



# REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

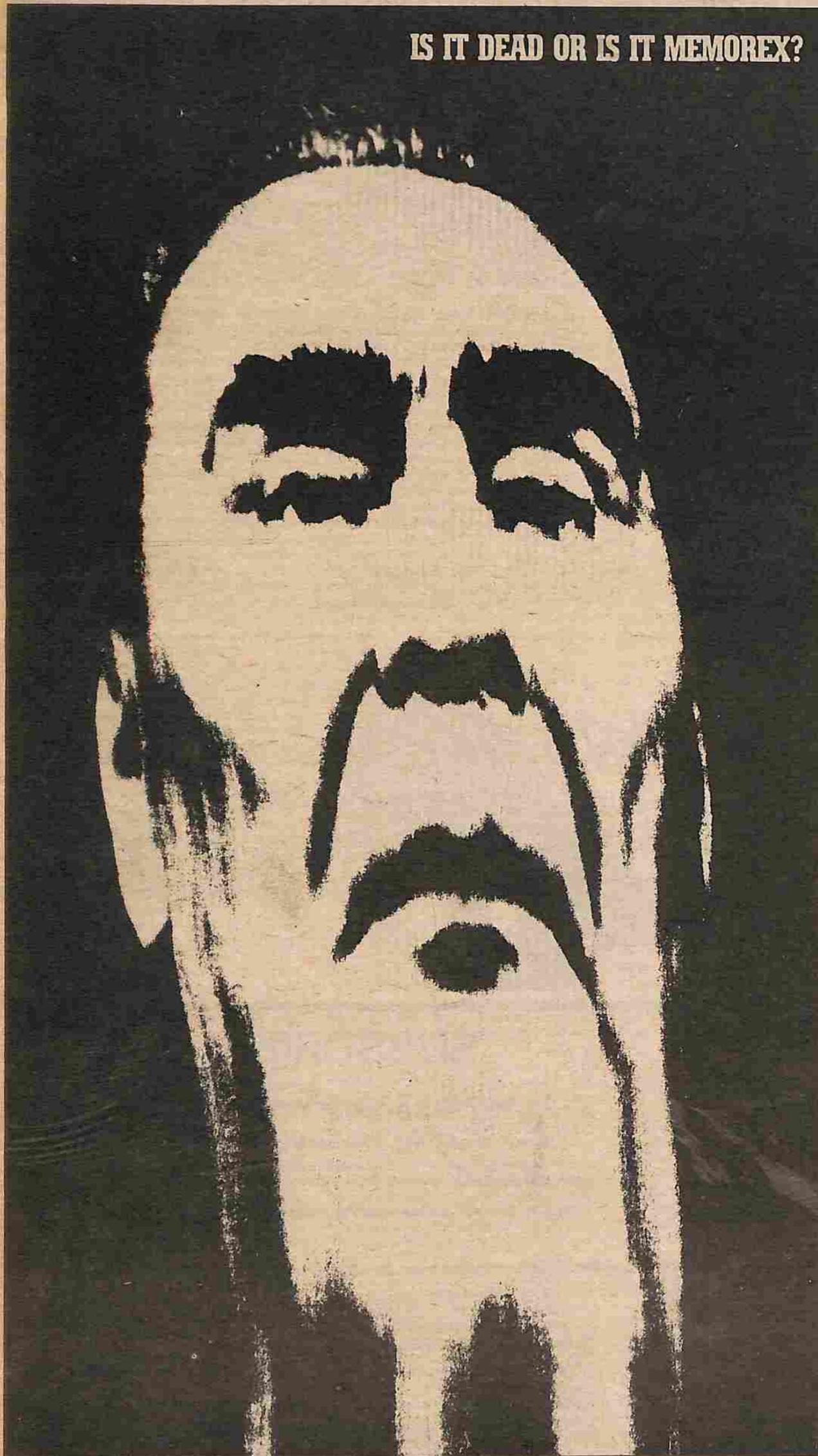
Voice of the  
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IS IT DEAD OR IS IT MEMOREX?



## THE BREZHNEV ERA: EMERGENCE OF AN IMPERIALIST CONTENDER

Leonid Brezhnev's death took a qualitative leap last week when he passed from the living dead to the *dead* dead. The incident was not unexpected.

Official Moscow paid its last respects at a big funeral. Eulogies by Brezhnev's successors praised him as a symbol of their "mature, developed socialist society." Among other things, he was called a "fiery Marxist-Leninist." But above all, he was called a man of peace. As Andropov put it, "He consistently fought with all the ardour of his soul for the relaxation of international tensions, for delivering mankind from the threat of nuclear war..."

Man of peace? Fiery Marxist-Leninist? ¿Qué Pasa, Cabrón? What the hell is this? In reality, Leonid Brezhnev was not peace-like, nor fiery, and he certainly wasn't any Marxist-Leninist. He was nothing less (and *certainly* nothing more) than the leading political representative of the Soviet imperialist ruling class in that era in which the Soviets emerged as a global imperialist contender.

### Different Faces of Different Phases

In 1956, Brezhnev—then a colorless *apparatchik* in Khrushchev's Ukrainian party machine—was lurking in the shadows as his mentor launched the notorious attack on Stalin at the CPSU's 20th Congress and began the process later summed up in Mao Tsetung's observation that "The rise to power of revisionism is the rise to power of the bourgeoisie." The overthrow of proletarian political power in the Soviet Union was an event of world-historic significance. And, as is pointed out in the document *Basic Principles For The Unity of Marxist-Leninists And For The Line Of The International Communist Movement*: "...given the level of development of Soviet society, the restoration of capitalism there was bound to and did mean that the Soviet Union would be

Continued on page 8

"About Face" at Vietnam War Memorial

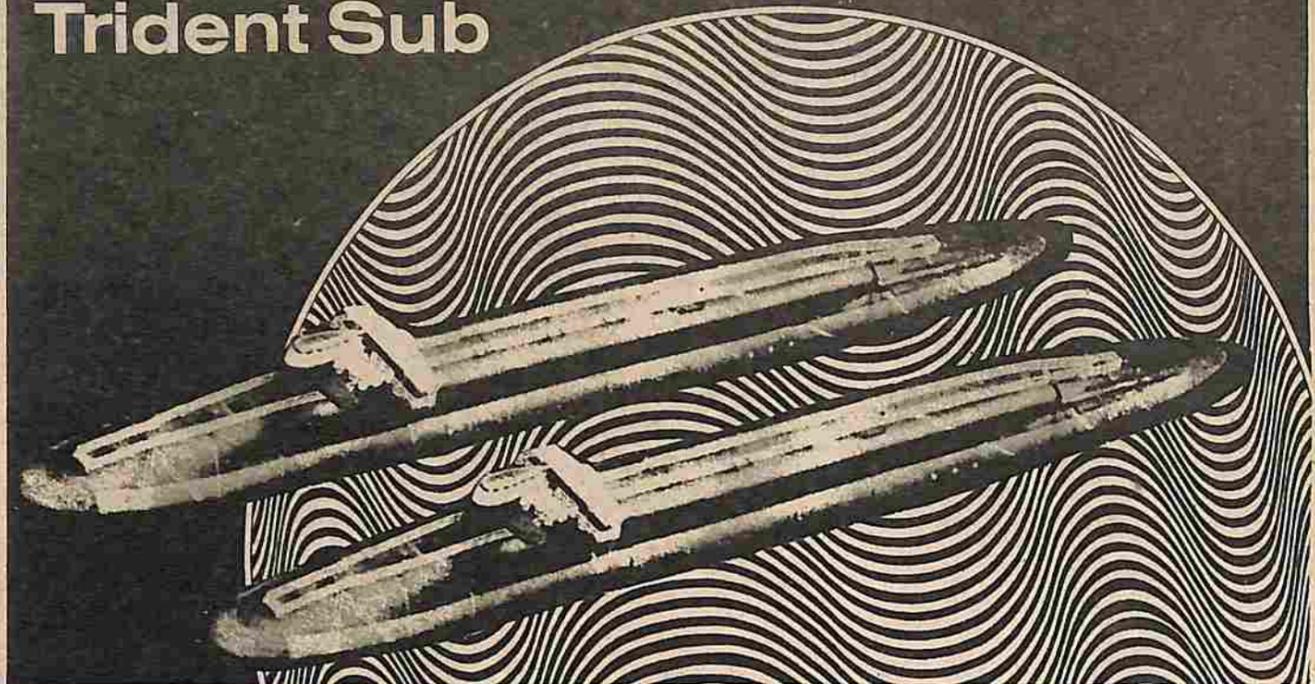
Tears Can't Hide the Dogs of War

See page 5

Another jewel in the U.S. Navy's growing Trident submarine fleet has taken a beating at the hands of anti-war protestors. This time it was the newly christened *USS Georgia*. At about 4 a.m. on November 15, seven members of the Atlantic Life Community entered the General Dynamics Electric Boat yard where the Tridents are built and set about hammering home their opposition to U.S. nuclear war preparations. Three of them boarded the *USS Georgia*, took out hammers and battered six of the sub's missile tube hatches, pouring blood down each tube. The word "DISARM" was painted on one side of the conning tower of the 560 foot sub, and on the other "Stop Trident 666" (666 is the sign for the biblical beast of the apocalypse). Finally they hung a banner reading "Beat Swords Into Plowshares" on the warship. Meanwhile the other four were busy hammering at a massive steam turbine in the boat yard. The turbine sits in the heart of the Trident and provides power from steam, heated by the sub's nuclear reactor. This is the fourth action by the Atlantic Life Community in which nuclear weapons have been physically damaged as part of exposing and condemning U.S. war plans and the seven have termed their action "Plowshares 4." They distributed a statement which read in part: "Trident is the ultimate lie in posing as the defender of freedom and peace. Who is free while billions are stolen from the hungry, the homeless, the oppressed of our world? What peace can there be while this beast inhabits the sea?"

This latest action against the U.S. imperialists' nuclear property took place less than a week after the Trident *Nein* had been sentenced to a year in jail for defacing the *USS Florida* sub last July. In sentencing the *Nein* the state had emphasized that it was trying to deter others from such politically exposing actions against the "property of another." To

## Smashing Encore for Trident Sub



say the least, their attempts at deterrence have been somewhat less than successful. In a statement from jail the seven said, "We will never be deterred from taking the urgent action necessary to disarm Trident and all nuclear weapons." Needless to say the Feds, the Navy, Electric Boat and officialdom in general reacted with outrage and alarm at yet another stinging indictment of their Trident arsenal.

All seven were arrested and charged with two felonies, conspiracy and criminal mischief, and a trespass misdemeanor. Three of them were also charged with felony forgery for allegedly using false identity. All seven have refused to post bond and will be arraigned in New London on November 22nd. The Navy announced that it was "vitaly concerned

about incidents of this nature, particularly when they could affect national security." They went on to say, "Vandalism of this type cannot be tolerated by General Dynamics or the Navy." One of the local prosecutors told the press that "There will be no presumption of innocence in this case, we are going to seek the maximum sentence on all counts." Rumors and press stories spoke of plans to bring federal charges "since the Navy has jurisdiction." This would be a major escalation on the part of the Feds since up to now they have held off such charges for fear of increasing the political exposure and stakes. On November 17th this was downplayed by a federal spokesman who said, "At this point I would say it would be a state prosecution.

The government will get no particular benefit from prosecuting the case."

The bourgeoisie is indeed in a difficult spot. In trying to quash these actions by militant pacifists they are finding themselves increasingly exposed and embarrassed. Regardless of how they proceed in prosecuting this case, the *Plowshares 4* action has once again hammered home a powerful message of hatred and opposition to the imperialists' plans to plunge the world into a nuclear conflagration. It is a bold act of defiance of the government's political persecution of those who actively oppose these criminal preparations to incinerate millions in a global bloodfest for world domination. □

## Tylenol Dumped on Mexican Market



Dear RW:

Thought you should know that despite the temporary lack of availability of Tylenol extra-strength capsules in the U.S., the shelves of stores in Tijuana, Mexico, have been well stocked with the potentially poisonous drug. And they're sold for half what it would cost in the U.S. Quite the imperialist bargain, indeed! As you said in No. 175, "The oppressed nations are a favorite testing and dumping ground for drugs and pharmaceutical products that have been exposed as unsafe in the U.S."

A Reader

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Reflections and  
Sketches  
by Bob Avakian

## What Proletarian Revolutions and Socialist States Are Good For After All!



1969—The Shanghai militia demonstrate against the Soviet revisionists. The banner reads "Down with the Soviet Revisionist Renegade Clique."

*This is the twelfth in a series, "Reflections and Sketches," by Bob Avakian. It has been transcribed and edited from a tape.*

Despite problems that do arise and assume very acute forms at times in the existence of socialist states, especially when they are surrounded by an imperialist world, it is after all a good thing, and more than that, a vitally important thing to have socialist states, and to have base areas for the further advance of the world revolution. Material force, after all, is extremely important.

This leads to the next question — the question of models. While there is a real problem of slavishness to whatever is the prevailing line and programme at any given time in a socialist country or in the socialist camp if it exists (slavishness to such a model both in the sense of a path to revolution and then as a new society versus the old), on the other hand such models have represented and concentrated great experience and great lessons for the international proletariat as a whole. If we have to evaluate it, even on the ideological level, with all the problems, it is much better to have models than not to have them; it is much better to have socialist states and successful proletarian revolutions than not to have them. And on the ideological level, it's important that a blow be struck and is struck in this way against agnosticism, which is certainly no answer to slavishness. One of the things that I think is good about the existence of socialist countries is that at least this poses very sharply what are some of the very real and acute problems that exist in achieving the transition beyond that to a communist world — both in terms of the contradictions within that society and the contradiction between defending that base area but making that subordinate to the further advance of the world revolution. Such real socialist countries, such models in that sense, as for example China was or the Soviet Union before it, not only represent but concentrate much rich experience of what the real problems are and not what anybody chooses to invent or say that they might be. That too is a very good thing about having successful proletarian revolutions and real socialist states.

### The Burden — and Potential — Resting With the Advanced

Now it's true that in the conditions especially where such proletarian revolutions succeed and such socialist states, dictatorships of the proletariat, are consolidated when they are still in a sea of imperialist encirclement, in a world still dominated by imperialism and reaction, it is true that this places a tremendous burden on particularly the advanced, not only in the world in general but specifically the advanced within those socialist societies, on those who have conquered advanced positions generally, that is those who have made revolution, and on the advanced among them in particular. In a certain way, without falling into Trotskyism, Menshevism, social-democracy and kindred opportunism, stepping back and looking at it from a historical perspective we can see how the burden of carrying forward socialism and advancing on the socialist road in such conditions of imperialist encirclement — and the very real and increasing threat of direct imperialist attack, particularly by the Soviet Union in

recent years — all this put a tremendous burden on the advanced forces within China and put, beyond that, a tremendous burden on the masses of Chinese people who are overwhelmingly peasants, and, although they had made tremendous progress, were still only historically speaking a few steps beyond the feudal shackles that had bound them for hundreds and even thousands of years. So in a certain way, again without compromising with or falling into Trotskyism, Menshevism or social-democracy, we can and should say that if such a burden proved to be too much, in the short run, for the peasants of China and for the relatively small proletariat there and for the advanced forces within China generally, that this is no cause for moaning or certainly no cause for abandoning Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought.

