggravated assault, a light charge for attempted murder, with the only time looking at her another stint in the hospital.

Not so coincidentally a month before the shooting, the for-hire-killers magazine, *Soldier of Fortune* printed an article called, "The Shot That Counts" describing how to shoot someone in the exact same spot as my in-

jury that if not insured to kill will insure the victim being immobile. This is the same magazine that ran an article complete with pictures of the takeover of the Alamo and Damián García before he was murdered in April, 1980.

About the same time after the shooting my home received daily anonymous phone calls, one a mistaken call to the police precinct stating my phone number.

The police are not the only part of the state machinery in cahoots with the shooting. The district attorney's office recently received "special" orders that it would take a court order before my attorney could look at the reports or witness statements on the case.

For you to refuse Bob Avakian political asylum is to condone the outright railroad and murder aimed against the revolutionary leadership of Bob Avakian and the RCP.

Beatrice Dong

West Virginia

Bob Avakian should be granted asylum in France because his life is endangered if he returns to the United States. The freedoms and rights that the U.S. government professes to protect apply only to divisions within the ruling class and are quickly set aside when dealing with those who oppose their rule.

I saw how quickly political freedom in the U.S. is yanked away when I took part in a rally supporting the right of members of the May Day brigade to sell their newspapers and carry red flags.

When the May Day brigade arrived in Raleigh County in March of 1980, Sheriff Okey Mills resurrected a 1919 state law forbidding carrying a red or black flag or opposing the government of the United States. He and his deputies arrested several people for selling *Revolutionary Worker* newspapers and carrying red flags in the small coal town of

Glen White, several miles outside of Beckley, the county seat.

The brigade members defied the attempts to intimidate them and planned a demonstration at the county courthouse several days later. I joined this demonstration, more to support free speech than to promote the brigade members' philosophy. When we marched up the sidewalk to the courthouse, we saw that all the deputy sheriffs in the county were lined up, waiting for us. Behind the deputies was a group of reactionaries and Klansmen, limbered up by free beer from a downtown bar owner who was treating anyone who would promise to take a swing at a red. Among this group of riff-raff were Beckley city cops in plainclothes whose role was to make sure the drunks adequately played their role as "the enraged citizenry."

The deputies surrounded us, and then the plainclothes cops reached through the line of deputies to grab some of us by the hair or shirts and drag us past the deputies to the rednecks, who proceeded to attack us from their safe position behind the police line. Other uniformed deputies broke up these fights by dragging the demonstrators off to jail. Seventeen demonstrators were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and/or resisting arrest. One of the "irate citizens" was arrested for public intoxication, but that charge was dropped when it was discovered which side he was on.

Local FBI agents were on the scene to take our pictures for future reference. What other roles they may have played was not obvious, but in the past they have worked with the sheriff's department in planning drug busts, and it is likely that they helped plan the attack on the demonstration, and they may have been orchestrating it.

Meanwhile, the "free press" was represented by the local daily newspaper. Its star reporter in his three-piece

suit was busy interviewing the sheriff, so he didn't see what happened. No problem, though, the sheriff told him what had occurred—that the demonstrators had gotten out of hand and attacked some citizens, but that his boys had restored order. I called the newspaper and asked them to investigate the treatment of those arrested, some of whom had been roughed up by the deputies, but they refused to investigate. A friend who worked at the paper told me that the publisher, after chatting with his peers at the country club, had decided that nothing more would be printed about the communists and passed that order on to the editors. They had printed the sheriff's story, what more was there to say?

The local judges stepped into line by setting bail at \$1,000 apiece on charges of disorderly conduct or resisting arrest. Normal bail for these charges is less than \$100.

A local businesswoman got into the act by writing about how she whipped a communist. The story appeared in the *National Enquirer*, with a picture that showed her kicking a demonstrator in the ribs while he was being held down by two cops.

These events opened my eyes to the way justice operates in the United States. Since that time I have come to understand the ways in which the capitalist class hides its maneuvering behind a thin facade of freedom and justice. I had taken part in the demonstration because I believed that in a county where the politicians give so much lip service to freedom, people should be allowed to express their political beliefs without being dragged off to jail. But after seeing the reaction of the politicians, cops, businessmen and media in Beckley, I realized that the issue was not freedom but class domination. The more I looked around me the clearer it became that economic exploitation was being rationalized by supposed freedoms that can be revoked immediately if class privileges, ownership capitalist philosophy is challenged.

Following the demonstration, the cops were out in force, asking questions about people they had seen at the demonstration and looking for brigade members who had escaped arrest. Before the demonstration I thought I was a free person, but afterwards I felt like I was being hunted. In truth, I never was free, but I had never before taken a stand against capitalism. Freedom in America exists only on paper. People are only free to speak their minds if they don't oppose capitalism. Bob Avakian would be free to say anything he wanted if he just didn't want to criticize capitalism. In light of the increasing need and attempts of the U.S. capitalists to eliminate opposition in this country, I fear for the life of Bob Avakian if he should return to the United States. The danger is not that he will be publicly executed, because that would too openly expose the nature of this system. More likely, Avakian would be jailed and then assassinated by undercover agents. Then the wardens and politicians could shake their heads and say, "It's a shame, but he certainly provoked it with all his inflammatory rhetoric."

Salvadoran Immigrant

I am a Salvadoran immigrant who has experienced reality and continues suffering the objective circumstances of the system of poverty and social divisions which they force on many countries, like El Salvador and others, under the rule of the North American empire.

The war moves and aid that the U.S. has given to this country in the past 3

Continued on page 20

Call to RW Readers to Testify in Connection with Bob Avakian's Demand for Political Refugee Status in France

Astounding though it may be, some people are unable—or unwilling—to recognize that the much advertised democracy in the United States is in reality no more than a big joke. This problem will have an important bearing on the procedure involving Bob Avakian's demand for political refugee status in France. Already in the initial stages of this process it has been said that political persecution has not been proved—that it has not been established that the difficulties encountered with the authorities of his country of origin (the U.S.) were of political origin, in the sense of the Geneva Convention. As this case now moves into the next and more decisive phase, the *RW* is calling on its readers to provide from their own experience, and to help organize on a grand scale, information and evidence which will clearly demonstrate two basic facts:

1. That the U.S. ruling class (which has been responsible for the war in Vietnam, Pinochet in Chile, the Shah of Iran, South Africa, El Salvador and on and on) in fact exercises a vicious repressive dictatorship *within* the U.S. as well.
2. That, in particular, through its various government agencies (and in cooperation with various "private" reactionary forces) it is carrying out systematic and increasing repression aimed against revolutionaries in the U.S. and specifically against the RCP and its Chairman Bob Avakian.

This is a chance to testify about the so-called "democracy" in the United States and its true meaning for oppressed and class-conscious people

Statements that illustrate the above two points should be written down and, if *at all* possible, notarized* (A notary does not have to somehow approve or verify what you write; they are only certifying that you are the person who is signing the statement.) These statements should then be handed over to the local Committee to Free the Mao Tsetung Defendants in your area, or if that is not possible, be mailed directly to the National Office of the Committee (P.O. Box 6422 "T" Street Station, Washington, D.C. 20009). If necessary, statements can also be handed over to a regular *RW* distributor. The kind of statements needed are those pertaining to such things as firings and harassment, frameups, brutality, threats, murder, etc. at the hands of police or government agents and especially as these incidents relate to Revolutionary Communist Party members and sympathizers (including people who sell the *RW*) and above all as they relate to Bob Avakian. There is a certain amount of urgency about collecting these statements, and the bulk of them should be in the hands of the National Office of the Committee right away. Please note if your statement could also be used (with or without signature) for publication in the *Revolutionary Worker*.

* (This can be done in many cities at banks, currency exchanges, and many other small business offices).

Forces of Revolution in the Coalfields

This article was written by a revolutionary who worked in the coal mines in the 1970s during the strike upsurge and returned to West Virginia in the midst of the recent contract strike as an RW reporter. This, the second and final, article in this series, (See RW No. 110, June 18) starts here the previous article left off, with the question—where will the forces for revolution in the coalfields come from and who are their advanced representatives today?

The workings of imperialism itself have hammered away at the political isolation of the coalfields. As laws of competition forced a step-by-step mechanization of the mines, it became inevitable that the thousands of petty coal barons would be eaten alive by huge concentrations of finance capital. And the coal industry, its ownership and sales, were woven into the network of U.S. imperialism's world-wide empire. That same mechanization forced hundreds of thousands of workers out of the industry, breaking down the system of company towns that had chained people for their lifetimes to one employer and one tiny community. A wave of unemployed miners was scattered throughout the country. And then, just as anarchically, repeated crises, wracking the country as a whole, forced many of them back into the coalfields looking for work again.

In the past twenty years, such changes have accelerated, and their political impact has become more significant as some of those coming back into the coalfields brought with them not just the experiences of other industries, but important political understandings they had gotten in contact with broad radical social movements and the defeat of an imperialist war in Vietnam.

In the talk, "Coming From Behind To Make Revolution," Bob Avakian discussed the importance of what he called the "roads to the proletariat" for the struggle in the country generally:

"I think a lot of what the advanced section of the proletariat is now are people who for reasons other than simply being members of the proletariat are somewhat more politically advanced. People who went through the experience of the '60s in one way or another; people from the oppressed nationalities; people who were veterans of the Vietnam war; women who don't accept being in their 'place'; some immigrants, especially those from countries where there's a relatively strong anti-imperialist struggle, and so on. And a crucial question for the Party is how to give all this a class-conscious expression and help spread it to broader sections of the working class as well as exerting an influence on other forces in society, broader sections of the people. I'm not saying that we should make that an absolute and go around looking for different strata within the working class and make them into separate compartments. Just the opposite—we have to look for those ways that different streams of political and social expression and movement are an influence within the working class that can be a big lever to move a class-conscious section forward and to influence much broader masses; and that links up with the question of diversion."

This analysis has a particular importance in the coalfields where the political life in the working class has been overshadowed by the massive, often illegal, economic struggles fought

by the coal miners, and where it can even be said that communists have at times tailed that spontaneous movement in place of carrying out all-around work in preparation for revolution. In the previous article, I pointed out that the raw trade union antagonisms that the coal miners have developed toward their immediate employers will be no reliable guide at all in the tremendous political storms ahead. "Any examination of the past and the lessons of the miners' upsurge, even at its most 'radical' and militant, shows that the role that miners will play—whether they (or a significant section of them) will be a pillar in the revolutionary movement or whether the unity and strength that miners have built will confront the revolutionary upsurges elsewhere in the country as a political foe—is a question that is not at all settled."

It is extremely important that now, as the accumulated contradictions of imperialism crank themselves up toward a historic breaking point, there are among the miners a section of workers who have been afforded a glimpse of the nature of the imperialist system, not just in their daily exploitation underground, but in far broader experiences that enable them to grasp the nature of forces and events far beyond the narrow confines of one industry.

Imperialism's Cannonfodder

Imperialism needed soldiers to defend its empire on the front lines of the war in Indochina. Thousands of the sons of coal miners were drafted, and thousands more enlisted, to get out of the deadly boredom of the coal camps and often out of a notion of "serving their country." This is, after all, "patriotic red-neck country"—an area considered so politically secure and naive that the CIA uses the rural high schools there as prime recruiting grounds for its secretarial pools.

But under the degrading discipline of military life, that grates on anyone with a sense of self-respect and rebellion, and in the demoralizing atmosphere of defeat in an unjust war—the imperialists were simply unable to keep the patriotic rah-rah alive. While the rate of enlistment among West Virginia youth was above average, that was quickly followed by a rate of desertion among those same soldiers that topped the scale for the country as a whole. Even some of those who went in yelling "Yee-hah" came out with an "A-WOL"!

They snuck away for all kinds of reasons, all of which boiled down to disgust with what they were being put through. Of course some of these veterans remain blind and obedient to the system that used them as its cannonfodder, but even many of the politically intermediate got a taste of an understanding about a world-wide system of oppression and a personal sample of revolt against authority. Two examples:

James told me, "It was like being in prison. They even sicced dogs on us trying to find marijuana—one of them ate the back pocket off my uniform pants trying to get into it. Finally I just said 'fuck it, I've got to get out of here.' I went AWOL 7 times. First time for three days, and after that for weeks at a time. All they would do was take my money, lock me up, and give me some lectures on my 'negative adjustment attitude toward military life'—so finally I just punched out the first lieutenant.

A few months in their 'Personal Control Facility'—and I was home free."

Rick got a letter from home that his marriage was about to dissolve in his absence. "I just called up my wife and said, 'Honey, don't do anything til I get there' and just lit out. I never went back. Six months, I hid out. They even sent MPs (military police—RW) to run me down. They talked to my folks and tried to scare them. And even staked out my house for a while trying to catch me."

