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The British Lion and the U.S. Lyin' in the South Atlantic

The smell of blood can work wonders on the undead. The yet vital corpse of the British empire has emerged from its crypt over the past week with a new spark of life. The attack on the loyal British subjects of the Falkland Islands has prompted both a rosy red blush to glow from the pale grey faces of the protectors and defenders of the Crown and the speedy dispatch of two-thirds of the British Navy for a showdown with the Argentinian

"aggressor." Maggie "Iron Lady" Thatcher snapped into top form decrying the violation of "British sovereignty" and vowing to avenge this assault on the rights of free British citizens, referring certainly to the 1800 Falkland Islanders (mostly sheepherders) but mainly to the British absentee landlords who are their employers. Conjuring up the bulldog scowl of Winston Churchill she made clear that Her Majesty's Royal

democracy had learned how to deal with threats to itself in the past and would deal with them now. "I'm not talking about failure," cried the Prime Minister, "I'm talking about my supreme confidence in the British fleet... Do you remember what Queen Victoria once said? 'Failure? The possibilities do not exist.'" The reference was to Queen Victoria's battlecry in the Boer War to expand "sovereign British territory" in South

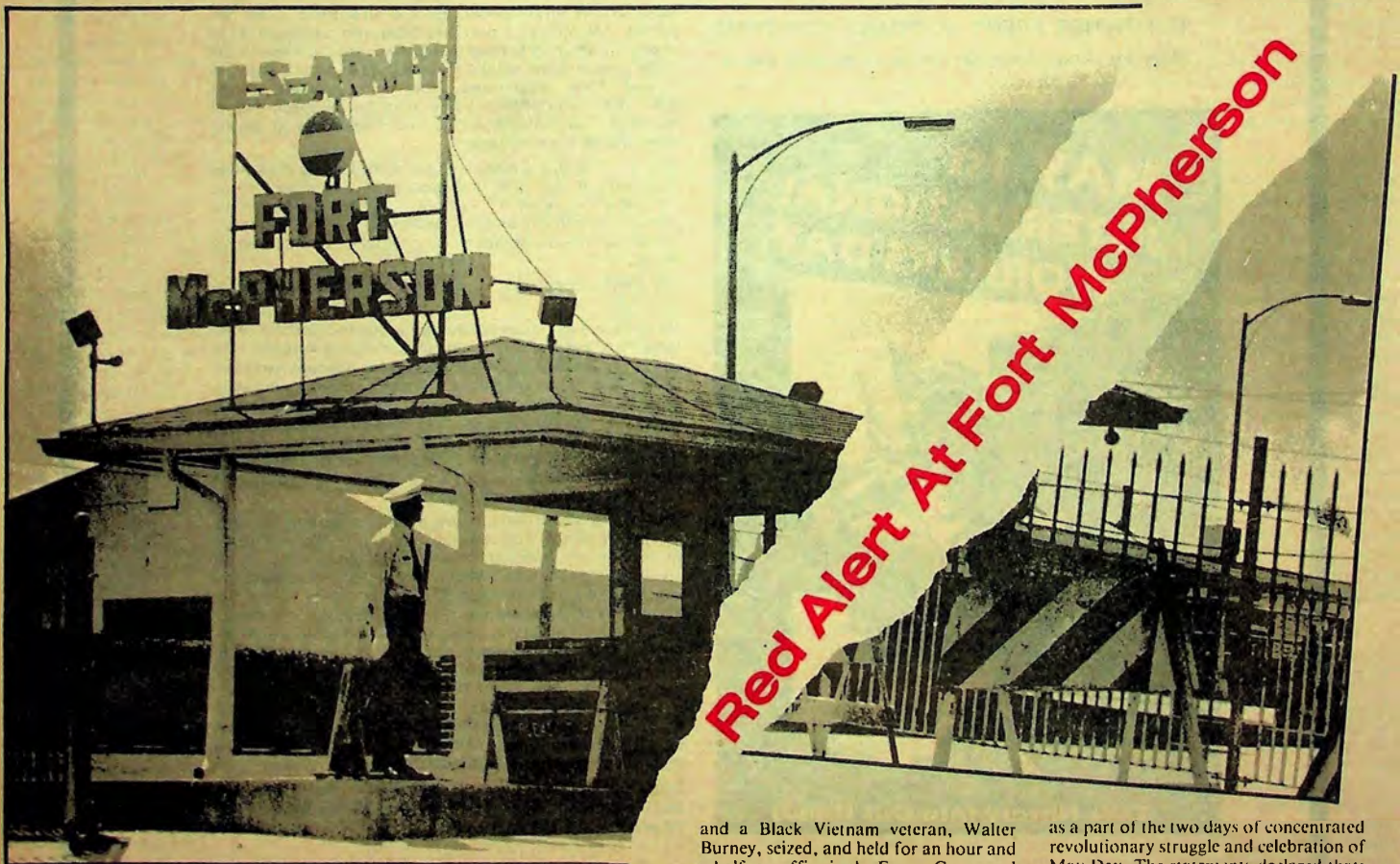
Africa. And now, the Argentinians! Why the British Empire has slaughtered tens and hundreds of thousands for less than such affrontery. Remember those good old days when the sun never set... Strange that she didn't raise the jolly good show Her Majesty's forces are staging in Northern Ireland just a few miles across the water from England. Now those tens of thousands of troops are doing just splendid in Ireland, enforcing the will of the loyal British subjects. Perhaps this simply slipped her mind.

Yes, it was a good show as the crowds lined the dockside at Portsmouth, waving their little Union Jacks, and cheering on the British fleet, led by the aircraft carrier *Invincible*, sent to "retake the Falklands for Queen and Country." "We Are All Falklanders Now" proclaimed an editorial of the *London Times* that day.

Endlessly repeated was the comment of Lord Wigg, a Labour Party aristocrat, who declared "we have spent 111 billion pounds on defense since the end of the last war and we can't knock the skin off a rice pudding." Headlines in the *Daily Mail* screamed "Shamed!" And everywhere the most reactionary and backward people were mobilized behind calls to beef up Britain's military. "If Churchill was still in government, there'd have been some trouble," one factory supervisor was quoted as saying, wallowing in imperialist nostalgia.

In the British parliament the chauvinist jingoism was positively rabid, setting off a patriotic orgy which the British press is

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The 2 p.m. broadcast spread word of the action through Atlanta. By 6 p.m., it was the lead story on local news programs. One radio announcer blared, "Two self-proclaimed communist-internationalists barricaded themselves in (an office on Fort McPherson), armed with nothing but communist rhetoric." Another noted that "May Day always brings trouble to the Atlanta-metro area."

And FBI Special Agent John Glover, who had arrived on the scene rather quickly, responded to reporters' questions as to the point of the protest: it had been taken, he had learned, to "call attention to the situation—imperialism and injustice around the world."

On Wednesday, April 7th, a member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB), Richard Newberger,

and a Black Vietnam veteran, Walter Burney, seized, and held for an hour and a half, an office in the Forces Command (FORSCOM) building at Fort McPherson. This base is the "Pentagon of the South"—the headquarters for the Command Offices of over 700,000 U.S. combat troops as well as all army operations within the U.S., the Caribbean and the Pacific Basin. In statements issued at the time of the seizure, the two revolutionaries called on people to converge on Fort McPherson on Saturday, May 1st,

as a part of the two days of concentrated revolutionary struggle and celebration of May Day. The statements declared that: "This action will be in alliance with revolutionaries around the world who want to end imperialism once and for all. And, "On May 1st in Atlanta, the bright future must explode. A bright future of international revolution aimed at ending all oppression must be splashed on the scene. This message will be listened for eagerly from Toxteth, England, to Turkey."

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TO XEROX & POST, TOGETHER WITH THE MAY DAY CALL.

A Revolutionary Offensive In The Sacred Sphere of Art

The sky shakes and flashes red
Some prepare a celebration
Others nervously discuss the blue receding
Those who feed the spirits of the dispossessed
See the day begin
The way a mallet strikes a drum
Sounding low and deep the ripples search the earth
Until a chorus shakes tradition from its perch

TO YOU AMONG ARTISTS WHO DARE TO FIGHT FOR REAL IN THE WORLDWIDE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE TO TRANSFORM ALL SOCIETY:

May 1st is a day of revolutionary offensive, a day for the most unabashedly rebellious political activity of many different kinds and in EVERY SACRED SPHERE AND STRONGHOLD, signalling to millions around the world that even here and even now there are those "preparing minds and organizing forces" for revolution.

Isn't art, isn't entertainment, just one such sacred sphere? Don't the mummies who rule claim the creation of beauty for the eyes, ears and mind as their own, screaming "ugly" at rebellion in the arts, even as they also sneer "*My... how pretty. Can we twist it; can we isolate it; will we have to smash it, or can we handle the problem some other way?*" And all the while they claim that in art anything goes and nothing matters, because after all theirs is such a free and stable world that art is totally irrelevant to politics and anybody halfway serious about changing the world had better leave the concert halls and stages and movie theaters to the escape artists and go do their stuff somewhere else.

BUT THINGS AREN'T SO SIMPLE FOR THEM

There are plenty who've had enough of their sick shit, in-

cluding artists who go right up in their face with characters and images, sounds and stories that strengthen and delight the rebellious. And the bourgeoisie will never be free of THAT!

BUT THINGS AREN'T SO SIMPLE FOR US EITHER. Don't you want to do more than rebel? Don't you want to see it all go somewhere? Like as a stream into a torrent of revolution?

This archaic, class-ridden world we live in is slated for the dung heap and what is "natural" today will be made to seem, through the revolutionary struggle of the international working class and all the oppressed, like a marvel of stupidity and ignorance to tomorrow's children.

"Naturally" there's a big gulf between workers and artists.

"Naturally" proletarians have no business criticizing, much less creating, ART; this, of course, must be left to those with leisure, "natural" talent, and refined taste.

"Naturally" artists, geniuses that they are supposed to be, are not interested in the criticism of the proletariat, or in the great political questions of the epoch, isolated as they are in their sacred sphere.

And "naturally" the proletarians do not know and never want to know anything about art, historically or today.

And so when revolutionary and progressive artists and art are attacked in all sorts of open and subtle ways by the bourgeoisie, "naturally" the artists fight (and sometimes die) isolated and alone. After all, the artists are lucky not to work for wages. And "naturally" the proletarians think so too.

This "natural" order is absurd and quite precious to the extraordinarily absurd bourgeoisie; this gulf is so pernicious that it even exists between the class conscious revolutionary proletarians and those artists who, to one degree or another, represent the oppressed on the stage.

Rebel artists mysteriously die, and *later* there is an "exposure." Many times, most times there is no "exposure" at all of what is easily described as murder... not to mention the clubs closed down, scripts mangled, visas denied, theaters burned, films suppressed. How come workers in the U.S.—those who thirst for a way out of this madness—as yet manifest little revolutionary activity in response to, among other things, such outrages?

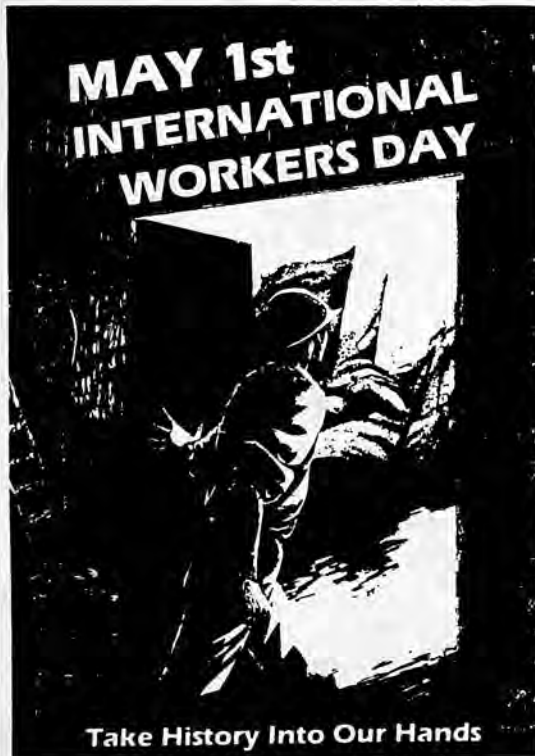
The fact that *this* situation exists more than is objectively necessary at this time is a product of the history of imperialist economism in the revolutionary movement, with its narrow view and its contempt for the masses of all oppressed classes and its acceptance of the "natural" development of things.

We won't accept any of it. We have a whole world to transform.

May First is a day for all-around revolutionary offensive, an international event which "politically foreshadows, if only for a day or two, and helps prepare the way for, the not-too-distant days when the proletariat will liberate territory and seize power now here, now there, pushed back only to surge further forward, emancipating as much of the world as possible from the twisted chains of imperialism." Isn't this a time, as part of this day, for revolutionary artists and revolutionary proletarians to *consciously* and creatively go up against the "natural" gulf which separates them?

What if, along with participating in other ways, revolutionary and progressive artists celebrate May Day with powerful performances in theaters and clubs and galleries and even, for chrissakes, on the tube? What if they find ways to expose the machinations of the bourgeoisie in this sphere to the proletariat? What if proletarians take initiative in going to the advanced among artists, in the spirit of daring to learn and daring to lead, to see their works and criticize them and to struggle over questions of art and revolution? What if artists take initiative and invite them? Wouldn't these be revolutionary new things—one more way of saying to the bourgeoisie that there is nowhere the proletariat will not tread, nowhere safe from the line and practice of the revolutionary proletariat and its allies who will dare attack all of traditions' chains

Some hell will be raised on May Day, in the streets and *elsewhere*, here and across the globe! Where will you be? What will you be doing?



The '70s: The Appearance & the Essence

Recently, Bob Avakian responded to a number of questions from a comrade who has been involved in the revolutionary struggle throughout the decades of the '60s, '70s and into the '80s. The answers elaborate on a number of questions raised in the talk, "Conquer the World? The International Proletariat Must and Will," published as a special issue of *Revolution* magazine (issue No. 50). Earlier excerpts in this series dealt with questions about the party (RW issues 136-144), about anarchism (issues 145-6) and "'60s people" (issue 147). Bob Avakian's remarks are edited from a tape. This segment began in issue 148 and will continue next week.

Q: Why don't we continue with this thing about coming out of the '60s into the '70s, and talk a little bit more about the '70s?

BA: In "Conquer the World..." the point is stressed with respect to some of these tendencies and line deviations, that we have to look first of all and most importantly to the international arena and in that context look at the situation inside any country, rather than the other way around, rather than ignoring the larger international arena. Some of the things we touched on before can perhaps be brought together here a little bit more. We talked about the U.S. in terms of some of the neo-colonial policies it carried out in much of the third world, or the equivalent of neo-colonialism that it practiced in Latin America, Africa and so on. And, on the other hand, we also talked about how Vietnam was both consciously and deliberately treated by the Kennedy administration and U.S. imperialism in general, as a test case in their attempts to suppress the national liberation struggles of the third world against imperialism—and how that turned into its opposite. Vietnam became the tail of the tiger that they couldn't let go of. And in the long run, it contributed to greatly weakening U.S. imperialism. But along with that we should more generally talk about the fact that in the aftermath of the last historic world conjuncture, around World War 2, there was a certain restructuring of capital internationally in that part of the world which was controlled by the imperialists and dominated in particular by U.S. imperialism, not only in the advanced countries, but, for a certain time and in particular as a concentrated expression of this, in the third world.

Specifically there were some changes in the late '50s, and, as a concentrated development, in the early '60s, with the Alliance for Progress in Latin America, the White Revolution in Iran, and similar programs and developments in a number of other countries—which both because of their position in world relations and because of their own situation domestically, their own particular features, were situated in a position where these changes could be brought about. There were some changes, not only in policies and in the superstructure of the imperialist domination of these countries, but there were also some significant changes in the economic base. While these changes, of course, did not change the relationship between imperialism and these countries, that is, did not in any way alter or, certainly, eliminate imperialist domination and distortion of these countries and the disarticulation of their economies, these reforms did, nonetheless, result in the introduction of some production relations more characteristic of capitalism including the further development of capitalist relations in the countryside in some of these countries, and also some infrastructural development such as roads, harbors, canals, things like that, to lay the basis for more investment in industry in these particular countries as well. Again, this was not an all-round, all-sided, harmonious, articulated development. Although that's never absolutely the case in any country, especially where there is the anarchy of capitalism, in the third world countries there was a lack of even that degree of articulation existing in an advanced capitalist country where finance capital is centered and controlled. Nevertheless, there were some transformations, under the domination and initiative of the imperialists, in certain third world countries which, again, because of their international position and internal features made these sorts of changes both possible and necessary.

The imperialists faced the necessity of trying to break through certain obstacles that were already beginning to gather in the way of the accumulation process of capital internationally and the necessity of dealing with certain political developments, especially the national liberation struggles and the anti-colonial movements that were intensifying and spreading in large parts of the third world. U.S. imperialism carried out and orchestrated this in a specific context: that is, in light of its position relative to other imperialists, and in the world as a whole relative to the development of the Soviet bloc which had gone from a community headed by a socialist Soviet Union to an

emerging and developing imperialist bloc; and also vis-à-vis China, which was emerging more strongly in the world, playing a stronger role in the world as a socialist country and a bastion of revolution, especially in relation to the national liberation struggles. In the context of and in the face of these different contradictions and their different expressions, and the contradictory position that the U.S. held coming out of the second imperialist world war and the re-ordering of the imperialist order in a world still dominated and under the baton of the U.S.—because of all that, the U.S. imperialists were able to and had a necessity to carry out certain changes of the kind I've been referring to in a number of these third world countries.

Crisis—But Not Straight Down

A lot of this has been gone into much more deeply in the investigation that's been done and is being drawn together now for the book *America in Decline* and will be presented in this book in a concentrated and much more all-round way. I'm not going to even try to duplicate that here, but just to trace the developments confronting U.S. imperialism in the '60s and '70s. There were these changes that in turn gave a certain impetus to the accumulation process that was going on within the U.S. bloc, within the general sphere of its overall domination, and to which it gave overall direction (not without contradiction, not without opposition but as the overall principal aspect). But already, both politically and economically, there were the seeds and beginnings of this turning into its opposite. Vietnam was in a sense a focal point of that, too. Again it was a question of where they went in to make a test case out of it and then found themselves unable to let go of it. Initially after the fairly severe recession that struck not only the U.S. but more or less all the countries of the U.S. bloc in the late '50s—'57-'58 or so—after that, while there was a very partial sort of downturn in 1960-61, there was, in any case, a very long period of expansion of the U.S. economy and many of the economies of the U.S. bloc.

You can see how the Vietnam war figured into this and how that ultimately turned into its opposite also. In the short run, the spending associated with that war generated a temporary economic stimulus, not only for the U.S. but especially for the others, Japan and West Germany which had sold quite a bit of materiel to the U.S. to carry on the war and were also able to ride that stimulus. But by the late '60s and going into the early '70s, this war was beginning, politically and economically, to turn into its opposite. This was a concentration point where politically U.S. imperialism was being battered, was being weakened and having a more difficult time holding its bloc together. France under DeGaulle, for instance, began to challenge the U.S. politically, even while accepting overall and in fact relying overall on the U.S. nuclear umbrella and its international strength, particularly in standing off the Soviets. Within that context and only within that context, France began to challenge the U.S. within its sphere, politically and economically. There were also challenges coming from other imperialist states within the U.S. bloc. And, by the late '60s and early '70s, there were the beginnings of what has now become very clear: an ongoing and deepening crisis, though it hasn't gone straight line down, either. Even in this last decade which has been marked and characterized overall by crisis, it has not been a straight line down. It has gone in the motion of a spiral and through twists and turns because it is developing through contradiction and through the interpenetration of different contradictions. But, still, there is a clear motion which began to emerge by the late '60s and early '70s, which saw the turning into its opposite of a number of things: the running up against, in a much more profound way, the limitations of what had been done earlier; the limitations of some of the transformations that went on in a partial and distorted way in some of these third world countries, the turning into its opposite of that in a significant way; and the turning into its opposite in both the political and economic dimension of the whole Vietnam experience of U.S. imperialism. 1968, the year of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam, was also the year that saw the first major assault on the dollar by other imperialists; the dollar's

weakening was very much linked with the financing of the war.

As this was happening at that time in the late '60s and early '70s, it's not that surprising that there was a certain expectation, and in a certain way many of us who were active, and in far greater numbers than just those of us who were in and around the RU*, tended to fall into this, despite maybe even knowing better in a theoretical sense, at least partially: we saw U.S. imperialism going much more straight down; and even if we saw the revolution being a ways off, we saw things developing, if not absolutely in a straight line, still generally heading in that direction. We didn't anticipate that there would be contradictory motion within that overall decline of U.S. imperialism in this period, including a significant lull and even an ebb, a retreat, if you will, in the revolutionary movement—not only in the U.S. but generally internationally for a period. And it's not too surprising, I say, because a lot of things were coming together and being concentrated in an adverse way for U.S. imperialism and its bloc on the whole in those years. What seemed to be an impregnable bastion and citadel of reaction was really taking an ass kicking. And not only was that true in the military sphere, not only was it being politically exposed and being shown ideologically to be bankrupt and criminal even more profoundly and even more broadly than before, but also economically it was shown that it was, as Lenin once called imperialism, a colossus with feet of clay. There were very sharp contradictions and despite all the vaunted prosperity of the U.S., there was within that the clear signs of decay and stagnation and crisis, signs that U.S. imperialism had not conquered and overcome the laws that are inherent in its own motion, its own contradictions.