During the intense critical first years when the task was one of consolidating the victories won in the newly-established Soviet Republic, Lenin spoke to this question very directly. In an essay in Volume 27, "On The Famine," he said, speaking specifically of "the best, the advanced, most class-conscious, most revolutionary, most steadfast detachments of the working class and of all the working people of Russia" that they were "one of the least liable to succumb to empty phrases, to spineless despair and to the intimidation of the bourgeoisie." Then he went on to make the more general point speaking about countries in particular but obviously he had in mind, and explicitly spoke in other contexts to, how this applied also on an international scale: "... it has frequently happened at critical moments in the life of nations that even small advanced detachments of advanced classes have carried the rest with them, have fired the masses with revolutionary enthusiasm, and have accomplished tremendous historical feats." (Page 395, Vol. 27) And yes, indeed, it is true that this has been the case. It's also proven to be true that when the critical conjunctures and possibilities for advance recede, when the task is one of consolidation, and at the same time, when the task is one of consolidating without becoming conservative, when it's a question of defending what you've gained and yet preparing to advance again and linking the advanced within a particular country to the international advance and as a subordinate part of that advance, that this has also placed tremendous burdens on the advanced. All this is very much bound up with the basic analysis of and the development, especially under imperialism, of spirals leading to world historic conjunctures and in this light the task of the proletariat within socialist countries. How the advanced should in fact carry forward the burden that is objectively placed on them must be viewed in light of this analysis and must be rethought and more deeply gone into in terms of this analysis. In other words, to pose the problem without attempting to answer it more fully here, how does the proletariat consolidate the gains it makes through an upsurge, how does it continue, even under these new conditions, to carry forward with it (or at least neutralize in the short run) the broader strata of the population, and how does it forge the link between further advances within the territory or the country it's conquered and both furthering and preparing to make qualitative leaps in the international advance when yet another world historic conjuncture shapes up? □

# Correspondence on Vietnam War Memorial

The recent moves by the U.S. government to reverse the correct verdicts on Vietnam by erecting that monument in Washington, D.C. and the political manipulation of these Amer-Asian kids has sparked me to write this letter. I am an Amer-Asian, a product of U.S. imperialism in World War II. This recent monument provokes memories of a similar monument in Okinawa where 500 high school girls were killed when the U.S. won its empire and after the smoke lifted from that war, cried tears of remorse as they erected a monument to those they had just slaughtered.

These benevolent dictators seized my grandfather's farm and turned it into housing for the occupying troops who had now secured the world for "peace, freedom and the American Way." Turned out with no means to live, my aunt was forced into prostitution and my mother worked as a domestic slave for the officers at \$5 a month. At the close of the war and the island now occupied it was turned into the ugly image of what America is — right outside the base are the mini-Saigons where dozens of women half naked solicit the GIs for their keep. My aunt was one of those who later got her ticket to the hell called Golden Mountain. What happened to her no one knows.

The use of Asian women was openly promoted by the U.S. government in the form of open prostitution or slave labor but severe restrictions were placed on the ability of legal marriages. There was a one year waiting period before marriage licenses were granted in which time many of these Asian-Americans were born of which I am one. My mother told me of an instance when she went to the market to shop and was approached to sell her child for \$20. She ran all the way home, frightened to even shop because at that time many of these kids were stolen and sold on the Black market.

I was a teenager during the Vietnam War living on military bases all over the world. One of the first questions I began to ask was why did the U.S.'s war machine span the whole globe? I began to learn some things through the course of that war in Vietnam. One of the instructions to military dependents during that time was that we were not allowed to watch the news. But of course we did and I remember when we lived in Ft. Benning, Georgia during the time when Lt. Calley was under house arrest for his fine job in Vietnam — we would drive by the house and I'd ask myself — "Now who was it that had no respect for human life?" Many of my Amer-Asian friends from the base were used in the movie "The Green Berets" filmed in Ft. Benning, Georgia in the mock villages they used to train the soldiers in genocide in Vietnam. They say it failed because these kids didn't look Asian enough but really it was because people could no longer stomach John Wayne.

The whole image of women and the family are mirrored in the relations in military families. Military families are

organized along the same structure as the army with the father as commanding general. Particularly the boys are raised in a boot camp atmosphere. I watched my brother repeatedly humiliated and whipped — maybe my father just couldn't handle the fact that the enemy he was supposed to kill in Vietnam looked so much like his son.

Because of the whole way that women are used as scapegoats for frustrated GIs I had to wear a wedding ring at the age of thirteen to even walk around these military bases. And still today the whole image of Asian women = prostitutes permeates the thinking of men, particularly those who were in the service where this was consciously pushed.

Today what awaits particularly these women who get tickets to this great melting pot of the oppressed can be seen right outside the military base at Ft. Lewis, Washington. Tacoma is sprinkled with hundreds of sauna houses used as fronts for prostitution. There was an article in the Tacoma paper several years ago describing the plight of these Vietnamese women where basically GIs marry these women and keep them as domestic slaves. Some of these women were literally locked in these homes all day and night. Not being able to speak English they can't even do simple things like shopping, ride the bus or use the phones. And when the men tire of them they are dumped into the open market — the sauna houses. With no one to hear them they are open to all forms of violence and used in prostitution rings on the military base.

It's tremendously inspiring to see revolutionary vets and immigrants who are flying in the face of that whole monument and what America is all about and breaking with the garbage that women are merely the spoils of war.

They may think they have a political gold mine in the Amer-Asian kids but the reality of this glittery ice palace of America as it prepares for war will soon break down these illusions. And it is only the vanguard of the international proletariat that can arm them with the true understanding of their heritage — it's "not coke-a-cola but rice" including the abortion of their revolution by the Soviet Union.

Their only place in the sun will be in the front ranks of the revolution to overthrow this beast.

Got No Country

*This letter was forwarded to the RW for publication by VVAW (A-I), Vietnam Veterans Against the War (Anti-Imperialist).*

If at all possible, I'd like this message to be given to: the two men handing out flyers and accepting donations at the corner of 45th and University Way on

11/4/82. (Thursday evening) please? I know you are all busy so I'll understand if it's impossible. *Thanks!*

I'm the woman that came back just as you were preparing to leave the other evening after I had read your flyer while eating dinner. I was very surprised and impressed by your cause. It is the most worthwhile protest I've heard of in a long while!

I was too young and preoccupied to understand what was going on during the Vietnam war. And also, having grown up in a military, middle-class, Catholic, Republican (you name it...) family, I never dreamed that the U.S. government could do anything but good and wonderful deeds to benefit everyone involved.

Well to make a long story short, I now am *really* beginning to realize all the atrocious bullshit that is going on. (Mostly thanks to my husband who is not American. God knows what kind of blind patriot I'd be if I hadn't run into him!)

It really makes me sad to think of you and all the others that either voluntarily signed up or were drafted (I suppose that really doesn't matter *now* does it?) into the Vietnam war. You were *all* used so *young*. I now understand why the military likes to sign 'em up at 18 or 19—get them while they're easy to brainwash. *Crap!* It's still going on today! Makes me sick to think of all the young people sucked into the military by all that "the few, the proud" shit. My younger brother was just discharged from the U.S.M.C. a few weeks ago — when he joined up I was really proud and so was he — but now I'm so glad he's out (him too!). I'm so bloody tired of the military/war mentality. I have no more patience for anyone who thinks it's necessary.

Anyways, I don't want to ramble on here too long.

Good luck to you all, keep up your incredible work. It makes me feel so good to know you're out there somewhere *THINKING*. I really hope the day is coming in this country when people like you will be the majority and not considered troublemakers or renegades (like my parents *tried* to teach me).

Please accept my additional \$20 donation — I sure wish I had lots more to give now. But I'll certainly have you in mind next payday and will make every effort to get to your demonstration next Thursday—

Again, good luck.

P.S. I wish I could give my name but my husband has just applied for his permanent U.S. visa and we are worried about putting our names on anything the immigration might consider "UNAMERICAN," those bastards.

Thanks and bye

Dear people:

I was moved to read the Vietnam vets statement, and the testimony of other Vietnam vets. The monument is typical government cynicism at its ugliest. Watching the news coverage I was most personally hurt and outraged by the exploitation of the grief of people who had lost men they loved in Vietnam.

I know that grief; it is still very fresh to me. My brother's name will not appear on that monument; he died not in combat but years later — last fall — of cancer caused by being exposed to Agent Orange. I am neither proud nor ashamed that my brother went to Vietnam; he did what he believed was right, conditioned as he was by years of patriotic propaganda. But I can't pretend there was anything noble about his being there — he was used by his government to harm other people.

My heart went out to those parents and wives interviewed on the news: they want so terribly to believe the men they loved died in some noble cause, as the soldiers themselves wanted to believe it. And the government exploits their grief as it exploits the bitterness and confusion of the living vets, who also want to believe what they did was noble.

But it wasn't noble: it was, at best, honestly misguided — and we do not

dishonor them by admitting it; we give their deaths the only meaning they can have.

I have my private monuments to my brother: I light candles to him: I keep his photo on my wall. But the monuments that matter will be the living monuments — the young men who might have gone to the next war but who will learn from our testimony that they don't have to go; the people living in the next invaded country who don't die because men who were supposed to kill them never show up.

The government is trying to rip off the deaths of those young men, as it ripped off their lives when it sent them to Vietnam to become both killers and victims. It's crucial that they not be allowed to succeed — that in another 20 years there isn't another ugly monument to another bunch of misguided young men who believed this new wave of propaganda, while the people who love them so desperately try to give meaning to their loss, to their own grief.

Sincerely  
Karen Lindsey  
feminist author  
Sommerville, Mass.

*This letter was forwarded to the RW for publication by VVAW (A-I).*

This was written in response to your statement. If you can use it go ahead. Good luck in D.C.

On the War Memorial

"They want us to forget the truth, to cease all opposition and rejoin the fold, to puff up our chests and play Deerhunter. But nothing will make us sink so low. Not dozens of books, movies and TV shows. Not a monumental obscenity in Washington, D.C."

Corporate america  
we are your karma:  
you cannot erase us.

Corporate america  
we are the scorpion  
in your jackboot:  
you cannot escape us.

Corporate america  
we are orion rising  
in the night sky:  
you cannot bury us.

Corporate america  
we are the cancer  
exploding in your throat:  
you cannot cut us away.

Corporate america  
we are the sappers  
threading through your wire:  
you cannot stop us.

Corporate america  
we do not want your memorial  
we do not want your vicious praise  
we do not want your bloody parades

Corporate america  
we will not feed you  
our children  
any more.

Corporate america  
our war memorial  
will rise out of  
your ashes:  
The War  
is far from over.

A Vietnam Vet  
Maine

Effete old man stooped, club in hand  
Coaxing, pleading. Nice doggie, here...  
Forget beatings. You're pedigreed  
Remember your birthright. On my  
Command dismember. Thought you were trained.

Trembling, resembling an Uncle  
Nobody once had. I need you  
Discontent stirs my other dogs  
Servants conspire, neighbors covet  
Vice versa. Time to show who's boss

The madman screamed. We'll sing tribute  
Wrong washes off in water. Build  
Stone monument/Fake glory. Name your price  
It'll be like old times. GET BACK HERE  
Fields lie rotting. War's to be waged

Growls years deep, hurt teeth, brought tears  
Called a dog and him The Man  
Forced to live under chain and boot  
Kill peers — 3 squares. Killed, oh well. Some deal  
Dream match. Sharp fangs/his throat. And then...

D.T.  
Vietnam Era Vet  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Continued on page 12

# "About Face" at Vietnam War Memorial Tears Can't Hide the Dogs of War

The five-day National Salute to Vietnam veterans in Washington, D.C. last weekend has been portrayed in the press as a basically a-political crying jag. The *Washington Post* reported, "Rarely in this city have so many men been seen to break down in public, to embrace one another as they remembered a shared past." *Village Voice* writer Bob Brewin related, "We spent the weekend doing something men can't and don't do very often in America — we cried, openly and without shame." Brewin's piece ends with an image of General William C. Westmoreland "wiping away a tear" and the words, "Thank you, General." The editor-in-chief of *Newsweek* who served as an officer in Vietnam and covered the memorial for his magazine asserted that, "I cried too, more than once." Television coverage featured numerous tight close-ups of weeping veterans and relatives of dead soldiers.

It is not surprising that this angle has been played heavily by the media, since every feature of the memorial ceremony itself, not least the monument, inscribed with the names of all 57,939 servicemen killed in the Vietnam war, was aimed at manipulating people's emotions and hardly for "a-political" ends. The memorial and the accompanying celebrations mark a major attempt to reverse correct verdicts on the U.S. imperialist war of aggression against the Vietnamese people.

The dead men whose names are now carved in polished black marble; their orphaned children (who now have their own lobbying group, "No Greater Love"); their mothers, who are currently a target of a stepped-up recruiting drive by the Gold Star Mothers; the severely disabled veterans; all Vietnam veterans; and vets in general were consciously exploited in Washington for their tear-jerking properties, and this tactic saw quite a bit of success. It served as a lure, drawing significant numbers of veterans and others to the wall to see the name of a relative or a friend. And it also served to soften people up for a blatant reactionary display of an ugly and unrestrained sort, the details of which were under reported or ignored in the main television and press coverage.

But, despite a last minute spurt of major publicity, the actual turnout in Washington was quite small by comparison to early predictions of a showing

in the hundreds of thousands. The *New York Times* reported that for the march on Saturday: "Long sections of the viewing stand were half empty, and some blocks along the ten-block parade route had but a single broken line of spectators on each side. . . . A District of Columbia policeman commented that the crowd was far smaller than he had been led to expect." The march itself was said to number 15,000, "including Vietnam veterans, veterans of other wars, bands, military units and other supporters."

The small turnout does underscore that a lot of progressive and revolutionary veterans who were aware of the National Salute stayed away in droves. Even within such organizations as the Vietnam Veterans of America, a number of chapters voted to boycott the celebration. The widespread tendency to recoil in disgust from the thought of marching behind Westmoreland, while it certainly indicates the potential and the social base for a revolutionary line among veterans, also stood in contradiction to the effort to give that revolutionary line an organized political expression: the line of "boycott" influenced many veterans who needed to be won to the stand of coming to D.C. to take the political stage.