What the bourgeoisie inherited from that war in the coalfields, especially because they replenished their workforce with Vietnam veterans, was an entirely new kind of worker—with an awesome alienation from authority, any authority. And more, in contrast to the older generation of miners, there were many who knew far more about the world and imperialism than just the General Patton-type stories left over from WW2 about fighting "across the water." There are thousands of workers in the coalfields now with vivid and complex experiences, of Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Indochina, the Mediterranean—who developed real (if partial) understandings from those experiences. These more advanced veterans are walking around with a lot of this inside them today.

From a letter, written by a miner's son during the war in Vietnam:

"Sometimes it seems as if I don't understand anything anymore, Mommy.

"I have to tell you about how we drove through villages on maneuvers—even the medics weren't allowed to pick up the wounded from the bombings. Some of the villagers just laid their wounded up on the machines hoping we would do something for them. And I saw guys just knocking their bodies off and leaving them lying. I can't seem to get it out of my mind...

"They took my stripes, and busted me all the way down. It happened when I was cooking in the mess and children came in to eat out of the garbage cans. We are supposed to run them off, and even shoot at them if we have to, to scare them. But I just couldn't do it. I was even caught letting them in...

"The only thing I know for sure, is that you always taught us to stand up for what was right. That's what I enlisted for. And it doesn't have anything to do with what we are doing here..."

Another story:

All I had known about Sam, a white guy I had seen at the mine for years, was that he worked like his life depended on it. Racing around at a dead heat, even stripping down and working barechested underground. At the time, my own thinking saw things heavily in terms of the immediate resistance in the mine itself, especially directly challenging the constant push of the section bosses for more and more production—and so, I had simply chalked Sam up among the relatively backward.

After running into him on an old strip mine road one day, we ended up sitting in his living room a few hours later. Suddenly he leaned forward, "I invited you here for a reason, to show you something," and walked into a neighboring room. He reached under the bed there and dragged out an old

footlocker. When he turned around he was holding a baggie in his hand which was crammed with paper. Slowly he smoothed the yellowing pages of a newspaper down on the table, "Here," he said. It was a copy of *Fight Back*, a revolutionary GI newsheet, from back in the late '60s. "I got that in Germany, while the war was still going on. A lot of what I know about the system I learned there. And I saved this paper to show my kids." He pointed to the box on the front page labeled "Pig of the Month." "That son-of-a-bitch was my CO. Nobody ever knew who posted it on his office door. But it was me. And I still do my bit—when it's right. I thought you'd understand. And I thought you should know."

Forces of the Black Liberation Movement

In the 1950s coal production plummeted as the entire railroad system of the United States switched over to the cheap diesel fuel squeezed out of U.S. imperialism's newly-acquired Middle East spheres of influence. Along with that, and in part because of that, the industry went through the most intense period of monopolization and mechanization in its history. Struck from two sides, the number of miners left working was cut by two-thirds, and 300,000 families were simply driven out. It hardly needs saying that under conditions like that Black miners were hit hardest of all. The industry might as well have hung a sign out saying "For Whites Only"—the Black part of the shrinking work force went from roughly a quarter to less than a tenth.

Whole areas in the coalfields became almost lily-white, and Blacks were concentrated more than ever before into a few specific areas where for various reasons decisions had been made to keep them on in the mines.

It wasn't until the latter part of the '60s, in the general flush of new hiring and with pressure from the raging Black liberation struggle that young Blacks started to get some of the, by now, relatively well-paying jobs in the mines. Many returned to get hired on from cities like Detroit, Cleveland and New York and out of the military.

What came back was different from what had left. Into the subdued and defensive Black communities, often literally tucked away "across the railroad tracks" or forced up onto the farthest and steepest slopes, came Black youth who weren't about to put up with the old blatant racist garbage. Among them were those who had direct contact with the nationalist and revolutionary currents within the Black movement, who in addition to having breathed the general atmosphere of Black pride in the Northern cities, had understood that national oppression is part of the functioning of the whole system. Even many who weren't actually in any organization had their lives dramatically changed by the indirect knowledge and strong personal identification with the movement.

In one town in West Virginia, one woman (a hospital worker and now the wife of a miner), told me of her contacts with the Black Panther Party in New York, about the breakup of the movement with the framing of the Panther 21, and how during that same period she had married a West Indian "illegal alien" who she barely knew, and never

on



LONG L
ARMISTICE

SHAH
IS A
US PUPPET



Jan. 10, 1976: Iranian students demonstrate in Charleston, West Virginia

lived with, to save him from deportation. And in a nearby city, a railroad worker I had just met by selling the *Revolutionary Worker*, pulled a worn-out copy of a book by Elijah Muhammad from the trunk of his car and launched into a discussion about whether liberation would be from a "Black or a multi-racial thing."

And among this kind of people there has been a concerted effort to not just carry on in the style that the liberation struggle of the '60s made possible but to keep up living links with what is happening in the Black urban centers, determined not to sink back again into the rural stupor of the past. Within weeks after Richard Pryor's underground tapes, like *Bicentennial Nigger*, hit the streets of New York—they are being played in the hollers of the coalfields.

During my recent trip to the coalfields, I borrowed a pickup truck in Beckley and drove down the valley of coal camps stretching off to the southwest, known as "the Gulf." I was hunting readers and distributors of the *Revolutionary Worker* for a better idea of what had brought them toward revolutionary activity. And within half an hour I was talking to John, on the rutted backstreets of a coal camp in the Gulf, about the life his father had led, and about the tremendously different experiences that had brought John into contact with communism, Mao and the idea of world revolution.

This valley had been a personal piece of paradise belonging to the coal baron Tams, who had run it like a god until after the second world war. Around the massive company store he had laid out the neat lawns and white painted houses of his bosses. And then in descending order of inferiority the communities of his workers: "American-town" for the Anglo-Saxons, "Hunkey-town" for the immigrants he practically shanghaied off the docks of New York. And farthest away, he had "nigger-town" built for the Black ex-sharecroppers shipped in from the dying cotton areas of the Carolinas. Intermingling was forbidden by decree, just as the entrance to the town was controlled by decree, by Tams' company police at the point where the railroad spur entered the valley. This was the life that John's father had known coming up; brutal exploitation and danger underground, and a stifling narrowness above it—where the only force he had known in his life that responded to the needs of the miners and their families was the United Mine Workers' union that came in during the depression of the 1930s.

The world John himself encountered, in the army, in the 1960s, was radically different.

"I remember the first time my sergeant called me a 'Black militiaman'—man, I was shocked. What was I doing? Just calling some bullshit for what it was, and he wants to put a label on it! But it hit me. He was right, my thinking had changed. And it wasn't just me, it was in the air. Back in the '60s you could wave around just about any-old-kind of radical-militant ideology and get a following... I remember getting to 'Nam and just thinking about it. 'These people haven't done a thing to me.' And a year later I was fully active in the Black Service-



Active-duty GI's in Vietnam proudly hold "the enemy's" flag and welcome the cease fire with the National Liberation Front



Newark, N.J., 1967—Black people confront National Guard troops

Coalfields

Continued from page 13
men's Caucus.

"We had a kind of commitment plan—it was a way of maintaining continuity. When you got out of service, you pledged to give twelve months to the organization and to the struggle. I ended up staying in California a lot longer than that. Wonderful years... I worked together with SDS, the Movement for a Democratic Military, and especially the Caucus. We had quite a group. We used to sell so many Panther papers they accused us of giving them away—a thousand a week sometimes.

"I had to come back home though. I'm no Grizzly Adams, but I live here—I feel fine here, familiar to the conditions, and will adapt to the conditions. Revolution here in West Virginia would be a different type of warfare." He flipped open one of the Red Books I had just sold him, and easily finds the quote he wants, "What do you think about this here, surrounding the city from the countryside?—sometimes I think that's how it will be here. For me, I'd rather duck behind a tree, than have to go messing with running down some alley—and it takes a while for the police to move around this part of the country. It's different here than in the city, everybody knows everybody. The revolutionaries stand out, but so do the pigs."

Five minutes with John, leaning back on the railing of his porch talking about the world, and you know he has done some thinking about revolutionary warfare. The question for him is not whether revolution is necessary, but how he can transfer his understanding to the people around him. "People like you and me, whereas we can sit and discuss this and we'll come up with some way, realistically, to fight to change policies... well, I'll tell you what our problem is. Take my father, a union man way back to the John L. Lewis days. I call him one step short of a 'John Henry.' He and I never did see eye-to-eye—even about why I couldn't stand the mines. Nine months in there and I had to get out. He could see what was happening: the union selling people out, Vietnam and all that... damn, he knew about how Black people are done—he lived that. But he just didn't want to hear about it, because he didn't want to deal with it. Just kept his head down and worked."

Trade Unionism vs. Class Consciousness

The sharp conflict John talked about is nothing isolated. There are now, and there will be on into the future, sharply different ways to view and respond to revolutionary challenges to the government. And in general opposing class consciousness there is a dogged trade unionism, mixed with a faith that things will somehow gradually improve, that has its roots in a thoroughly bourgeois summation of the narrow experience of the miners themselves.

In the midst of an intense red-baiting offensive in the press, right at a crucial point in a 1978 contract battle, an old pensioner called up some comrades on the phone to invite them to meet with him. He explained "I have been called a communist all my life, it's about time I found out what that was." A few days later, in his living room, he poured out the living memory of the horrors the capitalists are capable of: he described vast gangs of convict labor laying railroad tracks for the coal bosses, the wasted children working at picking slate until they earned the nickname "red-caps" because of the way their fingers were literally worn down to the meat. He listed explosions, the murders by gun thugs, the firings and blacklisting. And drew out each event of his life a scalding indictment of the owners and their drive for profit. After hours of talking he finished. And he was asked the natural question: "Where do you see all this going? What is its goal, what about the destruction of the system and socialist revolution?"

"It's not been going anywhere, at least in my lifetime," he finally said, "You see, I know about union, but not much else. A lot about miners and the

coal companies. But I don't know much about class struggle."

That, in a few words, describes not only one man's weakness, but a whole mind-set inherited from the past. That outlook teaches falsely that there is only one way to meaningful victories—it is for miners to cement a monolithic unity around their most immediate and common economic needs, and step-by-step force the employers back. In this view, anything else, anything that doesn't start with what the broad masses of miners can immediately grasp is (in the words of one man) "just a fart in the wind."

This whole outlook completely distorts reality, which is no surprise since it is one-sidedly based on that minuscule slice of reality called the "miners' movement." It is true that trade union struggle has, over several generations, won victories step by step. But what is overlooked is that those victories paralleled the rise of U.S. imperialism to the peak of its power worldwide, and it is that top-dog position in the world that made it possible for the imperialists to grant a series of concessions to key sections of the working class.

Once you understand that, the dogged trade unionism can be seen for what it is in the final analysis: a reformist illusion which, if persevered in, can only lead you ultimately to enlisting in the losing fight to hold the U.S. empire together. This is so despite the periodic sparks that fly in the economic struggle, sparks that must be seized and diverted to fan a far broader fire of class-conscious political struggle against the imperialist system.

The broader experience and understandings concentrated among the advanced workers are exactly the key to painting that real picture of imperialism, especially as those advanced views are given a class-conscious expression. But the tragedy of the last decade is that the advanced workers, left to themselves, have been just as badly infected as everyone else with the notion that the mainstream must be the starting point for anything significant. As one young white miner told me, "I've checked out a lot of what you communists say, some of it is bullshit, but most of it is true. But the simple fact is you're just not going to get a lot of these red-necks to go along with it. It's just not their beliefs."

And he is right. The majority will not go along with it now, and there will be some fierce struggle among miners, as well as among the rest of the working class, all the way to the very heat of proletarian revolution and beyond in this country. The point is not to crystal ball how things are going to develop, nor to give up on the majority of miners. As Lenin said, "We cannot—nor can anybody else—calculate just what portion of the proletariat is following and will follow the social chauvinists and opportunists. That will be revealed only by the struggle, it will be definitely decided only by the socialist revolution." But it is necessary to train people to understand that revolution in this country will never be the unanimous surrounding of a few thousand capitalists by everyone else, it can only be a civil war between two sections of the people.

To wait until everybody will "go along" before raising revolutionary politics is to give up on revolution altogether. And that is exactly what a lot of the potentially revolutionary people, including miners, who are "roads to the proletariat" in the coalfields did. The overshadowing upsurge of miners forcefully reminded everybody exactly what it was that the mainstream of miners were willing to fight for, and many accepted that as the end of the question.