So this began to appear, but what was not so clear or perhaps to a significant degree was not so clear at the time, were the reserves it still had and the way in which it could maneuver. And eventually the leaders of U.S. imperialism made a conscious choice, and obviously through a great deal of struggle (the terms of which aren't entirely clear to us); but clearly such struggle was part of this whole process of trying to deal with changing relations in the world and the emergence of a spiraling motion of deeper crisis and things turning into their opposites and coming to a head in a way. For example, Nixon, who at one point was very strongly backed by the great bulk of the bourgeoisie, was thrown out by the bourgeoisie. This was just one manifestation, in the form of the whole Watergate scandal, but obviously this was about much more profound and significant things than a few tapes and so on. But on the other hand there were the reserves and there was some maneuvering room and, through a tremendous amount of struggle, there was a resolution to do certain things, to maneuver, regroup and try to recoup certain losses, to pull the bloc back together and, on the basis of and as part of tightening things up, to prepare for meeting the rising challenge that was coming from the Soviet Union.

Soviet Challenge

Now this is a complex question, but this challenge from the Soviets was governed both by the greater necessity it faced and the greater freedom it enjoyed. Necessity because of its inner compulsion, its internal contradictions, contradictions of the imperialist system, which were determining the Soviet Union's motion, but also freedom because of what was happening with U.S. imperialism in the sphere of international relations, the way in which various elements, such as the revolutionary struggles in the third world and the contradictions within the U.S. bloc were interpenetrating. The Soviets on the basis of necessity were able to take advantage of both the weakened position of U.S. imperialism and the internal contradictions of these revolutionary struggles in the third world, in terms of the class forces contending, and some of their weaknesses, in the sense of the petty

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* RU—The Revolutionary Union, the organization which played the key role in the founding of the Revolutionary Communist Party.

Imperialist "Multiplicity of Tracks" in El Salvador

With the U.S.'s "pick a death squad — any death squad" election in El Salvador now fading rapidly into history, it's back to the business of fierce maneuvering over precisely what the next fascist junta will look like. The U.S. embassy has become the principal setting for this, featuring a dizzying in-and-out procession of U.S. henchmen — ranging the entire gamut from "extreme right-wing" butchers to "more moderate" butchers. Presiding over this parade is U.S. Ambassador Deane Hinton, who has threatened, cajoled and otherwise pulled numerous strings in the U.S.'s arsenal in a concerted effort to hammer something out that will meet U.S. requirements and satisfy its lackeys in the Salvadoran ruling class. Coalitions come together, meet with Hinton, and then fall apart in disarray as the U.S. lays out certain conditions. Current president José Napoleón Duarte, who has reigned over the junta's murder of tens of thousands, vows to fight to hold on to his job as number one U.S. frontman, then meekly retreats to acceptance of "what the people want" as the other parties demand his ouster and the U.S. searches for a suitable substitute. Major Bob D'Aubuisson, one of a number of death squad leaders currently in the hunt for top honors, pledges to ax Duarte's Christian Democrats one day and keep

some of them the next, only to appear to reverse his decision once again a few days later. One member of D'Aubuisson's ARENA party has already been assassinated since the election. And all this has been officially given the stamp of approval as "the will of the Salvadoran people." The people of El Salvador are certainly getting a giant dose of U.S.-style democracy at its grotesque best.

Quite naturally, the infighting among El Salvador's compradors has continued and even intensified, although it is mainly taking place in a somewhat different arena, one over which the U.S. hopes to be able to exercise a firm hand. Certain conditions have been laid out for the candidates' acceptability to the U.S.; namely, the continuation of the U.S.'s "land reform," the continuation of efforts to "improve human rights abuses," and the continuation of "free elections" just like the recent one. Many of El Salvador's comprador rulers have objections to one or more of these "reforms." For example, the "land reform" has centered on the herding of thousands of peasants into strategic hamlet "cooperatives" run directly by the junta (and indirectly by the U.S.). While this has facilitated the discovery and disposal of all those who show any sign of potential resistance, it has also given the U.S. more direct control in the

agricultural sphere and forced certain minor difficulties onto the old-line oligarchs. Others also worry that there may be some peasants naive enough to fall for the false hopes raised by the "land reform's promise of *someday* getting their own piece of land, and that these may turn on the *patrones* with a vengeance when reality sets in. The question of "human rights abuses" is also an issue, because it signifies that the U.S. wants to limit some of the bloodshed among bourgeois forces, keeping the killing in these ranks down unless directly ordered. Of prime concern is getting a government with at least one face that can be prettied up enough to facilitate any possible openings to forces currently in the FDR/FMLN in hopes of pulling them out of the opposition alliance in which pro-Soviet revisionist forces have significant influence. But many of El Salvador's compradors, represented by the so-called "extreme right," fear that their own interests will be sacrificed on the altar of bringing these forces back into the U.S.'s fold.

While the "extreme right" has been useful as a threat to the opposition (i.e., "If you think Duarte is bad check out who we have in store if you reject his terms"), they must be kept on somewhat of a leash given the complex political and diplomatic maneuvering that is on tap. This is why Alexander Haig took out an open letter in a leading Salvadoran newspaper calling on all the parties to be "conciliatory" towards their "adversaries." And a recent *New York Times* editorial spelled it out in greater detail, noting the significant fact that social democrats in the opposition had joined in a boycott of the elections: "Salvadoran rightists should not misconstrue American enthusiasm for the elections. The election (and boycott) confirmed the fragmentation of the country's centrists and their inability to wrest control from the violent left and right. The praise is for the start of a process of humane political evolution. A ballot is not a blank check but a promissory note." All this, of course, within the content of "self-determination" for El Salvador.

Duarte (and his Christian Democrats) have been most closely identified with this "humane political evolution," which is the main reason that the rest are so adamant about booting him out. It is indeed remarkable that this sad-eyed hitman is being seriously promoted as such a champion of the oppressed, but it shows that no matter how low it goes imperialism will always try to offer something just a little bit better than the knife they have in your back. Duarte, however, is out as head of the junta, and the U.S. is trying to find another "kind-looking" face, or faces, to take his place, if possible. This whole process, whatever comes of it, will certainly drag on for a while now, but at the same time some new things are becoming clear about what the U.S. is up to in El Salvador and Central America. A great deal of complex political maneuvering in the region is in store up ahead — with much of it focused up on the question of formal negotiations with various forces in the region, including Nica-

ragua, Cuba and possibly the FDR/FMLN. While it is not certain that outright negotiations with all of these parties will actually take place, here will at least be further back and forth motion over this. The point being, from the U.S.'s side, to achieve some measure of temporary and relative stability in the region, including within that, finding the ways to limit Soviet political influence.

It is becoming clear that the U.S.'s bellicose posturing and military threats around El Salvador and Central America have in fact had a two-fold purpose. It is not simply that this hard posture indicates the real trend toward greater U.S. military moves in Central America. Nor has the Haig and Reagan rhetoric been idle and useless words, as some have accused. The threats such as "leaking" plans to use Argentina and others in overt and covert military operations in Nicaragua and El Salvador, etc. are 1) more than just threats and 2) designed to force motion among opposition forces more in accordance with U.S. wishes and to erode Soviet influence in the region.

There has been controversy within the U.S. bourgeoisie, and its foremost practitioners have come in for some criticism from liberals on the basis that "all talk and no action" makes the U.S. appear even weaker in its "own backyard." And the liberals have favored different tactics to gain the U.S. "stability" in the short run. Such criticism has caused some bristling among current U.S. officials, who have tried to reassure everyone that they knew what they were doing all along. Most notable of these efforts was a recent meeting with reporters by Alexander Haig, who countered that those who criticize the administration policy in the region were guilty of a "myopic preoccupation" with El Salvador. Haig said, "There is a multiplicity of tracks. There are discussions that must be held. There are steps that must be taken in the economic, political and security areas . . . that influence the calculus in Moscow, Havana, and Nicaragua and in a regional context." And he added that the only alternative to this approach would be "to ultimately be faced with a decision whether to give up Central America, and all that implies."

What that implies is totally unacceptable for U.S. imperialism, exactly because it is such a strategic area. The upheaval and turmoil so close to home is a serious problem for the U.S., and so is the growing Soviet strength. But Haig's statement points to the other side of this equation, the fact that the U.S. still has a lot of political and military strength to draw on. Yes, the U.S. is in trouble here, but it is not a straight line down for them. Exactly because of this, the activity of the Soviets and their revisionist frontmen throughout the region has taken the form of pursuing a historic compromise, seeking to negotiate for a share of political power with more pro-U.S. forces, especially social democrats. Rather than risk confrontation right now with the U.S. in this region, the Soviets want positions for their subordinates from which to try to deal more significant blows to the U.S. at a more decisive time — and have been seeking to use their influence over the mass struggle as a bargaining chip in the pursuit of negotiations toward that end. At the same time, the U.S. has tried to make use of its significant remaining strength to limit this historic compromise as much as possible and even to make use of the compromising posture of the revisionists to buy some time and cool out some of the revolutionary opposition to the U.S.

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Defense Committee Formed for Salvadoran Revolutionaries

Los Angeles—The dates of deportation hearings will possibly be set soon for David Mendez and Emilio Henriquez, the two Salvadoran brothers who recently spoke throughout the country on the Salvadoran Revolutionaries Speaking Tour sponsored nationally by the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade. To escalate the political and legal battle, a national center for the El Salvador Tour Legal Defense Committee has now been established in Los Angeles. The committee is focusing on: developing national and international support for these revolutionaries to be granted political asylum in the U.S. and for their political asylum claims to not only be heard by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) before any deportation hearings, but in fact that the deportation proceedings should be dropped altogether; raising funds for the legal battle, overall support work, and many other things for which thousands of dollars are needed in the next few weeks; getting signatories for "Statements of Support"; and numerous other activities. The mailing address for the committee is now: El Salvador Tour Legal Defense Committee, P.O. Box 30922, Los Angeles, California 90030.

In another very important development, the secretary-general of Amnesty International in London has recently sent a letter to the District Director of the INS in Los Angeles supporting the demand of the two Salvadoran brothers for political asylum in the U.S.

The U.S. government has made it crystal clear from the date of the Salvadorans' arrest on October 12, 1981, that it is out for the blood of these rebels. All nice and legal-like if possible, of course, but if not, then by any means they feel they can get away with. The bourgeoisie's schemes have been all the fiercer exactly because of what the Salvadorans' biggest crime has been: seizing the opportunity and necessity through the speaking tour to tear into U.S. and all imperialism in El Salvador, and to advance the revolutionary struggle of the people in their homeland and internationally. An escalation of political, financial and legal support for the battle, broadly in society, is mandatory in defeating these schemes. □

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Pennsylvania: P.O. Box 11789, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (215) 849-3574

Texas:

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West Virginia: P.O. Box 790, Beckley, WV 25801



An Internationalist Call to May First Action New Posters Are In Your Hands!

May First 1982 is drawing near and right now posters of "An Internationalist Call to May First Action" by the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA, are ready in 18 languages to go out and go up all across the country in preparation for this day which stands for the international unity of the proletariat and its mission to turn the whole world upside down. Since this call to action was first published in the *Revolutionary Worker*, it has appeared in Aleut, Arabic, Chinese, Creole, Dutch, English, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Oromo, Polish, Sinhalese, Spanish, Sutu, Swedish, Turkish and Warora. It has circulated among many different people and organizations and we have so far received an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response. This has certainly been manifested in the numerous translations which continue to arrive, even as we go to press, and the attention to improving their quality by comrades worldwide; and we will continue to publish new languages in the *Revolutionary Worker* to enrich this powerful manifesto. In light of the favorable response and the urgency to step up preparations for May First, the draft call was finalized without changes in order to immediately publish thousands of these posters, with the understanding that getting this call broadly into the hands of proletarians and oppressed people will deepen the political struggle and correspondence on these world historic questions and greatly contribute to even more powerful internationalist actions on May First. All these posters together is really a splendid sight, and it is high time for them to flower in all the right places! For posters in all the languages, and to get new translations to the *RW*, contact the RCP in your area or write us at P.O. Box 3486, Chicago, IL 60654.

To the Workers, the Oppressed and All Who Dare Fight for the Future:

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

May 1st is the revolutionary holiday of the international proletariat, a class which truly has nothing to lose but the chains that hold it to a world-wide system of modern day slavery and murder. There is but one authentic meaning to this day: the determination of all who are exploited and enslaved, of all forces embodying the new and rising, to carry out revolution against this twisted order; the determination to leap forward—crossing barriers of language, nation and race—toward the abolition of all classes and class distinctions, the wiping out of the subjugation of one nationality to another and of women to men, toward the extinction of wars and of nation-states themselves, and the shattering of all tradition's chains. And there is but one way to truly celebrate this holiday: in struggle and rebellion, holding the red banner to the skies in every corner of the globe, and fighting as far forward as we can to the revolutionary future.

History moves in restless outbursts that flare up and then subside, only to erupt again, still more intensely. Beneath today's tremors lies a conflict of profound and literally earthshaking dimensions.

On one side the imperialist powers of both the U.S. and the Soviet-led blocs prepare for war, thrashing in quicksand of their own making, trying to hold their empires together while lurching toward nuclear conflict. Impelled on this course by the madman's logic of their system, they are also impelled to further infect "their" masses with that logic and line them up to kill each other off under the banner of "freedom and democracy" (Western imperialist style) or "justice and liberation" (Soviet imperialist style).

And against them? The one thing they never reckon on—the revolutionary spirit and struggle of the masses, spreading like underground fires from Gdansk to El Salvador to the Haitian refugee camps of Florida. You can hear it in the shouts of the youth—the same accents echoing in England's streets and the foothills of Eritrea—defiantly pointing to the emperor's nakedness and challenging his empire. You can see it in the eyes that once again shine with a vision of liberation reflected in the fires of night-time skies. You can feel it in the heartbeats once more pulsing to the rhythm of charging feet and the echoes of shattering icons. Revolution—a red flame burning in the oppressed nations of the world and stirring even in the central fortresses of the imperialist countries themselves, with the decisive link being the revolutionary role and leadership of the class-conscious proletariat in every country.



The clash now building between the forces of imperialist war and social revolution will be the forge on which the future is cast. On May 1st, the forces of revolution must make a leap in preparation.

On that day a vision must shine forth: the embryo of a proletariat conscious of its international character and its antagonism to all forms of reaction and of its historic mission to do no less than conquer the world. Infusing the workers' common actions in different quarters of the globe must be the determination to proceed, as Lenin put it, "not from the point of view of 'my' country . . . but from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

To actively and urgently carry out such preparations now, and to find the ways on May 1st especially to push this process forward, demands a rupture with the dead hand of the past. Revolutionary eyes and hearts must be set above the miserable level of tailing after whatever struggle comes to hand, telling the masses what they already know and keeping them spiritually and politically bound within the confines of their nation. The deceptively simple but thoroughly wrong arithmetic in which the struggles—even revolutionary struggles—of the people of each country "add up" to a world revolution must also be thrown off for the revolutionary calculus of Leninism. Especially in an acute crisis that will be global in its dimensions, the proletariat too must be global in its outlook and approach, coordinating its forces as detachments of a single army. Breakthroughs even in one or several countries lead to a weakening of the whole rotten enemy edifice and open up still wider world revolutionary possibilities. In this spirit and direction class-conscious forces must urgently go forward toward a common program, a common strategy and a common organization on an international scale of the revolutionary communist/proletarian internationalist trend.

Perhaps all this seems like dreaming. . . even visions. Well and good! Nothing less than visions—visions that pierce the veil of the everyday and seemingly obvious to reveal the real mainsprings lying beneath—are required today. Was not Lenin in 1917 accused of being visionary? Was not Mao in 1966? Yet did not their dreams change the face of the world and humanity, and prove more real than the appeals to choose the "lesser evil" and "be realistic"? This revisionism and reformism is a "realism" whose bounds are determined by the framework of imperialism and the status quo . . . and again today it comes at a time when world events will set crowns to rolling in the gutters, opening up great opportunities for the revolutionaries. Must not we too aspire to the same lofty heights scaled by Lenin and Mao?

This call then from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA:

Let May 1st witness, within the U.S. itself, breakouts from factories and schools, and revolutionary political activity of many different kinds in housing projects, prisons, street corners and every sacred sphere and stronghold, signalling to millions not just here but around the world that there is indeed a growing section even now "preparing minds and organizing forces" for revolution in this bastion of imperialism.

But more, let May 1st, 1982 reveal the dream of international proletarian unity coming to life in unified actions stretching from the nations oppressed by imperialism into the very citadels of capital itself; let it politically foreshadow, if only for a day or two, and help prepare the way for, the not-too-distant days when the proletariat will liberate territory and seize power now here, now there, pushed back only to surge further forward, emancipating as much of the world as possible from the twisted chains of imperialism. Let then the May 1st sun shine everywhere on red flags of revolution, blooming like roses pushing up the concrete, unquarable life amidst the rubble and decay of the dying.

Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

Red Alert

Continued from page 1

Shortly after noon, the two revolutionaries made their way into the office at the fort. As a secretary ran screaming down the hallway they barricaded themselves alone inside and began to slip Calls to May Day under the sealed door. To put it mildly, the authorities flipped. The sanctity of one of their highest military command posts had been violated by revolutionaries armed with a Call to May Day in a vision of the future. The impact of the action was such that even in attempting to sow confusion, the press was forced to speak about the Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), the preparations for world war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and the Call for May Day.

Squads of riot-equipped military police surrounded the buildings, together with Atlanta's undercover police and the FBI's "hostage negotiating team" led by none other than the aforementioned special agent in charge of the Atlanta office. Inside the office, the revolutionaries telephoned their prepared statements to the press throughout the city. An ambulance and a fire truck were discreetly parked behind the building as the FBI cleared the hallways by announcing that "it might get messy." FBI agents decked out in flak-vests and armed with sawed-off shotguns cocked their weapons outside the door. An hour and a half later, the revolutionaries, having accomplished what they set out to do, stood back as the FBI kicked down the office door and arrested them. After attempting to interrogate them, the FBI took their prisoners down to the Federal Courthouse where they were charged with trespassing and felony destruction of government property (a result of the FBI kicking down the door). With these charges alone, the Fort McPherson Two face a possible 10 years and \$10,000 fines. By nightfall the revolutionaries were being held in the Fulton County jail on \$2,500 bail each. At a hearing the next morning it was learned that at least three other federal felony charges are going to be launched against the two in the very near future.

No more fitting symbol of the crimes of imperialism—past, present and future—could have been picked to focus the initial blows of the battle for May Day and for the convergence of May First itself. Situated in the middle of southwest Atlanta, surrounded on three sides by some of the poorest, Black sections of the city, Fort McPherson stands as a centerpiece of both the imperialist plans for World War 3 as well as for suppressing domestic revolution. As the home of FORSCOM, Fort McPherson is responsible for the readiness and active duty capabilities of the army troops inside the U.S. and the overseas training for the army reserves and the national guard. Altogether it controls 21 major installations and over 30 smaller ones. All recruiting and mobilizations in the southeast U.S. are commanded out of this fortress. A special responsibility of FORSCOM unit is the leadership of all units "defending the home soil." FORSCOM, incidentally, defines "home soil" to include Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Panama Canal Zone and Guam.

The legacy of Fort McPherson is itself quite telling. Its rise to infamy began with the rise of U.S. imperialism itself and the Spanish American War of 1898. It served as both a major training center for the U.S. troops and as a POW camp during that war. In addition to cannonfodder, Fort McPherson also claims among its illustrious graduates one of the first governor-generals of Cuba under the rule of U.S. imperialism—Major General Leonard Wood. Through the first two world wars, the post quickly became the

CORRECTION

Last week's *RW* incorrectly reported casualties to supporters of the Oromo National Liberation Front in Europe due to a bomb blast. The bomb plot by agents of the Soviet-backed Dergue was real enough, but the victims of the March 22nd explosion in Berlin were Dergue agents who were assembling the bomb in their hotel room. □

On April 7th New York City's garment center was alive with preparations for May First. Red flags flew in the biting cold wind as workers from many countries stopped to talk, buy RWs in singles and bundles and red flags, making arrangements to get into further political discussion in preparation for May First. The garment center is a concentration of foreign-born workers from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala, Colombia and many Black workers who were active in the '60s. A revolutionary spoke: "Think of what it would mean for the international proletariat to see in this country, to see in this city, the red flag raised and for May Day to break out. Look who we have in this city. The bourgeoisie calls it a melting pot. We call it international gravediggers of imperialism." A cross section of people responded. A Black man spoke of his anger and the urgency to do something, saying, "We need to burn this system down." Another guy driving by in his van spotted the red flags and stopped, yelling "Hey, you remember me?"; straight away he bought a red flag and mounted it on his van. A very well-dressed professional woman bought a red flag and tucked it into her leather bag. A young guy from Switzerland, his first time in the U.S., was surprised—never had he expected to see May Day posters up and red flags flying in the streets of America. Some of the revolutionaries wore red bandanas over their faces like the youth in El Salvador and the rebels of northern Ireland. One youth wore a red hood over his face in the manner of Iranian revolutionaries forced to mask their identity in the streets of the imperialist citadels.



induction and training center for southern draftees. And, after the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam, the army reorganized its command structure, creating FORSCOM and targeting Fort McPherson as a key center. Even the makeup of the personnel of FORSCOM testifies to its importance to the ruling class—the number of generals and other top army brass stationed at the Fort is second only to the number stationed at the Pentagon.