It is, in fact, quite probable that the organizers of the National Salute were counting on those Vietnam veterans with more rebellious political inclinations to stay away. There was no real concerted national effort to draw the sort of crowd to D.C. that would, as some memorial organizers had blustered earlier, eclipse the monster anti-war rallies of the late 1960s and early 1970s. A larger and more diverse crowd of veterans would undoubtedly have posed far more serious problems of discipline and political control for the memorial organizers.

The issue of strict political control was a major one, for despite the claims that the National Salute to Vietnam veterans was to be "a-political," and that it was "organized and staged by the vets themselves," what was actually planned and carried out was orchestrated carefully as a glorification of the Vietnam war, and a patriotic rally that would play an important role as a catalyst for reactionary public opinion — including broadening and consolidating support for the next war.

The parade on Saturday, for example, was led by General William C. Westmoreland, the commander-in-chief of U.S. forces during much of the Vietnam war. Westmoreland played an extremely prominent role during the 5-day National Salute. He appeared at the special "entertainment gala" on Wednes-



day night, which featured Las Vegas singing attraction Wayne Newton, Jimmy Stewart and other well-known right-wing show-business figures, to sign autographs. He made a point of visiting the paraplegic veterans on the days at the dedication ceremony in full view of the TV cameras. Westmoreland, who had kept a very low profile in recent years, is now re-emerging in the public spotlight and is maneuvering to position himself as the general who "didn't lose the war, but wasn't allowed to win." He is a character with appeal for the most conscious backward assholes.

Westmoreland's extensive schedule of appearances stood in contrast to another striking fact: very few high-ranking officers did put in an appearance at the National Salute. The *Washington Post* even ran a special feature on the phenomenon of officer no-shows, blam-

ing the problem on the fact that many officers still don't want to be associated with a war that was lost. The fact that the U.S. government got its ass kicked in the Vietnam war, and that rebellion among their own troops was so widespread (resulting in numerous casualties for the officer corps) is a legacy that continues to haunt and hound the imperialists even as they themselves dredge up the war in order to reverse verdicts and attempt to unite Vietnam veterans under their banner. The Commander-in-Chief Ronald Reagan, who with his wife Nancy is listed as honorary co-chairman of the event, also "had a previous engagement," attending the memorial service for Nancy's father-in-law — who died last August. Reagan did put in a brief appearance at the National Cathedral, where the names of those American soldiers killed in Viet-

Continued on page 14



"About Face"—the vet at the right had just joined the action.

On Thursday, November 11, Veteran's Day, over 60 people rallied at the War Memorial in front of downtown Seattle's Public Safety building in opposition to the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C. and against U.S. war preparations. The rally was called for by a coalition of organizations including Veterans for Non-Intervention in Central America (VENICA) and the local chapters of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (Anti-Imperialist) and the Committee Against Registration and the Draft (CARD). A wide range of people took part including former activists of the anti-war movement of the 1960s, draft age youth and many Vietnam veterans. Several people came to the rally from the Pike Place Market where VVAW(A-I) had been actively building for it as well as collecting testimony in opposition to the Memorial and money to help send a contingent of vets to Washington, D.C. to oppose the Memorial. One vet told the *RW*, "I heard about this in the market and just felt I had to be there." Another in the crowd was a Vietnam vet and former member of the Concerned Officers' Movement who had run into VVAW(A-I) outside a concert a few days earlier. Some vets who had attended the official Veteran's Day ceremony, which this year was aimed toward Vietnam vets, also came to the rally opposing the Vietnam War Memorial. In fact there were fewer Vietnam vets at the official ceremony than at the opposition rally.

"They say they want to honor and salute us," said the MC, a member of VENICA, in opening the rally. "And they're trotting out Nancy Reagan, Bob Hope and General Westmoreland (retired) to do so. Yet we see no understanding of the horrible lesson of Vietnam and no remorse. Nothing but hackneyed phrases of service and duty and carping about the ill treatment we vets received at home. The same guys who sent 57,000 young men off to die now plan to cry crocodile tears over their names. We veterans here today are here to say that we won't be bought off with a cheap parade. We remember that the anti-war movement was anti-war but never anti-vet. We recognize the D.C. monument for what it is: an attempt to make us collectively forget the war of the past so that the government can prepare for the wars of the future. We were used once; we won't be used again!"

Following this a member of VVAW(A-I) read the statement from Vietnam-era veterans his organization was circulating around the country in protest of the memorial. (This statement was printed in *RW* No. 179) Another Vietnam vet and VVAW(A-I) member spoke later, saying, "We're proud of the fact that over there we refused to go along with their shit. We're proud of the fact that when we came home we joined with the anti-war struggle here at home. And they say we're the 'forgotten heroes' of that war. Well, I'll tell you who the real forgotten heroes of that war were. They're the people that taught us we didn't have to low-crawl for the man anymore — and that is the Vietcong, our so-called enemy. They taught us to stand up, to open our eyes, to see what the hell we were there for. There were a lot of cases where Black troops were told by their so-called enemy, 'Man, this is not your war. Your war is at home.' And we're bringing the war home!" Then, reading from the recent editorial in VVAW(A-I)'s newspaper: "They need us, desperately, to lend vital political strength to their war machine. Let's desert that parade, and lead others to desert. We're doing an 'About Face.' We're going Absent Without Leave and taking as many as we can with us; we're deserting to the camp of revolutionary internationalism, and pitching our tents with the people of the world!"

Another veteran, speaking for CARD, also emphasized the legacy of resistance produced by Vietnam veterans during the anti-war movement: "There was a time when to be a Vietnam veteran was to be against the war. We hated the war. We knew it was wrong. By the time I got to Vietnam in 1969 the opposition and resistance by the soldiers in the field was enormous, almost total. The great division at that time, the conflict in this country, was not between men and women in uniform and the anti-war movement. The conflict was between those of us in uniform and the pro-war movement. The anti-war movement, as a matter of fact,

## Seattle: Vets, Anti-War Forces Unite vs. War Memorial

gave us hope and the sanity that we could not find in our leaders. And now the pro-war movement seems to have crept back into power — or maybe it never left. And now we are told that the officers we hated want to put their arms around us and buy us a drink. But we don't want to be used again. And we can't let this pro-war government declare that the war is over, or that the divisions have disappeared, and that we are all on the same side now."

Throughout the rally speakers wrestled with the major political questions posed by the Vietnam War Memorial and U.S. war preparations. After the sponsoring organizations spoke, the mike was opened up, particularly for vets and draft-age youth to speak out against the Memorial and war preparations. A member of Registration Age People (RAP) took the mike. "As the government dedicates this Memorial, it cuts off benefits, educational and house benefits to veterans. These men were deliberately and cold-bloodedly used, many against their will. We, draft-age people, are not going to let this happen again and we stand in solidarity with our veteran brothers and sisters and all people opposed to U.S. militarism. Thank you." A member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) spoke to the fact that "the lessons of Vietnam have not been wasted on the youth."

A Native American Vietnam vet who had come down from the Market area took the mike to express his support for the rally and decry the inhuman treatment Vietnam veterans have suffered at the hands of this government. He ended by saying, "Something's got to go!" Next a Vietnam veteran, a professional, spoke, "This brother here said that something's got to go. The basic question

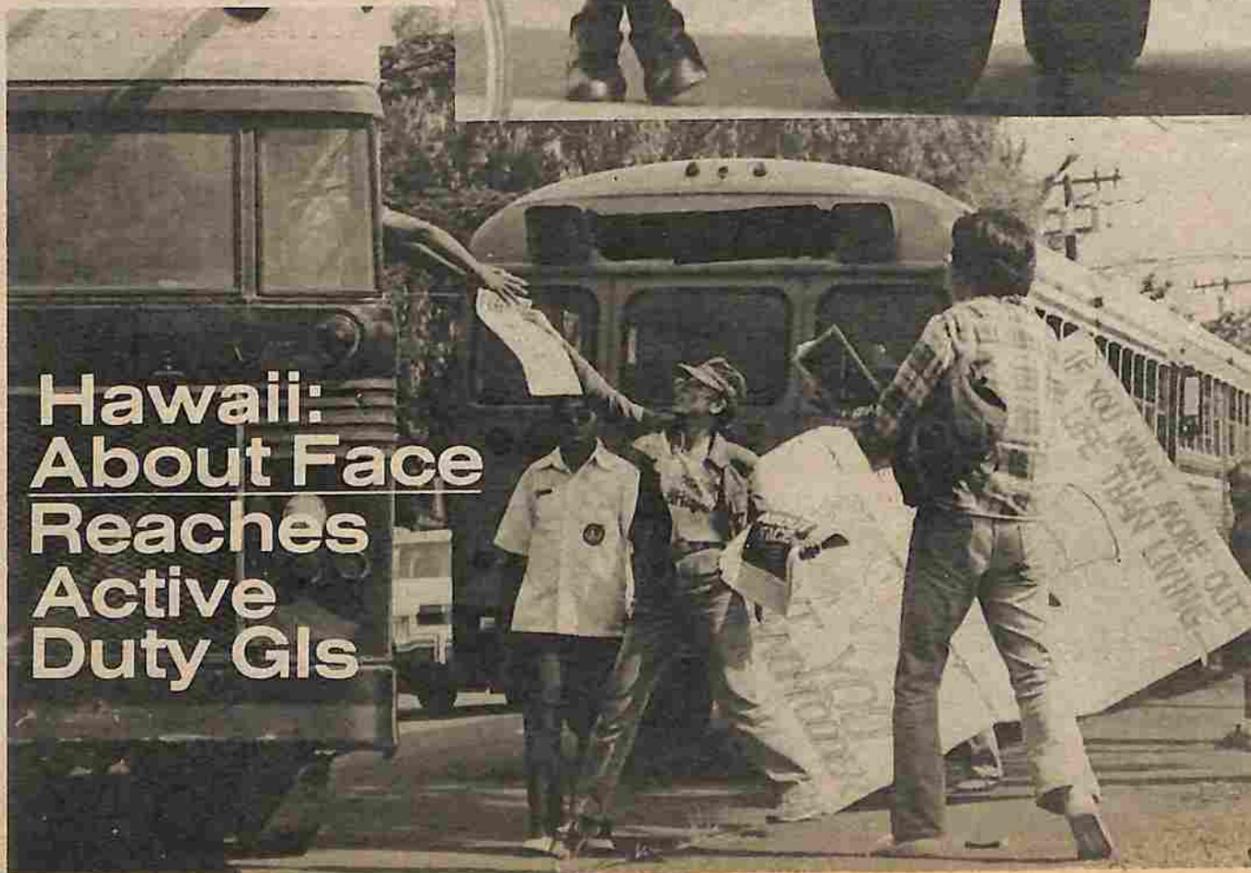
for us is when you have a Vietnam memorial being given in Washington, D.C. and at the same time that same government is doing what they're doing in El Salvador, which is the exact same situation you had in Vietnam, that says what they're memorializing in a memorial. They're not memorializing; they're we here are memorializing; they're memorializing their viewpoint on things. And that's what's wrong with the Memorial. The problem is what someone earlier said, that we're not going to follow someone's philosophy anymore. Well, we did learn out of Vietnam that when there is a basic lie going on, we've got to stop and say 'This is a big lie.' And we're going to go from there. That's what the

Memorial is: it's just a basic lie and it is related to El Salvador and Vietnam. It's so related; that says what the Memorial is about. That's why we're here. That's what's got to stop."

While the bourgeoisie did not go all out in the Seattle area to mobilize people around the dedication of the Vietnam War Memorial, they did make efforts on Veteran's Day to build support for it. Besides aiming the official ceremony at attracting more Vietnam vets, the day before they held a dedication ceremony at the State Capitol war memorial. In the days leading up to the D.C. parade, Vietnam vets were urged to send mementos of the war with a Washington state contingent to the memorial dedication. In the week leading up to the dedication VVAW(A-I) was out broadly distributing thousands of leaflets calling on vets and foreign-born to go to D.C. to do an "About Face" on the Memorial. They collected some \$300 from street-corner donations in a week and a half. The rest of the money needed to send a contingent of Vietnam vets from the Seattle area to Washington, D.C. was donated by other veterans and individuals contacted by VVAW(A-I). Among the advanced, veterans were "sickened," as one VVAW(A-I) member summed up, at the whole idea of being honored. Another added, "One of the things we did was rekindle the spirit of 'fuck you!' among vets." □



Every year in Hawaii the military does a big parade through Waikiki, but this year they went all out and had 3 parades. The *RW*, *About Face*, and "Uncle Sam" posters were hot items among the GIs, with many hungry for discussion about Vietnam, Lebanon, and what role they should play. Below: as the military bus pulls away hands reach out for papers in the face of harassment by officers and backward soldiers.



## Hawaii: About Face Reaches Active Duty GIs

**"A MESSAGE TO PEOPLE WHO LIVE NEAR THE NEVADA TEST SITE:**

"You are in a very real sense active participants in the Nation's atomic test program. You have been close observers of tests which have contributed greatly to building the defenses of our country and of the free world. . .

"Some of you have been inconvenienced by our test operations. At times some of you have been exposed to potential risk from flash, blast or fallout. You have accepted the inconvenience or the risk without fuss, without alarm, and without panic. Your cooperation has helped achieve an unusual record of safety."

(Atomic Energy Commission public relations pamphlet, 1955.)

"Paraphrasing General Forest's famous saying, 'Victory goes to the nation that gets there fastest with the mostest and bestest weapons', this is no less true in the atomic age.

"It is essential to continue the Nevada Proving Grounds in order to achieve maximum speed in the development of weapons. Speed is essential to national survival.

"In emergencies such as this, some risks, immediate and long-term, must be accepted."

(Letter from the head of the AEC's Biology and Medicine Advisory Committee, Dr. Elvin Stakman, to the acting AEC chairman, 1954.)

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These two statements were part of the government's public relations efforts of the 1950s aimed at residents of the area around its Nevada nuclear test site. The military and the Atomic Energy Commission were going full speed ahead in a crash program of nuclear weapons development. From 1951 to 1962 well over 100 nuclear explosions rocked the Nevada desert, spreading fallout throughout the area and exposing many thousands to deadly radiation, the effects

# Downwind Fallout from Nevada Nuke Tests



Explosions from this 1951 A-Bomb test lit up 1/2 million square miles in four states. This is a photo of the blast as seen from downtown Los Angeles over 200 miles from the blast. It could also be seen from San Francisco, 400 miles away.

of which are now coming to light around a court suit brought by some of the "downwinders" who were its victims. The Nevada site was chosen for the tests for a number of reasons: it was considered virtually "uninhabited," made up of small Mormon towns and Indian reservations; it offered ideal environmental conditions for the tests; and the government figured the rural population, many of whom were patriotic and

trusting citizens, would accept certain "inconveniences" in the interest of the national effort.