For most Black people, the upsurge confronted them as something alien and distant. For some it was a living proof that the masses of (white) miners were hopelessly mired in improving "their" industry and union, and unable to see any further, certainly unable to take up the struggle against national oppression that they saw as much more important. Many Black people, including the bulk of the most politically conscious who also tend to be nationalist in their outlook, watched the torrent roll by—after all, the thinking went, why raise

something when you know already the mainstream won't take it up.

And for those politically radicalized white miners who *did* join the strike movement—they overwhelmingly put their political understandings on a shelf and dove into the movement on its terms—passive in their own way, because for all their activity, they politically bowed to the instincts of the intermediate, fighting for economic improvements.

Ironically, not only were the advanced not able to politically unite (with the leadership of communists) and struggle independently to divert the movement and consciousness of the miners toward preparations for revolution—but the advanced among Black and white workers often confronted each other in the course of the movement as complete strangers, each seeing in the stand of the other a complete dead end, while along different routes they followed the logic of tailing the broad masses to a common demoralization.

This is a situation that can only be changed through systematic political work, centered around exposure. With that kind of work, a section among the miners can be won to seeing that what needs building is not the latest "stage" in the miners' movement anyway, but a battalion of a worldwide revolutionary movement in the coalfields consisting of the advanced among the people that will play its role at the point where acute crisis throws ever broader sections of the people into political motion, and the situation in the country as a whole makes a revolutionary attempt at power a real possibility.

Different Conditions & Outlooks

It is not at all surprising that the masses of miners are not now revolutionary and that sections of them may not be before socialism. The breakdown between the advanced, intermediate and backward, here, just like everywhere else, does not just depend on broader experience, but also on the material position people have in life, whether they view their lives as fine or as just tolerable—and what chances they see of rising further under this system.

Imperialism has succeeded in creating here, just as in the country as a whole, an arrogant and well corrupted upper crust of the most skilled and "secure" workers. These are the small number of miners, including many union officials and the most highly skilled, for whom life is stable and indeed fine, and whose reactionary instincts, frankly, have a broad influence. There is even a mini-version of "white flight" going on, as people like that wade into debt so that they can raise their families in exclusive, middle class, white, brick-lined, suburb-type developments that have sprung up encircling the filthier areas of traditional coal camps. The constant hot press of these workers out of the working class, throwing their inheritances and savings into "starting a business for myself" is held up as proof that in America it is still possible to "make it."

It is the reactionary thinking characteristic of this section of the miners that the *New York Times* picked up on as they portrayed the most recent contract strike as a rather mean and petty fight to protect relative privileges from a horde of poorer, hungrier workers who are willing to work as "scabs":

"Yeah, we think a lot about all the people who would like to take our jobs," said Mr. Turkal, "but I think before some scab comes and tries to take my job there's going to be some trouble, and I'm going to be right there in the front line when it happens."

"I'm protecting my way of life as a miner," said Robert Kreiter, a 27-year-old who put himself through college by mining in the summer, and then found no other work after graduating... "Anyone who isn't concerned with upward mobility these days is crazy and I see the destruction of the union as destroying any chance I have to rise up a little bit in life." (*NYT*, April 6, 1981)

The feeling of having "something to protect" is a sign of bourgeoisification even among broad sections of the miners—whose lives on the whole are tolerable, as opposed to those above,

whose conditions are fine, and as opposed to those below, whose conditions are far more precarious. This bourgeoisification even affects some more advanced forces who have recently settled into relatively secure and stable lives. One miner, formerly an active revolutionary, told me, "Let's face it, I'm not just a penniless ex-GI anymore."

In a certain sense the stratification of the working class is different in the coalfields than it is in large cities, because of the overwhelming dominance of one industry and the fact that within that industry conditions are kept more or less uniform (even in non-union areas) by the existence of a blanket wage agreement embracing the bulk of miners. (Also, a number of service jobs are held by miners' family members.) But within that, especially because of the return of layoffs to the mines, there is a growing section of the miners whose lives are not at all secure. And in addition, while there is not the same large sea of "real proletarians" concentrated in more poorly paid industry and service as in the cities, there are definite concentrations of impoverished proletarians alongside the miners—sawmill and timber workers, people on welfare, disabled miners on checks—most of whose lives are both extremely unstable and connected to the masses of miners in one way or another. Single women heading families, too, are mostly in this category. (The small but significant number of women miners, while not the same economic question, have also done a lot to challenge the old choice of "housewife or whore," and more than a few are consciously out to upset the reactionary appellation.)

Young miners in particular, and other "late arrivals" in the industry, have been caught sharply by the last years of fluctuation in coal. Raised on the fantasy of a lasting "coal boom," these workers have been introduced first hand to insecurity and often their lives don't revolve around "clutching on to what you got" but the far more basic fight for survival. Thousands have been run in and out of the industry like yo-yo's over the last years, and as the cushion of unemployment benefits runs out, have in many cases been forced to work in tiny fly-by-night mining operations called "dog-holes" where ten or fifteen men work in one entry punched in the side of a mountain, often under conditions that are qualitatively worse than in large established operations. Many can't even get that—and are simply pushed into hustles, part-time work cutting timber, or re-roofing homes.

This only adds to the generally rebellious qualities of the young. And in an area where the old includes a lot of rural backwardness, with preachers hovering right over the shoulders of young sinners, this creates some interesting opposites. One man, a strike leader during the '70s, reflected on this: "My first rebellious thoughts were a secret atheism, or really, it was more like agnosticism. Everyone was a believer, but the really church-going ones, the 'Christians' with a capital 'C', were such hypocrites." His wife breaks in, "So petty, they'd pass you up when you were hitch-hiking." And he continues, "First I thought, if heaven is filled with them—I'd rather burn in hell. And then I figured 'What kind of god wants people to be like *them* and lets the world be full of suffering like it is?' It was only later when I started reading, that I really shook all that shit loose. When I was coming up, the Bible was all there was."

Black youth are hit particularly in the present crunch because of the pervasive national oppression. The companies hadn't wanted to hire them in the first place—there was something about their "negative attitude" that simply doesn't sit well with the company image of productive "coal people." Infected with the pride of the '60s, and with an urban hatred of "old buddy" idiocy that still lingers in the coalfields, they didn't tend to look at mining as a life-time vocation to "settle into and make your peace," but as just another "slave." Not only were they hit by cut-backs that lopped off the bottom of the seniority ladder, but they were the focus of special harassment aimed at weeding

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The Day They Stole The Beach

On any given day in the summer thousands of people use the L.A. County beaches, and on weekends hundreds of thousands or even millions. Attempting to escape the sweltering heat and choking smog, people head to the beaches for the cool surf and relatively clean air. But there is a one-mile stretch, Dockweiler Beach, that won't be used by anybody this summer as it is now piled 8 to 10 feet deep with stinking, dark gray sand and silt, trash and garbage, and who knows what else. And it will stay that way for the rest of the summer. Dockweiler is the one beach in the county used primarily by Black people.

But it had to be sacrificed, said county officials, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Coastal Commission, etc., etc. The nearby Marina del Rey, they say, terribly needed to be dredged—a matter of crisis proportions—and they had to put the 230,000 cubic yards of silt somewhere. The Marina, built and paid for by the county, is a virtually exclusive reserve of the wealthy. It is the home of the California

and Del Rey Yacht Clubs, and those who can afford the expensive sail boats and yachts harbored there. The crisis? One year ago the county had to close one of the ocean entrances to the Marina channel because the silt had piled up. The entrance was only 5 to 7 feet deep—not hardly deep enough for the kind of boats used here. (After dredging, the depth was 20 feet.) On a busy day as many as 1,000 boats used the Marina, and as the head of the Small Craft Harbor Department put it, it was "crucial to ease the heavy boat traffic expected during the summer." And besides, he said, Dockweiler Beach "is not heavily used"—at least not by his kind of people. So they simply laid down a pipe in the Marina channel and pumped it all onto the beach.

But don't worry, the officials tell us, people could still use the beach. You can even sit on the pile of shit if you want to—in fact, you'd have to use the beach. Besides the dirty sand, you'd just have to clear away a spot amidst the soda and beer cans and other trash pumped out of the Marina. Don't let

the fact that many boat owners dumped their sewage into the channel (now on the beach) bother you. Don't worry about the fact that the Ballona Channel feeds whatever comes down the L.A. storm drain into the Marina. Many of these storm drains have been exposed as the receptacle of industrial waste, dumped surreptitiously by economy-minded businessmen. One such fellow was recently exposed for dumping contaminated radioactive material into a storm drain. An extremely high rate of cancer among lifeguards who work near one such drain in Santa Monica has been linked to this kind of dumping. Nonetheless, the county has been doing "extensive testing" on the silt and has given it a clean bill of health. Testing? Last year when the cancer among the lifeguards was exposed, the testing done amounted to having a lifeguard look at the water in the drain every day to see what was floating in it!

Normally silt is pumped out to sea or into the surf after dredging; but officials said that was impossible this time because it would interfere with the

spawning of various birds and fish during the summer. Why not wait until after summer? They just had to have the Marina channel open by Memorial Day. Why Dockweiler and not some other beach? There would be more protest and loss of revenue from parking and concessions. They claimed they didn't know the beach was heavily used by Black youth and that these youth could just go to some other beach anyhow. Actually, the building of the Marina itself and the condominium and other high-rise business development related to it has for several years been pushing Blacks and Chicanos out of the area. Low-cost housing has been demolished, police harassment stepped up. One local reporter found residents in one wealthy area nearby Dockweiler complaining about increased crowds—and their racial composition—on "their" beaches.

The yachting clubs now have all channel entrances open. The Small Craft Department has proudly proclaimed, "Safe navigation is back." □

Coalfields

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them out, firing them. While young workers generally were run "in and out," for Blacks the push was to "run them out, period." And for those just now getting out of school, the doors are simply closed—what little hiring is done now, in some new mines opening up, has a whole pool of skilled (mostly white) miners to pick from.

All of this has an impact, not only on how this section of the workers lives economically, but in how they are treated by the powers that be. The bourgeoisie has a habit of coming down hard on the rebellious and the superfluous.

In general, the daily pressure of the police terror on the masses of miners has slacked off tremendously—when you compare it to the brutal days of gun thug armies, where whole counties were ruled by the gun, and miners were treated like a volatile dangerous force threatening to explode. The general improvement in miners conditions changed that.

During the most recent strike, there was flurry of criticism aimed at the West Virginia state government after state troopers apparently sat and watched while hundreds of miners tore some mining operation to shreds. One rabid editorial screamed, "Miners may not understand a lot of things. But they understand sheriff's deputies in riot gear with scatterguns pointed at them." Within days, the more sophisticated voices from the top of the bourgeoisie had stifled the outcry. We have learned, they explained in the press, that such violence is a useless provocation and that other means are preferable.

For a generation violence has been held in reserve, used with almost surgical precision at those points, especially in the crucial moments of massive strikes, when miners themselves exceed certain limits. Even then, while the bourgeoisie is certainly willing to pull out the state troopers, and even in extreme cases shoot down miners, their basic tactic has been to rely on political reserves they have among the masses, using the pressure of the media, and especially the conscious reactionary influence of the union officials to split, and calm, the miners.

In contrast, there has been a growing

volatile element that the bourgeoisie does single out for special daily attention—when there are those it can't find any profitable way to exploit, it prefers to drive them under a rock, or better yet (in the best tradition of rural justice) run out of town.

Kimball, West Virginia—the one Black bar in this tiny bend in the road takes on a special significance in the largely segregated social life of West Virginia. Within a half-hour drive in any direction there are only one or two other places Black youth can meet. And so on a Friday or Saturday night, cars line the sides of the street in the deserted "downtown," and the municipal parking lot is filled with the coming and going—the partying, the music and loud laughter. Sit there for an evening over bootleg gin in paper cups, and you'll see almost every Black youth in the area drop in at one time or another.

All night long, the pigs sit in their squad car, watching and waiting. Looking for an excuse, a fight or a complaint, to barge in and close it down. Hardly a night goes by when they don't stop someone driving away, looking for drunks and dope—but really just looking to hassle, and let the Black people know that they are being watched.

The Kimball town cop leaned across the desk of his tiny office towards me and whispered conspiratorily, "My job?" he said, "It's simple. I'll tell you just the way the Mayor told me, 'Watch for speeders, and keep the jigaboos in line!'"

"It's like we're animals, man. First we hung out at the old Veteran's building—and they came and wrote 'No Loitering,' painted it right on the street. Then we moved to the steps of the old post office, and they come tell us, 'That's federal property, boy, you'll have to move.' Where to?"