Even before the takeover at Fort McPherson, the authorities proved that they were bracing for May Day 1982. On April 6, 13 revolutionary activists from the Atlanta area were notified through a bailbondsman that they were scheduled to appear in the Georgia State Court for a jury trial on April 19th. Although many of the 13 defendants face separate and different charges and were arrested at different times (predominantly during the period building up to and including May Day 1981, although also apparently including a few who were arrested around May Day 1980), the prosecution sneeringly contends that the scheduled trial "is not an attempt to be ironic or gang up on this group" nor is it connected to May Day 1982 in any way. According to one prosecutor, "It's the result of a weird schedule for the month of April." When pressed on the issue yet another prosecutor conjured up a truly weird and ludicrous mathematical formula to attempt to explain this "coincidence." Yet while denying that all this is an attack on May Day, the prosecutors themselves continually referred to the cases as the "May Day cases."

In the wake of the news about the seizure, agitators and *RW* sellers began to hand out red armbands for people to wear in solidarity with the action. Several dozens of these armbands were distributed at the Five Points MARTA (rapid transit) station—most recently the scene of intense political struggle (and police attacks) around the Atlanta Proclamation, issued by the RCP and RCYB after the infamous Wayne Williams conviction. At one point, a wave of enthusiastic applause greeted the speaker who said that the impact of May Day in Atlanta must be such that it is felt in places like Palestine. Later, a number of those who had tied on red armbands walked through the crowd and down the streets explaining the significance of the armbands and the action.

The seizure at Fort McPherson was the opening volley in the battle for May Day 1982 in Atlanta. It was an inspirational manifesto, a declaration of the proletarian internationalism that will mark the political struggle in the weeks ahead. □

State Flaunts Kidnapping of Mao Defendant's Daughter

The court-sponsored kidnapping of the daughter of Tina Fishman, one of the Mao Tsetung Defendants, is proceeding full steam ahead. On March 29 the California Court of Appeals denied without comment an appeal of the temporary custody change previously ordered by the San Mateo County Court.

Last summer, the California courts seized jurisdiction from Illinois, where Tina and her daughter reside, and granted emergency temporary custody to Tina's ex-husband while he had possession of the child for her regular one-month visit. In an outrageous and openly political ruling Judge James Browning determined that the child faced "an emergency situation," the only grounds on which a California court could step in. He openly admitted the child was well cared for and showed no signs of neglect, but declared that Tina had "withheld intangibles necessary" because of her "pre-occupation with interests other than parenting." At the heart of all this stood her involvement with the Mao Defendants case, which he brazenly used as further grounds for stealing her daughter, attempting to paint her as a criminal felon. Of course the worst crime of all for a woman is to refuse to accept her role of looking after the narrowest of interests of home and family and worst of all to dare to fight for revolution and the uprooting of all oppression throughout the world.

But even the appeals court's actions were a moot point: before they had even ruled on whether the temporary custody order should stand and whether there should be a stay of the permanent custody proceedings, the California probation officer Dan Daugherty, who is responsible for investigating custody claims, went ahead and filed without the knowledge of Tina or of her attorneys, his permanent custody recommendation, hoping to seal the kidnapping once and for all. This is the same probation officer who had earlier interrogated Tina about her political

activities and launched a barrage of accusations that she only wanted her daughter so that she could take her to France where Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, is now seeking political refugee status. Flaunting his intimate knowledge of the case against Bob Avakian and the Mao Tsetung Defendants, he boasted later to Tina's attorney, "I'm not an FBI agent, even though Tina thinks I am." In true FBI style, while Tina's appeal was pending, Dan Daugherty called up the Chicago office which investigates custody claims and frantically demanded that they locate Tina and begin an investigation of her home. When, upon Tina's request, the Chicago office declined to carry out the investigation until the stay issue was settled, Daugherty went right ahead and filed his recommendation anyway, omitting any report on the circumstances of Tina's home except to describe it as "a hostile environment." Fleshing out what he meant by this, he attacked her as a "communist" and just as criminal according to this pious low-life, is the fact that Tina does not shove religion down the throats of her children.

But this vindictive move only further exposes the reactionary sick nature of this whole attack and the society that gives rise to it. Tina is demanding a hearing to challenge this report which would otherwise automatically become the permanent custody order in this case. The Committee to Free the Mao Tsetung Defendants has called for people to send statements demanding that this kidnapping be stopped once and for all to:

Superior Court of San Mateo County
Hall of Justice
Redwood City, CA 94063

Checks for funds urgently needed for legal expenses can be sent to: Committee to Free the Mao Tsetung Defendants, 1801 Columbia Road, N.W., Room 104, Washington, D.C. 20009. □

Black Man Lynched in Downtown Atlanta

It has recently come to light that on February 10, 1982, as worldwide attention was focused on the Wayne Williams trial and the Atlanta Black youth murders, a 39-year-old Black man was lynched in downtown Atlanta. Frederick York was found hanging by the neck from a tree in a wooded lot next to the Atlanta Civic Center. He had been hung to the lowest tree with a shirt. Both of his feet were dangling on the ground.

The Fulton County Medical Examiner's Office very quickly and very quietly ruled that this brutal and reactionary murder was a suicide. In late February, in a cursory statement recounted in a tiny article buried in the *Atlanta Constitution*, the Atlanta Police Bureau Press Office declared that the police were "satisfied with the suicide ruling." So was the FBI. And none of them have said a word since, because a lynching right then in downtown Atlanta hardly fit into the ruling class's nationally coordinated plans

to close the case on Atlanta with the verdict in the Wayne Williams trial.

The official cause of York's death is listed as asphyxiation, specifically not strangulation — a none-too-subtle reminder of the asphyxiation murders of the Black youth. In yet another reminder, the Medical Examiner simply declared there will be no inquest. And the body was buried before most people in Atlanta were even aware that a Black man had been lynched.

But word of the lynching slipped through some of Atlanta's Black neighborhoods a month after it happened, after the March 13 issue of the *Atlanta Inquirer* (a locally owned Black newspaper) published a front-page article and photographs of the lynch scene. Much scrambling has gone down since then to try to squelch any further exposure, as well as to try to divert people's attention away from the York murder.

In investigating the York lynching, the

RW has uncovered some of these behind-the-scenes maneuvers. While the *Inquirer* article spoke of "howls of protest" and noted several groups "investigating" the lynching, there have been no such investigations. The director of the Union Mission, where York lived and worked, has not been questioned by anyone, including the police, FBI, or civil rights groups since the days following the murder. Neither have York's friends. The NAACP and SCLC have no plans to expose or investigate the murder. Both groups, as well as several reporters, referred inquiries into the lynching to one Black state legislator, Tyrone Brooks, who is well known for his outspoken propagation of a "civil rights agenda" in the rural areas of Georgia. Brooks is equally well known for being a mouthpiece for the officials when it comes to such matters in Atlanta.

As it turns out, Brooks and a number of other Black politicians knew about the lynching at the time it happened, but said

nothing about it to the public. In a letter from Atlanta Police Chief George Napper to Brooks (dated February 16 — a month before the *Inquirer* article), the police chief ran out the ridiculous official suicide line on the "subject: body found hanging from tree." Still no protest was heard from the people who saw this letter. A full two weeks later, not coincidentally after the Williams verdict, Brooks wrote a private "To Whom It May Concern" letter to the relatives of Frederick York in New York City "to inform you that we are conducting an investigation" into the ... "unfortunate death." Copies of this letter were sent to a number of reporters — a political snow job since no such investigation was underway.

A Black man is lynched in the bestial American tradition. The police bury the story as quickly as the body, and the Black political machinery greets the incident with a virtual seal of approval! □

"Multiplicity of Tracks"

Continued from page 4

There is ample evidence that such efforts are yielding some results: for example, the recent failure of the FMLN to do much of anything to disrupt the U.S. elections in El Salvador, based on the acknowledged advice of Cuba, Nicaragua and Mexico as well, actually helped the U.S. to gain some political and diplomatic points through pointing to the "massive turnout," and "the Salvadoran people want peace," etc. But more than any particular event, the whole Soviet strategy with its current hope for negotiations with the U.S., is more and more revealed as a poisonous and deadly influence that must be combatted, and ultimately wiped out, in order for the revolutionary struggle anywhere to advance. Very revealing for its educational value in this regard is a recent article in the *New York Times* which appeared under the heading: "Cuban Calls For Talks With U.S. and Accepts Part Blame for Strains," a report on a recent talk given in Cuba by an anonymous "senior official." It is worth quoting at some length:

"The senior official and others, speaking to a group of scholars and foreign policy experts gathered in Havana over the weekend, did not hide their concern about the possibility of United States' use of force against Cuba. They spoke on the condition that they not be named, a practice adopted by many governments in order to provide some elements of flexibility in later negotiations . . .

"The official said that Cuba would not abandon the right to supply arms and support revolutions, as he maintained the Reagan administration insisted that it do, but claimed that as a practical matter, Havana was now exercising self-restraint and was prepared to play 'a positive role' in settling disputes and bringing about 'democratic change' . . . (he specifically mentioned El Salvador as one place where Cuba could do this — *RW*).

"Perhaps to lay a groundwork for a better dialogue with Washington, the officials indicated disapproval of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and said that the situation in Poland should be resolved by the Polish people themselves.

"However, he added that the bond between Moscow and Havana was unbreakable. He also insisted that Moscow itself was not prepared to damage relations with Washington by trying to gain an 'asset' in El Salvador . . . (Among the senior official's themes were that) Latin America as a whole is not ripe for socialism and President Fidel Castro is therefore willing to promote 'democratic change' and moderation in the region . . .

"While Havana will always maintain 'socialist solidarity' with Moscow, it pursues an independent foreign policy and does not want to be 'victim' of East-West confrontation. 'Until recently,' the official said, both the United States and Cuba 'were acting in a way that was leading to an unavoidable confrontation.' He

said that this was 'the first thing to avoid and it can be avoided.'"

This is the "vanguard of the Latin American revolution," according to Salvador Cayetano Carpio, the chief of the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL) and the leading commander of the FMLN. Cuba offers to play a "positive role," and it, along with its boss (that natural ally of the oppressed worldwide), would gladly agree to almost any deal with the U.S. in order to secure some kind of piece of the action in Central America. After all, countries like El Salvador are simply potential "assets" to them just as they are real "assets" for the U.S. right now. As far as the U.S. is concerned, it will obviously try to take full advantage of the preaching of these revisionists for "negotiated settlements," etc. They hope that this conciliatory line will both weaken and subvert the struggles of the masses of people in Central America and even end up undercutting some of the support for the revisionists themselves among the masses. And the comments of this Cuban senior official graphically shows some of the "positive role" U.S. threats have played in the past period. They certainly haven't even given up the hope of forcing Cuba away from the Soviets at some point, though this will not happen tomorrow in any case.

As to the leadership of the FMLN, they have continued to prostrate themselves before such counsel. Not only has negotiations with the U.S. and its junta been their highest aspiration (in the short run), but they have continually shown their willingness to bend over more and more in the U.S.'s direction, "moderating" the terms of the proposed deal-making to essentially calling for a new junta that they can have a few positions in. Perhaps they will jump at the chance to physically cooperate in the suppression of the masses, if offered by the U.S. Of course, the U.S. hopes that even this can still be avoided if they can win away some of the more pro-U.S. forces in the FDR.

As for the other pro-imperialist forces in leadership of the FDR/FMLN, as best represented by Guillermo Ungo: His immediate task after the election farce was to go running off to Europe for a meeting of the Socialist International (a compendium of social-democratic parties led by the ruling imperialist politicians of West Germany and France, among others). His shameless bootlicking was rewarded by an SI reference to the "so-called elections" and another call for negotiations among all the forces in the FDR, including as one part, the EL Salvador. And, in the same document, the group also called for a regional agreement between Cuba and the U.S., and Nicaragua and the U.S. The West Europeans continue to try to use their influence for two purposes: principally to try and keep anybody who goes into opposition dependent on the Western bloc of imperialists,

May Day Correspondence

The following letter, written by a youth from Atlanta, is now circulating in the high schools in Atlanta:

On May 1st, revolutionaries all around the world will be taking to the streets. I'm a high school student here in Atlanta, and I plan to be right out in the streets with them. Where are you going to be! In some fucking school? I'm challenging you to bust out of school, on April 30. And for the youth to be in the front, and the old people not to be far behind in making May Day happen.

The other day I told my teachers I wanted to fight for revolution, and that I was hanging out with some communists. They said, "Those people are going to use you. They'll brainwash you. Besides, you're too young, it takes a man to fight for those things." See, but I think it's the ruling class (the high and mighty) who are trying to do all the brainwashing and they are scared of the youth.

Right now they are brainwashing us in school. They teach us all this stuff about George Washington and honest Abe Lincoln, and how great America is. Now they're brainwashing us to be drafted in the army. And in their next world war we will fight—they will sit back—and then put an American flag on us, stick us in the ground, and talk about how we were brave heroes. To all this I want to say I'm sick and tired about listening to all this bullshit!

Just ask yourself. Why did the government lie about what went down in the Atlanta youth murders? They lied because if we knew the truth about it, we would do something about it. Isn't that why they put a curfew on us to keep us from doing anything? Why did the government lie to millions of people in the '60s about what they were doing to the people in Vietnam.

This whole country, the American flag and all the rest of it STINKS! If we burned the American flag and raised up the Red Flag that stands for revolution and communism, it would mean we would be fighting for the future—real liberation. That's what I am living for. Many people tell me that they agree a lot with what I am saying, but that all the other people aren't going to do anything, so why should I. Don't worry about what they are going to do. Use your own mind. What are you going to do? Are you going to stand up and fight or be some robot for the ruling class? Well I'm not.

On May 1st, 1982, thousands of people will be demonstrating in the streets in a way that America has never seen before. March with the working class and raise up the red flag for millions of people all around the world. That's the symbol that the rich people fear the most, when they see it in the hands of the oppressed, because it means that we are rising up conscious of where our real interests are, and doing something about it, here and around the world.

THE FUTURE BELONGS TO US—THE YOUTH

BREAK OUT! TAKE IT IN YOUR HANDS ON APRIL 30 AND MAY 1!

—A revolutionary high school youth from Atlanta

and especially to win over those who are leaning towards the Soviets, and secondarily, to try and increase their own leverage *vis à vis* the U.S. in intra-bloc disputes.

The recent developments in the region, focused on El Salvador where the inter-imperialist rivalry is the most intense, have driven home with increasing force the fact that it is much worse than useless to rely on one (or several) imperialists and their representatives in order to get rid of whichever one happens to be on top of your particular location. Because of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the different imperialist sides in different parts of the world, their particular roles in all this may be reversed (as in Poland, where the U.S. has acted in a somewhat similar fashion as the Soviets in Central America). But really, which of these imperialists does what precise maneuvers in any particular situation *vis à vis* its rivals

is not the crucial thing for advancing revolution. What is of central importance is seeing through these maneuvers to the essence of imperialism of whatever stripe.

In their search for a much needed "fix," as temporary and partial as it may be, the U.S. is hoping to use "a multiplicity of tracks." And, as the Cuban statement above hints at, they may even have some short-term success even as the underlying situation for them in Central America and the world continues to deteriorate as it does for the Soviets as well. Those who have claimed that Reagan and Haig are maniacal nuts hell-bent on destruction without even realizing their own imperialist interests are right on one point and wrong on another. They, like all imperialists, are indeed maniacs and madmen, but they recognize full well and are taking full account of U.S. imperialist interests. That is, after all, their job. □

The Workers of the World in the Russian Revolution

In October 1917, after three years of warfare and casualties mounting into the tens of millions, the Russian Revolution burst forth. The seemingly inescapable bonds which had led the proletarians and oppressed of the two war blocs to fill each other with lead for the interests of imperialism were broken in part of the imperialist chain as the revolution opened up a world of new possibilities. The new Soviet Republic immediately published the secret imperialist war treaties with their details of how the Entente (Russia, England and France, and later the U.S.) planned to divvy up the plunder. Lenin and the Bolsheviks called on the proletarians of all lands to make full use of the imperialist war to make war on the imperialists. They themselves withdrew from the imperialist slaughter at the heavy price of dismembering Russia, for example, concluding the Brest-Litovsk treaty which ceded an area the size of the U.S. southern states to Germany.

The revolution was a world-historic event, and it called up world-historic forces. Even before the Anglo-French-American alliance had concluded their war, their armies were dispatched to invade Russia. The Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey), the Entente's erstwhile enemies, soon renewed their attack as well. The proletarians and poor peasants of Russia, though exhausted from a war in which they had suffered unprecedented casualties, rallied to combat the imperialist intervention. But they did not fight alone. Class-conscious workers from around the world rose to defend this red fortress of the international proletarian revolution. Virtually unknown to many is the part of this activity that took place in Russia itself as *zarubezhniki*, literally those "coming from across the border" ("foreigners"), enlisted in their tens of thousands in International sections of the Red Army. They were drawn from prisoners of war thousands of miles from their homes, from refugees who had been propelled by the war into Russia, from immigrants who had come to Russia earlier seeking work, and from the ranks of those who

just couldn't stay away from revolution. Though the Russian Revolution has since been reversed and the Soviet Union converted from a red base area into a world plunderer, whose "internationalism" means being stomped by Moscow-made boots instead of the Yankee brand, the significance of the October Revolution and the role of these "Internationalist Legions" can never be erased. Their story is the saga of men and women who battled not simply for the oppressed of Russia or of their own country, but indeed for the oppressed world over.

Even as the wave of chauvinism swept over Europe and most of the socialist organizations rushed into their respective national camps, the forces of the imperialist war were also cracking the routine of life which kept the peoples separated and nationally isolated. By 1917 almost 2 million refugees had been driven by war into Russia, and over 2 million prisoners of war were locked in Russian camps: many Hungarians, but also Germans, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Turks, Croats, Austrians, Czechs and many others. The number of POW camps grew rapidly to over 50 giant complexes, veritable cities of 40 and 50,000 where a dozen languages were spoken.

At first the Russian government kept the POW's quarantined from society. But the war dragged on. Russian casualties mounted into the millions; in 1915 the Tsar ordered the prisoners of Slavic origin to work in the fields and factories of Russia. The next year he was forced to bring in the German, Austrian and Turkish prisoners as well.

The POW's suffered brutal conditions: epidemics ravaged the camps, born of filthy living conditions, rotten and meager food, and unending hours of labor. Of 80,000 men sent to build the Murmansk railroad in northern Russia, over 72,000 died — the local peasants named it "the iron road built on human blood."

These conditions spontaneously fueled the hatred of many POW's against the Russian people. But many others were

Citizens! Comrades! Internationalists!

Here is the prison. Here is, above the danger of the world — war has value even as a pretext for justice and democracy — of the poor and the oppressed.

Here the various labor and water, strong and weak. And these are not your words and these words, the means, work, discipline, organization and

guns in the hands of fearless fighters.

We are here in the Revolution, in the International, in the Soviet power? Then join the International Legion of the Red Army. It is for the oppressed of the world, for the oppressed of the world, for the oppressed of the world.

It is for a free world! This call of war.

Are you working in the shop of effect? Then give your spare time to drill, the practice and the military course.

Headquarters: 2 Nikol'evskaya Peresolok — near the Temple of St. George

Bürger! Genossen! Internationalisten!

Hier ist die Gefängnis. Hier ist, über die Gefahr der Welt — Krieg hat Wert auch als Vorwand für Gerechtigkeit und Demokratie — der Armen und Unterdrückten.

Hier sind die verschiedenen Arbeiter und Wasser, stark und schwach. Und dies sind nicht eure Worte und diese Worte, die Mittel, Arbeit, Disziplin, Organisation und

Waffen in den Händen von furchtlosen Kämpfern.

Wir sind hier in der Revolution, in der Internationalen, in der Sowjetmacht? Dann tritt der Internationalen Legion der Roten Armee bei. Es ist für die Unterdrückten der Welt, für die Unterdrückten der Welt, für die Unterdrückten der Welt.

Es ist für eine freie Welt! Dies ist der Ruf des Krieges.