Prior to 1951, U.S. nuclear tests were done mainly in the South Pacific, using the people of the Marshall Islands as their proving grounds, provoking world protest. But this is not mainly what prompted the decision to move the main testing to the U.S. The fact was, in the U.S. they could be carried out more easily and cheaply and the performance of U.S. troops on a nuclear battlefield could be tested and experimented with more readily. In the Marshall Islands testing, scores of people were killed outright as several supposedly evacuated atolls were vaporized. Hundreds of others were irradiated. Fishing fleets too were affected by the fallout, the most publicized case being that of the crew of the *Lucky Dragon*, who, upon reaching home port in Japan, were found to have radiation burns already appearing on their skin. Pacific ocean marine life — including food fishes like tuna, so vital to the island economies and subsistence — were freely contaminated. But at the time this was of little concern to the people in the rural towns in the area of the Nevada testing facility if indeed any of them even knew about what had happened in the South Pacific. After all, they had the assurances of the U.S. government and it had spelled out what the duties of loyal citizens were.

"We believed the government. The government was the most marvelous thing. We thought it wouldn't do anything wrong." So testified a man during the trial currently unfolding in Federal District Court in Salt Lake City, Utah; a man whose son was one of many people to die of leukemia and other forms of cancer — victims of the radioactive fallout from U.S. atomic testing conducted at the Nevada Test Site between

the years 1951-1962.

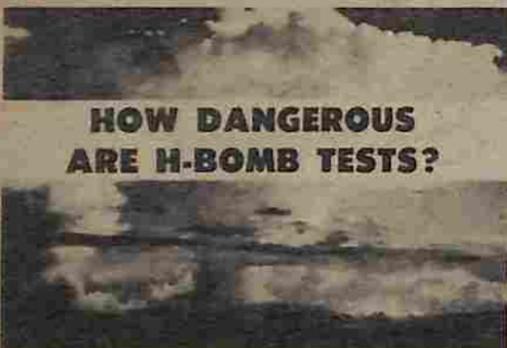
The trial, which began on September 14, is the result of a multi-million dollar civil suit filed in 1979 by some 1,192 people — residents of the small towns located downwind from the site. The suit is the first and only such case allowed into court by the government, which has systematically refused to hear similar suits filed by atomic veterans, Native Americans, scientists, and others. The suit charges the government with "negligence" and "deception" for their pious pledges of safety while knowing full-well that they were nuking people with deadly radioactivity. As government officials churned out tons of propaganda vowing that everything taking place at the Nevada Test Site was A-OK, fallout drifting into towns in Utah, Nevada and Arizona, began to take its toll. Some of the more immediate effects on people from the tests were hair loss and blistered skin, while longer range effects included abnormally high rates of leukemia and cancer, mental retardation, a myriad of birth defects and death. Furthermore, because of the realities of life on the reservations — complete with its unmarked graves, lack of medical care, and the non-documentation of deaths — the actual numbers of Native Americans that have fallen victim to the atomic tests may never be accurately known.

In the current civil suit, 24 cases out of an estimated total of over 300 fatalities have been selected as representative of the effects of the nuclear tests.

The central issue that the downwinders are basing their case on has been the fact that the government consciously falsified and lied about their own records on the levels of radiation that saturated these areas, and their covering-up of the links between these high levels of radiation and the high incidences of various kinds of crippling, disease, and cancerous deaths. One doctor testified that statistically only about 13 deaths from leukemia would have been expected among children under 15 between the years 1951-58. Yet his findings recorded 32 such deaths — more than double the norm. The doctor also cast doubt on the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission's (AEC) fallout monitoring system, whose records would lead one to believe that the leukemia deaths had no relation to the levels of radiation the government monitored. In fact, under questioning by prosecution attorneys, William Johnson, the former manager of health and safety at the Test Site, revealed that attempts to measure the iodine count in the milk produced in the area were unsuccessful. Why? Because, as Johnson admitted, the method used to test for iodine in the milk samples actually destroyed the radioactive iodine! U.S. Attorney Jake Chavez, in cross-examination, actually

Continued on page 12

U.S. News & World Report



## HOW DANGEROUS ARE H-BOMB TESTS?

These Are the Official Answers—

ARE FOOD SUPPLIES CONTAMINATED? **NOT DANGEROUSLY**

"The amounts of radiostrontium and radioiodine (the two most dangerous fall-out substances) which have fallen outside the areas near the test sites as a result of all atomic tests up to now are insignificant compared to concentrations that would be considered hazardous to health."

WILL BABIES OF THE FUTURE BE "FREAKS"? **NO NEED TO WORRY**

"The Commission's medical and biological advisers do not believe that this small amount of additional exposure (from test bombs) is any basis for serious concern at this time."

ARE NEARBY COMMUNITIES ENDANGERED? **NOT THUS FAR**

"The highest actual dose of radiation at an off-site community has been estimated to be less than one third of the greatest amount of radiation which atomic-energy workers are permitted to receive each year under the Atomic Energy Commission's conservative safety standards."

IS THE LEVEL OF RADIOACTIVITY RAISED IN U.S.? **NOT APPRECIABLY**

"It is important to recognize that the average amount of radiation exposure received by residents of the United States from all nuclear detonations to date has been about the same as the exposure received from one chest X-ray."

Atomic Energy Commission chairman Lewis Strauss and some of the AEC's sage advice (left), published in U.S. News and World Report, Feb. 25, 1955.



"We believed the government. The government was the most marvelous thing. We thought it wouldn't do anything wrong."

—downwind resident

# THE BREZHNEV ERA: EMERGENCE OF AN IMPERIALIST CONTE

Continued from page 1

characterized by and constitute capitalism in its highest and final stage, as analysed by Lenin himself—imperialism, where monopoly and finance capital dominate and the export of capital is an inevitable and distinguishing feature—and that the Soviet Union would emerge onto the world scene as a reactionary, expansionist force, compelled to seek 'spheres of influence' and to contend with other, rival imperialists in looting the world in pursuit of profit."

But this was to proceed through two general phases, the first largely corresponding to the period of Khrushchev's leadership, the latter with that of Brezhnev. At the time, Brezhnev enthusiastically supported Khrushchev's leadership in the thorough destruction of the socialist economic base and superstructure—the "letting loose" of the forces of capitalism and the frontal assault on basic Marxist-Leninist principles. Internationally, the Khrushchev era was characterized by Soviet collusion with the U.S. and its bloc and general kowtowing to the superior strength of the West, as exemplified in Khrushchev's theory of the "three peacefuls"—"peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition, and peaceful transition to socialism."

It is not that the Soviets were, even in this period, revisionists "without backbone"; instead, these policies were the only possible policies given global power relationships and the far weaker capitalist base in the Soviet Union *vis à vis* the West. "Peaceful coexistence" with the West meant, in particular, counter-revolutionary opposition to genuine socialist countries, like China, and to national liberation struggles raging throughout the third world. These crimes were justified with the revisionist aphorism of "preventing world conflagration." "What good are principles if your head is cut off?" Khrushchev asked. Of course, with or without a head, very definite principles were being applied here, and within this period, already visible were the machinations of a state monopoly capitalist ruling class determined to "catch up."

This can be seen in Brezhnev's more notable contributions at the time. Elevated by Khrushchev to the post of Defense Minister, he personally directed the successful flight of Sputnik that so panicked the West. But more (and something that is not widely known), he was Khrushchev's trusted "missile czar" who supervised the construction and deployment of the USSR's first ICBMs and developed the Strategic Rocket Forces as the "principal arm" of the Soviet military. Between 1956 and 1960, Brezhnev was in complete charge of some 17 missile plants, 11 missile engineering and development centers, nuclear war-head factories, etc. He even managed to complete a series of long range ICBM tests (over 5,000 miles) in 1957 before the U.S. launched its own payloads over similar distances. The Soviets however still had a ways to go.

Despite Brezhnev's herculean efforts, by the early '60s what the Soviet rulers perceived as a humiliating and unpalatable situation had become the subject of considerable debate. The U-2 incident and the failure of Khrushchev's unsuccessful shoebanging in a succession of crises over Berlin had represented major losses of face. In 1962 there was yet another bitter pill to swallow as Khrushchev was forced to back down

during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and under the circumstances no other Soviet leader would have done differently. Even Brezhnev demurred that it was "a sensible compromise." "We were eyeball to eyeball, and they blinked," said that peacemaker, John Kennedy. But the crisis, which laid bare Soviet weaknesses, caused a sharp revisionist reassessment: as Henry Kissinger has astutely summed up, "The Soviet leaders concluded that they never wanted to be in this position again."

As far as the Soviet rulers were concerned, Khrushchev was just fine as far as he went—but he hadn't gone nearly far enough. As *Basic Principles* notes: "...the role, and particularly the reasons for the fall, of Khrushchev can be seen in basic terms. He was ousted by the revisionist Soviet bourgeoisie he once headed partly because he had made a mess of things in the Soviet Union itself and perhaps was incapable of leading in the 'orderly' restructuring of society along capitalist lines, and at least as importantly because his policies of collaborating with and capitulating to U.S. imperialism no longer conformed to the needs of this bourgeoisie. 'Khrushchevite revisionism' was replaced by the revisionism of Brezhnev, Kosygin and Co."

In Oct. 1964 Brezhnev, with the consensus of the Soviet rulers, dispatched the unsuspecting Khrushchev to his Black Sea villa at Sochi for "a much needed vacation." By the time Khrushchev returned to Moscow his regular plane crew had been replaced with KGB agents, the telephone numbers of any Central Committee members who might have rallied to his defense had mysteriously been changed, and his picture had already been removed from public buildings. As he was hustled into the Kremlin to be informed of his "early retirement," it was Brezhnev who was barking the orders from the chair at the head of the presidium normally reserved for the party chief.

## The "Return to Leninism," or the Emergence of an Imperialist Contender

Brezhnev came to power in the midst of converging internal and international necessities confronting the Soviet rulers, who were by now well aware of the need for more active contention with U.S. imperialism and determined to take significant measures to facilitate this. These measures were shepherded by Brezhnev under the cynical guise of a "return to Leninism," and presented as a lofty rectification of "Khrushchev's errors." Seemingly in contrast to the "wild and woolly" policies of the Khrushchev period, and in a hypocritical and criminal distortion of everything Lenin ever stood for, the name of the great communist leader was invoked to cover a thoroughly reactionary, social-imperialist program.

The Soviet rulers now required a far more tightly run ship. This meant a reconstruction of the party—which was still rent from the Khrushchev period. Brezhnev and Kosygin immediately moved to strengthen the role of the state and centralized planning; they abolished, for example, Khrushchev's notorious regional economic councils.

In 1965, the principle of profit in command introduced by Khrushchev was firmly established with the Kosygin reforms—not merely as an "accounting device" as certain latter-day Soviet

# ENDER

mean the emergence of imperialism and everything that comes with this. Reform internally was thus linked to pressing international needs. Any imperialism, be it U.S., European, Japanese or Soviet, is driven by an inner compulsion to expand, in particular to export capital which, because of limits within the national boundaries, must "flow abroad," as Lenin put it; and any imperialism must fight for its own "spheres of influence" and ultimately, for a division of the world favorable to itself. For some years, the Soviets have been consciously acting on the understanding that this would come to world war against the Western imperialist bloc headed by the U.S.

It is revealing to note a series of inner-ruling class spats carried on by these "Leninists" throughout the '60s. These disputes were, in essence, bourgeois arguments over not whether but *how* to best contend on a world scale with their U.S. rivals and, in particular, over the contradiction between developing the Soviets' material base and the need for increased non-productive military spending. Kosygin and Podgorny, for example, argued that a higher rate of capital turnover by stressing light industry was required. Podgorny even went so far as to declare in 1965 that "restrictions on consumer welfare and national sacrifices by the population to allow for priority development of heavy industry and strengthening of defense are a *thing of the past*." (After this statement, he was suddenly taken sick for several months—an illness that is clearly political rather than medical in nature.) It was Brezhnev however who gave expression to the overriding necessity of the social-imperialists; that same year he delivered

no less than five major speeches calling for the "ceaseless strengthening of the Soviet Armed Forces." What Brezhnev astutely recognized here, among other things, was that the question of the material base for Soviet imperialism is by no means limited to the borders of Mother Russia.

This imperialist "understanding" was soon underscored in the streets of Prague. Brezhnev shocked the world in 1968 by ordering Soviet tanks to roll into Czechoslovakia after "reform elements" led by Alexander Dubcek threatened to loosen the country from its Soviet moorings by openly courting the West. Here was the first example—or if not the first, certainly a dramatic early example—of the Soviet revisionists' new-found "proletarian internationalism." (And to give credit where credit is due, we should note that the invasion was an inter-bloc operation, organized in part and aided by revisionists in Poland and East Germany.)

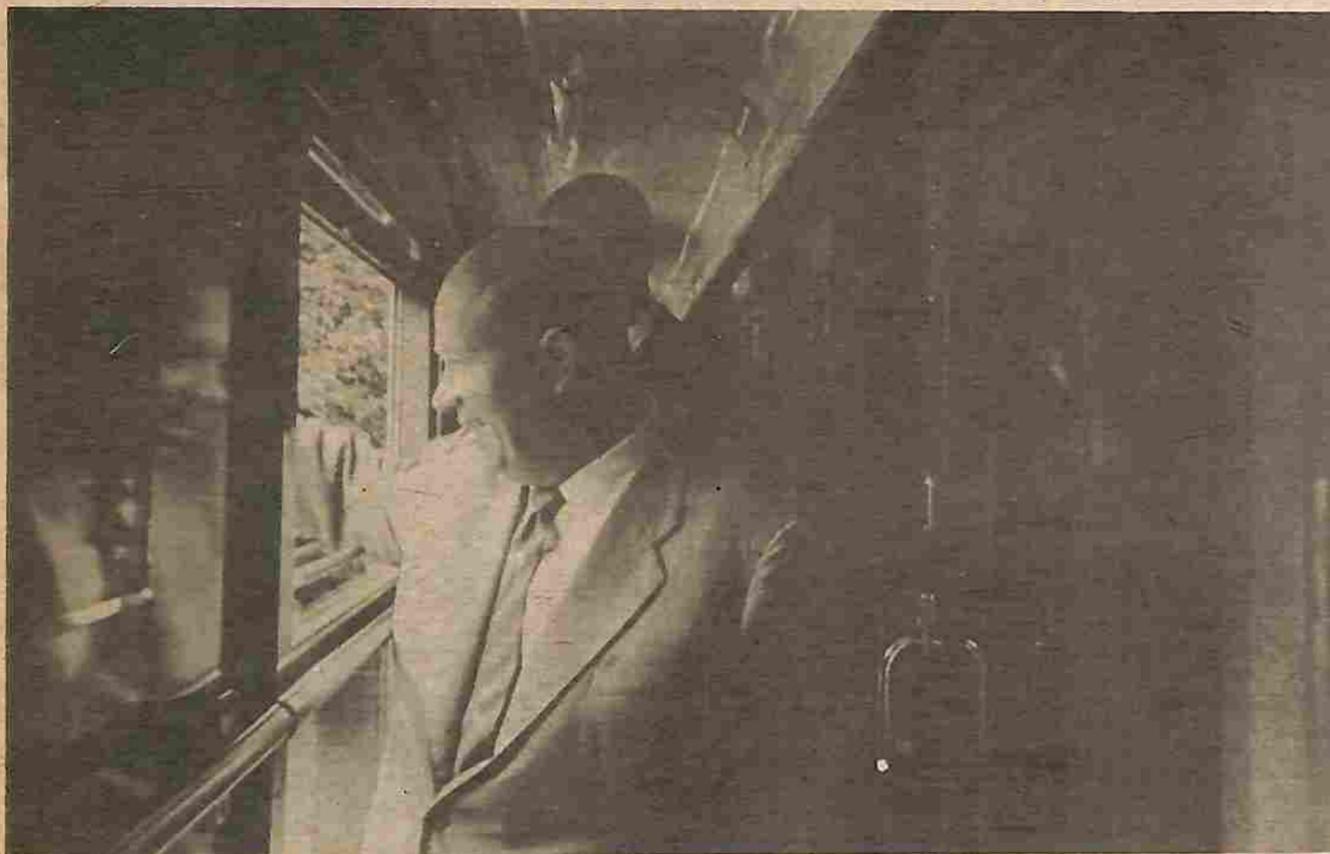
Here Brezhnev-style "Leninism" gets translated into what would become known as the "Brezhnev Doctrine"—the notorious theory of "limited sovereignty" and its corollary, Soviet "fraternal aid and assistance" in the form of offers that can't be refused. Dubcek and other Czech leaders were drugged, kidnapped by the KGB and brought to Moscow where the entire Czech presidium was subsequently assembled in the Kremlin and lambasted by Brezhnev. According to one account, when Czech President Svoboda bangs his fist on the table and scoffs at Brezhnev's dissertation on "socialist brotherhood and mutual assistance," Brezhnev yelled back: "We've already taken care of other little nations, so why not yours too?" But,