One young Muslim told me, "They dog you to catch you with something, or they make something up... get you in the back of the squad car and tell you straight out, 'leave the state, don't show your face again—and nothing more will be said.'"

And another adds, "But there's no place to go now. It ain't the '50s, man. What's in the cities? No jobs, nothing—just heroin and jail."

And responding to this, all the mechanisms of the bourgeoisie focus in on singling out those who obviously

won't learn to shuffle.

In Beckley, I was told of the way the Young Black Vets was crushed. It had been an organization in the early '70s organizing a boycott of slum grocery stores and had taken an open stand against the Klan-inspired anti-textbook strike. "If you go against the system, they'll pick up on two or three, pig out on them, get to the guys that've got the heads, and then it fades away. Take XXX," he mentions the leader of the Y.B.V., "That man was intelligent, a marine vet—and still he couldn't get a job anywhere. It was constant harassment, frisking him down for a joint, busting him for resisting arrest, fingering him every way they could for being a militant. He's dead now, got blown away recently. And nobody'll say exactly what was behind the shooting. I don't think the pigs did it directly, but there's no doubt they put the word out that they would like to see it done."

Over the years, there has developed a smoldering war between the police and rebel elements among the youth, Black and white, and sometimes that smoldering bursts into flame:

"I was hitch-hiking real late, two or three in the morning. And my ride lets me off right down town and takes off. You know how dead this place is about then. Suddenly... Blam! Blam! I hear shots everywhere. The cop car comes racing up the street behind me, he must have been doing 80 to get away—all of his windows in the back were shot out, and there were holes in all the rear doors. Man, I hit the dirt, and saw two young dudes cut down the parking lot wall—duck into the alley right there—and they're gone. I headed home, fast—this was definitely nothing to get caught in the middle of. They were riding up and down the streets all night long looking for those two, or anyone else they could catch. They had everybody packed into a bunch of pickups—the mayor, the cops, the fire department... loaded for bear, guns pointing in every direction. Hey, that wasn't over a robbery or nothing either—it was somebody settling some business with that town pig."

Influence of the Advanced

In the statement from Comrade Avakian I quoted earlier, it says "...a crucial question for the Party is how to give this a class-conscious expression and help spread it to broader sections of the working class as well as exerting an

influence on other forces in society, broader sections of the people." And this hits squarely on the tasks demanded by the present situation in the coalfields.

By themselves, because of their consciousness, the more advanced people among the masses constantly try in various ways to exert an influence more broadly. I met a miner, for example, who had lived in Portugal during the revolutionary upheavals that swept that country during 1974, and who was not only himself grappling with all kinds of political questions, but trying to the limited extent he knew how to raise and discuss his experiences at work.

One older worker, quiet at work, opened up to me when we got in the privacy of his own living room about how he himself had been influenced by someone like that:

"You know one way I find out what they don't want us to know? My brother is a sailor. He's been everywhere: Egypt, Singapore... everywhere. And when he comes in we all sit around all night, talk and listen. Like... one time he told us of going through the Panama Canal, right when the people were rioting against the U.S. Crowds were everywhere. There was burning on the bases there. And the sailors were told just to sit tight. In the night, Panamanians started climbing right up the ship's anchor chain. My brother says he'll never forget it. Some were for shooting them off—but nobody did. They just came up on the deck and shouted to the sailors, 'Tell the world what we are fighting for, tell the world what you have seen, brothers.' And that's what my brother did."

And in many cases, those with more explicitly revolutionary understandings and even some training in how to do revolutionary work, have gathered around themselves loose networks of people attracted by their politics and their general rebellious stand toward the powers-that-be. That is the situation with John, as well as others I met. Cut off during the '70s, he has generally slid into the daily hustle for survival, assuming that new revolutionary forces can only emerge with the next round of political crisis. But at the same time, he can't help but respond and agitate over a thousand outrages he sees, both those immediately around him and in the world in general. And sitting on his porch, I was right in the middle of a

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UN 2 Glenn Gan Denied Access to Parole Hearing

The authorities' fear and hatred of the UN 2 continues to be exposed by Federal Prison officials' outrageous treatment of Glenn Gan. On July 7, at 6:30 a.m., Glenn was removed from the Federal Prison at Lompoc, California—supposedly to be transferred to the Sandstone, Minnesota penitentiary. Glenn has now been on "holdover" (in transit) since April 27. During this time Glenn has repeatedly been given conflicting stories of where he is headed, been transferred from prison to prison, and denied any access to a parole hearing or even the forms necessary to apply for a hearing.

Federal Parole Commission guidelines state, "A federal prisoner serving a maximum term or terms of more than one year (the UN 2 were sentenced to one year and one day—RW)... may be released on parole in the discretion of the Commission after the completion of one-third such term or terms." In addition, prison officials' work orders on "transfer of inmates" read, "Unless it is ascertained that an inmate can be transferred and still receive the initial hearing as early as he or she would have at the transferring institution, transfers shall be deferred until after the hearing."

But these laws, like all bourgeois laws, are obviously just so much toilet paper to those who "enforce" them. Prison officials' practice has been to keep Glenn on "holdover," thus denying him even the "right" to use the

prison library to obtain parole information, much less a hearing.

Three days before Glenn was transferred, an attorney went to Lompoc to personally hand Glenn information and applications for a parole hearing, but was denied permission to see Glenn, told that it was a holiday weekend and that they should go through "proper procedures" and come back on July 6. The prison officials knew full well that Glenn would be transferred on July 7 and that by the 6th it would be too late to stop the transfer or apply for a parole hearing (the Parole Commission was at Lompoc

the first two weeks in July). In addition, although Glenn has been denied access to a parole hearing application, his attorney has been prevented from filing for him because he can't "prove," without seeing Glenn, that Glenn is being "denied his rights."

An American Indian Movement activist, who has worked with Native American political prisoners, told UN 2 supporters that such tactics are a common means used by prison officials to harass political prisoners. The Native American activist expressed concern about how long the transfer from Lompoc to Sandstone would take, noting

that some Native American prisoners have been "lost" for considerable periods of time in such transfers, with prison officials claiming there are no records of where the prisoners are or where they're headed.

Such maneuvers are obviously the work of low-level flunkies, but show once again that the spectre of red paint at the UN on the eve of May Day 1980, and the worldwide exposure of imperialist war preparations by the grave-diggers of imperialism, continue to haunt the bourgeoisie. □

UN 2 Steve Yip Reports RW Banned in Prison

Dear Comrades,

It seems the political shockwaves of the Pontiac Brothers' victory has chilled the spines of the prison administration here at F.C.I. Danbury.

After several weeks of being withheld by the administration, perhaps vacillating from indecisiveness, the Warden finally forwarded a memo to me advising me that RW May 15, has been censored for its front page article, "Prison Rebels' Victory" because it "supports the disruption of a correctional facility."

This bundle of three copies of this RW was one of three packets that had arrived at the institution but were being withheld by the administration for several weeks. I was receiving subsequent issues. On June 13 and 15, I sent requests to my Unit Manager and the Mail Room inquiring about their whereabouts.

On June 19, I received a notice from the Mail Room telling me that they didn't know what I was talking about. Ironically (or interestingly), that same evening, two of the three bundles ap-

peared at the Recreation Dept. for pickup. (All books and multiple copies of publications must be picked up rather than being delivered at unit mail calls.)

I then received this memo on June 24 (which was dated 6/18!). I have appealed this decision after reviewing the article.

In struggle,
Steve Yip

Coalfields

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constant stream of rebellious workers and youth, coming and going:

"I've tried to do what I could for the last five or six years. I go over the street, I try to put down an honest job, and people I see who are somewhat advanced politically I try to talk to them, in that area, but really I don't have much time to do it, I'm chasing that dollar, or sitting around waiting on a ride, waiting on somebody to come up and say, 'Hey, I need you to go somewhere, drive me to town'—maybe 25, sometimes 50 dollars a week, I'm living. But, you know, nobody wants to hire a competent man, a Black Vietnam veteran that's mad..."

Suddenly we were interrupted. Terry bounds up the steps to the porch, a long-haired white miner, stripped to the waist, sweating in the hot summer afternoon. And just cooking with anger. A few words of explanation about the article I'm trying to write, and he jumps off into it like a cocked gun. "I'll tell you about it, man. It's not a living, it's slavery. They want you there every day—dragging pumps up to your ass in water and mud, running their raggedy equipment, cutting that coal no matter what—and then when you're worn out, old and ready to kick back (if you live that long), then it's 'fuck you!' We've been striking for two months now, and for all I care they can blow the mother-fucker up—'cause no matter what happens they're going to run it, the rich will have their say." Rapid-fire he runs down one outrage after another. Government safety inspectors hanging men for minor violations while company murder goes unchallenged. Union mine committeemen "on the gravy train, and then look at them when they get in front of the Man—not a peep!" The choking dust. Hundreds of feet of rock hanging over your head.

More of John's friends pull up. Three Black guys here to lay plans for an odd job—plowing somebody's field. We talk. And one guy, a city worker, shakes his head when we offer an RW for sale. "I don't read anything but the daily paper to see which ones of my friends got arrested last night."

"You don't understand," John jumps back, "This paper is hooked up

with that outfit that got busted at the courthouse with the red flags." It is a full year since the May Day Brigade was arrested in Beckley, building for the actions of May First, 1980. And still—the heavy controversy and excitement it caused is right there. The whole tone of our conversation changes. The city worker laughs to his friends, "Man, we had city trucks driving round and round the courthouse that day, in shifts—checking everything out. They didn't report in the paper, but it's a fact: Okey Mills (the sheriff—RW) got put right on his ass—we saw it!" And he turns to me, "OK, man, if you guys are serious about this revolution thing, I got one question. You know the law ain't going to be with it, none of the big wheels will be—if we do it, maybe we can get the numbers, but where do we get the fire-power?" We flipped on Bob Avakian's 1979 May Day tape, where he hits on exactly that question. And after more discussion they leave, taking RW's with them.

Suffocate Under Backwardness or Weld a Class-Conscious Force

Repeatedly the advanced raise the frustration of feeling like they were smothering under the weight of general backwardness. They recognize that society is going to hell around them, and that they know all kinds of people grappling for explanations—but left to themselves they feel incapable of piecing together an overall picture of explaining imperialism and bringing the possibility of revolution to life.

An Iranian revolutionary, living in the coalfields, spoke about how his eyes had been opened once he and his friends took up working to build an RW network in a neighboring proletarian community. I had asked him about his experiences: "Experiences, so many experiences... let me put it like this: before I sold this paper to the masses, not only had I never done mass work before, but I thought that revolution in the U.S. was impossible. Now I know better."

Without a link like the *Revolutionary Worker* at the center, both training the advanced element to understand the events in the world in a class-conscious way, and providing a concrete focus for transferring their growing understanding and carrying out ongoing revolutionary work among the broader masses—what could these advanced elements do but

sooner or later carve out some little piece of the world to wrap up in. They could only end up submerging their own higher understandings (especially internationalism), and instead of being "roads" to anything, fall into one pit or the other—from "community relations committees," to trying to "at least help people" by assuming union office, to the ultimate trap of cynicism and despair.

Spontaneously, a lot of the potentially advanced forces don't even recognize one another. On the surface what does a white vet, an ex-Panther and an Iranian student have to do with one another, anyway? Without the common source of all this being constantly exposed, and from all angles, these remain separate elements—separate from each other and from broader masses who also experience different contradictions also stemming from the same rotting source of imperialism. The situation demands systematic all-around revolutionary work to weld these advanced elements into a class-conscious force, capable of joining the battle in a hundred ways against the forces of reaction, and capable of influencing broader masses.

As we said in our first article on the coalfields: "In political crisis, it is political understanding that will determine the role that the masses of miners will play." Already the superficial unity among those workers that was based on a simple collective grab for immediate concessions has broken down, shattered on the rocks of the intensifying crisis of imperialism. An openly reactionary section of the workers, led by the top UMW officials, can be counted on to throw their lot in with the defense of the empire, swallowing the perverse logic that only a dominant U.S., gorged with the blood of the world, can maintain them in a style they would like to get accustomed to. Already the union hierarchy has replaced the vague reform slogan "Safety or Else!" with the openly slavish motto, "Why Not Coal?" And first item on the agenda of the most recent union convention was the unanimous, even enthusiastic, denunciation of the Iranian revolution and the seizure of the American embassy.

While it has created this pus, imperialism has also prepared advanced contingents of its own gravediggers, workers who are capable even now of understanding their own historic interests and the tremendous oppor-

tunities the proletariat faces. The potential is there for welding them into a class-conscious force that can play a pivotal role among that section of the proletariat and the broader masses concentrated in the coalfields.