Arbeiten Sie in der Fabrik? Dann geben Sie Ihre freie Zeit dem Drill, der Übung und dem militärischen Kurs.

Hauptquartier: 2 Nikol'evskaya Peresolok — nahe dem Tempel des Heiligen Georg

Citoyens! Camerades! Internationalistes!

Voici la prison. Ici est, au-dessus du danger du monde — la guerre a une valeur même comme un prétexte pour la justice et la démocratie — de la misère et de l'oppression.

Ici sont les différents ouvriers et l'eau, forts et faibles. Et ce ne sont pas vos paroles et ces paroles, les moyens, le travail, la discipline, l'organisation et

les armes dans les mains de braves combattants.

Nous sommes ici dans la Révolution, dans l'Internationale, dans le pouvoir soviétique? Alors rejoignez la Légion internationale de l'Armée rouge. C'est pour les opprimés du monde, pour les opprimés du monde, pour les opprimés du monde.

C'est pour un monde libre! C'est l'appel de la guerre.

Travaillez-vous dans l'usine? Alors consacrez votre temps libre au drill, à l'exercice et au cours militaire.

Quartier général: 2 Nikol'evskaya Peresolok — près du Temple de Saint-Georges

Граждане! Товарищи! Интернационалисты!

Здесь тюрьма. Здесь, над опасностью мира — война имеет значение даже как предлог для справедливости и демократии — бедности и угнетения.

Здесь разные рабочие и вода, сильные и слабые. И это не ваши слова и эти слова, средства, труд, дисциплина, организация и

оружие в руках смелых бойцов.

Мы здесь в революции, в интернационале, в советской власти? Тогда вступайте в интернациональную бригаду Красной Армии. Это для угнетенных мира, для угнетенных мира, для угнетенных мира.

Это для свободного мира! Это призыв войны.

Вы работаете на заводе? Тогда отдайте свое свободное время на drill, на упражнения и на военный курс.

Квартал штаба: 2 Николаевская Пересолок — около Храма Святого Георгия

Cittadini! Compagni! Internazionalisti!

Ecco la prigione. Qui c'è, sopra il pericolo del mondo — la guerra ha un valore anche come un pretesto per la giustizia e la democrazia — della povertà e dell'oppressione.

Qui ci sono i diversi operai e l'acqua, forti e deboli. E non sono le tue parole e queste parole, i mezzi, il lavoro, la disciplina, l'organizzazione e

le armi nelle mani di coraggiosi combattenti.

Siamo qui nella Rivoluzione, nell'Internazionale, nel potere sovietico. Allora unisciti alla Legione internazionale dell'Esercito Rosso. È per gli oppressi del mondo, per gli oppressi del mondo, per gli oppressi del mondo.

È per un mondo libero! Questo è il grido di guerra.

Lavori in fabbrica? Allora dedica il tuo tempo libero al drill, all'esercizio e al corso militare.

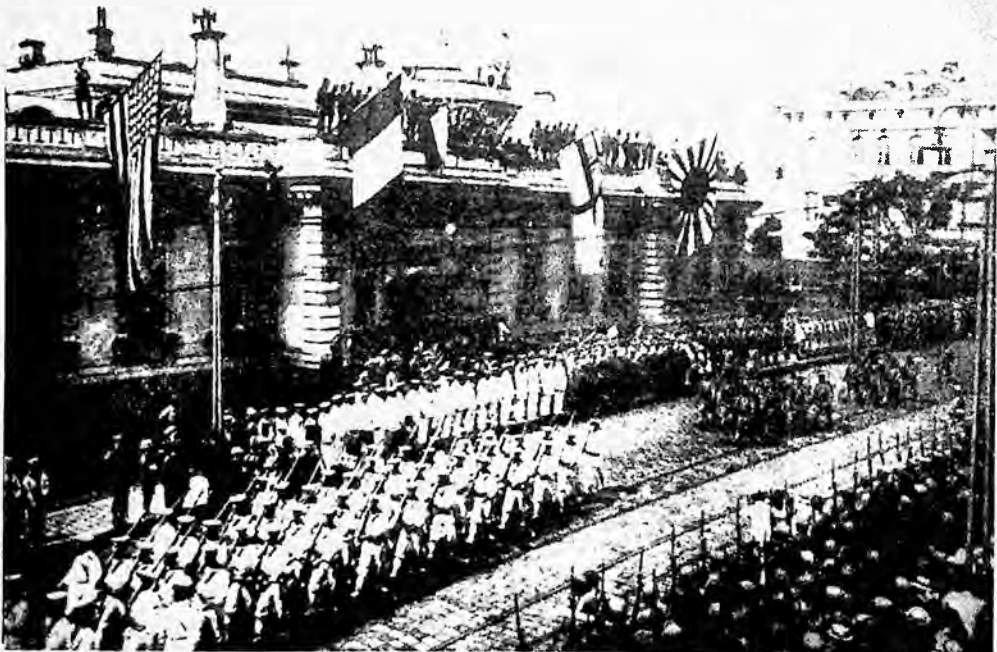
Quartiere Generale: 2 Nikol'evskaya Peresolok — presso il Tempio di San Giorgio

(This is the Moscow appeal of the International Legion as it appeared in five languages.)

deeply moved by the plight of the oppressed there and by the spontaneous solidarity they witnessed. One Hungarian POW wrote: "1915-1916 — these were the darkest years for the Hungarian prisoners. They were also in truth a terrible period of ruthless despotism for all Russia. . . . And if many thousands of Hungarians made it through these hard

years of captivity, then this was because of the simple people of Russia. The Russian people fed us, often taking the scraps from their own children, and risked their lives, eluding the vigilance of our guards in order to nourish those of us who were dying from hunger and disease." Such fraternizing became all the more dangerous to the Tsar because the POW's were often assigned to work with revolutionaries sentenced to hard labor for treasonous activity.

The February Revolution of 1917 cracked the prison regime of Tsarist Russia, but Lenin pointed out, while the proletariat was fighting the February Revolution and overthrowing the Tsar, the bourgeoisie was stealing toward state power. And they seized it. In this complex situation, where the revolution had advanced part way but left bourgeois rule intact, the spontaneous tendency arose, fanned by the bourgeoisie, of "revolutionary defensism" — the widespread chauvinist feelings among the masses in the form of "defending the gains of the revolution." May Day that year was a scene of wildly contending lines, with the Bolsheviks led by Lenin continuing to expose the predatory nature of the war, but with many participants caught up in the festive, celebratory mood occasioned by their belief that the revolution had already been completed. Into this swirl of controversy and celebration suddenly sounded a dissonant and sobering note. Small bands of German, Austrian and Hungarian prisoners of war, still wretched in appearance from malnutrition and back-breaking labor, and still confined to the camps by the bourgeois government, strode into view, red flags at their head, the Internationale on their lips. Sensing the critical point in the revolution, this



Allied imperialist armies march into Vladivostok, launching invasion of the Soviet Republic.

relative handful of men had broken out of the camps with the aid of the Bolsheviks and had come to proclaim before the people of Russia their brotherhood with the people of Russia and the world. It was a sight which brought shame to those, including many advanced, and some Bolsheviks too, who were torn between the "realism" of continuing the war and the "utopian" hopes of the revolutionary internationalists.

Events moved dramatically ahead, and many *zarubezhniki* began to arrive from around the world to see and participate in the revolution. One socialist from the U.S. enlisted in the Red Guard (the Bolshevik militia). He describes what happened next: "Hearing this, Lenin suggested that I form a foreign detachment. *Pravda* printed our 'call' in such English type as they could muster." (See reproduction of this on next page.)

"About sixty men joined the detachment. Amongst them was Charles Kuntz, heretofore a Tolstoyan with scruples against killing even a chicken. Now that the Revolution was in peril, he threw over his pacifism and took up a gun. A tremendous change, to convert a fifty-year-old philosopher into a soldier. In target practice his rifle would get tangled in his beard, but once his bullet hit the bullseye, and his eyes glistened with joy.

"We were a motley crowd and our fighting-strength really amounted to little. But the spirit of it had a good moral effect upon the Russians. . . ."

By now, in early fall, the desire for insurrection was burning among significant sections of the workers and among masses of peasants and soldiers as well. In October the Bolsheviks toppled the bourgeois government and immediately set out to consolidate proletarian power and to help launch world revolution. In this context the Bolsheviks along with revolutionary internationalists among the prisoners called on the former POW's to take up the tasks of defending the revolution and at the same time prepare to carry the flames of revolution into the heart of Europe and set the continent ablaze. Special schools were set up to give the POW's concentrated courses in Marxism, as well as to teach them things like how to fabricate passports and personal papers. By the spring of 1918 almost 20,000 revolutionaries had been trained in these schools and sent abroad to Germany, Hungary, Romania, Poland and many other countries. The Bureau of Revolutionary Propaganda in Moscow published 3 million copies of newspapers in over a dozen languages to assist them.

The main training, however, was the experience of the revolution itself, as right before the eyes of hundreds of thousands of former POW's a new world fought for its life and drew them into this fight. A Slovak POW wrote of these times:

"I met with several Czech Social-Democrats, who were at that time in Moscow. The newspaper, 'Prukopnik,' was coming out in Czech, informing us of the victories of the revolution. Hundreds of Czechs and Slovaks in Moscow were going into the legions of the Red Army. A few of my comrades and me went in too. Later we found out a section was organizing for people speaking Czech and was forming up in Red Square in the heart of Moscow. So we took off for there. We quickly got into combat preparations while some people undertook guard duty and others made a search of bourgeois houses. The Austrian Consul came upon us and demanded to know what the hell we, Czechs and Slovaks, were doing going into the Red Army for, why didn't we just go back to the 'fatherland.' Maybe later on, when the 'fatherland,' that is, Austro-Hungary, was shattered and his majesty 'Father Joseph' overthrown, maybe then he understood things a little better."

Just after the October Revolution, the Russian Revolution had a vital but short-lived breathing space. Soon new and more intense contradictions presented themselves. The former imperialist army was melting away, with desertion massive and everywhere. In February 1918 the German imperialists seized the opportunity to press ahead rapidly, towards the heart of the revolution in Petrograd (now Leningrad), and into the Ukraine and in-



Jeanne Labourbe—the daughter of a French peasant who fought in the Commune. At 18 she went to Poland to teach school. There she met Russian Marxists, and when the 1905 Revolution broke out, she took part in it and became known as a fiery agitator. She was arrested and deported to France, but a few years later returned to Russia and undertook underground work as a Bolshevik. In 1917, she organized among French immigrants in Moscow, and led in conducting underground agitation and propaganda among the French troops which invaded the Soviet Republic in 1918.

dustrial districts of Russia. The Russian people were exhausted by the war; it would take time, months at least, to put together a revolutionary army that could fight the civil war Lenin knew was imminent.

At this point, with the Russian revolution under heavy attack and with revolution in Germany or elsewhere not imminent, the Bolsheviks and revolutionary internationalist POW's called a Congress of POW delegates which issued a call to all former POW's: "The fate of the Russian Republic is linked with the fate of International Revolution. It is the duty of every prisoner of war to defend the Russian Soviet Republic. The Congress appeals to all prisoners of war to join our ranks and as revolutionary soldiers take up arms against the imperialists."

Internationalist POW Congress

From the scattered fragments recounting this Congress, it is clear that it was a gathering the likes of which had never been seen on earth. Hungarian peasants, German artisans, Austrian long-haired students and Turkish dockworkers, a dozen nationalities from the mountain regions of the Balkans, and even a few Chinese and Koreans. In sum, over 2,000 POW delegates, hardened by years of war and prison, only just freed from the brutal labor camps, men who had already seen so much bloodshed and fighting in the trench-warfare of the Eastern front, men who hadn't seen their families, their homes, their friends in years — but who came to Moscow not reluctantly but fired with the determination to fight, and perhaps to die, for the dream which was being born by the heroic efforts of their Russian brothers and sisters.

The session opened in chaos, with translators shouting everywhere to be heard above the din. A German soldier took the floor: "Our Excellencies the German imperialists and their Russian colleagues, the bourgeoisie, know damn well that the proletariat of Russia does not stand alone: At this critical moment we guarantee the support of many, many thousands of prisoners of war. Only over the corpses of us proletarians will the bourgeois bandits ever take the red fortress of the Russian revolution!" Resolutions were read from different camps, including one which stated that "The Russian revolution is in its very heart a revolution of the workers and peasants, it is a struggle against the yoke of capital . . . therefore we, workers and peasants who are prisoners of war, will defend it to the end . . . for if the Russian revolution perishes then there will also perish the cause of the liberation of all mankind." A Hungarian worker asked: "Here in the vast expanse of Russia is now being de-



Bela Kun—a revolutionary from Hungary—was ordered into the Austro-Hungarian army in WW 1 as punishment for carrying out anti-war activity, which he then continued to carry out in the soldiers' ranks. Captured by the Tsarist Army, he became a revolutionary leader of the Hungarian POW's, and then took great initiative in joining with the Bolsheviks to mobilize the POW's into the international sections of the Red Army. In 1918 he returned to Hungary where together with other revolutionaries including many ex-Russian-POW's who'd fought in the revolutionary civil war there, he led in forming the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Its brief life was ended by massive imperialist intervention.

San Fu-yan—had left China and found work in a factory in St. Petersburg. He joined the Red Guards and took part in the October Revolution. He then helped mobilize other Chinese into the International Chinese Battalion of the Red Army, which was composed of several hundred Chinese, a number of Romanian volunteers, and a few Austrian and Hungarian prisoners-of-war. San Fu-yan was chosen commander, and they took part in heavy fighting against the German imperialist army.



One of the International Battalions of the Red Army on the Southwestern front.

cided the fate of the workers of the world. Is it possible to stay away? Is it possible not to act?!" It was announced to thunderous applause that a group of Hungarians, Germans and Czechs had already gone to the Eastern front to fight the advancing army; it was a stunning moment, for up to that point the imperialist war had been Hungarian, German, Austrian and Czech against Russians, Englishmen and French — now was developing not only a revolutionary civil war within Russia, but elements of a revolutionary civil war internationally. The slogan went out from the Congress to the POW camps; "All into the Ranks of the Red International Army" — for so it was conceived and built.

The ranks of the Legions swelled. There were cases of a Chinese command-

er leading Hungarians and Czechs who all tried to speak German; of Germans leading Croats, Serbs, Slovenians; of Turks, Greeks and Bulgarians, and many others. As their ranks further grew, the Karl Liebknecht Brigade from Germany, a revolutionary regiment of Poles, and other units formed. In the spring of 1918, just as the Red Army began to mobilize, between 40,000 and 90,000 soldiers, making up 30-40% of the Red Army, came from countries outside Russia.

The imperialist governments reacted to this with horror. One of the first acts of the newly established German Embassy in Moscow was an official protest against these efforts "to subvert the prisoners from allegiance to their own governments." An order was issued stating that

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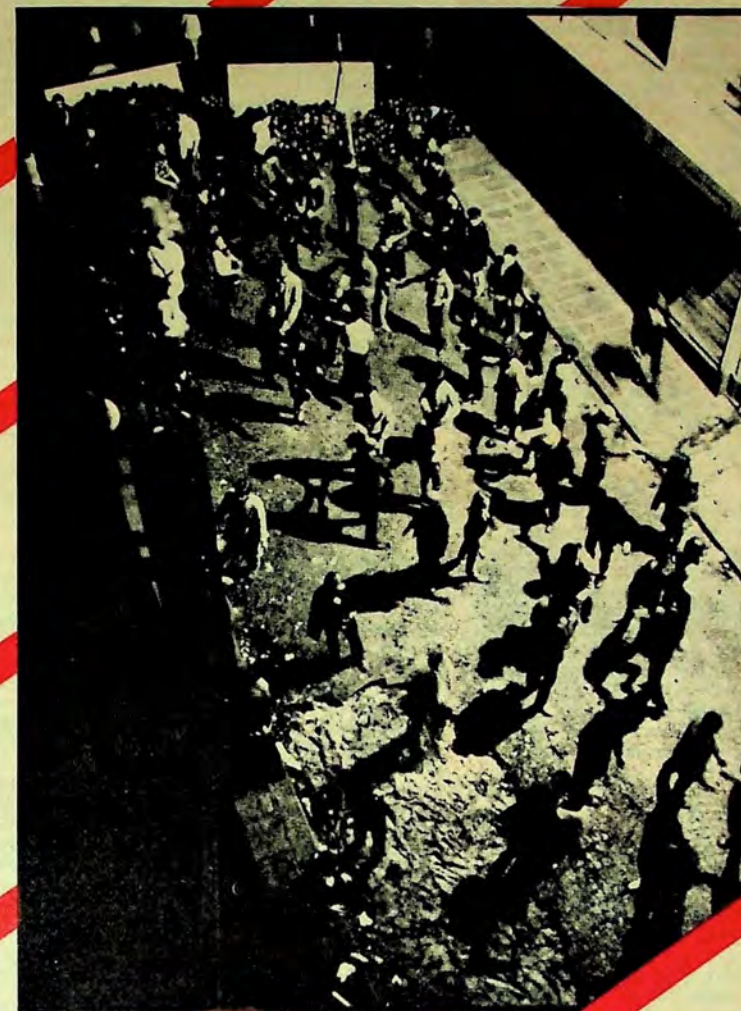
The Days of May: France 1968



French students and auto workers at Renault salute each other.



Red Flag over France.



Chains of students building barricades at night.

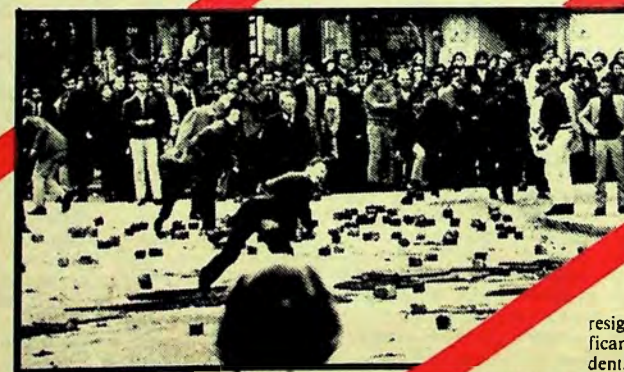
The Gaullists.



The revolutionary youth.



A rebel foot-soldier in gear filched from Odéon Theatre.



After the closing of the Sorbonne, demonstrations in the Latin Quarter.

It was Spring, 1968. And though the sticky heat of the continental summer had yet to make its annual appearance, France was already sweltering in shirt-sleeves—enveloped by the stifling atmosphere of bourgeois rule embodied in De-Gaulle's Fifth Republic. Incredibly, it almost seemed that France had developed a strange immunity to the turmoil that marked the international situation that year: the national liberation struggle in Vietnam; the Cultural Revolution in China; upheaval in the U.S. and a number of imperialist countries. By comparison, France as a whole appeared deceptively somnolent, even indifferent, in the face of the turbulence that was already stamping its indelible ink upon the times.

Amidst the general pall of cynicism and

resignation, there were, however, significant stirrings among the university students that would prove to be prophetic. Many were fed up with deadening weight of the factories of "higher education," and there had been protests against the maddeningly petty rules and regulations laid down by the faceless bureaucracy in Paris—no politics on campus, no posters on dormitory walls, etc. Students were particularly incensed with the universities' puritanical refusal to permit any form of "co-habitation"—i.e. barring men from entering women's rooms and even refusing to allow co-ed swimming in the campus pool.

A typical piece of graffiti on the wall of the Sorbonne declared, "Thanks to Teachers & Examinations, Careerism begins at age six." Anti-imperialist sentiments, if not the impetus for huge demonstrations, were nevertheless quite widespread among the students and revolutionary politics were hotly debated on the campuses. Sporadic clashes had increasingly broken out between radical students and the iron-bar wielding fascist "commando" of the right-wing group, Occident, which prided itself on such slogans as "Kill the Communists" and boasted that "We will not allow a hand-

ful of student *guerilleros* to glorify the actions of the Viet Cong torturers."

On March 22, the Sorbonne's campus at Nanterre was occupied briefly by students furious at the arrest of several anti-Vietnam war militants who had been grabbed by police after 500 people trashed the American Express offices in Paris. But, though the turmoil at Nanterre continued to bubble in a number of mass student meetings held in defiance of the administration throughout April, it must have seemed to those who frequented the tasteful drawing rooms with an adequate view of the Seine or sprawled in the exorbitantly-priced outdoor cafes along the Champs Elysées that it was nothing extraordinary, all things considered. As April gave way to May, there was little reason to suspect that all of French society would shortly be tossed disrespectfully up in the air and stalked by a spectre that the bourgeoisie had literally tried to write out of its history books and that would now return to leer at them over the tops of the barricades—the spectre of the dreaded Paris Commune.