there are little nations, and then there are "little nations." The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was the result not of revisionist dislike of Czech "socialism with a human face"—after all, the Soviets themselves have always made room for a little pluralism, a little bourgeois democracy within their "dictatorship of the proletariat." What Prague '68 revealed more than anything was that by this time the social-imperialists had consolidated a bloc and an imperialist base area economically, politically and militarily. The early '60s had seen a distinct leap in the integration within the East European economies and between these and the Soviets'. COMECON (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance), which had been comparatively non-functional (and qualitatively different) prior to Stalin's death, under Khrushchev and especially under Brezhnev developed into the economic netting of the bloc and increasingly into a springboard of international capital export, not to mention the international export of revisionism. A "little nation" Czechoslovakia was; but nevertheless, a decisive nation, one of the most developed nations in East Europe, and a nation integrated into the social imperialist base. Soviet bloc "divisions of labor" portended the future re-division of the world. The invasion served notice that Czech "proletarian solidarity" would at all costs be maintained, and that any deals with the West (which, seemingly ironically, mushroomed in the '70s) would be on terms dictated by the Soviets and aimed, as we shall see, at strengthening the bloc, not weakening it.

#### Different Pokes for Different Folks

As Brezhnev, that "fiery Marxist-Leninist" and "man of peace," stood on the threshold of the '70s, he was all the more prepared to lead in the direction indicated not only by the Czech invasion, but also by the Soviets' increasingly flagrant behavior in Vietnam through which these imperialist liberators planned to and finally did usurp the struggle of the Vietnamese people, reducing Vietnam to a wretched Soviet neo-colony. The revisionists were ready to more actively confront a world situation still dominated by their U.S. rivals, but one in which the West was beginning to exhibit signs of deepening economic crisis and other imperialist troubles. As *Basic Principles* says: "The carrying out of capitalist restoration and the emergence on that basis of Soviet social-imperialism meant that the ruling class there had the need to challenge U.S. dominance and the division of the world favoring the U.S. bloc. And, especially as the U.S. was tied down, battered and heading for a major defeat in Indochina, the Soviet social-imperialists had increasing opportunity to expand and make significant gains in opposition to U.S. bloc interests in various parts of the world, and they did not fail to take advantage of this."

With this as a backdrop, and with the ebb in the '70s of revolutionary movements internationally, a new con-



Nikita Khrushchev waves bye-bye from the window of a train as he leaves for a month-long vacation at the Black Sea. Below: Brezhnev and a number of other party dignitaries, who have come down to the station, bid Nikita bon voyage. When he returned neither they nor anyone else was there to meet him, Brezhnev had usurped his position, and the phone numbers of his potential allies on the Central Committee had mysteriously changed.



## Letter on Soviet Debate

## One Imperialism, or Two?

The following correspondence on the Soviet Debate is in response to an article written by an American Marxist recently returned from the Soviet Union, which was published in RW No. 178:

Dear RW:

I'm sending you part of a letter I wrote to a friend. The part I'm sending you deals with some questions raised by the article "A Taste of Anarchy in the U.S.S.R.":

I just finished the article "A Taste of Anarchy in the U.S.S.R." and while it certainly raises interesting questions I'm not sure that it implies that there are two imperialisms unless one means two forms of imperialism.

It seems clear from the first full three paragraphs, pg. 12, column 2, that the time frame of the crisis is close to the time frame in the U.S. (with decay beginning in the '70s — or becoming tangible then). Dr. X said, "One reason activism

died in the seventies is because the economic situation for people no longer allowed people to grow up with the mind set that 'anything is possible.' " Regardless of whether he is correct in his view of why activism died, he sets the perceptual view of crisis at around the same time (perhaps some other word besides crisis should be used here, but you get the idea.)

So my point is that while obviously we're talking about two forms they appear to be bound together in one crisis.

The other interesting point raised in the article is the intense anarchism in the sphere of distribution. Does this intensify as a crisis deepens? (Is this a thing related to the "rich get richer and the poor get shit" sense of crisis one sees in the more "traditional" economics?) How does the crisis of capital accumulation relate to or give rise to the contradictions the author is pointing out (or sharpen them)?

It does seem clear to me, looking at Poland and Afghanistan, for example on one hand, and Western Europe and Mexico on the other, that the secondary imperialists and dependent countries are hit harder, sooner, by the international crisis (I'm not saying Poland is imperialist). Clearly the crisis manifestations aren't as sharp in the U.S.S.R. as in Poland.

We know that a crisis intensifies the lopsidedness of things (both internationally and internally in an imperialist country). If one can be clear on the mechanics of this process I think the reasons for the phenomena he describes in the article will become clearer.

Also the division of society into "two great antagonistic camps" occurs. It seems that the form this will take in the U.S.S.R. is more the eroding of "privileges and benefits of industrial workers." (Bottom of pg. 12 column 2)

Also in the same place he points out low productivity — which is a characteristic of the crisis in the U.S.S.R., he says. (Certainly lessened productivity of *capital* is a general characteristic of crisis but this doesn't seem to be what he's describing — at least in the "traditional" form).

I'm going to close now because it is getting impossible to write — I'm riding on a bus.

Note: An additional question has been raised in relation to the "debate" over one or two imperialist systems: Is saying there is one falling into "ultra-imperialism" (or at least giving it credence)? Is saying there are two going toward the problem during WWII of "democratic imperialism vs. fascist imperialism"? More Later!

## THE BREZHNEV ERA

Continued from page 9

stellation of policies were now devised under Brezhnev's leadership. These were policies which, while seemingly incongruous, even schizophrenic, when viewed on a world scale constituted elements of an overall strategy, and one quite level-headed at that. In a nutshell, it amounted (and still does) to "different pokes for different folks," a collection of thrusts and forays into areas of an unfavorably divided world, the nature of which were largely determined by the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Soviets' rivals in the West.

Of course, it should be said that this was no simple straight-line process. There was more than one contradiction—U.S. bloc/Soviet bloc—at work. The antagonism, for example, between the Soviets and then-revolutionary China was real. Brezhnev had massed 2 million troops on China's northern border by the late '60s. Hundreds of armed incidents were provoked by the revisionists. The entire Soviet armed forces were put on alert and the Soviets came close to launching an all-out attack. (Nixon commented in his memoirs that there was evidence that the Russians were considering a nuclear strike.)

Yet certainly by the mid-'70s, the basic features of inter-imperialist contention shaping and conditioning the world situation were discernable. And the Soviets began to push out all the more, hypocritically behind a socialist mask. But, as a quick review of some of Brezhnev's policies of this period will show, the signboard of socialism was missing a few letters.

Conditions permitting, the Soviets did in fact aid some national liberation movements and made some headway with the bourgeois and petty bourgeois leaders of these movements—like in Angola. The Soviets had for various reasons given a minuscule amount of aid to the MPLA since the armed struggle began against Portugal in 1961. (Even here, Soviet "support" was erratic, depending on the revisionists' assessment of the political fortunes of the MPLA.) In the meantime the Soviets sold military transport ships to the Portuguese between 1968 and 1971! After the Portuguese were defeated in 1975, Brezhnev began to bellow loudly about "the just struggle of the Angolan people" as he rushed to back the MPLA in the civil war with the FNLA/UNITA forces backed by the West. According to one biographer, it was Brezhnev himself who personally came up with the idea of using Cuban troops as proxies—some ten thousand of which (along with several thousand Soviet "advisors") were dispatched in Soviet tanks and planes to secure Angola for social imperialism, in the process rounding up and jailing or executing thousands of revolutionaries who opposed them. (Castro and the rulers of Cuba—whose 15 years in the Soviet orbit since the revolution had resulted in switching from being a giant U.S. sugar plantation to a giant Soviet sugar "cooperative" and whose economy was

by this time completely at the Soviets' mercy—were in no position to refuse.)

Such examples are numerous. Mozambique: an illuminating picture of Soviet sponsored "socialist development" (see last week's RW) which, aside from establishing methods of exploitation, allows Western imperialism to retain its hooks in the economies of such countries while consolidating Soviet political and strategic control. Ethiopia: a fine example of Brezhnev-style "aid to national liberation" where for the past seven years the Soviets have armed their clients, the fascist Dergue, to the teeth, in one successive attempt after another to exterminate liberation struggles in the region and secure the Horn of Africa as a social-imperialist base.

In the areas of the world where U.S. strength prohibits a direct pro-Soviet bid for power — either through subversion through liberation movements or through one of the Soviets' fine-tuned "Colonels' Coups" — the '70s saw the Soviets, through their international network, stabbing at "sharing power," with pro-U.S./pro-Western elements. This was no sign of Soviet capitulation to the West, but the opposite. It has been part of a strategy whereby large chunks could hopefully be torn from the U.S. orbit when conditions do permit. The deadly results of the "historic compromise" are no more stark than in Chile.

But let us leave Brezhnev, the "militant anti-imperialist" of Africa and, more recently, Afghanistan, and join him as the "man of peace" in Europe. Was *detente* a policy of peace? Indeed, to many this was the deceptive appearance of Soviet diplomacy in Europe throughout the '70s, ever since *detente* was initiated in 1971 as West German Chancellor Willy Brandt was wined and dined by an amicable Brezhnev aboard a yacht on the Black Sea. But *detente* and the whole package accompanying it — economic agreements, arms negotiations, and so on — was simply a particular form of contention.

"Divide your enemy" advised the great Chinese military strategist Sun Tsu. And the Soviets pursued exactly such a strategy with *detente*, as cracks in the Western alliance became more apparent. (Our purpose here is not to examine the many jabs into the Soviet bloc taken by the West in this period.) The obvious danger of Europe becoming a principal theatre of World War 3 looms large as a basis for Soviet designs, both in terms of attempts to influence imperialist European governments, as well as the people in these countries. And we should note that despite the many tiffs and difficulties between the Soviets and the revisionist parties of West Europe, the problems have stemmed in the main from the objective difficulties faced in the carrying out of Soviet strategy by these parties in imperialist countries allied with the U.S.

Brezhnev's game plan is revealed in the boom of both West/East trade, and in particular in the boom of Western investment in the Soviet bloc, spawned especially in the era of *detente*. And this was no small potatoes. Some estimates set West Germany's trade with the East as high as 20% of its GNP. And consider the fact that Poland, largely through the infusion of Western loans, literally doubled its productive capacity in a mere 10 years.

Today, as is well known, Poland is in debt to the West to figures approaching \$30 billion, and the debt of the Soviet bloc as a whole (including the Soviet Union itself) towers billions over this. This does not show, as some Soviet sycophants hold, simply a dumping by the West of its crisis on the East; it does, however, show the close interknittedness of the crisis of both blocs. But it shows something else too. While the Soviets have certainly attempted to use these economic exchanges as a wedge, that is, to pry away in the West, they have been mainly used to gain an edge, against the West. The inviting in of Western trade, technology, and investment has since the late '60s/early '70s represented a calculated strategy of developing the revisionist technical base for war. And as regards the debt, this is simply enough cancelled with the outbreak of war, that great interrupter of any number of circuits of capitalist production and finance.

### The Behests of a Revisionist Stiff

What does "comrade" Brezhnev leave behind to his worthy revisionist successors? Nothing more or less than a path to traverse which will continue to be charted by the dictates of imperialist necessity. This is not, however, a smooth road.

For one thing, the full weight of Brezhnev's breakneck military buildup is yet to be felt, serious as are the resulting problems already. The number of Soviet ICBM's shot up from a reported 50 missiles prior to the Cuban missile crisis, to a couple of hundred in 1964, to thousands by the early '70s, surpassing the U.S. in simple numbers (though, significantly, not in military technical advances). Between 1964 and 1972, the Soviet army was doubled in size, and other Warsaw Pact armies grew apace. Brezhnev's "Peace Program" presented at the 24th Congress presented a proliferation of new military programs. For example, in 1974, the Soviets began construction of a deep-water fleet and the transformation of the Soviet navy into a force befitting an imperialist superpower and capable of projecting into every corner of the globe. In 1973, Brezhnev bragged that by 1985, Soviet military power will be able to "dictate the terms of our relationship with any country." Around the same time, Brezhnev's Defense Minister, A.A. Grechko declared: "At the present stage, the historic function of the Soviet armed forces is not restricted merely to their function in defending our motherland and the other socialist states... (the Soviet state) resolutely resists imperialist aggression in whatever distant region of the planet it may appear." (Now, some will certainly argue that a "socialist country needs a strong defense against imperialism" and that it is, after all the duty of such a country to aid the struggles of the oppressed internationally. True enough. However, what is under discussion is not a socialist country, but an imperialist country.)

Strategic parity with the U.S. was achieved. This was the ground of the new Soviet posture through the '70s. But it was built on a productive base roughly one-half that of the U.S. and with a relatively stunted financial infrastructure. The immensely parasitic process of

channeling incredible chunks of Soviet GNP into non-productive military expenditures began by the mid-'70s to make itself felt in a steadily declining national growth rate, severe shortages, general stagnation and other ills.