Already in the struggles of the past, where communists struggled to shake themselves out of the fascination with the spontaneous movement, and where major events shook up the political atmosphere—there are examples that show in embryo the tremendous possibilities that exist.

The winter of 1978, a caravan of huge produce trucks winds its way through the darkness along the icy mountain roads out of Beckley toward the college town of Montgomery. For a week the farmers of south Georgia had driven north with their loads of potatoes, swine, beans and vegetables in a gesture of solidarity between the American Agricultural Movement and the striking miners. Today after a long day of rallies and food distributions, there is still one stop left to make. In the cabs of the trucks, discussions and debates rush on—only days ago the politics of the farmers had been limited to angry rebellion and the demand for parity, and some had been deeply influenced by the demagogic populism of the John Birchers.

Only two months before, as the strike first started, some of the miners present had seen the strike in simple trade union terms, essentially as "the miners against the world." Now, whole new terms for struggle seem possible. The discussion ranges from the possibility of revolution, to the different world-views of proletarians and small owners, to the possibility of alliances beyond immediate demands—extending perhaps to state power. The explosive issue of communism (a strange abstract satanic spectre for those raised in south Georgia Klan territory) gets raised with an immediacy that several of the farmers and miners never thought they'd see. In some ways the most shocking eyeopener is yet to come: the final destination is a Norooz banquet, the celebration of the Persian New Year, sponsored by the revolutionary Iranian Students Association. Hours later, watching a skit of Uncle Sam and a puppet called Shah being chased from the stage by Iranian masses, a farmer leans over to a coal worker, "Man, I've

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Supposed to Be Hell

Continued from page 2

"We cannot afford to ignore the underlying causes of civil disorders during this period of relative calm. The urban crisis is far from being resolved; in many ways, the state of the great cities is more desperate than it was during the most serious riots of the 1960's. An unstable economic situation has forced substantial curtailment of public services in many cities and caused a general deterioration in the quality of life for the poorer classes. . . . Unemployment has risen markedly, and job opportunities for the disadvantaged have dwindled. These facts may well have contributed to the present quiescence. But this is a false calm, and we must see in the current situation in accumulation of trouble for the future. There will surely come a time when once again socioeconomic conditions will generate violent reactions. It is important that we be prepared to deal with such future disorders. . . ."

The leap in prison population lies in a fundamentally conscious attempt by the bourgeoisie to repress and control the most volatile sections of the people, with whom experience was gained in the '60s, including parts of the white proletariat. The idea has been to terrorize the oppressed nationalities in particular, and in coordinated campaign between cops and courts, incarcerate an ever-rising number. The aim has been to create an atmosphere, so to speak, among the masses—one in which it be-

comes widely acknowledged that guilt or innocence in any crime, has nothing to do with arrest, trial or conviction. You are a criminal if you're poor—especially if you're an oppressed nationality. You are to understand that the justice system has a loaded gun pointed straight at your brains. It can go off any time; it can go off at random.

The penal system has always been central to national oppression in the U.S., and a weapon for use against the masses of people generally. The difference in the recent period is the social situation which gave rise to it and that which is to follow. The "insanity" of the criminal justice system has been condemned by many a lawyer. A few months ago, the *RW* interviewed one of the 16 Pontiac Brothers, then on trial for his life, who presented a vivid description of this judicial random selection: "I don't think there is no justice. . . . This is the way it works: 'We gonna pick up 20 in the streets, we'll let five go, we'll give five probation, we'll send ten down to prison.' I think that's the way it is. 'All 20 of them is not guilty, maybe ten of 'em is, we're not sure.' That's what they say. . . ." And that's what they do.

National Oppression

So, for example, between 1969 and 1979, the overall percentage of Black people in the prison population in this country (again, excluding local jails) rose from 40% to 47%, figures startling enough in their own right. In 1977, the total number of Black prisoners was around 132,000. The number of white prisoners in the same year was 122,000. This increase, assessed in light of the number of people jailed as a per-

centage of a particular nationality, is even more startling: Today, Black people are incarcerated *eight and a half* times as frequently as whites. 600 Blacks per 100,000 of the population of Black people are jailed against a figure of 70.8 per 100,000 population of whites. (The point generally applies to all oppressed nationalities. After Black people come Native Americans. They are locked up at a rate of 280 per 100,000 population. Due to the racist nature of government statistics, it should be noted that this number for Latinos is undoubtedly underestimated. Among other things, 12 states, including Florida, don't even count their Latino prisoners.)

A booklet entitled *United States Incarceration Rates by State and Race*, compiled in 1977 by a progressive Maryland lawyer, provides some revealing facts state by state. The absolute number of Black prisoners vis a vis white prisoners in the south tends to be higher than that of whites, not surprisingly of course. Mississippi: Black—2,144; white—1,106. North Carolina: Black—7,742; white—6,412. Georgia: Black—7,386; white—4,998. Texas: Black—110,750; white—9,691. Etc.

And as Malcolm X used to put it: "If you're south of the Canadian border, *You're south.*" New York: Black—11,185; white—5,457. New Jersey: Black—3,611; white—1,898. Michigan: Black—8,692; white—5,766. Illinois: Black—6,234; white—4,478. And so on. Generally, states that saw the sharpest urban rebellions in the '60s have the largest population of Black prisoners.

We don't know exactly why Justice Thurgood Marshall was the lone "dissenter" in the Supreme Court's ruling: we suspect it's a fear of

powderkegs. That this apparently was considered secondary by the other justices shows the bind they're in, and how they plan to fix things: only more and more of the same viciousness. The court's ruling declares to prisoners: "You belong in hell, you're in hell—so shut up." But the court—and company—can only antagonize the problem they are trying to avert.

The prisons are becoming seething cauldrons of revolution, and will grow increasingly so. Conscious revolutionary ideas are spreading. Revolution? "Yeah, it's coming," said the Pontiac Brother mentioned earlier. "They're stepping on too many. . . . on too many people at one time. Inflation, they're talking about closin' down the County Hospital, they was talking about taking people off aid, nuclear power, drafting people, you got a shortage of jobs, you got overcrowding in the penitentiary. People gonna wake up. It's a massive genocidal attack coming down, and people gonna wake up sooner or later. And when they do it's gonna change.

"You can't keep people in the dark—not forever. Something inside tells you that this here is not right. It can be done a better way. This here is what brings about a change in all of us. . . . to get involved in the human struggle. This is what causes us to study about history, the history of the races. How did all of this here come about? You curious. When you don't have the answers to something that you want to know the answers to, you start studying. Even though you gonna find contradictions, it's gonna be something that tells you which one to believe. . . ."

Coalfields

Continued from page 16

learned more here in one day than in 27 years in Carter country! They'll never believe this down home."

A student comes over to teach him the distinctive and loud finger snapping technique of the Iranians.

While John and I were talking about the fact that the future doesn't hold just a vague worsening of conditions but specific sharp and explosive leaps in events, he expressed insight into the political tasks the revolutionary forces face.

"Look, it is a direct by-product of the system," John said to me, "People are ready to fight, and not just Black people, though there is a component of racism in things, and definitely Black people are more prone to fight. But as for being ready to fight *the system*, that's a different thing. Look, you see that boy down there?" He pointed to the white teenager eavesdropping on our conversation from twenty feet away, pretending (not too successfully) to be absorbed in working over an old tool, "Now, he won't come right up and talk to you. But as soon as you are out of sight, he'll be around with a million questions about you and about communism. He was by last week, and told me about the Klan recruiter coming through town—and wanted to know what I knew about them. He didn't know—that guy sounded like he was promising some real action, some change, and that's what a lot are looking for.

"Look, you're going to have a definite polarization, you will have a heightening. You will have a fight—and you will have a victor and you will have a loser.

"Fighting is not the question, that's coming—the question is, will the masses be able to do what some of us have done: 'cast away illusions'."

The answer to that question depends, in large part, on those who *do* understand today and the work they do in the period ahead. □

Bob Avakian Speaks on May First, 1981



Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

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"Wherever people rise up in rebellion, raise up the red flag! That's the flag that the imperialists in this country and throughout the world hate, the thing, the symbol that they most fear to see raised in the hands of the oppressed because it means that we're rising up with our heads up; we're rising up with our eyes really cast to the far horizon; we're becoming politically conscious; we know what our interests are, that they lie with the international proletariat in its struggle for communism throughout the world. . . ."



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May Day Convictions in Detroit

On June 26, five members and supporters of the RCP were convicted in a Detroit courtroom of misdemeanors, and sentenced to 40 days in jail each for carrying out revolutionary agitation at a local high school on May First.

Western High is located right in the middle of a proletarian community that is extremely multi-national, containing large numbers of Latinos, many Blacks and Arabs. It is a neighborhood with the highest unemployment rate in the country, and the city's tin-badged gun-slingers are heavily in evidence.

During the course of the trial, there was no shortage of awe-struck testimony from both cops and school officials about the 150 students breaking out of their classroom cells to engage in debate and struggle over the struggle for world revolution and communism. Even those that stayed inside at first, hung halfway out of the school's upper windows shouting, "May Day!" and "El Salvador!" One student, who had his red flag confiscated immediately upon his arrival in school that morning, took the offensive with the principal, challenging him to make May First the focus of discussion throughout the whole school. Failing to get the principal's agreement he left, only to return at the school day's end to claim his confiscated flag. Another student thrust his red flag into the ground in challenge to fellow students to pick up the red flag themselves. In full view of the school authorities, the action was defiant as hell.

The response of the police was to swoop down in a frenzied attack and arrest the revolutionaries, hurling one woman head first into the back seat of the squad car and then beating her legs with the heavy wooden pole that held a red flag until it splintered and broke. Of course, testimony about this, from her or the doctor who examined and x-rayed her, was ruled inadmissible. The prosecutor, brazenly gave the Detroit pigs *carte blanche*: "So what if she was beaten. Even if her legs had been broken, it would be irrelevant to this case."

But while the prosecutor and the judge tried to claim that May First and revolutionary politics were "irrelevant" to the case (it being simply an open and shut case of "disorderly conduct" and "trespassing on school property"), both the conduct of the state and the revelations that flowed out of the pig's own snouts, made a mockery of their claims. The very unprecedented fact that this *misdemeanor* trial went on for three weeks, was indication enough that there was indeed something stinking down at the city court.

As early as last February, Commander Hady of the 4th Precinct (the precinct that provides the armed overseers for the neighborhood where Western High is located) had met with Western officials to plan a big baseball parade for—you guessed it—May First. Hady, during testimony, openly recounted that the "possibility of communist activity" had been talked about at the planning meeting. These preliminary plans, aimed at keeping as much distance between the youth and May Day, were only the first indications that what went down at Western on May First was part and parcel of the authorities' calculated attacks on May Day and the red flag. Indeed, the morning shift at the 4th Precinct were briefed by Hady personally and told to "watch out for May Day activities—especially at the high schools." They were also told to immediately contact the "command post" if they sighted such activity. But while Hady tried to downplay all this planning and calculating with phrases about the "insignificance of May Day," the fact that several cops admitted the existence of a special May Day Task Force, composed of several top cops, city officials, and precinct commanders, blew his "just routine" ruff to pieces.

When the five revolutionaries were first brought down to the 4th Precinct after their busts at Western, Hady

quickly called a private conference with all the arresting officers to get all their stories straight. One cop involved in the huddle let it slip that Hady left them at one point to call Judge Shamo to consult. Only after this phone call were the May Day activists told their charges and booked. *RW* readers may remember that it was Judge Shamo who, during the activities prior to May Day 1980, took it as his personal duty to handle all the May Day/RCP arrests himself, vowing at one point to use jail time "keep the RCP off the streets during the Republican National Convention."

While the prosecutor and judge provided a tandem chorus of "irrelevant" whenever any of this testimony pointing to the calculated and pre-meditated assault on May First arose, they were quick to pepper the defendants with highly "relevant" and "non-political" questions like: Were they or were they not members of the RCP? How long?

England:

Continued from page 5

spending, which was not the case in the United States at the height of its urban rioting."