In Paris, the leaders of the General Trade Union Confederation (CGT), the powerful trade union machine run by the pro-Soviet, revisionist Communist Party of France (PCF), had not even bothered to stage a May Day parade worth mentioning for the past fifteen years. The PCF had been increasingly alienating left intellectuals and the revolutionary-minded generally with, among other things, its nauseating support for the unsuccessful suppression of the French imperialists' Algerian "possession" in the early '60s. But perhaps it felt somewhat secure in the knowledge that up until now

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The Days of May

Continued from page 11

the better paid French worker disenthralled with DeGaulle's "politics of grandeur" would frequently feel, as one writer put it, that "his natural home was in the party or the CGT," outfits which sometimes paraded about to the singing of *The Internationale* and beneath the red flag, but, often as not, to the strains of *The Marseillaise* and the waving of the French tricolor. This complacency would soon be shattered as well.

Perhaps faintly sensing a note of discontent, this year the PCF had decided to revive its annual May affair in the best revisionist splendor. At the huge demonstration, however, a contingent of a thousand anti-imperialist students from Nanterre unexpectedly joined the march amid clashes with the CGT's security forces who were trying to keep out what they referred to as the "anarchist infection." Immediately the students split up into small groups, talking animatedly with the younger and more rebellious workers who were eager for something more than the usual yawn-inducing procession of PCF speechmakers and left-wing political hacks that droned on from the reviewing stand.

It was a fitting prelude to what would come to be known as "The Days of May" in France—an exhilarating and magnificently prolonged revolutionary explosion detonated by revolutionary-minded students that would shake the marbled pillars of bourgeois society to their foundations. And its tremendous significance was that it would awaken and jolt into motion a section of advanced proletarians whose influence would, in turn, lend the upheaval a different character, spreading it broadly and deeply among the masses and unleashing an irrepressible torrent. And try as the bourgeois *forces de l'ordre* might to smother it, this explosion would tear away at the rotten fabric of the old order and rupture significantly with bourgeois ideas and ways of thinking and with the reformism draped over the struggle for generations by the traditional left.

On Friday, May 3—the first in a series of what were to become known as "Red Fridays"—the spark ignited. Hundreds of students were gathering in the courtyard of the Sorbonne in Paris to protest the closing of the campus at Nanterre, due to the recent turmoil there, and the disciplinary hearings that had been scheduled for a number of student leaders—among them Daniel Cohn-Bendit who would become the most widely known during subsequent events. Police surrounded the students and began packing some of them into vans. Chanting "Free our comrades!", the students broke out of the encirclement and took to the Latin Quarter, engaging the cops in furious fighting along the Boulevard St. Michel. The battle continued into the night and the first barricades began to go up. By morning some six hundred had been arrested and hundreds injured, including 83 policemen. Action Committees, the main organizational form the May events would take and which would eventually number in the hundreds, were formed.

Several days later, ten thousand people marched through the streets of Paris demanding the reopening of the university, the release of those arrested and the withdrawal of police from the Latin Quarter. Violent street fighting broke out again to the ugly thwack and hiss of the clubs and teargas grenades wielded by the CRS (special French security forces) called out by the government. According to one account: "...sweaters, scarves, trousers, or socks that were red (the symbolic color of the revolt, of its flag, of the 'pro-Communist devil') acted as magnets for police clubs. . . . Slogans began to appear like magic all over the city: TURN AGAINST YOUR COMMON ENEMY: IMPERIALISM AND CAPITALISM! POWER IS IN THE STREETS!

By May 7, the ranks of the rebels had swelled to the tens of thousands (including no small number of young workers defying CGT orders to stay clear of such "political adventurism") as they crossed over from the Left Bank of the Seine at a trot chanting "Hup, hup, hup!". Would they move on the National

Assembly which had, inexplicably, been left unguarded? No, instead they moved in a gigantic, snake dance to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at l'Etoile. Here, fifty thousand people joyously reclaimed the anthem of the international proletariat from the clutches of the revisionists, singing *The Internationale* at the top of their lungs as red flags, along with many black anarchist flags, floated in the breeze.

This was a sacrilege that would provoke indignant protests from the bourgeoisie since, as one observer put it, "it is well known that the poor fellow got, along with a bullet in his head, a pledge not to be subjected to anything but patriotic prose and the national anthem." Indeed, both the revolutionary crowd and the bourgeoisie knew full well that "the poor fellow" was no less than a metaphor for the nation of France itself! So did the revisionists, as the horrified PCF general secretary proclaimed, "We Communists (!) have always fought for and shall continue to fight remorselessly the lack of national feeling that certain anarchist elements vaunt as a sign of their revolutionary ardor. We, for our part, are proud to have restored to the working class. . . the colors of France!" (emphasis his).

The Battalions of Youth

From the start of the May events, it was the youth—filled with intolerance for the stifling oppression of bourgeois order and fighting in the spirit of "Down with the old authority!"—who were in the forefront among the politically aware and active forces. While the first skirmishes and demonstrations were ignited by the students, from the very first day unemployed youth (France then had several hundred thousand unemployed youth) moved rapidly into the ranks of the rebels. By the end of May the bulk of the forces in the streets countering the wave of attacks by the state's shock troops would be young students and rebel proletarians fighting side by side in equal numbers.

Extremely significant was the role of the youth from the *lycées* (high schools). As one writer noted, "These boys and girls were the sappers preparing to dynamite the old barracks of French secondary education." These youth quickly shut down the normal operation of the schools, turning them into centers of resistance and political struggle, and spilled into the streets to join the university students. Widespread opposition to the war in Vietnam had already galvanized many high school students into actions like the attempt to take one high school, the Lycée Condorcet, by storm after the dismissal of a student anti-war activist. No sooner had the May Days begun than in more than thirty Paris *lycées*, and in every major provincial *lycée*, Action Committees were formed to carry out the struggle. At the singing of *The Internationale* at l'Etoile, and in the subsequent street fighting that night in which nearly a thousand were injured, there were already no less than six thousand *lycéens*.

One "older" radical activist who accompanied them that night told of the effect on him of the young students from the Lycée Voltaire: "They were sixteen or seventeen years old. They had discovered action and politics at the same time. One could discuss everything with them: Lenin, the plays of Armand Gatti, Courbet, the Commune. With them I really had the feeling of living a cultural revolution. Kids who had been kept away from everything suddenly started to laugh, to open up, to be fraternal. They talked! I had the feeling that between them and me—and I've had to endure the pressure of the apparatus for ten years—the gulf was not so tremendous. I mean it was they who gave me something new. They spent their first night together, free, for the first time in the streets of the Latin Quarter. . . . There is a remarkable strength in their generation, and it has so much in reserve. . . ."

The ferocity with which the youth—who called themselves *enragés* (wild ones)—against the established order was revealed on the night of May 10-11, the second "Red Friday" in May. The previous night Action Committees had conducted strategy meetings throughout the Latin Quarter—the area

on the Left Bank in which the universities were concentrated and which the youth traditionally considered their turf even though it was now occupied by a massive police force. Now, to the cry of "We must take back the Quarter at all costs!", thousands (including eight or nine thousand *lycéens*) marched in to "liberate" the Latin Quarter from the pigs.

This was the famous "night of the barricades" in which the rebels defended their base area from a prolonged and vicious police assault conducted with CS and poison gas, *bidules* (extra-long rubber truncheons), and offense (high velocity teargas) grenades. And as the news of the battle blared out over the airwaves, thousands more poured into the Quarter from all over Paris to join it—a good deal of them young workers.

Over 60 barricades—some of them over ten feet high—were built from overturned cars, sawed down tress and lamp-posts and anything else at hand. People working at the rear with pickaxes, and occasionally a liberated jackhammer, furiously ripped up the streets as paving stones were passed from hand-to-hand up to the front lines where they were rained down on the police. Spotters on rooftops signaled what the police were up to. Transistor radios were blaring everywhere as the rebels used live on-the-spot news reports to determine the positions of the police and to receive (often encouraging) news on their rebel comrades in other sections of the Quarter and the city.

One rebel described some of the innovations in the streets:

"Where a building was going up in rue Gay-Lussac they went in to get wire, they made a barricade that was normally high enough, eight to ten feet, and about a hundred and fifty feet long in rue de l'Abbe-de-l'Épée, which was dark because they'd knocked out all the street lights, they really fucked things up with the wire, strung so that any cop that went into that street would get it right in the throat, no one could move! And then you read in the papers that the guys had been trained for this! On the contrary, the first barricades that were built were very badly done, but the last, the ones in rue Gay-Lussac, had genius in them; the guys put stakes in front, the way they must do it in Vietnam; the guys devised great technical solutions with the material that was available."

Many residents rallied to the support of the rebels. As one resident described: "All of us spent the night of May 10-11 in the street. All the neighbors were there—shopkeepers, teachers, laundresses. We were curious and a little uplifted: the atmosphere was definitely out of the ordinary. Everyone contributed stuff to help the kids build their barricades: cellars were emptied, even flower pots and old packing cases were donated. . . . Residents opened up their gates, taking in and treating the wounded at the risk of beatings or gas grenades being fired point blank through their windows by the marauding CRS pigs. Taxi drivers responded en masse to a call to help evacuate the wounded.

One man described yet another reaction of some residents of the area: "People on their balconies were so revolted by the behavior of the forces of order that they stood up on those high floors and flung huge pieces of furniture down on the cops who were huddled under their shields like old Roman soldiers." The police had to fight for every inch of ground gained and were finally only able to demolish the ingeniously constructed barricades with a two-story high bulldozer borrowed from the army corps of engineers. Though people were finally forced to retreat, it was in the spirit of a popular slogan revived in May—"Run, Comrade, run! The old world is behind you!"

The exhilarating mood in the Latin Quarter that night was described by one observer: "In a large number of participants and spectators the barricades awakened recollections: 1830, 1848, 1871. The site itself was propitious: it had known barricades before. 'Barricades', a word steeped in history, was translated, in this area steeped in history. . . as 'heroic deaths'. Gavroche, Baudin, who knows? All of us, especially on that night, thought of gunpowder and bullets, of the Versaillais and the Communards. . . . And, indeed, others were seeing these events in such a historical perspective. At midnight a terrified police inspector

stumbled out of breath into the office of the Ministry of the Interior exclaiming, "If you could see that! It's unbelievable! It's the Commune!" "Not yet," replied a high official bitterly, "but it's already an insurrection."

Rolling Over Revisionism

There is a story about how at four in the morning on the "night of the barricades," several students phoned up the head of the CGT, a slimy revisionist named Georges Séguy, and told him in essence: "We can't hold out. We need the proletarians to come and help us." In fact, one of the main strengths of the student movement was that—despite a wide range of differing political trends and a general theoretical distaste for the leading role of a vanguard party (largely in response to the putrid counter-revolutionary tradition of the PCF over the years)—its leaders repeatedly called for the proletariat to join and lead "the Revolution," as the May events were popularly called. Séguy's response was quite in keeping with the PCF-run CGT's attitude toward the "days of May": "One does not mobilize the working class at this time of night," he tartly replied. It was little wonder that throughout the duration of the May events, it was often noted by political commentators that the "two Georges"—Séguy, together with DeGaulle—"ruled France."

In fact the revisionists had been attempting night and day to mobilize the workers *against* the students, branding them as "pseudo-revolutionaries" and "provocateurs." PCF honcho, Georges Marchais, in a long article in *L'Humanité* declared the student demonstrators to be "mostly sons of grand bourgeois" and accused them of serving the government, etc. These attacks were particularly ludicrous coming from the likes of the PCF whose notorious history had already confirmed just who was "pseudo," who was serving whom, and who was in fact an enemy of any revolutionary struggle. When various PCF and CGT officials occasionally deigned to tour the Latin Quarter to reconnoiter, they were routinely hissed and booed down by the decidedly unpatriotic rebels.

When France awoke the morning after the "night of the barricades," the revisionists found themselves in a pickle, faced with a wave of outrage at the suppression of the young rebels. Deluged by the workers, leaders of the various trade unions were forced to call a 24 hour general strike to protest the repression against the youth. The CGT found itself in the position of having to issue a call for a huge demonstration, knowing full well that if it did not, thousands of workers would take to the streets anyway.

On May 13, one million people marched through the streets of Paris as the government made noises about meeting some of the students' demands. PCF goon squads, led by members of the party's central committee, could be seen manhandling and attempting to contain any workers who showed signs of wanting to break with the official slogans and march route of the demonstration. When several thousand students and young workers broke out and tried to lead the march toward the seat of the government in the Élysée, CGT "security monitors" quickly ordered the march to disperse, channeling people in the other direction as a number of sharp skirmishes broke out in protest. The PCF/CGT leaders fervently hoped that the workers' anger had been siphoned off by this large manifestation and that this would be the end of it.

No such luck! The next morning the young workers at the Sud-Aviation plant near Nantes blew the revisionist pipe dreams wide open, transforming the whole nature of the struggle in an action that served as a manifesto to the workers throughout France. Blasting *The Internationale* through the public address system, they seized and occupied the factory, imprisoning the management in its offices, and fortifying the premises against police attack. Other workers began to follow suit, crashing through the barriers of trade union struggle painstakingly erected over the years by the CGT leadership. One day later, the Renault auto plants in Cleon and Flins were similarly occupied. From this point on, the meaning of "liberated territory" was to take on a much broader and profound scope than simply the Latin

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The Pope's Modern Day Inquisition

"Radical priests" have become something of a phenomenon in the Catholic Church in the last two decades, particularly in Latin America, where almost half the world's 400 million nominal Catholics live. In Guatemala and El Salvador Catholic priests and nuns have been murdered by right-wing death squads because of their relationship with the rebellious peasantry. In Colombia, Bolivia and Nicaragua, priests have been known to join guerrillas fighting U.S.-backed governments. In Nicaragua, four priests, including a Jesuit, were involved in the Sandinista movement which overthrew the Somoza regime. Despite the vocal objections of both the local bishops and the pope, they are now serving in the new government. Such activities by clergy have been justified against more traditional Catholic teaching and practice by the emergence of a liberal "liberation theology," an update of the "social gospel" of Christianity popular among some Protestant clergy working in the urban industrial ghettos of the U.S. at the turn of the century.

The activities and influence of these people have been more than an annoyance to the Vatican. They run directly counter to the pope's campaign to bring calm to the U.S. empire while posing as the savior of those living under Soviet domination in Poland and elsewhere. Since his elevation to the papacy he has traveled tirelessly to virtually every hot spot of U.S. imperialism, throwing holy water on the flames of dissent and rebellion. From the Philippines to Mexico his message has been the same, that the role of the Church, as he put it in Brazil, is not to "provoke or deepen dissension, to worsen conflicts or become involved in them." At a meeting with Latin American bishops he explicitly took aim at "liberation theology" by contrasting it with what he called "a correct Christian idea of liberation," and ordered his priests to restrict themselves to caring for the spiritual needs of their flock.

It is against this background that the pope last October launched a major clampdown against the Jesuits, the Roman Catholic Church's largest and most powerful religious society. After Pedro Arrupe, the Jesuits' Spanish-born Superior General, was hospitalized by a stroke, the pope personally took over the order. At a meeting near Rome in February he called together Jesuit leaders from around the world to tell them that the organization, with its 26,000 members, better toe the papal line.

Church authorities have been quick to point out that the clampdown is directed at liberal activists and not the Jesuit order as a whole. It's a good point. Mention of the Jesuits is capable of conjuring up many images, none of them particularly associated with the passions that stir men's souls for liberation. Their more familiar totems are the torture chambers of the Inquisition, the christianization/pacification of colonized peoples in China, India and Latin America, and the shepherding of falangist snipers into Church belltowers during the Spanish Civil War.

Today throughout the world the Jesuits operate almost 100 universities geared to turning out upstanding citizens drilled in the virtues of the status quo and the righteous harmony between Christianity and capitalism. During the upheavals that rocked university campuses in the U.S. and Europe during the late '60s and early '70s, these Jesuit institutions were marked by their quiescence and general lack of student activism. Jesuit schools, most notably Georgetown University, have become renowned as bastions of establishment orthodoxy and political reaction, boasting of an imperialist think tank, the Center for Strategic Studies, and such names as Henry Kissinger and Jean Kilpatrick on faculty rosters. And it is a fair bet that papal ire is not directed at the likes of Secretary of State Alexander Haig's brother, the Jesuit president of one such institution.

Nevertheless, the Jesuits, like the Catholic Church as a whole, have not been immune from the turmoil, crisis and revolutionary struggle of the past 20 years. It became increasingly difficult for the Church to continue its tradition of blatant identification with the interests of the landed aristocracy, local capitalists and foreign imperialists in the countries of the third world. It was much harder to preach an unwornish gospel of submission and acceptance and maintain a hold

on the peasantry and lower classes. In the early '60s "modernization" and reform began to spread throughout the Catholic Church in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. Not surprisingly, it paralleled the efforts of the Kennedy administration to revitalize the image of U.S. imperialism and to respond to the threat represented by the Cuban revolution and its spreading influence. Such programs as the Alliance for Progress in Latin America, the Green Revolution in India and the White Revolution in Iran found their counterparts in a new concern expressed by the Catholic hierarchy for the interests of the exploited, the poor and the downtrodden of the world.

Many idealistic youth were taken in by the image of the young Catholic president in the White House and the old, iconoclastic roly-poly reformer in the Vatican. It was not unusual to find pictures of John Kennedy and Pope John the 23rd hanging side by side in many homes. Thousands of young people joined the Peace Corps and ventured off to "help the poor." Young Catholic priests and seminarians seemed to have less enthusiasm for preparing catechism classes and serving the spiritual needs of the latifundistas. More often they were found participating in land reform programs, organizing peasant cooperatives or running literacy programs.

At the same time the Second Vatican Council stimulated the reformulation and modernization of Church theology and ritual, aimed at holding onto the allegiance of educated Catholics in the industrial countries of Western Europe and the U.S. Few of these new Catholic theological innovators were known for their identification with the revolutionary struggles and sentiments of people in the imperialist-dominated countries. Their efforts were directed primarily at meeting and countering the intellectual challenges to traditional Catholicism presented by 19th and 20th century philosophy and science. They set out to show, as the Vatican Council theologian Hans Kung put it, that "today there is no necessity to be against God merely because we are for geocentrism and evolution, for democracy and science, for liberality or socialism." But they had an effect on the more liberal social activists in the ranks of the clergy. By challenging and rejecting some long held Catholic dogmas, they undercut the authority of the Vatican hierarchy. In their efforts to get around what they considered the obscurantism of the old establishment in the Church they promoted a sort of ecclesiastical populism and doctrinal eclecticism which also undermined the magisterial and organizational authority of the Church bureaucracy.

In general the strategy failed, as statistics on Church attendance and financial contributions in the industrialized countries continued to drop in the '60s and '70s. Unfortunately for the Church, once the window was thrown open a bit, a lot of things began to fly out, including some of the pope's authority and ability to demand unquestioned obedience. At the same time it did give some theological leeway to those who justified identification with "leftist" political causes and looked favorably on certain aspects of Marxist philosophy. Even Jesuit Superior Arrupe, who had spent his early career in Japan ministering to victims of the U.S. atomic bombs, seems at one point to give

some approval to this "rereading of the gospels from a Marxist angle," as the liberation theology was often described. He told an Italian journalist in 1979 that "although we cannot accept the commitment of (pro-Marxist) Jesuits . . . this should not prevent us from taking a deep interest in Marxism . . . Many views of the Marxists are mistaken and dangerous, but it is no less true that they are often inspired by a profound sense of the injustices they want to combat . . ."

It is not surprising that more than a few Catholic priests and nuns, thrust directly into the wretched conditions of life of the masses in the colonial countries, were radicalized by their exposure to the oppression and rebellion of the people. For many of these highly motivated, altruistic young people it was only too obvious who was responsible and who benefited from these conditions. Like their counterparts in the Peace Corps, who were sent off in the service of U.S. imperialism, they had their eyes opened by what they saw, began to recognize the role they were expected to play, rebelled, and became anti-imperialists. Some of them became sympathetic to pro-Soviet forces in these countries.

During this period the revisionists — the French Communist Party Politburo member and philosopher Roger Garaudy was perhaps the most famous — tried to take advantage of these trends by promoting a "Christian-Marxist dialogue." In Europe this was linked to the revisionists' electoral strategies, hoping to entice some liberal Catholics to pull the Communist lever in the ballot booth. In the third world, especially Latin America, the revisionists used this openness to Marxism in an effort to draw the minority of progressive clergy to a more friendly attitude towards Soviet strategies, including their efforts at an "historic compromise" with pro-U.S. Christian Democratic parties and Soviet efforts to step up their influence among groups engaged in armed struggle against U.S.-backed regimes.

The liberal, reformist strategies, which were joined to more traditional, heavy-handed methods of expansion and control in the '60s by both the U.S. (Kennedy in Vietnam) and the Catholic Church, quickly became unsuited to the changed world conditions of the late '70s and the '80s. As the Soviet Union and its bloc emerged from a more conciliatory approach to contention with the U.S. to more direct military and political challenge, a much more hard-line, confrontational response to this challenge was required. The smokescreen of detente gave way to a propaganda offensive against Soviet totalitarianism and repression of human rights. Efforts were intensified to create trouble for the Soviets within their own satellites in Eastern Europe and to counter Soviet influence within the Western bloc. And lo and behold, a Polish Cardinal from behind the Iron Curtain is selected to lead the Roman Church at this very opportune time. He was a man who knew first-hand the "reality" of "Marxism" and the deceptive falsity of "socialism" à la the Soviet Union.