This is not to suggest that what in the West is now being called "a major systemic crisis in the Soviet Union" is simply reducible to the problems stemming from the large non-productive sector (which includes but is not limited to the war machine). Clearly, though, it is a critical piece in the general puzzle.

So Brezhnev leaves behind inextricable economic contradictions — inextricable that is, short of world war. And on this count, it is important to grasp another point made in *Basic Principles*: "More than seeking to outcompete the U.S. imperialists in sucking the blood of the peoples in the 'underdeveloped countries', the Soviet social-imperialists are laying the basis to forcibly recast the whole framework within which the imperialist vampires compete." Their strategy is not one of tearing piecemeal chunks from the U.S. empire to oppress and exploit in the short term; only a basic realignment of world power relationships, a redivision of the world favorable to the Soviets can, from the revisionists' point of view, resolve the contradiction. They can't even really integrate into their economic web many of the areas where they do wield power, like the above-mentioned Angola and Mozambique, since these (and other) areas were inherited by the Soviets after years of domination by Western imperialism, resulting in gross internal disarticulation. And, as is the case with Cuba and Vietnam for example, which are of little if any economic value to the Soviets at this time, they are using these countries for deeper political and military regional penetration. If chided for making a bad investment, the astute Soviet banker will warn the critic against short-sightedness.

All this does indicate sharp contradictions within the Soviet orbit which are all the more antagonized by continual U.S. and Western probing. Potentially explosive contradictions in the Soviet bloc, exemplified most clearly of late in Poland, have obviously not escaped the attention of the U.S. And the spectre of major political upheaval is not confined to Poland, as various revisionists admit when they talk hopefully about "containing the Polish disease." The disease can easily infect other Eastern European countries, not to mention the workers and the minority nationalities within Russia proper. Whether or not political upheaval of this nature will go over to actual revolution remains to be seen. The revisionists are, needless to say, alarmed at the possibilities.

These contradictions themselves assume the features of a force compelling the Soviet system to war. In other words, in the final analysis "socialist solidarity" can not be achieved by aid packages, weapons shipments or even an occasional localized military incursion. The military operation must be global in scale and, at that, it must be victorious.

The preparation for exactly this leap — world war, nuclear war — was concentrated in the years the Soviet Union was led by Leonid Brezhnev, this "anti-imperialist," this "man of peace." □

# THREE-WAY TERROR AGAINST GUATEMALAN REFUGEES IN MEXICO

As part of its particular political role on behalf of the U.S. in Latin America, the Mexican government has carefully cultivated an image of Mexico as a haven for opposition forces from all over the region who have been driven out of their home countries by the U.S.'s puppet fascists. For example, the official leadership of El Salvador's FDR is headquartered in Mexico City, and there are representatives of, and participants in, a number of other opposition movements based there as well. There are those who like to point to this as proof of Mexico's "independence" from the U.S. However, the treatment of tens of thousands of refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala by the Mexican authorities tells quite a different story. They are treated viciously and the government fully cooperates with the regimes in those countries and the U.S. in trying to prevent refugees from getting into the U.S. and even in some cases returning them to the waiting arms of the death squad. Mexico too has deep fears about the upheavals in Guatemala and El Salvador spreading further into Mexico itself. The treatment of refugees from Guatemala, nearly all Indian peasants, is a sharp example of this reality.

Over the past few months, the number of Guatemalans living in refugee camps just across the border in Chiapas, Mexico has jumped to an estimated 30,000, with more arriving every day. They are driven out of their villages in the Guatemalan highlands by massive search-and-destroy missions conducted by the Guatemalan army. All peasants in the area who have not abandoned their homes and turned themselves in to the army for "protection" in a "model village" (the modern-day Guatemalan equivalent of strategic hamlet) are the enemy, and new arrivals to the camps bring tales of massacres for which U.S.-backed counterinsurgency is infamous the world over. For many, escape across the border into Mexico is the only option.

But it is really no escape. Guatemalan military attacks on refugee camps within Mexican territory have been taking place on a regular basis, and an unknown number of refugees have been kidnapped out of the camps and taken back across the border; the latest reported assault occurred on November 1, when 100 Guatemalan soldiers invaded the Santiago El Vertice camp a few yards into Chiapas, aided by U.S. Huey helicopter gunships. Meanwhile, Mexico's Minister of Defense has been issuing statements saying all is tranquil in Chiapas and that

there have been no reports filed of Guatemalan incursions across the border. But Mexico's officials have hardly limited their part in the counterinsurgency process to one of malignant neglect. Immigration officials in Chiapas have gotten into the act by harassing the refugees at every turn, including kidnapping and deporting them back to Guatemala and marching them through the mountains, where they somehow become "lost." At the Rancho Tejas refugee camp, Mexican immigration authorities evicted about 2,000 refugees, burning down a small hut that served as a health clinic/food warehouse in the process. In another area, heavily armed groups of young goons roamed the camps, threatening to run all refugees — whom they referred to as "guerrillas" — out of Mexico. One Mexican newspaper has reported that many of the refugees are beginning to change their traditional Indian dress so as not to be recognized as Guatemalans.

For a variety of reasons, including differences within the U.S. bourgeoisie over what to do about the situation in Guatemala and reports that many of the Indians on the Mexican side were beginning to take up arms, the situation in the refugee camps began to come to light. As exposures appeared in the Mexican, and then the U.S. press, the perennial "anonymous Mexican officials" began blaming the whole situation on the local head of immigration in the Chiapas border region, one César Marcos Morales. One of these unidentified types told UPI that Morales "was acting against the official Mexican policy of asylum, and he will soon be relieved of his duties," while a *New York Times* article said that Morales "has frequently been accused of collaborating with Guatemalan military authorities and conservative local landowners in detriment of the refugees." While these latter accusations are undoubtedly true, Morales' actions are anything but "against official Mexican policy." In the first week of September, federal judicial police and federal security agents set up a general headquarters in Comitán, the nearest large town to the camps, and they have joined in the harassment of the refugees, including reducing the length of time for which the refugees' residence cards are valid. Meanwhile, refugees have reported that helicopters from both the Guatemalan and Mexican armies have landed in the camps at the same time, with their occupants getting out to publicly confer — an obvious attempt to in-

timidate the refugees. Officials from both the Defense and Interior Ministries have continued to insist that relations with Guatemala are just fine, a fact that was borne out by the official invitation to the Guatemalan Defense Minister to observe Mexico's Independence Day military parade on September 16. But apparently some reporters still haven't gotten the message, and went running to the Guatemalan consul in Comitán to ask about the possibility of a confrontation between the Guatemalan and Mexican militaries over the refugees; the consul set them straight, replying that this was impossible because "the two armies work hand in hand."

And of course, Uncle Sam is quite busy watching over the clasped hands of his two neo-colonial nephews. The *New York Times* reported that U.S. diplomats have been making "unofficial visits" to the camps and have told Mexican officials that "many of the refugees in Mexico are guerrilla sympathizers and are probably funneling through them

medicine to rebels in Guatemala." The Mexican magazine *Uno Más Uno* has reported that one visit to a camp by "two Americans apparently of high rank" was followed by the disappearance of a number of refugees that the Americans pointed out as "guerrillas," including one who has subsequently turned up in jail in Huehuetenango, Guatemala.

It is patently obvious that the U.S. and its lackeys in Mexico are quite worried about the presence of these refugees, not only for the aid they may provide to the struggle in Guatemala. The situation in Chiapas is already quite volatile, and there are many peasants there who have the same Mayan ancestry and the same revolutionary sentiments as those from Guatemala. This is a crucial factor in the apparent decision to move the refugees out of the area as quickly as possible and disperse them throughout the country. Mexico's Secretary of the Interior held a televised press conference to announce that the Guatemalans were a "new political phenomenon" (he never used the word "refugee," apparently because this might reflect poorly on the benevolent Guatemalan regime), and to emphasize that "...we reserve to ourselves the right to place the foreigners where we have a conviction that it will not generate political, social or economic problems, or an alteration of order." Not exactly the words of a man confident in the strength of his rule and certainly not the words of a defender of those who are struggling against imperialism. □



## Stop the Extradition of Hüseyin Balkir

Amid recent hysterical screams to stop "international terrorism" the German and French "socialists" have been orchestrating the deliverance of Hüseyin Balkir into the hands of the American and German Grey Wolves in Ankara. The terrorism is clear: 100,000 political prisoners in Turkish prisons, hundreds murdered since the fascist coup, torture so pervasive that a German court in Mannheim has been forced to acknowledge its widespread use, but only to say it's so common that it can't be used as a reason for seeking political asylum! While the fascists have plastered Turkey with shoot to kill posters of Balkir, the German government waits for the junta's "word of

honor" not to "officially" execute Balkir as a means to circumvent the Turkish-German extradition treaty.

The jailing and barbarous torture have failed to contain the revolutionary outbursts in Turkey, even within the prisons and torture chambers. It is this contagion, that has spread to West Germany, the cornerstone of the NATO war bloc in Europe, which so terrifies the western imperialists.

FREE HÜSEYİN BALKIR — RIGHT NOW!!

Tom Hirschi  
Mara Youngdahl  
Travis Morales  
THE MOODY PARK 3

This letter demanding the immediate release of Hüseyin Balkir is from the Moody Park Three, revolutionaries indicted and convicted of riot charges in a well known trial in which the ruling class sought revenge for the powerful and broadly felt May 5, 1978 rebellion which erupted in a Chicano neighborhood in Houston called Moody Park.

It is still vital and urgent that French and W. German authorities be deluged with telegrams, letters, petitions, etc., demanding the release of Hüseyin Balkir. This leading revolutionary from Turkey is being held by W. Germany for extradition to Turkey, where death awaits him, despite the fact that he had been given political refugee status in France and a passport under the UN Convention, and despite the fact that the Turkish

military junta had revoked his citizenship. (See *RW* No. 179.) Send protests to:

Oberstaatsanwaltschaft  
Reihenspergerplatz  
5000 Köln 1  
W. Germany

Ministère des Relations Extérieures  
Quai d'Orsay  
Paris 7ème  
France

Copies should be sent to the *RW* and to:

Committee in Solidarity with Political Prisoners  
Kaiser-Wilhelm Str. 252  
4100 Duisberg 11  
W. Germany  
Phone: 0203-407244

# Nevada Nuke Tests

Continued from page 7

had the nerve to claim that the leukemia rates the doctor cited only *appeared* high because the rates before and after the nuclear tests were abnormally low! To which the doctor fittingly replied: "I find it ludicrous that the government assisted the residents of the area in achieving average leukemia rates."

Ludicrous? Certainly, but not out of character for what the government ran out to residents of the areas surrounding the Nevada Test Site year in and year out. Through a variety of multi-media performances — movies, radio spots, brochures and government forums — the theme pounded into peoples' heads was: your government knows exactly what it's doing, this is perfectly safe and sound. One film, produced by the AEC and entitled "Atomic Tests in Nevada," advised residents to simply stay indoors when approaching radioactive clouds were known to be on the move after testing. Furthermore, as a result of such high and mighty assurances of safety, it was a common practice for school children to be taken out on field trips to watch the blasts and to watch in awe the mushroom clouds rising from the desert floor. In a vivid recollection this past April at hearings of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, resident Gloria Gregerson brought to life just what unquestioning faith in the imperialists' claims and promises meant:

"I remember the day nuclear testing started in Nevada. . . The first blast came without any warning. The flash was so bright, it awakened us out of a sound sleep. We lived in an old 2-story home, and when the blast hit, it not only broke out several windows, it made two large cracks in the full length of the house. . . The radioactive cloud, as it came over, was very distinct. It always had a pinkish-orange tint to it. . . I remember playing under the oleander trees, trees with broad thick leaves. It doesn't snow where we live and it was fun to pretend that this was snow. We would shake the dust onto our heads and bodies. . . Then I would go home to eat. If my mother caught me in time, I would wash my hands. I made most of the bread for our family from the time I was quite small. I do not remember if I always washed my hands first. Our family ate vegetables from the fallout-exposed gardens, and livestock raised on fallout-laden grass. The AEC told us not to drink the local milk, but they never said anything about not drinking the water."

But all the government assurances in the world could not alter the fact that deadly levels of radioactivity were in fact being spread with every nuclear bomb tested. And as things began to happen — strange and frightening things — people in the areas began to ask more and more if there wasn't indeed some connection between these occurrences and the government's allegedly safe tests. Of course, the government didn't rely solely on regurgitating their "it's harmless" song and dance; their stonewalling took many forms. For example, when goats in the area began turning blue and thousands of sheep died, government officials looking into the matter attributed it all to "malnutrition" and "poor animal husbandry." The imperialists' classic maneuver came in 1957 as a result of a petition from local area residents that the government stop testing because of the mounting and seemingly inexplicable cases of poor health and sickness. This time the downwinders were told by one Nevada Senator that their fears were totally groundless and that they were being duped by "communist-inspired scare stories."

In this atmosphere, people who themselves were victims of leukemia actually began believing that they were merely victims of a contagious disease. Just how long this situation has festered like this is revealed in the fact that it wasn't until 1978, after reading accounts about the high levels of leukemia found in soldiers exposed to nuclear blasts, that the downwinders began putting two and two together — the leukemia, the cancers, the exotic blood diseases, the birth defects and the deaths — and started to expose just what the real deal surrounding the Nevada Test Site was.

With the growing anti-nuke movement, increasing exposures of nuclear-related deaths, and the quickening pace of preparations for nuclear war, the downwinders were spurred into increased activity and into taking on the government. The residents of the small towns united with Native Americans, atomic vets, and others against the government's steadfast stonewalling of all attempts to expose what had happened in the Nevada desert and to demand reparations for these crimes. The same forces united to oppose the positioning of the MX missile silos in the same area. This has become a very worrisome sight for the government especially given the fact that those whom it hopes will remain loyal citizens are up in arms and uniting with forces who have never had any reason to be loyal to the U.S. Particularly with a new war on the horizon, this is a real problem. Formerly politically reliable people (some of whom still refer to themselves as "patriotic, industrious, religious, conservative, and honest people as can be found anywhere in the country") are fighting the very nuclear centerpieces that the U.S. so dearly loves and needs for its plans to incinerate tens of millions around the globe. Their blind faith in the government has been shaken along with other illusions and they now are realizing how they have been used and abused, lied to, and nuked.

These political problems for the government have forced it to at least make a show of concern for *some* of the residents in the nuclear test area and to make some maneuvers in light of what lies ahead for it. Last April Utah Senator Orrin Hatch held hearings on the matter in Salt Lake City. He called for testimony from downwinders regarding a proposed bill for compensation — the so-called "Hatch Bill." It certainly seems to be an appropriate name since so far any hopes for actually getting any compensation have gone down the hatch. In response to the call for the hearings rural Mormons, atomic vets, Native American downwinders, and Dine' (Navajo) uranium miners showed up to testify. Hatch's first

order of business was to flat out exclude all Native Americans from his compensation bill upfront. Some of the other downwinders opposed this while others didn't. Next on the agenda was Hatch's announcement that the atomic veterans would also be excluded from the compensation bill. As Hatch himself put it, in expressing the imperialists' fears about what opening the door to such claims from ex-soldiers could lead to: "...we need to avoid setting an *improper precedent* threatening to our defense effort." Improper indeed; the rulers certainly don't need to give anyone any ideas about suing or publicly exposing the government for acts carried out under the auspices of "patriotic duty" — especially with all the patriotic duty the U.S. has in store for the not-too-distant future. Of course, since these hearings not a word of any compensation for anyone has been heard.