In this light, Home Secretary Whitelaw spoke for the whole British bourgeoisie in declaring that "worldwide experience has shown that it is quite impossible to buy oneself out of difficulties of this kind." Instead, what must be bought are more water cannons, rubber bullets, and riot gear for the police. Thus the British government finds itself in a very weak position, facing the worst domestic turmoil in its recent history, and beset by the "troubles" in Northern Ireland too. The horror and dismay expressed in the British rulers' shrieks at the "greed and ferocious violence of collective madness" sweeping England is indeed a reflection of the reality they and the other imperialists are facing now and up ahead. As the festival of the oppressed masses in Britain continues to widen and intensify, the proletariat and oppressed people of the world are being provided with another glimpse of the real opportunities for revolutionary advances right within the bellies of the imperialist countries themselves in the period ahead. Given conscious revolutionary leadership and increasingly armed with revolutionary consciousness, the masses of proletarian and oppressed people in the heart of the imperialists' enslaving empire have the potential of performing great deeds of a world historic nature as the world situation sharpens up. And the masses of people in Britain may very well have the opportunity of putting British imperialism out of its misery this time around. □

When did you become involved in May Day activities? Do you know the internal structure of the RCP? What is the relationship between the RCP and the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade? Etc., etc., etc.

Clearly, the same frustration and dismay that the authorities exhibited when confronted with the political turmoil generated at Western—fairly drips from the court proceedings. And, it has been consciously carried over into the jail as well, as the pigs continue to lash out in a frenzy. One brother, who is a diabetic, has been consistently denied his insulin and denied his required diet as well. Only the broad response demanding his treatment come to an end has forced the jailers to provide the proper medical attention. Another brother wrote from the Detroit House of Corrections that he had been restricted to a more isolated cellblock and told by a guard that "communism promotes

racism." When he asked the cop to clarify, the guard just pointed at him and said: "Look, let's cut out the games. If we hear any report that you've been advocating communism, we're going to lock you up in one of those little cells for your own protection. You'd better realize where you are," he warned.

Even before the verdict was delivered in this case, the bourgeoisie was casting their judicial net out to ensnare many more political activists and revolutionaries. Trials, that have been pending since before May Day 1980 have suddenly been scheduled for court—the trial dates extending throughout the summer and into the fall.

But, the authorities are confronted with a lot more than what's on their court agenda. May First at Western High School showed that. □

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CORRECTIONS

The following corrections are for *RW* No. 112, July 3, 1981:

In the article "Imperialism's Nightmare on Africa's Cape" the Cape of Good Hope was incorrectly referred to as Cape Horn.

In the article "Imperialist Tales of Religious Feud Can't Hide Reality of Irish Struggle" on page 14, column two, the next to the last sentence in the second full paragraph should read: Indeed, the United Irishmen, politically led by a sec-

tion of the Presbyterian Protestants among the manufacturers in Ulster, was very successful in uniting the outraged masses of peasants, both Catholic and Protestant, under the banner of an independent Ireland free of religious persecution.

In the article "The Trial of Annie Small," page 10, the sentence in the 6th paragraph which reads "Clyde, Jr. answered, stepping closer," should read: "Clyde, Jr. answered, coming in through the door and stomping halfway across Mrs. Small's living room."

In the same article, paragraph 9, page 18, the sentences which read "The only

photos shown as evidence (and quite probably the only ones taken) were of the bloodstained porch where Clyde, Jr. had finally fallen. There was not a single photo of the inside of the house, the busted doors, etc. And not a single fingerprint was dusted for." Should read: "The photos which the homicide squad had taken showed only the bloodstained porch. Photos of the blood on the inside of the house and the kick marks on the door were only brought in by the defense lawyer himself. Homicide had not bothered to dust the doorknobs for prints." □

The Mother Tongue and Other Evils Like That

Continued from page 7

grammarians like Edwin Newman and John Simon, to name only two—ordinarily use no arguments at all but name-calling and abuse." As Quinn proceeds to prove his case, one's attitude toward these posturing school-marks changes swiftly from sullen resentment to hilarious contempt.

The following excerpt provides a basic illustration of the method Quinn employs throughout. Here he takes on the "panel of experts" of the *Harper Dictionary of Contemporary Usage* on the subject of whether it is correct to say "between you and I." The panel's comments:

W.H. Auden: "Horrible!"
 Heywood Hale Broun: "WHY!" [Caps original]
 Anthony Burgess: "...only when 'give it to I' is also used."
 Paul Horgan: "Never heard a literate person use it."
 David McCord: "Flying catfish: NO!!!" [Caps and repeated exclamation points original]
 Harrison Salisbury: "No, no, no!"
 Harold Schonberg: "No!!!" [repeated exclamation points original]
 Red Smith: "A thousand times no!"
 Elvis Stahr, Jr.: "This one, above all, chills me. It signifies an effort to be elegant by one obviously ignorant."
 Herman Wouk: "Horrors!"

Quinn then counters by producing citations of the usage of "between you and I" from Shakespeare, Ben Johnson, etc., and ending with the comment:

"And it's a lesson to all of us, I hope, in favor of tolerance to see W.H. Auden, a great poet then in the twilight of his years... forget one of the most famous examples of the use of the nominative pronoun in an accusative sense: the famous opening lines of 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.' 'Let us go then, you and I

When the evening is spread out against the sky
 Like a patient etherized upon a table..."

Quinn's method is simple: rough-housing in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, that vast monument of Victorian empirical scholarship which traces the development and usage of words throughout history, and other readily available reference works, he is able to show that the weighty injunctions of "proper English grammar" amount to nothing but ignorant hot air exhaled through upper class lips. There is no scientific or grammatical foundation for denouncing "hopefully..." (as in "Hopefully, the bell will ring soon,") as a "barbarism," and insisting on "It is to be hoped that the bell will ring soon." The same holds true in the instance of countless other grammatical "buzz words" and no-nos. Quinn shows furthermore that in most cases, the pop grammarians do not even attempt to marshal any scientific evidence for their decrees; Edwin Newman, observes Quinn, "...has written two bestsellers. He does not in either book mention a single grammarian, a single grammar text, a single writer on language, a single dictionary."

Not that reactionary pedantry can be fazed by being confronted with elemen-

tary materialism. The current bourgeois infatuation with "proper language," as Quinn observes, is only the latest spasm of a phenomenon which has been going on for centuries. Insistence on imaginary and pointless niceties of grammar serves the same function for the ruling elite of a society as elaborated codes of table manners and dress: mastering the artificial distinction between "who" and "whom" (arbitrary as any such distinction must be) becomes a form of cultural allegiance to the ruling class.

Black English

Quinn's own approach is an example of a robust, irreverent, and (as the title of his book asserts) essentially populist view of language; it is its dynamism, incessant change, and variety, shaped and determined by its creative use, that excites his interest. And within *this*, correctly, he also seeks living laws of language. He correctly hates the attempts by the established order to freeze language in stone, to attempt to fill the lower classes with fear of language, to mystify it and to impose their own decayed social conventions on it. Quinn devotes a special chapter to Black Vernacular English, and opposes the attempts to suppress it. He imagines, for example, what would happen if white English professors were forced to endure the same tactics of intimidation which they regularly employ in trying to drum standard English into Black students:

"No, no, no, Professor Morse... we do not say on entering the room, *Hello motherfuckers*; what we say is *Hay Muhfuhs*. You are just going to have to try a little harder to *think first*, and then put your thoughts in words."

As Quinn himself points out, the issue is not whether or not "grammar is important." Black English *has* grammar. The real issue is that the dialect of Black English operates under grammatical rules which are *different* from those governing Standard English, and has a different historical development. As Quinn says, "to suppose that any language can function without grammar at all is like supposing that the airplane defies the law of gravity." (We speak of the *grammar* of a language here in its correct, scientific sense, as the set of objective rules which define the structure of a language, and not in the sense of a set of artificial conventions imposed on the language by the ruling elite.)

Against those who oppose (or condescend to) Black English on the grounds that it "disregards grammar" or "is not subtle," Quinn points out, for example, that "Chinese shares many features with Black Vernacular English: no change in the verb for past tense; no copulative verb—*min* (people) *lik* (power) means *power to the people*, *the power of the people*, and *the people is power*, depending on the context. Chinese is even worse off than Black English: it not only has no past tense, but no future tense, no progressive tense, no perfect tenses... Yet Marx was very effectively translated into Chinese."

Nor does Quinn argue that speakers of Black English or other languages and dialects should not be taught Standard English, knowledge of which is in many

ways a practical necessity under present conditions in the U.S.—what he attacks is the policy of the schools which teaches "children that the language of their parents and friends, of their whole culture, is inadequate and ignorant and wrong"—a policy of suppression which impedes all learning.

Quinn succeeds resoundingly in what he set out to do: puncture the balloon of the "pop grammarians." *American Tongue and Cheek* therefore collides head-on with one column of the bourgeoisie's current ideological offensive; reviews of his book in the bourgeois press, where they have appeared, have been predictably sour.

But, as Quinn himself perhaps recognizes, experiencing a rush of liberation at being able to shout "The reason is because..." without feeling guilty is hardly the ultimate goal of the scientific study of language. Behind the recent promotion of the "pop grammarians" lies the imperialist glorification of the English language above all other languages; the direct attack on all forms of bilingual instruction in the schools; the hideous lie that other languages and dialects of English spoken by the oppressed, especially Black English, are proof of an inferior intellect; and, overall, the fanning of a fascistic "Anglo-Saxon" cultural chauvinism in the service of U.S. imperialism. Here some of Quinn's most important shortcomings stand out. His vision—or at least his idea of the required scope for the book—starts and stops with the U.S.A. and even more particularly, the various dialects of the English language. "A pluristic society" seems to be his goal. But even on these terms, the limitations of this outlook show up. What of the millions of immigrants in this country, whose first language is not English? This fact, with

its obvious effects and pressing implications for language is not discussed. But beyond this, what of the whole world, for most of whose residents English presents itself today as the Ugly American Tongue of an arrogant oppressor. You know, "SPEAK ENGLISH!!", or else. And, even more, what of the world's future development? With the revolutionization of the world throughout its history, we have seen a tremendous amount of inter-penetration among languages, the creation of new ones and the death of old ones—including the extinction of the most notable of all the "imperial mother tongues," Latin. In the course of the inevitable continuation of these processes and especially on the basis of new, proletarian revolutions and the advent of communism worldwide in the centuries ahead, with the abolition of classes and nations, there can be little doubt that a new language among men will arise, and eventually unite humanity, while never ceasing itself to change and evolve. This is a far higher goal than "pluralism," but it is certainly true, and here again we would agree with Quinn, that it will not be achieved on the basis of suppression of the languages of the oppressed. And while this language of the distant future cannot now be predicted, we can safely assert that it will not be Edwin Newman's sanctified, ossified Basic Standard English. The masses who will shape it will *certainly* see to that.

Obviously, the stakes run a lot higher than tweeking the noses of the old fuddie-duddies. But as a form of struggle, nose-tweeking is not without merit; and Quinn tweeks some pretty ugly snoots bloody in a book which, by its very nature, encourages others to join the battle and explore these questions in even greater depth. □

A Case In Point

The speaker being interviewed in the sample of Black English dialect reproduced below is a 15-year-old gang member in New York. At the time this interview was done—on the steps of a brownstone in the streets of Harlem, by a team of researchers investigating the capacity for Black English to express logical and abstract concepts—the speaker had already been held back two grades and was "being threatened with further action by the school authorities." "Further action" was clearly being threatened because of the *particular* (and accurate) "logical and abstract concepts" this youth's Black English was so clearly expressing. (The source is "The Logic of Non-Standard English," by William Labov, in *Black American English*, edited by Paul Stoller, Delta, 1975.)

J.L.: What happens to you after you die? Do you know?

Larry: Yeah, I know.

J.L.: What?

Larry: After they put you in the ground, your body turns into—ah—bones, and shit.

J.L.: What happens to your spirit?

Larry: Your spirit—soon as you die, your spirit leaves you.

J.L.: And where does the spirit go?

Larry: Well, it all depends...

J.L.: On what?

Larry: You know, like some people say if you're good an' shit, your spirit goin' t' heaven... 'n' if you bad, your spirit goin' t' hell. Well, bullshit! Your spirit goin' t' hell anyway, good or bad.

J.L.: Why?

Larry: Why? I'll tell you why. 'Cause, you see, doesn' nobody really know that it's a god, y' know, 'cause I mean I have seen black gods, pink gods, white gods, all color gods, and don't nobody know it's really a god. An' when they be sayin' if you good, you goin' t' heaven, tha's bullshit, 'cause you ain't goin' to no heaven, 'cause it ain't no heaven for you to go to.

J.L.: Well, if there's no heaven, how could there be a hell?

Larry: I mean—ye-eah, well, let me tell you, it ain't no hell, 'cause this is hell right here, y' know!

J.L.: This is hell?

Larry: Yeah, this is hell right here!

J.L.: ...but just say that there is a god, what color is he? White or black?

Larry: Well, if it is a god... I wouldn't know what color, I couldn't say,—couldn't nobody say what color he is or really *would* be.

J.L.: But now, jus' suppose there was a god—

Larry: Unless'n they say...