The new pope set to work immediately. He moved quickly to re-establish the frayed central authority of the Vatican, censuring liberal theologians like Hans Kung and denouncing those influenced by Marxism. Because of their powerful

and influential role in the Church, the Jesuits became a key focus of this re-ordering and disciplining of the ecclesiastical troops. If he could hit hard at those troublesome forces among the Jesuits, it would have a much wider impact in the Church. The pope ordered the Jesuit leaders to rein in maverick elements running counter to the Church's doctrinal dictates and international policy. "If one half of all Jesuits might have to leave the Order it would be better than the present confusion and distrust," says someone the *New York Times* calls a high churchman who is expected soon to become a cardinal.

Former Jesuit head Arrupe set the tone for dealing with the radical minority in the Jesuits and cleansing the order of liberal influence. The *Times* reported that "each Jesuit community subsequently received a picture of the Superior General kneeling before the Pope. Father Arrupe urged every Jesuit to engage in self-criticism and help bring about the 'necessary changes.'" It seems that Arrupe's efforts to reverse the reformist trend with which he himself was loosely associated were a case of too little, too late for the pope. In order to emphasize the direction and seriousness of his rectification the pope also began to promote a group known as *Opus Dei* (the work of God), a right-wing Catholic lay organization tightly connected with the Franco regime in Spain.

The Roman Pontiff, as much as the State Department or the U.S. Congress, views the revolutionary ferment in Central America and other global flash points in terms of superpower contention. What helps the U.S. bloc is good, what hurts the U.S. and/or advances the influence of the Soviets is bad. So the criticisms of the Duarte government and the military junta by Archbishop Romero of San Salvador were frowned upon and the pope was hardly heartbroken by his assassination. In his place he appointed a new bishop who called for the rebels to lay down their arms. In Poland the Catholic bishops who serve as a rallying point for opposition to the Soviets are warmly embraced by the pope, and meet with him for important strategy sessions in the Vatican.

Thus, the first target of this effort to purge the Jesuits is those priests who because of their opposition to U.S. imperialism and inclination towards "Marxism" are considered to be objectively aiding the Soviets. Such a fifth column must be rooted out. As for others influenced by the climate of liberalism and political activism, the pope called on them "in a period of polarization and contradictions which mark contemporary society" . . . "to return with humility and joy to the unsullied communions with their pastors and brothers who suffered from their attitude and their absence."

The Catholic Church certainly does not want to lose too many of its priests and nuns, particularly given the difficulty it has in mustering new recruits these days. But there is no doubt that the pope, from his own perspective, upholds the old slogan "fewer but better troops." Imperialism still needs the hangman and the priest, the former to garrot, the latter to console. The pope just wants to make sure the priest standing next to the hangman is a reliable consoler. □

Russian Revolution

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Germans who joined the Red Army would be treated as deserters. Indeed some of the finest deserters in history!

The governments of the Anglo-led Entente screamed as well. The American Consul in Irkutsk (Western Siberia) telegraphed the Secretary of State: "(Conference with Soviet Representative Jansen) began with the arming of prisoners of war. Jansen openly admitted that the Hungarians mentioned in my I, armed by the Bolsheviks to fight the Cossack Semenov, as claimed. Justified this under the theory of international class war, saying that these workmen willingly went against the supporters of bourgeoisie. I vigorously protested against Russia, an Ally of America, (sic — he was invoking the imperialist war treaties which the Bolsheviks had repudiated — RW) arming the enemies of America for any purpose whatsoever. Declared this against international law and public morale, as forces so armed were a possible menace to America and American interests."

Imperialist Intervention

The imperialists brought to bear their own brand of "internationalism" against the Russian Revolution — the invasion of the Soviet Republic in the summer of 1918 by imperialist powers led by the U.S., England, France and Japan. Once it was in their interests the imperialists proved not at all reluctant to arm certain POW's. An army of Czechs and Slovaks, led by White Russian officers, had determined that they were going to exit Russia via the Trans-Siberian Railroad in order to get to the Western front. Many were hardened reactionaries. For others, the bottom line was: by God, I'm going home from all this shit and nobody better try and stop me. This petty backwardness amid the world-historic upheaval shaking Russia was soon carved into a weapon against the Revolution, with many of the Czechs mobilized around a special hatred for the *zarubezhniki* whom they viewed as foreigners who had taken Russia from the Russians. Soon they had become the core of Denikin's counter-revolutionary army in Siberia and were doing the work of the imperialists. The following account of the taking of Vladivostok from the Soviets by the imperialists vividly portrays the vengeance with which they attacked the Russian Revolution:

"The occupation proceeds swiftly, like clock-work, according to plan.

"The Japanese seize the powder-magazine, the British the railroad station. The Americans throw a cordon around the consulate. The Chinese and others take up lesser points. The Czechs converge upon the Soviet building. They encircle it from all sides. With a loud 'Hurrah,' — they rush forward, and go crashing thru the doors. The Red Flag of the Socialist Republic is pulled down, and the red, white and blue flag of autocracy is run up. Vladivostok passes into the hands of the Imperialists.

"The Soviet has fallen,' a hoarse shout goes up in the street, and runs like wildfire thru the city. The patrons of the Olympia Cafe, rushing out into the street, burst into yells, flinging up their hats, cheering the Czechs. The Soviet and all its works is a cursed thing to them. It is fallen. But that is not enough. They would obliterate every trace of it. . . .

"With incredible swiftness a complete change passes over this city of the proletarians. It becomes a city of the well-fed and well-groomed, their shining faces exultant, congratulating one another, praising God and the Allies, and cheering the Czechs.

"Poor Czechs! These cheers embarrass and mortify them. Their heads hang in shame, meeting a Russian workman. . . . And the bourgeoisie want more than a holiday with bands and streamers. They want a Roman holiday with blood and victims. They want vengeance and retribution on these workmen who have forgotten their station in life.

"Now, we will put them in their proper places," they exclaim. "We will put them on the lamp-posts. It's red these birds admire, is it? Very well, we shall give them all they want of their favorite color. We'll draw it from their veins!"

The *zarubezhniki* became a special tar-

get of attack for the counter-revolutionary armies. Instead of just shooting those whom they believed to be Bolsheviks as was the custom, they often hung them and let their bodies hang as a warning.

Mass rallies were held to send these *zarubezhniki* units to the fronts. At one of these for the Warsaw Revolutionary Regiment, consisting of 16,000 Polish revolutionaries, Lenin spoke: "As you go to the front you must remember above all that this war alone, the war of the oppressed and exploited against the violators and plunderers, is legitimate, just and sacred.

"An alliance is coming into being between the revolutionaries of different nations — something that the finest people have dreamt of; a real alliance of workers, and not intellectual dreamers.

"The guarantee of victory lies in overcoming national hatred and mistrust.

"It is your great privilege to uphold sacred ideas arms in hand, and to make international brotherhood of nations a reality by fighting together with your front-line enemies of yesterday — Germans, Austrians and Magyars.

"And comrades, I am confident that if you muster all your military forces and set up a mighty international Red Army and hurl these iron battalions against the exploiters and oppressors, against the reactionary thugs of the whole world, making your battle cry 'Victory or Death!' — no imperialist force will be able to hold us!"

The Polish revolutionary regiment left the front with the words of revolutionary battle songs on their lips:

Fix bayonets! Under the flag of hearts,

Let our burning blood boil.

To battle, proletarian battalions!

Let the song of liberation resound. . . .

Besides the critical field of military battle, underground political agitation, propaganda and fraternizing was carried out on a number of the fronts, particularly against the armies of the Entente forces which waged more protracted warfare. These underground units consisted of a number of Russians who sometimes spoke Japanese, French, German, etc., and a number of *zarubezhniki* comrades from the nationality they were seeking to infiltrate. Leaflets were distributed in these languages, as well as newspapers and pamphlets.

The backbone of the imperialist intervention was U.S. imperialism, which had stayed out of the bulk of the World War I combat and now threw fresher troops and supplies into the intervention. Wielding its banner of democracy, Woodrow Wilson denied any intent to crush the revolution: the Entente troops were simply securing war materiel which had been shipped to the Russian bourgeois government and was now in danger of falling into German hands. The U.S. Ambassador to Russia explained that the war supplies were stored in "such points in the interior as Kotlas, Sukhona, and Vologda, as well as in Petrograd and Moscow." The motto of the Polar Bears, the nickname of the American troops, the bulk of whom had volunteered, was taken from Stephen Decatur: "Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations, may she always be in the right; but our country right or wrong."

The revolutionary forces who conducted underground work against the U.S. troops consisted of internationalists from Russia and France as well as England and the U.S. Their paper, *The Call*, was edited by, of all people, a British journalist from the *Manchester Guardian* whose life had been profoundly shaken as he reported the developments in Russia during 1917, as well as some British proletarians. These men had a difficult task, for the American and British soldiers were largely volunteers — and after the hell of World War I that indicated something. An example of their effort to sabotage the military intervention and help neutralize these often backward troops is contained in an excerpt from a leaflet:

"Why have you volunteered to come to Russia?

"Why? Is it that you like war so much? Do you enjoy this rolling in mud and blood? Do you get satisfaction from seeing mangled bodies, and wrecked towns and villages? You claim to be the representatives of a civilized race! Is this how you propose to bring civilization into Russia? . . .

"Does it not strike you that what you

are getting for your work is sheer *Blood Money*? It is the kind of work that cut-throats, blackguards, thieves and hoodlums undertake to do for money. If these are the reasons for which you came, it is not much use appealing to your reason and humanity. The only argument that we can effectively use against you is the bullet and bayonet, and you will find that the Red Army will give you all you want of that. You will find your job 'soft' enough when you find yourself sucked in the mud, in the marshes and forests of Northern Russia.

"We cannot believe, however, that the majority of you volunteered for these reasons. Probably you were induced by the lies circulated by the capitalist press about the anarchy and terror prevailing in Russia. Probably you have been induced to believe that Bolsheviks are devils, who must be destroyed in order that the peace of the world may be secured. If that is so, we are convinced that when you learn the truth about Russia, you too will refuse to be the executioners of the Russian people, just like the British troops you replaced in the Caucasus, and the French and foreign troops in other parts who have refused. . . .

"Volunteers! You are workmen too. What interests have you in fighting for the gang of Russian counter-revolutionaries and international capitalists? As workmen, your business should be to support your fellow-workers in those places where they succeed in taking power, for the victory of the workers in one country is a step toward the emancipation of the workers in all countries."

Internationalism in Action

An inspiring example of the heroism of these underground revolutionaries and of the success achieved in actually winning over an advanced section of these troops who were up against the Red Army took place in the Southern Front, among the French forces on the Black Sea.

The work of the *zarubezhniki* internationalist underground on this front was led by Altera Zalika, a Romanian, Helen Sokolovskii, a Russian, and Jeanne Labourbe, a French woman who became a legendary figure among the French sailors. Labourbe, the daughter of a French Communist who had trekked throughout Europe seeking work after having been driven out of France, came to Russia alone at age 16 at the time of the 1905 Revolution. She was deported as an unwanted foreigner in the ebb following the revolution. In 1917, she undertook work among French people in Moscow, formed a group of French-speaking Communists and then at the time of the French army's intervention, volunteered to lead them in underground work.

Operating out of Odessa on the Black Sea coast, she wrote leaflets and articles for "Le Communiste," the organ of the French Communist group from Kiev, and translated other articles. She went into sailors' bars where she carried on fervent discussions among the French troops. She was renowned for gathering contacts for the paper, some of whom themselves wrote articles for "Le Communiste" opposing the intervention.

A soldier from the 156th French infantry division recalled how the Bolshevik agitators had come to them: "Our commanders just weren't able to stop us from talking to the Russian workers. The courage of these people astounded us. They boldly walked right into our midst, armed with assorted dozens of French words which they mutilated in their Russian way. But these words hit us like powerful bullets: they devastated us. . . . There also came to us people who spoke French beautifully. From obedient sheep we little by little turned into people with some class-consciousness and then finally we categorically refused to fight against the Bolsheviks."

The French underground section was itself a living rebuke to the imperialist history of France, for it was composed not only of women and men from France, but also Senegalese, Algerians, Moroccans and Vietnamese. On the night of March 1, betrayed by a spy, the bulk of the group was arrested by French counter-intelligence agents. The imperialist agents were determined to break the back of the insurgent forces among the French military. They concentrated their efforts on breaking the revolutionary women. The men were lined up in front of the women, and then one by one shot with a revolver point-blank in the face. Not a word from the women. They were

beaten. Still not a word. The next morning their mutilated bodies were found floating near the shore.

Accounts of the heroism of the French-speaking women and the infamy of their butchers rocked France. Within weeks, the name of Jeanne Labourbe was pinned on lapels all over France, and it became a battle cry too among the sailors and soldiers with whom she had worked.

At that time there had already been minor mutinies in the ranks of the French troops; one unit had even cut off communication lines between the command post and the artillery squad in the midst of shelling a Bolshevik-held town. On the heels of the execution of Jeanne Labourbe, soldiers and sailors burst out in isolated but furious rebellions, which were quickly put down with the aid of Romanian military police squadrons in another display of internationalism, imperialist-style. Hundreds were arrested, and the first French sailor was shot as a Bolshevik. But the tocsin had sounded.

In April a decisive battle for the Black Sea coast loomed, as the Red Army units gathered for an offensive. The French Command prepared as well — but so did their troops. On the 19th of April, 1919, as the Red Army troops neared the outskirts, the Command ordered several ships to shell Sevastopol. The sailors refused. They were quickly joined by the sailors of four or five other French military vessels.

The events that followed are described in the account of the leader of the Sevastopol revolutionary underground Bolshevik Party unit: "Morning came on the 20th of April. I almost didn't recognize the French fleet: the flags they were flying were red! The excitement of people gathering on the streets of the city rose with every minute. At noon on the Grafski pier, rowboats, launches and skiffs began to come in, overflowing with French sailors. Suddenly on the Bolshoi Morskoi a column of French sailors formed up. Hugging each other, slapping each other

on the back, the jubilant excited sailors stepped off. Sailors' caps were flying into the air. Red ribbons were pinned to their caps and chests. You could hear shouts of 'Vive la Rusi! Vive le Bolsheviki!' They belted revolutionary songs. As they marched along, new groups of French sailors kept joining in, as they continually arrived from the launches. A red flag flew at the front of their ranks. This flag had its own story. The sailors had come to the union hall of Sevastopol metal-workers and said that they needed a red flag. It was this flag, given them by the metal-workers, which they now carried through the streets."

The people who had remained in Sevastopol, mostly women, older men and youth, joined in the French sailors' procession. Together, these former "enemies," French, Russian, Ukrainian, stormed the nearby prisons, where they freed almost 3000 French sailors and soldiers who had been locked up for refusing to fight the Red Army. The procession, now some 5 or 6000 strong, erupted into an uproar of internationalist solidarity.

Then, near 4 o'clock, on orders of the French Command, Greek soldiers set up firing positions. Without warning, they opened fire with rifles and machine guns on the marchers. Soon the blood of French sailors and Russian proletarians ran together on the streets of Sevastopol. Again from the account of the underground Party leader: "The sailor carrying the red flag at the forefront was shot and fell. Another sailor picked it up. Then he too was killed. Then someone else seized the flag and flung it high into a tree-top. It was saved. . . ."

The uprising of the French sailors and their mass fraternizing with the people of Sevastopol was brutally suppressed and the participants arrested. News of the events stunned France; the already broad opposition to intervention was felt more powerfully than ever. In the Black Sea fleet a week later, on the very flagship as well as the command cruiser and several other ships, mass gatherings of sailors announced that if the interventionist attack was not halted and the fleet sent back to France, then they were not just going to mutiny. They were going to go, ships, weapons, and all, over to the Red Army. Within days the entire French fleet set sail homeward.

On May 1, 1919, the region around Sevastopol celebrated with the units of the Red Army who had now entered the city.

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Medical Mutilation of Haitian Refugees

A nude woman lying on the beach. But it wasn't St. Tropez. It was Miami and the picture blazed out from the pages of the *New York Post*, another warning to those Haitians who would escape the U.S.-backed "paradise" of "Baby Doc" Duvalier and dare the waves of the Caribbean for "the land of the free"—better not try because you ain't gonna make it! The Coast Guard, commenting on this latest drowning of Haitians in late March, said that even though there was a big storm, the boat with the refugees didn't send up an SOS. And, therefore (naturally) they didn't think any help was necessary.

Just in case any Haitians make it to shore, there are the U.S. concentration camps still waiting. Descriptions of atrocious health conditions are coming from both the prisoners themselves and the few medical personnel who are allowed to visit them.

Along with the "usual" respiratory ailments, particularly common among refugees incarcerated in cold areas and spread easily in rooms packed with 40 to 50 and more people, low nourishment, gastrointestinal ailments, and stress-related conditions such as insomnia, mental depression, ulcers and heart ailments, there is another type of disease common to the male refugees.

Called "big breast" or genocomasty, it is found among approximately 10% of male refugees in all detention centers in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. According to experts, there are many things that could cause this disease, such as hormonal defi-

ciencies, particularly testosterone, the male hormone; or liver disease, as the liver is the organ in the body that metabolizes all the hormones that the body secretes. One of the hormones the liver metabolizes is estrogen; and if the liver is unable to metabolize this, the level of this hormone in the blood will be very high and this could cause the disease.

Other causes are also possible: a diminution of testosterone or an increase in estrogen from various causes; starvation or malnutrition. Drugs added to the diet are another possibility, but no one has found out yet—or at least no one is saying.

There are a lot of theories. One possi-

bility is that the food served was injected with hormones to decrease the sexual drive of the refugees. There is also strong opinion that the refugees have been fed dairy cow meat. These cows are injected with prolactin to make them produce more milk. When the cows die they are supposed to be burned, not eaten, but it is entirely possible, given the glorious record of U.S. imperialism, that these are the very cows that end up on the tables in the Haitian detention camps.

What are the effects of this disease? In some of the male refugees, their breasts have grown so much that they could wear a bra. They are in a lot of pain; they cannot sleep face down and milk comes from

their breasts. In addition, they suffer from mental torment; some are so deformed that they are subject to ridicule from some of the more backward refugees.

All this is a "big mystery" so far to the medical profession. At least publicly. Some agencies like the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta are supposedly conducting some research on this. But for all the blood samples taken from all the male refugees to determine the level of the sexual hormones, all they can say is that the tests are "normal"—with the testosterone in the Florida refugees being only "low normal." They also tested the food and true to form, found it all good.

The concern of the bourgeois and bourgeois medical establishment is exemplified by a doctor assigned to the Brooklyn Detention Center, who when approached by a group of Haitian doctors who challenged him on the conditions of many refugees with high blood pressure which was never controlled, people with bleeding, untreated hemorrhoids, women five months pregnant and never examined by a doctor, said that none of these were emergencies and he is only paid for those!

The proletariat will be only too glad to pay for all services rendered, bourgeoisie—with the spirit of the Krome rebellion being only a small taste of the payment we are all too willing to give for such outrages. []

Shine the Light of Revolution Behind the Prison Walls

Dear RW,

I thank you for sending me the *Revolutionary Worker* and the five May Day posters. I am a Native American from Pine Ridge, South Dakota. I'm happy to know that the Dakota Tribal Sovereign Nation is not alone in its struggle to free itself from U.S. imperialism and their lies. Power to all People who oppose U.S. imperialism. Keep up the good work. This country is long overdue for a "REVOLUTION."

I do not fear this system

Revolutionary Greetings:

I am a prisoner at the Indiana State Prison and have been receiving your paper for some time now. It has helped me greatly in understanding the total picture of struggle.