This latest civil suit is a further move in the same vein. The government hopes that giving the downwinders their "day in court" will cool their anger. No Native Americans or atomic veterans are part of the suit. And every effort has been made to keep the exposure that comes out in the courtroom as limited as possible. The government lawyers and witnesses have continued to spew out lies and coverups and to deny any wrongdoing whatsoever. Judge Jenkins has ruled out of order any references to government policy decisions regarding the nuclear testing program allowing only testimony about government mistakes or oversights. Citing the "discretionary function exemption", Jenkins has refused to allow any implication that the government was actually aware of what was going on or that it was conscious U.S. policy to ignore the effects of the radiation on the people in the area and cover it up as part of defending the national interest. Instead, the trial is cast on the narrow terms of whether or not the plaintiffs can prove and document that this whole episode was simply the result of errors by low-level bureaucrats and AEC officials who were carrying out the government's unques-

tionably infallible policies. It is not clear how the court will rule but there are a few hints as to how much of a chance there is that any compensation will be forthcoming — it is a juryless trial and the judge plans to take the results of the proceedings under advisement pending a decision for an undetermined time, i.e., he can rule whenever he and the federal government choose to do so.

Any ideas that the government is seriously concerned about the well-being of the downwinders in this case should be put to rest by the fact that the government is *still* nuking people in the area and attempting to justify it with the same deceitful lies of the past regurgitated anew. It so happens that as a result of underground testing in the same Nevada desert, deadly fallout and radioactive gases are being forced up onto the surface through fissures in the earth's crust and into the air, treating another generation to the atomic delights that poisoned, maimed and killed so many others in the past. And considering that the underground tests have been going on since 1963, more than a little radiation and fallout has found its way topside over the years. And, adding insult to injury, the AEC is busily preparing another "safety" film for distribution in the areas around the underground test site, coolly explaining all the non-dangers emanating from such tests! And surely there will be renewed calls for the people of the area to do their patriotic duty. Their ability to rally people to such calls is exactly the government's main concern in this matter. After all they have big plans and nukes play a big part in them.

*As we go to press, the government attorneys have rested their case and the trial is in recess until December 17, when closing arguments and final motions will be heard from both sides. From there, Judge Jenkins will take the case "under advisement" for an undetermined period before issuing his ruling. The RW will continue to report on developments in the weeks ahead.* □

## Correspondence on Vietnam War Memorial

Continued from page 4

medals for it. And when he came back it was on his record—how many he had killed. They knew exactly how many of the "enemy" he had killed—a heroic statistic. And they wanted to do right by him. He told me he went to a job interview and they told him he was a great hero. The man doing the interview said, "I see you've won all these medals. We sure have a job for you." My friend got up and said, "Fuck you, I don't want your job for killing all these people." And he walked out.

He was tortured inside by what he had done in Nam. I'll never forget what he said. I cried when he told me what they did to the people, the women and children in Vietnam. One thing he told me that was true about the movie the Deerhunter, was how they shot flames of fire on the Vietnamese. As a kid, I couldn't believe that I might have to do this.

His story and what I later saw in pictures and read in little bits and pieces made me realize you had to question, to speak out and oppose these atrocities.

When I was in High School the teachers would talk about the Vietnam War. One teacher said, "It was a war over land—no one really won—no one really lost—US just gave it to the Vietnamese." I couldn't stand that. I stood up in front of all the other kids and said, "That's bullshit. They sent kids to fight their meaningless war and they rewarded people with medals for burning men, women, and children. And you're filling us with a bunch of bullshit and we're not supposed to question it!" She threw me out because I kept it up. I was suspended.

The other kids reacted different ways—some of them wanted to know how did I know all this. Why is it different what they tell us in school?

I started to think about this a lot and I fought it all during HS. This wasn't the only time I was suspended because I didn't fit the mold and toe the line.

In school, they did not want us to question. Like Vietnam if they tell you to

go. . . then you go.

Go to do what! Burn and kill women and children!

And I tried to take the Vietnamese point of view and I knew even more that there was nothing to honor about the people who killed the Vietnamese. And with this memorial I think back to why they told us different and why they are trying to erase what my friend taught me. They want us who don't remember

Vietnam to think—"Vietnam wasn't so bad, now it's your turn to go to war for us."

And now I understand that's why they're doing this memorial.

My friend would not be bought and used.

I will not be silent about what I know.

D.T.W.  
Chicago

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# L.A. Forum Exposes U.S. Role In Lebanon

A lively and significant forum, "Lebanon and After" was held at the University of Southern California campus in Los Angeles on November 10th. This is a portent of things to come for the U.S. imperialists as on one of their more elite campuses well over 100 people, including Palestinians, Lebanese, Iranians, a Nigerian student, and a group of Salvadoran youth from L.A. High (scene of May First actions earlier this year), came to get a better understanding of events in Lebanon.

This forum was initiated by the RCP to address the question which has been and continues to be the focus of very sharp struggle and debate — the role of the U.S. in this most recent invasion. The panel was made up of individuals and representatives of organizations which have been quite active in their opposition to the invasion. While the panelists did have different views on the role of the U.S. in Lebanon, they all saw the need to examine the U.S. imperialists' actions.

The panelists included: Dr. Jack Kent, a physician who did volunteer work in West Beirut in support of the Palestinians early on during the invasion. He showed slides he took during his stay of the destruction there, including unexploded bombs which were displayed in front of the PLO office (clearly marked: "USA"). He recounted the active participation of the *USS Winslow* in the blockading of Lebanese ports during the initial stages of the invasion, while also drawing some striking parallels with the activities of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, South Africa and Nicaragua.

UCLA professor Ed Kennan, member of the Committee in Solidarity with the Palestinian People and former instructor at Tel Aviv University in Israel, brought out that the U.S. had to rescue Israel

from the fire of the Palestinian resistance. He talked about Israel's expansionist aims and actions, including more bold moves to annex the West Bank by replacing the military government with a civilian government while also leaving the door open to annexing parts of Lebanon in the future. He exposed that some forces in Israel are now issuing maps of Lebanon, complete with Hebrew names for Lebanese cities — no doubt recently discovered historic evidence for future Israeli claims to Lebanese land! As an interesting side note, he recounted his memories of a frequent lecturer at Tel Aviv University during his stay there — none other than the famous independent Lebanese Major Haddad!

Dr. Tony Sayegh, a revolutionary-minded Palestinian spoke about the historic role of the U.S. and the lessons of Lebanon. He said that more and more Lebanese and Arabs must face the reality that Lebanon today is a fascist regime with the backing of the U.S. Marines. And that the enemy of the Palestinian people is not only Israel, which is acting as a tool of the U.S. working within the framework of the U.S.'s strategic designs in the area, which includes forcing the withdrawal of the PLO. He said that the only solution was for revolution in the Middle East and that the PLO had given up that goal in exchange for a mini-state. He exposed all those so-called friends of the Palestinian people, the reactionary Arab regimes, who did nothing during the invasion but leap at the U.S. "peace" plans.

A representative from the RCP condemned the U.S.-sponsored invasion as well as the current occupation by the U.S. Marines as well as exposing these "peacekeepers" and their role in the enforcing of the continued roundups and

disappearances of Palestinians by the "newly independent" fascist Lebanese government. He also talked about how the U.S. actions in Lebanon were actually a plan for the nailing down of Lebanon as an outpost for World War 3.

The forum was moderated by a representative from the L.A. Feminist Women's Health Center who also made a brief statement in support of the Palestinian people and why they saw the need to speak out on this issue.

The discussion got very sharp rather quickly as Phalangists in the audience could not stand the exposures that were coming from the panel. They shouted that only the Lebanese could talk about Lebanon and that the panel had no right to speak on this question. When this was shouted down and ridiculed by the audience, the fascists defended the Gemayel regime in Lebanon as being voted for by the Lebanese people. This was challenged by the panelists, who exposed that the parliament which voted Gemayel in was paid thousands of dollars to do so, and by others in the audience who said that the Phalangists only represented 30% of the Lebanese. Then one of the Phalangists changed his tone, identified himself as a moderate Lebanese, said that the Lebanese government had given the Palestinians many privileges in Lebanon but these were abused and that the Palestinians were the cause of all the problems. At one point a Lebanese woman in the audience said that she was extremely insulted that the Phalangists were here and were allowed to put out their bullshit. A youth from El Salvador identifying himself with the international proletariat, began to speak on the links between El Salvador and Lebanon, saying that this would help everyone get a better perspective on the situation, but before he could continue, was

interrupted by shouts from the Phalangists that this was a forum on Lebanon and not El Salvador. This was yet another self-exposure by the Phalangists who were told to shut up and let the brother from El Salvador continue.

While it was clear that most people had come to understand the events in Lebanon, it was also clear that many were there to try and understand these events in the context of the world situation and world revolution. A Nigerian student wanted to know the panelists' views on the role of the Soviet Union, as in his country, he knows they are a force to contend with. The panelists had different opinions on this ranging from an analysis of the Soviet Union playing the prudent imperialist banker waiting for the chips to fall and see where it could make its best investments, to a view which held that the Soviets were waiting for a genuine and mature Palestinian revolutionary movement to develop so as to aid it. All the panelists felt this was a necessary question for the oppressed around the world to come to grips with.

One other thing of note is the struggle prior to the forum. Trying to get a place for the forum at USC, some forces did their utmost to prevent the forum from happening. This included a representative from the Lebanese National Movement who tried to rally people within a group of graduate students, that was discussing sponsoring the forum to oppose it, because the RCP was involved in it. When someone wanted to know why they should not sponsor it because of that — as they felt that the RCP had been a target of the U.S. government and as far as they were concerned that meant that

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## Arson Conviction Challenged in Yellow Ribbon Case

On Friday, October 29, oral arguments were heard by the Oregon State Court of Appeals in the case of two members of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB), John Kaiser and Nancy Whitley. The two were convicted in a thinly-disguised political trial of Class A felony arson for burning a yellow ribbon at the speech of Victor Tomseth, one of the spy-hostages in Iran, and were sentenced to ten days in jail and two years probation (with a threat of twenty years in prison for its violation). They were also required to pay court costs of approximately \$8,000. In response to the defendants' appeal, the government has reiterated and gone to even greater lengths to shore up the same sham and threadbare arguments it used at the trial. This further shows just how determined the government is to maintain this arson conviction which is part of its efforts to pin the "terrorist" label on the RCP and its supporters and is an outrageous attack on the RCYB's sharp internationalist statement against the chauvinist swill of the U.S. rulers exemplified in Tomseth's appearance.

To obtain the conviction in the first place the prosecution sought to concoct a lurid picture of violence-prone maniacs recklessly endangering hundreds present at the speech by burning the yellow ribbon. Testimony was elicited from two compliant witnesses to portray the audience as on the edge of panic; the yellow ribbon was ruled to be "valuable property" in order to squeeze the ribbon burning into the legal definition of arson; and capping it off, photographs taken by cops in a secret search of John Kaiser's house were introduced by the prosecution, showing two guns (both legal) which the cops had dragged out of his closet and criss-crossed over a copy of the *Revolutionary Worker* newspaper. The judge ruled these photos out of order while stating that "the party is not on trial here, at least not today." Beyond this there were set in motion all sorts of other undercover measures against the two, including planting marijuana in one RCYB's car, a rape attempt on Nancy, surveillance of defendants and their lawyers, and, most recently, the COIN-

TELPRO-style action in which someone claiming to be the RCYB called in a bomb threat on a University of Oregon classroom (See *RW* No. 178).

The government's brief in response to the defendants' appeal in this case continues in the same vein as all of this. First of all, the government affirms once again that there is nothing "political" about this case, that the prosecution is completely innocent of the defendants' accusation that they have been singled out for prosecution. Anyone else who supposedly "endangered" so many people in a closed auditorium by setting something like the yellow ribbon ablaze would also have been prosecuted, they state — even though testimony established that there have been literally hundreds of instances in that same auditorium or others much like it on campus where propane lighters were blazing at rock concerts, where jugglers juggled flaming Molotov cocktails and so forth. Once the *entire stage* was accidentally set on fire. But no, the prosecution continues to insist that burning the scrap of yellow ribbon was different, so different in fact that only it merited prosecution. Why? The government begins in response by citing the testimony of Deputy Fire Marshall James Jensen, who swore that, "In the five years he had been assigned to the University of Oregon district, this was the first 'demonstration fire' which was set inside a building." Following this rather open admission, the government then repeats the fable of threatened panic in the auditorium, complete with bountiful praise for the Eagle Scout who crawled on his hands and knees up to the fiery ribbon and heroically smothered it with his down-jacket.

But, probably sensing that this crude concoction might be somewhat stretched, the prosecution proceeds to a conclusion by dredging up a case which will finally "prove" that they have not singled out the defendants. There have been other cases where they politically prosecuted people on arson charges! "Indeed," they boast, citing a case from the early '70s, "in that case the defendant, a University of Oregon student, was prosecuted and convicted of third-degree arson for his burning of a United States Navy recruit-

ment banner as part of an anti-war protest." Now *that* should completely clear the government of the charge of "selective prosecution"!

As for the trial judge's squeezing of the ribbon burning into the legal category of arson by ruling the yellow ribbon "valuable property," here the prosecution is adamant. Suddenly in their brief the yellow ribbon is transformed into a "yellow banner." But in any case, they argue, something was burned, and everything, no matter how worthless, has some value, and is therefore property. This logic, which would have millions of match-users turned overnight into felonious arsonists, is ridiculous, but no more so than the trial judge's original ruling. However, once again sensing the flimsiness of their argument, the real deal is hinted at: "Conceivably, the value of an item could also be measured by other means, such as its sentimental value..." And then, of course, a yellow ribbon with its renewed life as a symbol of national unity, might be found to be very, very valuable "sentimental" property indeed.

However shaky such arguments might be even from a legal viewpoint, the courtroom is, as the prosecution reminds the appellate court, a province of government, and it is the government that ultimately decides these questions. More specifically the prosecution argues that even when there is little or no damage committed by a defendant, he may be charged with and convicted of a more serious crime than one who inflicts far more harm, for there is the question of the defendant's intent, as well as the government's right to penalize acts which "have greater social impact and more grave consequences." In short, the defendants have committed arson because the government *says* they have committed arson, and that's that.