J.L.: No, I was jus' sayin', jus' suppose there is a god, would he be white or black?

Larry: He'd be white, man.

J.L.: Why?

Larry: Why? I'll tell you why. 'Cause the average whitey out here got everything, you dig? And the nigger ain't got shit, y' know? Y' understand? So—um—for—in order for that to happen, you know it ain't no black god that's doin' that bullshit. □

TESTIMONY

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years only has resulted in the death of 30,000 Salvadorans.

During May, 1980, the greatest representative of the masses, Monseñor Oscar Romero was murdered, a deed carried out by the bourgeoisie backed by the U.S. with the intent to derail the Salvadoran revolution and thus smash it, like in 1932 when General Martínez was president, who massacred 30,000 people or about 4% of the population.

Since then the country has been governed militarily.

In the same decade of the '30s, North American marines arrived and tried to destroy the guerrilla Sandino, who was a first-rate fighter against yankee imperialism. Not having achieved their objectives, the North American imperialists put the bastard Somoza in the presidency, who in the lowest and most vicious way killed Sandino through

treason.

This is a short account of what the imperialist monster has been doing for a long time. And here, in the belly of this dragon, how can we talk of democracy when millions of eyes have seen how the members of the Ku Klux Klan killed 5 demonstrators in Greensboro and were later turned loose! How can we say that there is freedom of expression when a RCP sympathizer, who takes the newspaper out to the streets, is arrested, mistreated and fined. We saw the example of boldness and courage of Comrade

Damián García who spoke from the bottom of his heart for the international proletariat, raising the red flag at the Alamo, and only days later being murdered by the police dogs of Los Angeles. Actually this is what we call democracy! When it's soaked in blood and corruption that smells of gunpowder and napalm, overrunning Vietnam and now El Salvador. It is for this and for the more than a hundred thousand kilometers of death and injustice that we demand that they give Comrade Bob Avakian status as political exile. □

U.S. Concentration Camps in WW2

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hire help to do it for them, and so \$10,000 worth of celery would rot in a field and there would be a lifetime of savings invested in it. On top of this the press and local public would accuse the people of trying to sabotage the war effort by not caring for their crops."

The "sabotage threat" line was used by the media to the max. A typical clip from the *L.A. Times*: "Removal of the entire Japanese population—alien and native born—inland for several hundred miles was advocated by Mayor Bowron last night in a radio talk... 'If there is intrigue going on, and it is reasonably certain that there is, right here is the hot bed, the nerve center of the spy system, of planning for sabotage', said the Mayor." Another paper ran a story about a raid on a farm and there were pictures showing a length of water pipe that was supposed to be used for manufacturing guns, clothes line wire that was supposedly a sending aerial, and insecticides that were said to be for killing off the civilian population. Only later when the evacuation was well under way did the *L.A. Times* print an article which admitted that there was no evidence of any sabotage at Pearl Harbor before the invasion, let alone in the continental U.S.

The FBI sweeps continued and intensified. No one was immune—Buddhist priests, Japanese school teachers, Christian ministers, invalids, an 85-year-old veteran of the Russo-Japanese War who was deaf, half-blind and had stomach cancer. Even Japanese members of the American Legion were picked up.

So-called "liberals" played their role in whipping up reaction too. A Japanese college student said, "One of the professors addressed our group of Japanese students and stressed that it would be well if we kept inconspicuous around the school and did not laugh among ourselves in the study hall or library. Another professor addressed us later and said that we were too quiet and that others would be suspicious if we all carried such long faces. So there we were, we couldn't look sad and we couldn't look happy. We tried just keeping our faces straight, and then came rumors that we were poker-faced."

Chiming right in with the reactionary chorus was the Communist Party U.S.A. which not only went along with the internment of the Japanese people, but encouraged it, developed their own chauvinist cartoons and propaganda against the Japanese; this was only one of the more hideous features of their general line of subordinating everything to the "anti-fascist" united front, in fact, taking sides in an inter-imperialist war.

"Evacuation" Begins

Finally, having whipped up enough reaction, the government moved. *L.A. Times*, Feb. 24, 1942: "Notified that farmers of the county might take 'matters into their own hands,' unless action is taken soon by government agencies, the County Board of Supervisors today adopted a resolution urging Army officials to remove from California all enemy aliens and persons of Japanese birth, regardless of American citizenship. Five hundred farmers would be on the march by nightfall today if they felt their action was necessary."

Government promises to the Japanese people were made and just as quickly broken. It was announced that Japanese could avoid forced relocation by voluntarily moving out of the coastal area. Later those that did were rounded up and thrown into the camps anyway. It was promised that they could store or dispose of their property and land in such a way as to not suffer losses. When the time came, they were forced to move on such short notice with no help in transportation that the Japanese were prey to thousands of speculators who literally ripped them off. The official government policy was sell or else.

\$100 refrigerators for \$5. A farmer was forced to sell one horse, four tons of hay, three-quarters of a ton of fertilizer, a harrow, cultivator, and plow all for \$100. Most people ended up with what they could carry. Before the evacuation, Japanese farmed 40% of the total acreage in the state of California. They had their land virtually stolen including \$40 million of crops in the ground and over \$100 million in investments. Over \$4 million worth of businesses—mostly small businesses—were taken.

First stop for the evacuees from L.A. was being herded into the horse stables at the Santa Anita Race Track. "The food we had the first day was potato hash and stale bread, which had mold and had been bitten by mice. At times the food caused diarrhea." An epidemic of measles broke out throughout the camp.

At the end of this description of the evacuation process, our imperialist social scientist gives us a further example of his objective and impartial methodology and lets a little bit slip out. In summing up the response of the Japanese people to being shipped off to concentration camps, he muses that: "They thought they had been victimized by racial prejudice and war hysteria fanned by predatory political and economic interests"... "They thought evacuation had been unnecessary because the Japanese had been law-abiding and not engaged in subversive activities"... "They thought they had been crushed economically"... "They were disillusioned with the Americanism taught in school and felt that democratic principles and the ideals for which the war was being fought had failed to prove a reality"... "They thought the American government had failed to give the citizens the protection it had earlier promised, and to which they are entitled by the Constitution, and on which they had been relying." But all this, Commander Leighton informs us, is subjective one-sided thinking for, "They gave little appreciative thought to certain points on which those responsible for the conduct of evacuation were inclined to pride themselves, such as keeping families together." This "one-sided" view of the oppressed, jolted awake, who failed to recognize the subtle generosity of their oppressors while carrying out what, for them, was a necessary pogrom, presented a bit of a problem to the imperialists.

"Self-Government" to Sow Division

Further problems resulted in the attempts of the authorities to demonstrate that this camp was not a concentration camp but a "pioneering community" by setting up a "self-government" arrangement in the camp. This, of course, was carried out with the utmost care to sow divisions among the Japanese to insure that "self-government" did not unify the masses in the camp against the authorities but was a means of keeping the people in line.

Leighton analyzes three categories of people—Isseis (those born in Japan), Nisseis (born and raised in U.S.) and Kibeis (born in U.S. but educated in Japan) and shows great ability to analyze the myriad ways to split people. For example, Isseis having more cultural ties to Japan and having been the hardest hit economically in the evacuation, were excluded from the phony "self-government" scheme set up in the camp. The authorities tried to use the Nisseis' conflict with some of the old ways of their elders to promote destruction of Japanese culture and also to promote illusions about American democracy. They also bribed some Nisseis with cushy jobs, etc., trying to create some base of support.

But reality shattered these illusions quickly. In describing the difficulty in getting much of the work done to run the camps (which were supposed to support themselves through making the Japanese work) Leighton comments:

"...there were many who, due to attitudes arising out of evacuation, had little interest in caring for government property and little sense of responsibility in regard to it. The lack of going wages removed not only an important incentive from the evacuee workers, but also deprived their supervisor of the usual control over subordinates. Being fired was not too important to those who were getting less than 50 cents per day and would be housed and fed whether they worked or not. In such a situation it was almost inevitable that a supervisor would try to exert absolute control over the actions of the evacuee workers on whom he was dependent for the accomplishment of his job." (This statement speaks volumes not only as an admission of outright slave relations in the camp but also of the essence of modern capitalist wage slavery.)

Not only work conditions but everything about life in the camp punctured the constantly repeated myth about the "pioneering community." Early camp plans admitted that it was highly unlikely that the Japanese would be "reintegrated into the private sector of the economy for some time." The first thing the people had to do as they entered the camp still hot and weary from their travel through the desert was to sign a "loyalty oath" in which they gave up virtually all their rights. It said: "I swear loyalty to the United States and enlist in the War Relocation Work Corps for the duration of the war and 14 days thereafter in order to contribute to the needs of the nation and in order to earn a livelihood for myself and my dependents. I will accept whatever pay, unspecified at the present time, the War Relocation Authority determines, and I will observe all rules and regulations.

"In doing this I understand that I shall not be entitled to any cash or allowances beyond the wages due me at the time of discharge from the work corps; that I may be transferred from one relocation center to another by the War Relocation Authority; that medical care will be provided, but that I cannot make a claim against the United States for any injury or disease acquired by me while in the Work Corps; that I shall be subject to special assessments for educational, medical and other community service as may be provided for the support of any dependents who reside in a relocation center; that I shall be financially responsible for the full value of any government property that I use while in the Work Corps; and that the infraction of any regulation of the War Relocation Authority will render me liable to trial and unsuitable punishment. So help me God."

The Prisoners Resist

Abuse after abuse piled up and with it grew the smoldering hatred and resistance of the people in the camp. When they learned that the Indian Bureau was in on the management of the camp, Leighton complains that: "Some people wanted to know if they would be 'kept' all the rest of their lives on 'reservations like Indians.' Inherent in this was the belief that Indians were forced to stay on reservations much like animals in a zoo and that the Indian Office was a sort of keeper." After having been repeatedly promised "going wages" and getting no wages for several months, finally wages came out at \$12 per month. The authorities tried to force people to work in filthy conditions and wouldn't even pay for new replacement clothes for those ruined. The temperature climbed to 124° in the shade. While the administrative offices had coolers, the evacuees had none, not even in their hospital. Leighton reports an incident: "It was firmly believed, not only by the public, but by the Japanese doctors, that a number of babies had died in the hospital as a result of dehydration by the heat. Therefore, when three new coolers were placed on the personnel mess hall and none was assigned to the infants' ward, indignation ran high and there was a move on foot in some blocks to come in force and transfer the coolers from the mess to the hospital. However, more level heads prevailed and protests were limited to verbal expostulations."

The camp authorities saw clearly things were getting out of their control. Leighton devotes a whole chapter to

this process which he calls "social disorganization." The main response of the authorities was stepped up repression, plus more frenzied efforts to set up the facade of "self-government" and continuing efforts to divide people. But soon even those who were temporarily seduced into this phony venture became demoralized by the broken promises and slaps in their face. They began to withdraw, leaving exposed the most careerist and boot-licking collaborators and spies (or "dogs" as they were called) who had been placed in their midst by the U.S.

It is interesting that one right that the authorities left to the people was freedom of religion. As Leighton says: "...where the political and semi-political associations endeavored to satisfy human needs by interaction with the Administration or by pressure on it, religious associations worked chiefly through the inner life of the individual resident. It follows, therefore, that to the degree that religion was non-political and was successful in its own field, to that degree would the driving force be reduced that put pressure on the Administration. For, the more religion succeeded in creating emotional states of satisfaction, the more it tended to mitigate general fear, anger and restlessness."

But despite these efforts, the Japanese people began to not only grow "restless" but started to take matters into their own hands. After months of broken promises about providing building materials to repair their broken down quarters, the people started taking ("borrowing") what they needed. Also spies who had been so bold as to cash FBI checks at the camp store were increasingly beaten up.

The authorities tried to clamp down. After finding another of their spies beaten unconscious, they arrested 2 people and held them for days. The FBI was called in but no charges were filed for lack of evidence (or for fear of exposing more spies). Both the accused were popular in the camp—one was a judo instructor for the youth.

People massed outside the jail in the hundreds and a full strike was declared. People stayed outside the jail by bonfires for days even though it was extremely cold. Leighton expressed the rulers' fear when he said it reminded him of "innumerable peasant uprisings that have dotted Japan's history." He also makes it clear that the army was almost called in to drown the strike in blood. Finally through a great deal of deception, legal maneuvering and a new string of phony promises of self-government, the strike was ended.