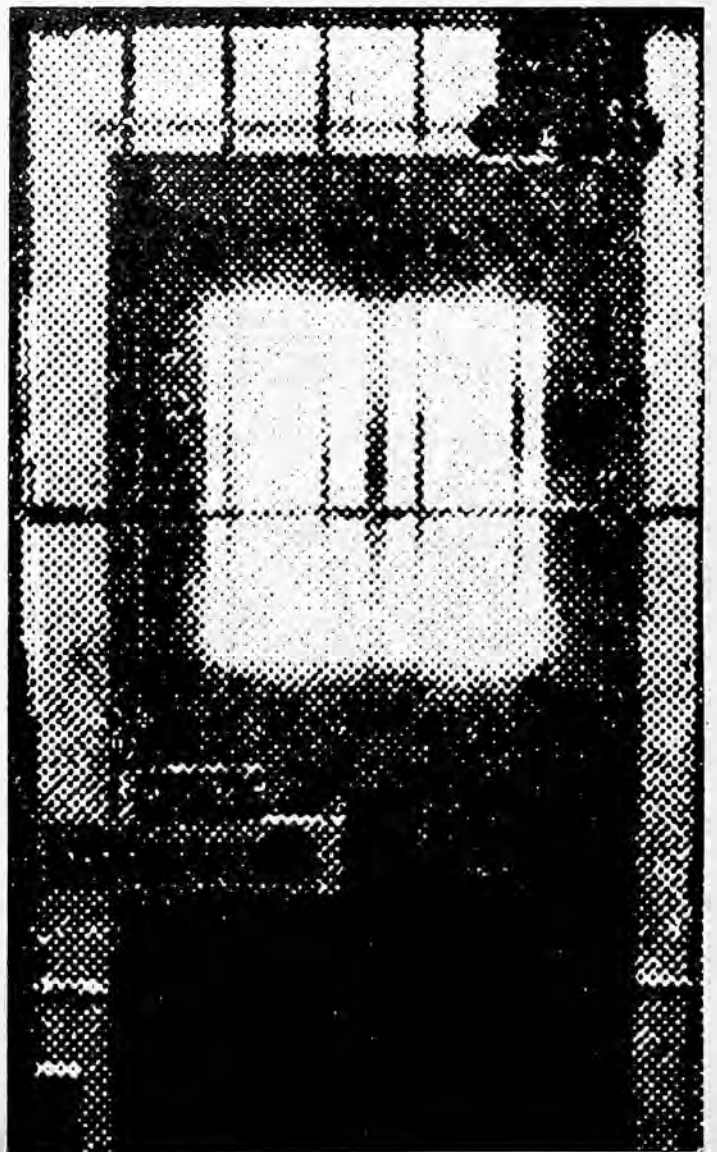
In a few days I will be leaving this place and hence I will no longer be necessary to send me the paper. I will be able to purchase it on the streets.

In behalf of myself and the other comrades here we thank you and appreciate all that you have done for us. As always with me I remain—

Yours in Struggle

The Revolutionary Communist Party receives many letters and requests for literature from prisoners in the hell-hole torture chambers from Attica to San Quentin. There are thousands more brothers and sisters behind bars who have refused to be beaten down and corrupted in the dungeons of the capitalist class and who thirst for and need the *Revolutionary Worker* and other revolutionary literature. To help make possible getting the Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party as well as other Party literature and books on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought behind the prison walls, the *Revolutionary Worker* has established a special fund. Contributions should be sent to:

Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund
Box 3486, Merchandise Mart
Chicago, IL 60654



The Days of May

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Quarter.

Within two weeks, more than ten million workers had seized hundreds of factories, mines, shipyards, government offices, a nuclear facility and even at least one whole town. Wave upon wave of strikes cut off all public transportation, air, rail and sea service, communications and even the banks and the Paris stock exchange. Paris—the heart of France—was paralyzed, and the whole country was in turmoil. Everywhere public officials were held up to ridicule. Hoots and catcalls greeted DeGaulle's sundry appeals for "law and order" as he bellowed that "France is threatened dictatorship" and blamed the country's troubles on "the power of totalitarian Communism."

However, just which dictatorship the so-called communists of the PCF/CGT were concerned with preserving (possibly with themselves eventually cut in on a bigger piece of the action) was to be amply demonstrated as they maneuvered to regain control of the upheavals under new conditions. The CGT now moved quickly to assume the "leadership" of the factory occupations (though they never did officially issue a call for them even after the fact). Mobilizing its well-oiled union apparatus, it relentlessly focused the attention of the workers around winning the most miserable and paltry reforms such as the demand for a minimum wage increase to \$120 a month. They also moved to isolate the workers from the ferment going on in society outside the factories. In a typical tactic, when CGT officials heard that students were planning to march to the Renault factory at Billancourt (a CGT stronghold) to express their revolutionary solidarity with the strikers, they ordered the gates locked and forbade any fraternization with them.

But in many cases the revisionists found it would not be so easy to suppress the revolutionary aspirations summoned forth. At Billancourt, for example, when the first students arrived at night to find the gates closed and the windows shuttered, they also found knots of young workers who had sneaked up on the roof and who shouted enthusiastic revolutionary greetings and chanted slogans as they all sang *The Internationale* together. Quite a number of workers then rushed outside the factory gates and, in the small square opposite in the Place Jules Guesde, discussions of things revolu-



tionary ensued, as in the rear of the plant by the river other workers were talking with students from behind the iron grated windows. The next night three thousand students marched to the factory despite a leaflet distributed in the Latin Quarter by the CGT that warned "it could facilitate a provocation by leading to an intervention by the government." Embarrassed CGT flunkies were forced to pretend that the leaflet was a fraud as for the next few weeks the Place Jules Guesde became a sort of revolutionary Hyde Park.

The Torrent Unleashed

The days of May inspired a wide diversity of social strata as a joyful and irreverent current swept through the entire country. Farmers parked their tractors across the nation's highways. Doctors, lawyers, museum directors, journalists, etc. called in to question their professional structures from varying perspectives and outlooks. In Paris, especially, where showgirls even occupied the Folies Bergère, there was widespread ferment as indicated by the fact that one reporter was—within the space of two days—able

to obtain on the streets of Paris no less than 3,000 completely different leaflets. Meanwhile the Sorbonne was triumphantly re-occupied and a central Student Soviet set up as the floors of the amphitheatres and lecture halls groaned under the weight of often as many as 30,000 people at a time awaiting their turn at the microphones.

One writer briefly characterized some of the terms of these debates: "There was the struggle between 'reformists' and 'revolutionaries.' On the one side were those who saw the student revolt as a means of putting pressure on the government to reconstruct the universities in France on a wholly new basis. They dreamed of autonomous, decentralized campuses, of the overthrow of remote mandarins, of throwing wide the universities to the working class. On the other hand were those for whom university reform was a troublesome irrelevance. The fighting at the barricades had roused in them the hope of revolutionary action. They wanted to march, Red Flag flying, from the rubble of the university on society itself. . . they wanted to turn the courtyard of the Sorbonne into the launching pad of a revolutionary missile."

French society had indeed been overtaken by a revolutionary fever. Even football players were infected by the prevailing spirit. On May 22 about a hundred of them took over the offices of the French Football Federation, hoisted the red flag from the balcony and locked up the secretary general and the national instructor. They flung a giant banner over the façade which read "Le football aux footballeurs!" (Football for footballers!).

International Impact

The May events in France were conditioned by, and in turn reacted back upon, the turbulent international situation and the revolutionary developments around the world. As in other imperialist countries, French youth, students and a number of advanced proletarians had been inspired by national liberation struggles, particularly against U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, and also, especially, by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched by Mao Tsetung

and the revolutionaries in China beginning in 1966.

There was in France, as elsewhere, a veritable potpourri of different political trends—Anarchism (Cohn-Bendit's avowed tendency), Trotskyism, Castroism, foco-ism (the theory put forward by Regis Debray whose imprisonment was popularly considered an outrage), etc. Indeed, some thousands of different revolutionary graffiti representing any number of varying political angles could be found scrawled and spraypainted on the walls of the Sorbonne, not to mention in the streets of Paris. Within all this, the trend of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought was being taken up by many of the youth and students. The influence of these revolutionary ideas could be seen in the Red Books being studied, as well as carried and waved in the numerous demonstrations, and in the enormous blow-up portraits of these revolutionary figures that were draped from university buildings in the Latin Quarter. The following horror-stricken description by one reactionary resident who witnessed the fighting on the "night of the barricades" is revealing:

"We saw a mass of vicious, belligerent students and so-called students striding up and down the boulevard, sounding incitements to revolt, with long hair and beards, Russian-style caps, Mao-style jackets, violent hysterical girls in Chinese-style caps, etc. I saw hordes of Huns smashing everything. . ."

That this phenomenon was by no means limited to France and that the rebellion was fueling revolutionary spirits across the continent was indicated by the fact that, to the dismay of the Paris authorities, on the "night of the barricades" they discovered that a contingent of German students (from a group called SDS) were fighting alongside their comrades in the Latin Quarter. Police could be seen frantically writing down the German registration numbers of VWs parked in the area. Later that week, two SDS leaders were turned back at Orly airport and at the Strasbourg frontier post an entire busload of German student actors were refused admission when their coach was searched and

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The Workers of the World in the Russian Revolution

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A number of French sailors had chosen to remain behind in the city, and marched as well. The red flag which had flown at the front of the mutineers' procession flew once again, but now on it was inscribed in French: "To the Rebel French Sailors From the Proletariat of Sevastopol. Long Live the III Communist International."

By December 1919, the bulk of the Allied interventionist troops had been sent home, and in the next year the Bolsheviks went on to carry the civil war to victory. In analyzing these events, Lenin pointed out the vast superiority in numbers of men, technical level of equipment and personnel, command of sea routes and transportation, all of which were possessed by the Anglo-French-American forces — and he asked, in light of this, how did the Russian Revolution, with a small Red Army drawn from a war-exhausted populace, prevail?

He then went on: "From the very outset of the revolution we have said that we constitute a party of the international proletariat, and that, however great the

difficulties facing the revolution, there would come a time when, at the most decisive moment, the sympathy, the solidarity of the workers oppressed by international imperialism would make itself felt. For that we were accused of being utopians. But experience has shown that while we cannot always and in all cases rely on action by the proletariat, at any rate we may say that during these two years of the world's history we have been proved correct a thousand times . . . That was our first and chief victory, because it was not only a military victory, it was not really a military victory at all — it was actually a victory of that international solidarity of the working people for which we began the whole revolution, and which we pointed to and said that, however numerous the trials we would have to undergo, all these sacrifices would be repaid a hundredfold by the development of the world revolution, which is inevitable." (Vol. 30, pp. 210, 212)

The '70s: The Appearance and the Essence

Continued from page 3

bourgeois and bourgeois forces and ideologies having the upper hand and having the initiative in a lot of them. All this provided openings to the Soviets and presented the U.S. with a much sharper challenge to draw together and regroup its own forces, to restructure and refortify its alliances on a new basis to meet this challenge, both because of the deeper crisis in which it was caught and also because of the rising Soviet challenge.

So, this was what was generally on the agenda in the '70s, although it was full of contradiction and had different phases within it. And there are certain things that are clear in this as we look back over that decade; for example, the whole phenomena of OPEC and the oil price rise in particular coming after the '73 war between the Arab states and Israel. This price rise was not from the beginning, and simply, a plot by or at the initiative of U.S. imperialism, but it was seized on by U.S. imperialism, which is much less dependent on the oil from the Middle East than its allies in Europe and Japan where this dependence is especially acute. This was seized on by U.S. imperialism which, after all, still had the upper hand in the bulk of these OPEC states, including some of the especially crucial ones like Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Shah. While on the one hand the price rise created difficulties for U.S. imperialism and for its bloc, on the other, it was seized on by U.S. imperialism to strengthen its position vis-à-vis the other imperialists within its own bloc—those who remained within the general framework of the bloc led by the U.S. but who, like all dog-eat-doggers, were pursuing their own interests, even stepping up their competition and rivalry with the U.S. in the context of the kind of ass kicking it was getting in Vietnam and of all the chickens that were coming home to roost for the U.S., as these things were, in a concentrated way, turning into their opposite in the late '60s and early '70s. So the U.S. struck back. It struck back with the oil price rise and even before that in '71 with the tariffs and then especially the dollar devaluation. Nixon's whole so-called "new economic policy" and so on was in significant measure aimed at doing certain things within the U.S. but was also, perhaps in an overall sense and in a more important way, aimed at the whole structure of international economic relations and particularly the relations within the U.S. bloc. With a larger view towards pulling the bloc together, there was a degree of far-sightedness on Nixon's part, from the imperialist standpoint. But it wasn't just pulling it back together more strongly, it also meant and means doing this on the basis of a firmer hand and the reassertion on a new basis, that is, under new conditions, but a reassertion, of U.S. dominance and leadership of that bloc. The U.S. imperialists still (for example with OPEC) had the reserves and the ability to do this even while the general motion was toward deeper and deeper crisis. They were more and more sharply facing the need to deal with the challenge coming from the Soviets and to prepare to take that challenge head on. And the other imperialists within the U.S. bloc were also, by the same motion and by the same contradictions, propelled toward seeking to refortify that bloc even as they were still trying to strengthen their position vis-à-vis the U.S.

Vietnam and the Coming Conjunction

The fact is that U.S. imperialism, while it did come to a sort of crucial juncture in the late '60s and early '70s in which things were turning in a very powerful way into their opposite, particularly as focused up around Vietnam, was not in a situation in which it had to put everything on the line. If you want to make a certain analogy (in fact, we've made this before, in the last Central Committee report), as long as it's not applied mechanically or taken too far, but there is a certain analogy with the difference between the situation of Russia in the 1904-1905 war with Japan, on the one hand, which gave rise to a revolutionary situation and a revolutionary movement on a certain scale, but not one which succeeded, a situation which in fact found the ruling class in Russia with more room to maneuver and not with all of its reserves having to be brought into play and exhausted to a large degree, versus World War I, on the other hand, when their reserves were in fact exhausted and when Russia did, for a number of different reasons, become a focal point of world contradictions. In that sense, again as long as we don't treat this mechanically, Russia did become a, not by necessity the only, weak link of the imperialist system which was broken at that point—owing both to those objective conditions and to the subjective factor and the correct line, work and preparation that had been carried out under Lenin's leadership. So, there is a certain analogy: Vietnam was, again without being mechanical about these analogies,

more like a 1904-1905 war with Japan; it was very important and in a certain sense signalled what was yet to come and what is in large part still to come in terms of the much more profound expression of the concentration of these contradictions. In and of itself, Vietnam revealed the internal contradictions and their sharpening up and the underlying weaknesses of U.S. imperialism, despite its remaining reserves and remaining strength. But it was not the case that U.S. imperialism was forced to throw all its reserves into that kind of situation. It was not forced to put everything on the line and do or die in a certain sense around Vietnam. It threw a tremendous amount in, but then it maneuvered its way out and began to pay attention to some of the other key aspects of its sphere of influence. It had the "Year of Europe" in 1973 and began to pay attention to shoring up, refortifying and regrouping its whole international sphere of influence and to dealing with both the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and also the rivalry and competition within its own bloc from the other imperialists, on the other hand. It was able to do that. That's not to metaphysically say that in some absolute sense and abstractly that the situation could not have become more serious at the time. Vietnam was a concentration point, but it was not the case that Vietnam became—and it was unlikely to, given the way things were developing and had developed to that point—a concentration point which would in turn spark off a whole international confrontation.

In other words, something like Vietnam may be the particular thing that becomes a concentrated "flash point" (or whatever they call it) that may react back upon the whole of world relations as they're shaping up and be the thing that compels all the forces—in particular the two rival imperialist blocs—to throw everything on the line against each other, or virtually all their reserves. Of course, there'll be unevenness within that. U.S. imperialism didn't have to throw anything like all of its reserves into World War I or World War 2, but this time U.S. imperialism will. Now, whether there'll be other imperialists that will be able (undoubtedly in a more limited degree or almost certainly more limited degree) to keep some of their reserves "in reserve" and be able to maneuver to come out of the next world war stronger is something we can't predict now. It depends a lot on things which can't be certainly, fully foreseen, including the revolutionary struggles in the world, and even what we do will help influence that one way or another. But that is what is shaping up now. And this is calling forth various different forces: the imperialists are being forced into much more direct and sharp confrontation with each other, particularly the two blocs of imperialists, and the masses of people throughout the world are being called into motion, into action, and into deeper thinking by the heightening of these contradictions: there is again a rise of upheaval, of struggle and of revolutionary movement in various parts of the world.

A Shifting in the '70s

I used the analogy before of war communism, talking about why some people, for example in the U.S., in a limited way made compromises or even up to a certain point made their peace, at least for a time, with the system because they became exhausted and saw that there was a question of having to go on living in a position of opposition to the established order for an extended and seemingly indefinite period without the prospect of revolution. That's not something the majority of people or anything like the majority can maintain all the time. People who "knew better," people who still believed in revolution and still hated and even today still hate the system and maybe even in their own thinking did not at all give up the idea of fighting against it if another opportunity presented itself—a lot of these people, maybe at least to some degree consciously, retreated. They were tired, they were exhausted, there was a shifting, they didn't understand consciously fully why. We didn't understand fully why either and our understanding of this is still being deepened and we're really, I think, only beginning to get a qualitatively deeper and more all-around understanding of it.

But there were these shifts in the world. On the one hand, the Soviets were able to make their way into a lot of these revolutionary movements in a qualitatively greater way and turn them in a different kind of direction which produced contradictory results. Some forces gravitated more towards the Soviets as a result of that, other forces were repulsed by that because they had enough of an understanding of what the Soviet Union was to know that that was no good, but they became demoralized or disoriented by it. They didn't see an alternative to being under the domination of one or the other of the imperialist great powers or imperialist blocs, the West or the East. And, on the other hand, U.S. imperialism finally did extricate itself from Vietnam—on the basis of being defeated, but still not throwing everything in and being pulled down all the way.

If you remember, by the time that Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, was finally liberated (and Cambodia was also liberated at roughly the same time), we all sort of felt that feeling of joy, watching that in 1975, after U.S. imperialism had been forced out and was not even in a position to give the kind of support to its lackeys there that would enable them to hold on. But the world had shifted enough that it didn't, in a certain way, have the same significance, if you want to get sort of metaphysical about it, although it was significant, as it would have had if it happened in 1970, because already the shifting contradictions in the world were such that this was now no longer the focal point of world contradictions in the way that it had been. That's another reflection of the same kind of thing that I'm talking about.

So in large part, not just in the U.S. but throughout the

world as a whole, there was a certain retreat or a feeling, at least to some degree, of disorientation and a certain exhaustion; and it even affected the conscious forces, including our own party certainly, and also those more broadly who had been a part of the movement of opposition, part of the struggle, even been conscious revolutionaries. Because people can fight heroically, and they can fight, like in the Chinese liberation war or in Vietnam for long periods of time with little rest, but everything still proceeds in spirals, even with all that, and people can't fight indefinitely on a very intense level, which is what the latter part of the '60s into the early '70s was in the U.S. in general, and much more generally than that throughout the world. They can't fight that way indefinitely. And if after a certain period of time there is a shift in the way the contradictions of the world are expressing themselves and interpenetrating, and a shift in the relation of the forces, understood in that kind of materialist dialectical way, then, there's a need for people to regroup—in fact, to varying degrees there's a consciousness of this—and with some people, it even takes a form that they temporarily retreat. In other words, some of the reserves, if you will, of the more conscious, revolutionary forces are themselves exhausted temporarily—and it takes the further development of the contradictions and their further sharpening before some of these reserves can be called back into motion and even some won back over from the camp of the enemy, where they may have temporarily been attracted at least in part, to the side of the revolutionary forces.

Generally this is what was going on, but it wasn't going on country by country, internally, with only secondary relationships between one country and the next. In an overall sense, it was going on on a world scale in terms of the way these contradictions of the imperialist system, and the forces of imperialism and the forces arrayed against it were expressing themselves, and the shifts in that during this period from the early '70s through the mid '70s and toward the late '70s. I think it's extremely important to understand because it enables us to grasp and to draw the appropriate lessons from this very sharply contradictory phenomenon. Coming out of World War 2, imperialism had gotten a new spurt on the basis of the resolution, partial and temporary, of the contradictions going into that war, and then through some of the changes that were made in its aftermath. Despite the struggles and tremendous revolutionary upsurges in opposition to this, there was still this sort of temporary surge of imperialism with U.S. imperialism at the head. The '70s was a period, however, where the weaknesses of the imperialist system were much more sharply manifesting themselves, when a lot of the strengths it had gotten were turning into their opposite. And despite the fact that there was a tremendous setback for the international working class with the rise to power of a new bourgeoisie in the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s and its transformation into an imperialist superpower and the head of an imperialist bloc, by the '70s the contradictions within that were also beginning to manifest themselves. Some of the developments in Poland, even in certain ways the 1968 Czechoslovakia events, while they showed the ruthlessness, in a certain sense the strength of Soviet social-imperialism, also showed the sharp contradictions that were gripping it and that were already beginning to sharply manifest themselves—and which would further deepen.

So, the '70s were, on the one hand, a period when the weaknesses, the contradictions, the crisis of imperialism and the sharpening of its contradictions can be more clearly seen. On the other hand, it was a period in which some consolidation took place and some gains were made because of the way the rival imperialists, particularly the two rival imperialist blocs, were moving, the necessity they faced and the freedom they had and the maneuvering that they both carried out—the Soviets more by using revolutionary movements against U.S. imperialism (at least that was one extremely important form of what they were able to do and did more fully), and the U.S. imperialists by regrouping and reorganizing their bloc and reasserting their leadership in a firmer way and on a new basis. These two things, on the one hand, the growing weakness, crisis, the much sharper manifestation of the contradictions of the imperialist system and, on the other hand, the actual gains or at least maneuvers that the rival imperialists were able to carry out, even at the same time as they came more sharply and directly into profound confrontation with each other, were going on at the same time in the '70s. And as a result of it, there was also this sort of lull or overall ebb in the revolutionary struggle and the revolutionary movement for these different reasons.

Prospects Sharpening Up

So, you had this period of the '70s which has been correctly described, for example in the preparatory material of *America in Decline*, as a period of crisis and development toward war, not as a period of great strength for imperialism. But at the same time as there is a much deeper crisis and things are sharpening up much more than they were, let's say in the '60s, even with all the tumultuous character of that decade, still the movement of opposition from the masses of people and the revolutionary struggles in the world are not as advanced and not as powerfully expressing themselves, not assuming such a powerful form as they were in the '60s. So this can lead spontaneously, and has led a number of people, to the conclusion that all there is about the '70s into the '80s is a very negative thing—namely, yes, the imperialists are in crisis, but they are getting ready to go to war and there's the whole danger of that, but there's not any real prospect of doing anything about it, that is, there's no

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The Days of May

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discovered to contain helmets, truncheons, revolutionary literature and Chinese and NLF flags. (Most of the large numbers of foreign-born rounded up in the vicinity of the barricade fighting and taken to the main detention center at Beaujon were summarily deported.)

The revolutionaries in China responded with tremendous enthusiasm and support for the May developments which were sending out international shock waves and confirming, as Mao said, that "Imperialism has prepared the conditions for its own doom. These conditions are the awakening of the great masses of the people in the colonies and semi-colonies and in the imperialist countries themselves." On May 21, half a million workers, Red Guards, revolutionary students and teachers and PLA members demonstrated in Peking manifesting their support for the upheavals that were shaking a number of the Western imperialist countries and particularly for the events in France—raising, among other slogans, "Resolute support for the just struggle of the workers and students of Paris!" and "Long live the revolutionary tradition of the great Paris Commune!" The Chinese stressed the significance of the fact that the students' actions had brought the proletariat onto the stage.

And more, events in France were having a profound impact on the rest of the world and setting a revolutionary example for the masses everywhere—even, as Mao and the revolutionaries had the far-sightedness to suggest, within China itself! As the Chinese revolutionaries pointed out, the struggle in France was "an immense inspiration and support to the revolutionary people in every country and to the revolutionary people in China who are winning all-round victory in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." "The revolutionary heat wave generated by the struggle of the French workers and students has shaken the entire capitalist world. This is great encouragement to the Chinese people."

The events in France, as well as in other imperialist countries, became the impetus

for a mass movement that spread throughout China. Red Guards put up giant posters hailing the revolutionary actions of the French students and workers. Loudspeakers in the schools broadcast news of the latest developments in France. Within the space of one week no less than 20 million people in China had taken part in large-scale meetings and demonstrations upholding these struggles.

La Combat Continué

On May 24, the third "Red Friday" erupted in Paris and street battles broke out again as DeGaulle made a speech announcing a referendum on the government. "Fuck his speech" was the first slogan that arose along with the barricades as thousands of students and workers defying CGT appeals for calm took the Place de la Bastille and raised the banner of the 1871 Paris Commune, moving on to set the Bourse (the Paris stock market) on fire. One student described the scene that night as a column of rebels marched into the working class district of Belleville (part of what was known as the "Red Belt", ironically a PCF stronghold): "If the cops really wanted to seal us off, let them come to Belleville. There were young proles there who wanted just that and said, 'It's going to be terrific!' And it really was terrific. You could see the guys coming out of their homes, they were joining the demonstration. When we got past the République, before we reached St. Martin, there were five or six thousand of us, at least four thousand of them proles. You really should have seen them march past, guys who had marched all across Paris with garbage-can lids, pick handles, broomsticks, anything! It really was the army of Spartacus!"

Emerging from negotiations with the government, the CGT announced the "pathbreaking" and "unprecedented" Grenoble Agreements in which the government gladly gave in on a number of economic demands. By this time, however, the CGT leadership had a dif-

ficult time selling this agreement. When they drove straight from the bargaining table to Renault's Billancourt factory and urged the workers to accept it and return to work, they were booed down by the 25,000 assembled workers and virtually run out of the plant.

Meanwhile, with the Gaullist government seemingly paralyzed and ready to topple (it would, but only later), a host of imperialist politicians like François Mitterand and his Parti Socialiste and left-wing social-democrat Pierre Mendes France (a former prime minister) were all proffering their services to the bourgeoisie and claiming to be the best hope of heading up a new government. On May 27, a mass meeting of some fifty thousand of the most active workers and students took place at the sports stadium at Charléty in hopes that the movement could still retain the dynamism it had shown up till now. It was filled with revolutionary enthusiasm on the part of the masses (and more than a few bourgeois forces crawling out of the woodwork), but given the general situation, the days of May were reaching a certain limit and this meeting failed to define a road forward.

The PCF made its move two days later as the CGT mobilized a large demonstration in Paris which raised the slogan, "Popular Government!"—by which, of course, they meant a new bourgeois government to replace DeGaulle, hopefully with the PCF in a stronger position.

However, it was DeGaulle who finally pulled out the bourgeoisie's trump cards. Having met with his trusted generals in Germany to assess the reliability of the French army (over half of whom were conscripts) in case of civil war, it had been decided that the most loyal sections of the armed forces could still be relied upon to move against the factory occupations. On May 30, DeGaulle suddenly returned to France and announced, "I will not retire..." Dissolving the National Assembly, he called for new elections. Simultaneously, the remaining loyal Gaullist ministers and deputies brought out several hundred thousand of the "silent majority" which had indeed been quite silent up till now (many were bussed in from the more backward provinces).

Every reactionary matron, jaded Pe-tainist, and ex-Foreign Legionnaire available showed up for a hastily organized demonstration in Paris that marched to the cries of "DeGaulle does not stand alone!"

To set an example, thousands of troops were eventually mobilized to evict the workers occupying the Renault factory at Flins. At four in the morning thirty-six mobile machine-gun batteries arrived and broke through the gates flushing out the workers with guns at their backs. Invoking an ancient 1936 anti-fascist law, DeGaulle declared all the leading student organizations illegal and moved to suppress the publication of all revolutionary newspapers, propaganda sheets, etc.

But even after the factory evictions began, the resistance continued throughout the month of June. At Flins, the workers attempted to reoccupy the Renault factory, setting up barricades outside and, joined by a thousand students and workers from Paris mobilized by the worker-student Action Committees, fighting pitched battles with the government troops now occupying the plant. Similar scenes were repeated all over France as the site of the front lines shifted to the barricades being erected outside workplaces and factory gates (with the CGT now, of course, forbidding the workers to retake the factories).

In Paris, barricade fighting continued to rage on both banks of the Seine in response to the killing of a student organizer and two workers as police stations were attacked and the police showered from rooftops with slates and molotov cocktails in a number of last-ditch battles.

Eventually the "Days of May" subsided—prevented from storming even greater heights by a number of factors. But France, and the world, would never be the same. The proletariat and broad sections of the masses had risen up. Revolution was on their minds. An inspiring example had been set and a profound impact had been made on the world struggle.

"Look at it this way," summarized one worker participant from a farsighted angle, "What happened in May was a dress rehearsal." □

The '70s:

Continued from page 17

real prospect of struggling against it and making revolution and fundamentally altering the world in that way either before, during or in the aftermath of world war. What's missed in that view, and what we've been stressing from different angles and giving more and more emphasis to as our own understanding of this has been deepened and developed, is precisely the need to grasp the ways in which the very same process which is heightening the contradictions between the imperialists and sharpening up the confrontation between them and leading them toward war is also sharpening up all the contradictions of this era, including the different expressions of the contradiction between the masses of people and the imperialists, and is sharpening up the revolutionary prospects and developments in the world. That is beginning to manifest itself again now, so that people, even spontaneously, are beginning to see more of that. But there is a need to make a leap and to begin to see the interconnection between these two different aspects, that is, the sharpening of the inter-imperialist contradictions, on the one hand, and the sharpening of the contradiction and struggle between the masses and the imperialists in its different forms and expressions on the other hand. There is precisely the need to grasp the spiral motion toward and the gathering together of the contradictions and the shaping up of an historic conjuncture which will influence the development of things in the world for decades to come and in turn upon which the conscious revolutionary forces—precisely by grasping this—can exert a tremendous influence, and influence things in the world for decades to come as well. That's what we have to continually and ever more deeply and from different angles and in a more all-around way, grasp, and also arm and educate broader and broader forces. And we also have an internationalist duty to put forth our understanding of that and to struggle with people over a correct understanding of this, as well as a need to carry this out within the U.S.


The more that's done, the more that people will recognize what we've been stressing over and over again: that at the same time that there is a sharpening up of contradictions between the imperialists and the growing danger and the growing prospects of inter-imperialist war, with all the horror and destruction that really will entail—and we can't underestimate that or people will think and correctly so that we're not serious—ultimately more important, and where we can in fact exercise our initiative and freedom, is the real fact of the heightening and growing prospects and developments for revolution in the world which are part of the same process which is

bringing all this to a head, to the conjuncture shaping up. The more that we enable people to grasp this, the more they'll see that this is not just sloganeering, but that this is a profound truth and that the very events which are, on the one hand, striking horror into people, and not without reason, are also calling into motion and will increasingly call into motion the forces that can ultimately put an end to this, if not through this particular conjuncture, at least can make real leaps toward that, and which in the final analysis, can, must, and will put an end to this. To understand this ebb is important, not just in and of itself, although it's important to do that. But precisely

the most important aspect of understanding this ebb is understanding it in terms of what's shaping up now and in terms of the future, and how in fact that ebb was only a partial expression of the sharpening up and heightening of these contradictions with the growing prospects on the positive side, that is, for revolution and toward the final abolition of the system which in fact is now presenting in a concentrated way all the negative things which do strike real horror and repulsion into people. □

(To be continued)

Reprinted from a section of the report from the 1980 Central Committee Meeting of the RCP, USA



**Charting the
Uncharted
Course
Proletarian Revolution
in the U.S.**

"The point is to challenge old, economist conceptions of what an insurrection and civil war is. We have to get away from straight-jacketing preconceptions of the sort that the enemy is 100 families and that millions upon millions will surround them (after a round of successful general strikes). In 'Guerrilla Warfare' Lenin wrote, 'The forms of struggle in the Russian revolution are distinguished by their colossal variety as compared with the bourgeois revolutions in Europe, Kautsky partly foretold this in 1902 when he said that the future revolution [with the exception perhaps of Russia, he added] would be not so much a struggle of the people against the government as a struggle between two sections of the people...'"

"Historically, having a majority working class has always been viewed as an advantage for the revolution in a certain sense, it is. But isn't there some strategic significance to this fact? Isn't it more difficult to win this whole class to a revolutionary banner? Doesn't it mean we have to look at the strategic significance of the stratification within the working class itself, even within the industrial proletariat?"

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British Lion

Continued from page 1

openly and admiringly likening to the U.S. display of flag-waving during the Iran hostage crisis. "You had 52 hostages," British ambassador to Washington, Sir Nicholas Henderson, solemnly declared. "We have 2,000 down there." All the parties from the ruling Tories to "Her Majesty's Socialists" of the Labour Party have vied with one another in calls for military action.

"Let us hear no more about logistics, how difficult it is to travel long distances. I don't remember the Duke of Wellington whining at Torres Vedras," chimed in a Tory. (The reference here is to the British occupation of Portugal during the Napoleonic wars.) Opposition Labour Party leader Michael Foot declared that "there is no question in the Falkland Islands of any colonial dependence. It is a question of people who have built their lives on the basis of association with this country." Foot & Co., of course, called for Thatcher's resignation due to her weak handling of the situation which led to Britain's honor being besmirched. In fact the farther you went toward the Left end of the spectrum of official British politics, the more rabid became the calls to arms. David Owen of the new centrist Social-Democratic Party proposed the declaration of a 200-mile war zone around the Falklands and blockading the islands. Tony Benn, leader of the left labourites, opposed the sending of the fleet *only* because it was too little too late and scolded the Tory government for not acting more decisively earlier and thus avoiding a situation of great international tension. Benn & Co., you see, are against war when it can be avoided by preemptive invasion. In this he should find himself in great company with peace-loving men such as Gen. "Blood and Guts" Patton, General Douglas MacArthur, Gen. Curtis LeMay—and all the great ones throughout history. Mr. Benn, et al., have demonstrated yet again that if you scratch a social-democrat anywhere in the world you find a frothing social-chauvinist.

The Western European imperialists with Mitterand and Helmut Schmidt in the lead, were swift to come to the aid of their British allies, announcing a ban on military sales to Argentina. The French government spoke for all these men of peace and good will when it announced its ban on military sales and, "the hostility of France to all forms of aggression and its desire to promote respect for international decisions everywhere in the world," except places like Chad, Senegal, Gambia, etc. or earlier, Vietnam, Morocco, Algeria, etc. The peace-loving countries of Western Europe including tiny neutral Switzerland and the Netherlands are contracted already to supply Argentina alone with \$2.2 billion of arms this year. These weapons like all the rest including all those nukes and stuff are, of course, only for use in demonstrating "hostility to all forms of aggression." And with so much aggression in the world naturally the hostilities of these men of peace are boiling.

The U.S. has also expressed its desire to see peace and cool heads prevail as is so characteristic, given the American ideals

of fair play and so forth. The administration declared it was playing the whole thing right down the middle. "We are friends with both," declared Ronald Reagan as Alexander Haig took on the role of shuttle diplomat between London and Buenos Aires. *Nightline* declared on April 8: "The U.S. is again placed in its characteristic role as international mediator." Jody Powell, Jimmy Carter's press secretary, was called upon to say that the U.S. was "do-gooders by heredity and training" and that the "Secretary of State could be doing a lot worse things than getting up early in the morning to prevent people from killing each other." Haig is certainly aware of worse things to be doing. Only a few days prior, he arose early in the morning to announce U.S. intentions to use a nuclear first strike "if necessary." Nothing like the smell of jet fuel or plutonium at dawn, is there guys? Why, you are so experienced in mediating that few people in the world have not witnessed your efforts at subtle persuasion especially as demonstrated currently in Central America, or during the Vietnam war, or in Korea. With its arsenal of diplomatic weapons the U.S. firmly hopes to be able to mediate any and all its enemies off the face of the earth if need be. One can only wonder: If the actions of the U.S. to this point have been expressions of "hereditary do-goodness," then what pray tell would nastier actions look like?

But at any rate, the U.S. is "friends of both sides," supposedly torn between two staunch allies, and deploring the whole affair. A little closer look, however, reveals quite the opposite and in fact shows that the U.S. has deliberately let this face-off in the South Atlantic unfold. Washington has done so at more than a little risk to its war bloc. Beneath the cute jokes and media commentary about how silly the battle for the Falklands is—after all who cares about a bunch of sheep and penguins, etc.—lies some very serious imperialist maneuvering. The fact that such a remote and obscure set of islands near Antarctica has become such a focus of attention involving 2/3 of the British royal navy says something about the extent to which inter-imperialist contradictions are coming to a head.

First, it has become crystal clear that the U.S. has deliberately gone along with Argentina's reclaiming of the Falklands (which it calls the Malvinas). Argentina certainly has its own reasons for wanting the islands; in fact, the British previously agreed to return the islands to Argentina anyhow. Facing severe economic and political troubles, and with its own aspirations as a regional power, the Argentinian junta very much needed such a move. The junta desired to head off a growing opposition and potentially to reap the benefits of the oil which lies beneath the Malvinas. In addition, the islands have a military value for the area in which both Argentina and the U.S. are interested. But at the same time Argentina could not and would not have taken steps such as occupying the islands without tacit U.S. approval. For example, a few years ago when Argentina sought to press militarily its territorial claims against Chile to some islands in the Beagle Channel at the tip of South America, the U.S. intervened to put a halt to the affair, even sending in the

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Pope to threaten to excommunicate anyone who took military action in the area. The U.S. wanted to avoid a fight between two of the countries most important to its strategy in Latin America. The Soviet Union was trying to encourage such a conflict through its own influence in the Argentinian ruling class.

So it was clearly within the power of the U.S., which has been spending a great deal of effort to solidify the Argentinian government more firmly into its orbit, to restrain the Argentinians from landing on the Falklands, but they did not. Behind the scenes three-way negotiations were going on between the U.S., Britain and Argentina over claims to the islands. Both the U.S. and Britain knew of the Argentinians' invasion plans; it was so much an open secret that several British newspapers sent reporters to the Falklands in advance to cover the landing. The same week, the U.S. Undersecretary of State for Latin American Affairs, Thomas O. Enders, was quietly in Buenos Aires and U.S. Ambassador Harry Schlaudeman was meeting with Argentinian foreign minister Costa Mendez on a regular basis. The British assumed that the Argentinian moves were a bluff and that the U.S. would pull Argentina back at the last minute. It was not until the Argentinian fleet set sail for the Falklands on March 31 that the British suddenly realized what was happening. Prime Minister Thatcher called Reagan that evening to demand that he call Argentinian President Galtieri and tell him to stop it. No call was made.

Instead, that evening another quiet visitor arrived in Argentina—Admiral Thomas Hayward, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations. The next morning he met with Admiral Jorge Anaya, commander of the Argentinian navy—presumably to discuss matters of mutual interest. And at 4:30 that afternoon, Argentinian troops landed in the Falklands. Five hours later, with confirmation in hand that the invasion had gone off as planned, Reagan got on the phone for a (later well publicized) 50 minute conversation with Galtieri.

It was now shock and surprise times for media consumption in Washington. Putting on his best dopey expression, Reagan strolled into the rose garden the next morning to tell the media that "I did talk to the President of the Argentine and tried to persuade him not to go forward." But then U.S. presidents are seldom listened to by military juntas in Latin America, right?

Of course, the U.S. issued a few pious words against the Argentinians' use of force. To the shock of the British the U.S. State Department announced that the U.S. in fact had no position on the question of who rightfully owned "the Island" (the use of either name was tactfully avoided). In fact, it went so far as to point out that U.S. consular affairs for the Falklands are handled by the U.S. ambassador in Buenos Aires. And finally to rub salt in the wound, UN ambassador Jean Kirkpatrick, Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel, and Undersecretary of State for Latin America, Thomas O. Enders, all attended a gala dinner in Kirkpatrick's honor at the Argentinian embassy the next evening after the invasion.

The Galtieri regime was of course ecstatic, and, exploiting its demagoguery to the hilt, maneuvered even the anti-junta opposition behind the government. A general strike scheduled for April 7 was called off, and the revisionist communist party (in accordance with Soviet wishes)

sent a message of congratulations to the junta.

In the UN the U.S. dutifully voted to condemn Argentina's use of force (the Soviet Union, China and Spain—which claims Gibraltar, now run by Britain—abstained).

The U.S. obviously is placing great importance on being able to cement Argentina (one of the most developed countries in Latin America) into its bloc as an important regional gendarme. Certainly the U.S. judged that it was worth the price of giving the regime a goody or two even at the risk of antagonizing and definitely humiliating its staunchest ally, Great Britain. But there is more to this story.

What has been kept under the surface here is that a very, very important aspect of this affair has been the U.S. using the Argentinian landing as a heavy message to the Western European members of its bloc. Jody Powell made a brief reference to this when he remarked, "We can't get our European allies to defend themselves or let us do it for them." In other words, let this humiliation of Britain be a lesson to all the Western European imperialists who are dragging their feet in supporting U.S. efforts to whip the bloc into line. Let this be a message that no one, not even closest allies, are going to get a free ride. Remember good fellows, YOU are part of this BLOC, so pull your weight or we will make you sorry. Clearly this message has gotten across.

So it begins to come clear that a lot has been put on the line. The depths of the turmoil within the U.S. bloc are revealed. Also apparent is the principal method by which the U.S. must bring its bloc into line: direct pressure and tough measures, not quiet conversations and cordial suggestions. The crisis also presented the Soviet Union with a knotty dilemma. On the one hand, as the "natural ally" of the colonized and oppressed peoples, the Soviets would be expected to beat the drums in favor of Argentina's seizure of the islands. The Soviets have in fact carefully developed commercial ties with the Argentinian junta which is now the Soviet Union's largest trading partner in Latin America. In this light, the Soviets have declared support for the claim to the Malvinas and offered naval support to Argentina, should they need it. But on the other hand, the Soviets' necessity, in Europe dictates that this support should be as low key as possible. To go too far against Western Europe on this one could blow a big hole in things. The Soviet Union could also find itself in a rather embarrassing position with regard to its own imperialist occupation of a group of Japan's northern islands.

Unfortunately, for the Soviets they can only wish it was they who were now in the position of the U.S. Provided the U.S. is able to engineer some kind of settlement between England and Argentina—without a large scale military conflict, the U.S. will come out of this thing on top. As it is, Washington seems quite confident and self-assured, grinning with pleasure through do-gooder mouths, proud that Britain has been forced to issue a call to arms. Fine, this is how U.S. allies are supposed to act, especially its closest one—virtually kith and kin nonetheless. They hope that this will become an imperialist manifesto to all the U.S. bloc—a manifesto that, if put in words as blunt as recent actions would read: Gentlemen, let's not hear anymore talk of neutralism, unilateral disarmament, or detente. What's going on in the world today is preparations to redivide the world in our favor and don't you forget it. □

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