Although he tries to trumpet the peaceful settlement of the strike as an inherent feature of "democratic" concentration camps in the U.S., not like those bloodthirsty Nazis, Leighton gives evidence to the contrary a few pages later: "...at the Manzanar Relocation Center a strike occurred a few weeks after that at Poston. It seemed to be the result of circumstances very similar to these which had obtained in Poston, but the Administration was at a greater disadvantage because of several factors and in this instance military force was used. Although no command to fire was issued, a number of soldiers did shoot into the crowd, wounding a number of persons and killing two."

Clearly Leighton and his masters were haunted by the strike and its future implications. As he says in words that seem quite prophetic today: "The emphasis in this report on the strike has been dictated in part by the fact that it was an important incident in itself and is a type of upheaval which is likely to be faced by the administrators of any group of people if the perennial forces tending to disrupt society are as prevalent as they may be in occupied or liberated areas and in the community management of various parts of the post-war world, including some within the United States."

These words, written in 1945 as U.S. imperialism began to reach the period of its greatest strength, already reveal the fear and weakness of this class of bloodsuckers based on their parasitical nature and the fact that all over the world and "including some within the United States," imperialism creates its own gravediggers. □

Bomb Fallout in IRP

Continued from page 3

rialists and their agents in Iran benefited greatly by the death of Beheshti, the man the U.S. was counting on to deal a crushing blow to the revolutionary forces, and then to move on the pro-Soviet forces. Fortunately for them, the principal Soviet-leaning elements in the government, Ayatollah Rafsanjani (who dropped the "East" from the widely held "Neither East nor West" slogan after returning from a trip to Syria several months ago) and Minister for Executive Affairs Nabavi (a former member of the Tudeh Party) were not touched by the blast. Many cabinet minister posts and seats in the Majlis are now opening up, and the revisionists and their clerical allies are making a major move to grab up as many of them as they can. Already the head of the Soviet revisionist Tudeh Party, Kianouri (derivatively referred to by many in Iran as "Ayatollah Kianouri") and the Fedayeen-Majority's leader, Negahdar, have been allowed to publicly announce their candidacies for the presidency.

The Soviets have also stepped up their wooing of the reactionary IRP clergy. According to one newspaper in the U.S., the infamous Ayatollah Khomeini—responsible for sentencing scores of captured Kurdish revolutionaries to death last year—was invited to the USSR and traveled there for three days in mid-June, meeting with Foreign Minister Gromyko. The activities of Rafsanjani and Nabavi in the wake of the bomb blast have been especially interesting to observe. They were at the head of the funeral march in Tehran, loudly shedding crocodile tears after Beheshti's death, and publicly daring the Mojahadeen and the revolutionary Left—who they called "American agents," of course—to come after them. These reactionaries have worked out a conscious plan—depending to an increasing degree on "aid" from their northern neighbor—to get the upper hand over their pro-Western rivals. At present they are especially making use of the utterly right-wing pro-Soviet Tudeh Party and Fedayeen Majority to aid their efforts, as well as fishing around in other groups for support.

Another sure indication of growing Soviet influence within the IRP is that the Tudeh Party was legalized the day after the bombing. The Soviet imperialists now have the best opportunity they have had to date in Iran to get their hands on new chunks of state power in Iran, with an eye to grabbing it all in the future.

But of course, in order to do so, the Soviets will have to deal with their U.S. rivals' not inconsiderable ability to counter their moves in Iran and in the region as a whole. For the U.S. imperialists and their war bloc, control of the strategically located Persian Gulf and its rich oil supplies is a non-negotiable matter, and they have already made it clear that they consider Iran to be a possible trip-wire for World War 3. Likewise, their Soviet rivals have lately taken to equating the defense of the USSR's southern borders with the "defense of Iran's oilfields and sovereignty."

The recent step-up in mutual U.S. and Soviet warnings and counter-warnings reflects the fact that they are eyeball-to-eyeball in Iran today, just as they are in many other parts of the world, and have now entered close-quarters combat over Iran. Furthermore, while both are sensing opportunities to gain a decisive advantage over the other in the turbulent situation inside Iran today, neither the U.S. nor the USSR can afford to suffer a decisive setback. And to add to their problems, both are facing an increasingly politically aroused and struggling Iranian people, something that does not bode well for these two powerful but increasingly vulnerable bastions of the imperialist system in the period ahead. □

**TO THE
MARXIST-LENINISTS,
THE WORKERS,
AND THE OPPRESSED
OF ALL COUNTRIES**

Joint Communiqué of
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Grupo para la Defensa del Marxismo-Leninismo (Spain)
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Attack, Counter-Attack in Iran

Continued from page 3

government's systematic news blackout on the resistance and struggle of the masses, such exposure is something they can't tolerate. While the government's attacks on the revolutionary press have grown more widespread and savage in recent weeks, this has been an arena of intense struggle ever since the outlawing and banning of most of the revolutionary organizations and their press in the fall of 1979. The Marxist-Leninist newspapers went underground and have basically stayed that way, though seizing the opportunity to engage in more open, public distribution as possible, such as during the high tide of anti-imperialist struggle around the takeover of the U.S. embassy.

Because of the constant attacks on and arrests of newspaper sellers by the reactionaries, all of the revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist groups moved to take advantage of the contradiction in the reactionary, chauvinist Islamic ideology employed by the government around "women's special place" by assigning women cadre to do much of the public literature distribution. In this division of labor, men have largely been providing security, including preparing to rally the masses in the area in the event of reactionary attacks.

As the reactionary regime has launched its all-out counterrevolutionary assault over the past month, their attacks on women selling literature on the

streets have become all the more openly aggressive and bloodthirsty. In what appears to be a coordinated national policy, Pasdaran and Hesbollahi have physically assaulted women in hundreds of incidents, tearing up their clothing and especially slashing them with knives on their faces, breasts and stomachs. When crowds have gathered to confront these bestial acts, the Pasdaran have instituted a policy of shooting in the head the first man who comes to aid the women, while threatening the rest with the same.

Just how conscious the government is in carrying out this systematic clamp-down on the revolutionary press is shown by how they have been handling some of the pro-Soviet "communist" press. On a normal day in Tehran, for example, on hundreds of street corners and intersections, there will often be people selling *Mojahed* (the Mojahadeen paper), *Haghighat*, *Peykar* and other Marxist-Leninist papers, as well as revisionists from the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party and the Fedayeen (Majority) selling *Mardom* and *Kar*. When the reactionary authorities attack, they somehow know just who to assault and who to leave untouched, and in fact often get help from the revisionists, who finger revolutionaries doing agitation in the large crowds that gather around these incidents.

Thus, it is no surprise that an increas-

ing number of clashes between the government and the revolutionary masses have centered around maintaining and expanding the distribution of the revolutionary press broadly among the people. Some of the incidents and skirmishes that are occurring on a daily basis—such as the incident reported in last week's *RW* in Bandar Abbas—have actually gone over into spontaneous armed actions of the masses, accelerating the revolutionary struggle and deepening a revolutionary mood and sentiments among still broader sections of the masses.

Struggle Among the Workers

The sharpening struggle and political ferment spreading throughout society has sent shockwaves throughout the industrial working class in Iran. As the economy has gone from bad to worse, with the capitalists and the government forcing wage cuts, short weeks and layoffs, and increased production quotas on the workforce (all in the name of "serving Islam" and "standing up to imperialism," of course), there has been a wave of resistance and a number of important strikes. But with the political crisis coming to a head over the last month, political struggle has become the order of the day in the factories, with many economic struggles go-

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Iran

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ing over to raising political demands of various sorts against the IRP government.

On June 5, the oil refinery at Shiraz went out on strike over economic demands, but within several days the strikers were demanding the removal of the IRP government before they would return to their jobs. At the same time, a large number of the workers at the big refinery in Isfahan issued a statement supporting their comrades in Shiraz. About this same time, militant workers at the Mazda assembly plant near Tehran closed down the IRP's offices in the factory and threatened to tear apart any of their representatives if they dared to show up on the premises.

At one big factory in an industrial area outside Tehran, a group of workers developed creative tactics to conduct revolutionary agitation against the government inside the plant. In order to avoid being identified by the managers and the IRP's spies and snitches among the workers (including a number of Tudeh Party members), one day recently they switched off the lights throughout the plant and started shouting slogans against the IRP, denouncing its ties to both U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. As the authorities scurried around trying to figure out how to regain control, revolutionary workers circulated on the shop floor, calling on their fellow workers to join the struggle against the IRP government and their henchmen in the plant.

Government Counter-Attack

The authorities' attacks on the revolutionary movement have been accompanied by an even broader official counter-offensive in the arena of public opinion. As the mass struggle and armed resistance to the IRP has escalated, the IRP has launched its own political "encirclement and suppression" campaign against the revolutionary forces. This moved into higher gear after the bomb explosion in the IRP headquarters that blasted away 74 of their number, as they are trying to exploit the confusion around the bombing and the contradictory sentiments among many to rally broader sections of the masses around them. The official line being employed by the authorities is that those forces "who have picked up arms against the Islamic Republic" (i.e., the Mojahadeen and the revolutionary Left) are acting as "agents of U.S. imperialism" and are attempting to "destroy Islam."

Such "anti-imperialist" demagoguery that appeals to the patriotic and religious sentiments of the masses, especially the more intermediate and backward among them, has been a key part of the government's continuing attempts to mobilize all the social forces they can to preserve their rule and crush the revolution. The two main reactionary strike forces the IRP regime has thrown against the masses to date have been the Pasdaran—the 60,000-plus so-called "revolutionary" guards who function as the regime's reactionary militia in the cities and villages—and the Hesbollahi. These are club- and knife-wielding gangs who believe the IRP to be "the Party of God" and consider all opposition to its rule as warring against God himself. (However, the depth of their be-

lief in Islam is more accurately demonstrated by their going to the graves of well known revolutionary martyrs and urinating publicly on them.)

These Hesbollahi, whose number is reported to have grown to the present level of about 20,000 in recent months, are directly led by the reactionary leaders of the IRP and are a mélange of lumpen, criminal elements from the cities and intensely religious, politically backward youth (often peasants or villagers who have recently arrived in the cities) who are under the sway of the reactionary propaganda of the mullahs, who tell them they are duty-bound to "defend Islam" against "imperialist agents" and "monafaghin" (literally, "those who have betrayed Islam," a label IRP usually hurls at the Mojahadeen).

The IRP has been on a big recruiting drive, particularly in some of the more politically dormant and backward villages where they have built up their influence since the Shah's overthrow through a combination of allying with the feudal landlords and offering some "reforms" to the peasants (like redistributing poor-quality, fallow land, etc.). The IRP also dangles large salaries and benefits before potential recruits—the pay for these fascist gangsters is now 6000 tuman/month, which is 2 to 3 times what an average worker makes in Iran today. Recruiters are paying even more for mercenary and criminal types with special skills; "knife-men" are especially in demand.

Imam's Image Fading

A significant development in the recent period in Iran has been a shift in the attitude among sections of the people around the role of Ayatollah Kho-

meini, as he has consistently gone down the line with the IRP reactionaries in supporting their bloody suppression of the masses.

For example, at the Pars Electronics factory in Tehran, the workers were all assembled to listen to one of Khomeini's speeches attacking Bani-Sadr and the revolutionary forces. After he finished, scores of workers started chanting, "Death to Beheshti, Death to the IRP." A similar incident occurred in the women's section (the government has segregated most factories by sex) of the Jam Shoe Factory after Khomeini's speech. And at Minoo Food Products in Tehran—the largest candy factory in Iran, which has been the scene of numerous sharp economic and political struggles—the Imam's speech was met by many of the workers shouting, "Down with Khomeini!"

There are other signs that Khomeini is beginning to lose his popularity more than ever before. Like other high-ranking religious leaders in Iran (who can become Ayatollahs only if they develop a certain following among the people), tens of thousands of people have in the past "registered" for Khomeini as their preferred man of the cloth. But the long lines of people standing outside Khomeini's bureaus in many cities in early June were not there to sign up, but to take back their registrations! Thus, while Khomeini's revolutionary credentials are still relatively intact among many, his role of shielding the reactionary forces in the government and keeping the masses from withdrawing their support from the Islamic Republic as a whole is having rapidly diminishing results among many others as the revolutionary struggle sharpens further. □

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"In Spain, to be blunt, the possibilities for big revolutionary advances in that country and worldwide were sacrificed..."

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This is a call to all co-conspirators to raise thousands of dollars toward our main weapon against imperialism, the *Revolutionary Worker*, through a special 1-month fund drive. Many thousands of dollars from *RW* sales and regular contributions are spent each week to produce the *RW* and this will continue to expand and increase. In addition, funds are needed now beyond the regular sales of the paper, building off the tremendous advances in its distribution over the past two years, to finance operating expenses and further expand and strengthen the influence of the *RW*.

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