As a further indication of just what is the ultimate goal of this continuing attack, the prosecution has also taken one additional move to streamline its case. Oregon law requires that a hearing be held to determine a defendant's ability to pay court costs whenever these are assessed, and Kaiser and Whitley were not

given one. The prosecution has now agreed that one should be held so as not to jeopardize the upholding of the arson charge because of this "oversight."

This blatant political railroad and the continued hounding and harassment of John Kaiser and Nancy Whitley has drawn growing opposition from broad forces. Recently, the main newspaper in Eugene, the *Register-Guard*, was forced to reverse its original refusal to print the political affiliation and names of those who signed a Statement of Outrage, circulated by the RCYB and the Committee to Free the Yellow Ribbon Burners and submitted as an ad to the paper. Though the University of Oregon paper printed a preliminary list of the signers on the day of oral arguments (Oct. 29), the *Register-Guard* refused, citing a "written policy" of the paper prohibiting such ads. It partially backed off when it was exposed that no such written policy in fact existed, and when it further came out that the staff member in charge of ads for the *Register-Guard* was none other than a cousin of Mr. Victor Tomseth! Even so, battle is still being waged on this front as the *Register-Guard* is now insisting that every name be notarized before it will print the ad. The statement has been signed by hundreds of people including students from many countries (Iran, Palestine, Turkey, Azania, Saudi Arabia, India, the U.S. to name only a few), the Iranian Students Association (SETAD), professors, anti-nuke activists, artists, feminists, and a variety of political activists, to list only some of the broad range of people who have signed. In addition the RCYB and the Committee held a well-attended press conference following the appeals court oral arguments. The conference received coverage by most of the major media in the Eugene area including a lengthy article in the *Register-Guard* itself. While the government considers how it will rule on the appeal, broad support continues to grow. The lengths to which the government is going to make their conviction stick reveals all the more what they have been up to all along in this political railroad. And this is becoming much more clear in the minds of many more people. □

# Weapons Search Sparks Breakout in NY High School

November 10th, East New York, Brooklyn. This was the day the authorities had planned to crack the whip on some 2,000 Black youth at Jefferson High School. At 8 a.m. a special squad of Board of Education security guards took up positions at the school entrances at Jefferson High in the predominantly Black section of East New York, Brooklyn. Their mission: to conduct a weapons search. In fact, the Board of Education (which might better be named the Board of Detention) has a special mobile unit to do just that, having conducted weapons searches in 12 other of the city's public schools as part of an official program to combat the so-called crime problem in the schools.

In addition to the surprise weapons searches, the authorities have instituted other practices designed to provide some higher education for the youth, particularly in schools where there are concentrations of oppressed nationalities, in the American way of life, a program which might best be described as "GET IN LINE, STAY IN LINE." In 1982, school security guards swelled from 300 to 1,500, photo ID cards were issued and electronic alarms were installed in the schools. In one program, called the Bed-

ford Stuyvesant Street Academy, behavior modification — "acting out aggression" accompanied by "peer humiliation," "getting in touch with your feelings" and other brainwashing techniques — are used to enforce discipline among students considered particularly troublesome. In three city high schools, the Board of Education in conjunction with branches of the armed forces has recently set up ROTC programs, complete with enrolled students dressed in uniforms with naval and air force personnel for instructors.

Jefferson High is listed by the authorities as "one of the most dangerous" schools. And in the recent raid, the "danger" posed by these youth to the authorities was well demonstrated. A former student told a member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) who visited a few days after the raid, that he calls Jefferson High, "Rikers Island." The scene set up by the security guards resembled every bit of a prison lockdown. When students arrived for classes they were ordered to remain in the schoolyard while youth in groups of 6 were taken inside the building. Each student was frisked with a metal detector. Bags, books, pocketbooks,

everything was subject to search. Female students reported being searched by male guards. The slightest protest against the search was met with swift retaliation. Two youth who protested were physically carried away to the principal's office. Other students reported that the two had been slammed up against the wall by guards when they refused to submit to the search. Another youth reported that as he took off his jacket he was punched by a guard because he didn't step on it fast enough. It wasn't long before word of these incidents spread and all hell broke loose.

Students surged out of the schoolyard and into the street. "Hundreds of students began hours of sporadic brawling with the security guards," one local newspaper reported. Reinforcements were called in and the street was cordoned off by the police. A SWAT team showed up. Attempts to disperse the youth were met with volleys of rocks and bottles and shouts of "Gestapo tactics." One youth put it, "They tried to get live with all the task force stuff. And we were not going for it." The authorities' attempts to maintain order inside the school by extending class periods and refusing to allow students to leave the classroom were futile. Large numbers of students took to the halls, the cafeteria, turning over tables and chairs and meeting blows from security guards with blows. More

students headed out into the street and for hours refused to leave, repelling attempts to disperse them. Radio reports at the time announced that the authorities had closed the school at 11 a.m.; in reality it had already been shut down by the actions of the youth.

With the students now in the street, the weapons search a flop and fearful of a spillover effect in the community, the authorities decided to pull back, making no arrests and waiting until the crowd of youth petered out. In describing these events to the RCYB afterwards, the students expressed great contempt for the school and other authorities and were very angry that the press had portrayed them as mindless animals. News spread to other high schools in the city, and one student at Wingate High, where there was a breakout of students last May 1st, asked the RCYB if they were going to go out to Jefferson.

Meanwhile, the principal who had himself ordered the search, attempted to cover his ass and explain away the rebellion by saying, "What the students felt was a natural, human resentment at having their privacy invaded by being searched. I feel the same way every time I walk through a metal detector at the airport." It is safe to say that despite his sudden "understanding," this pompous bourgeois does not "feel the same way" as his students about anything. □

## Dogs of War

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nam were being read, and he made a comment there, that: "We're finally beginning to understand these men fought in a just cause." But the ginger attitude with which prominent imperialist representatives approached the National Salute — despite their own extensive behind-the-scenes funding and promotion of it — does demonstrate that the Vietnam war continues to be a complicated and charged issue for the imperialists. At the same time, it is clear that the bourgeoisie did not attempt to create the same kind of all-encompassing national flag-waving hysteria around the National Salute to Vietnam veterans that they tried to whip — albeit with generally disappointing results — around the Iranian hostage crisis. The National Salute was not an effort to electrify the whole nation with war fever today, but a milestone in the course of laying the most favorable political basis for mobilizing the maximum social base behind the war banner when that time does roll around for real.

The more brazen expressions of patriotism and national chauvinism at the parade and rally were, indeed, deliberately under-emphasized in the general media coverage disseminated nationally. At the parade itself, squads of F-4 fighter bombers roared overhead to wild cheers from the crowd below. "The F-4 fighter bomber, the main fighter craft used by the United States Army in Vietnam!" exclaimed the P.A. announcer, "Good work, boys!" A great sensation was made of the presence in the parade of elements of the Americal Division — Lt. Calley's outfit, noted in legend for its especially brutal methods, which was described as "marching as a unit on U.S. soil today for the first time since the war!" In short, the parade, far from being conducive to "somber reflection" or "a-political" in its attitude towards the war, was an undisguised and undiluted expression of the political point of view of the American Legion.

It is not everyone that will swallow that sort of thing, and in point of fact many of the vets that were mobilized for the memorial were among the more backward sections of veterans and of the population as a whole. In the parade, and among those milling at the memorial site or hanging out at the various beer parties featured at the Sheraton-Washington Hotel were significant numbers of "soldier of fortune"-type vets, those who affect ranger-style outfits, black sweaters and berets, the "mercenary look." *Soldier of Fortune* and other fascist "mercenary" groups advertise heavily in veterans' publications and play a significant political role in the movement; these forces were there, and they had good reason to be: so was some of their social base.

### About Face

There were veterans who came to protest. Some brought their own signs of political protest, with contradictory content. One sign supported the monument but warned against the planned additional statue of three combat soldiers which would one day "stand in silent approval as we march by to the next war." Another sign read, "We fought, we bled, we died, for worse than nothing." A contingent from the Washington Hiroshima-Nagasaki committee which includes veterans who have come forward to sign the Vietnam Era Veterans Statement in opposition to the memorial and join with Vietnam Veterans Against the War (Anti-Imperialist), brought a banner reading, "Vietnam: Remember — So that It May Never Happen Again."

The small core of revolutionary veterans under the leadership of VVAW(A-I) had a significant impact in this situation, an impact all the more striking because of the clear hegemony of the reactionaries in the activities overall and the "coming from behind" character of their revolutionary work. At least 1,000 copies of the VVAW(A-I) newspaper "About Face" were sold, in addition to hundreds of *Revolutionary Workers*. When VVAW(A-I) led an "About Face" at the rally, chanting the slogan "We Won't Be Used Again" in the middle of the speech by the National Commander of the American Legion, numbers of other vets rushed forward to stand with them. A veteran who helped to lead the About Face told the *Revolutionary Worker*: "It polarized things immediately, it was so sharp. There were five or six guys who jumped in, including one guy from the Queens chapter of Vietnam Vets of America who told us later how inspired he was by the About Face. Where I was standing, one woman with a notebook in her hand, I think she was some kind of reporter, was joining in the chant 'We won't be used again!' There were two other guys with fists in the air. All these other people had looks on their faces like, 'Oh my God, I'm gonna have to take a stand on this.' People were trying to figure out what they were going to do. When the About Face took place, there was a knot of about 15 of us around the agitator on the bullhorn. Several people joined in that had to make their way through the larger crowd to get to the About Face. One guy really sticks in my mind. He had the classic 'backwoods' look but he came running through the crowd yelling, 'We won't be used again!' Then another guy who had been mainly organizing from the right comes over to argue with this guy, and his only response was to keep yelling. This guy marched with us right behind the VVAW(A-I) banner. The more backward forces had to back off, or jeered at the thing from the sidelines, but some of these more advanced people really took it up, found

their way into it, took stacks of literature and so on. The About Face didn't last more than between 5 or 10 minutes, but the polarization was very sharp."

In the days prior to the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, members of VVAW(A-I) were interviewed by FM radio station WPSW on two occasions. One hour-long show followed by questions and answers was able to take only a small number of the calls from listeners that lit the board due to time limitations. That show was followed by a regular weekly call-in show called "Dial-A-Poem" where people call in and read their poetry; that day several of the poems were in opposition to the monument. A show which aired on the night of Nov. 13th featured three veterans of the Indochina war — one was a brother from Indochina who had come to D.C. with VVAW(A-I), one was a member of VVAW(A-I) and the third vet was the show's moderator. The brother from Indochina was also present at several meetings called by VVAW(A-I), and the vets at these meetings were deeply affected by this opportunity — for most, a first — to talk with someone from Indochina and even more to fight on the same side of the barricades.

Given the overall composition and nature of the rally, the revolutionary forces were not in a position to marshal the strength necessary to decisively transform the terms of the struggle at the memorial. In addition to the fact that many progressive and revolutionary-minded Vietnam vets were disgusted by the whole deal but did not grasp the necessity to actually mount the political stage in Washington, D.C., many of the vets at the memorial itself who bought papers and expressed agreement with the VVAW(A-I) statement, were influenced by the line that this was an event "by veterans for veterans" and that this was "not a day for politics." Influencing their reluctance to "break rank" was the fact that the reactionaries clearly had the upper hand, and while they tried to muzzle everyone else, they went about singing patriotic songs for the TV cameras and doing spontaneous flag ceremonies at the memorial. The fact that important inroads were made even on distinctly unfavorable terrain, however, is an indication of a large untapped potential; but more than anything, a sharp illustration of the crucial need for the advanced forces among veterans to step forward and meet the urgent responsibility of entering the political arena as an organized, class-conscious contingent.

There is something to be learned here from the tactics of the enemy and their attitude toward the threat posed by such revolutionary veterans. For example, the major press told VVAW(A-I) representatives upfront that they had no intention of covering any revolutionary demonstrations of opposition to the National Salute. Thus, revolutionary veterans

were faced with a conscious blackout by the national press in the days preceding the Saturday rally, on the day itself, and in the immediate summations of the events. At the About Face action, reactionary organizers among the veterans were working systematically to prevent any coverage; fellow reactionaries who seemed about to start a rumble were restrained by their own leaders, and counseled that "We don't want these people to have any publicity." Photographers who converged on the About Face to take pictures were urged not to shoot film, and then threatened if they persisted.

This well-thought-out determination not to let any rebellious or revolutionary images of Vietnam veterans "pollute" the mass media coverage exists in intimate relationship to the bourgeoisie's own deliberate effort to craft a convincing image of the "loyal, patriotic working class vet" as the new dominant "vets motif." A big deal was made in news coverage that the National Salute was "the vets' own thing," and the working-class, enlisted-man, unemployed "prole"-type vet at that. This is quite a joke, considering that the roster of organizers for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is replete with generals, industrial magnates and hard-core reactionary outfits such as the VFW who until just recently treated Vietnam veterans as if they had leprosy. But more to the point, it is an attempt to reverse verdicts on the image of the Vietnam vets, give the political initiative to the junior Archie Bunkers or John Waynes (as the case may be) and bury the image of the real proletarian vets — many of whom acted in the finest tradition of the international proletariat and gave the imperialists and their brass more than sleepless nights during the Vietnam war. The editorial in *Newsweek* by William Broyles was a concentrated example of this aspect of reversing verdicts:

"Around midnight on Thursday night, a few Marines finally realized what the memorial was missing — a flag. And so, with the daring and skills that served them so well in Vietnam, they went on one last mission. Moving stealthily, they liberated the hotel's American flag and flagpole and spirited it off to the Memorial . . . They sang 'America,' they swapped stories, and they cried. 'They didn't have to put up a flag for us,' said Terry McConnel, a Marine from Cleveland who is unemployed. 'We take care of our own. We always did, we always will.'"

The imperialists are definitely working in more ways than one on their side of the "split in the working class" in preparation for world-shaking events when the question of a "national salute" or an historic "about face" will be pressing indeed. This should provide some fuel for serious thought among revolutionary-minded vets and a further impetus to step into the front ranks of proletarian revolution for real. Indeed, the times demand it. □

## Doctor Testifies

In RW No. 166 we printed some remarks from a speaking tour by Dr. Chris Giannou, a Canadian surgeon who was the chief resident at Gaza Hospital in Beirut and later director of the Red Crescent Hospital in Nabatiyeh in southern Lebanon for a year. At that time Dr. Giannou spoke of his experiences during the early days of the Israeli invasion, his jailing and eventual release. Since that time Dr. Giannou has returned to the Bekaa Valley and southern Lebanon and is now reporting his findings on another nationwide speaking tour. The following are excerpts from a talk he gave in Chicago on November 10.

Ladies and Gentlemen, friends:

I've been asked to return on this occasion to speak on the war's aftermath and basically its medical consequences. I have, since I was with you last, returned to Lebanon in order to survey the medical and social situation there....

One major problem, is a social problem, socio-economic to be exact. And that is the situation with the prisoners who were taken by Israeli armed forces during the summer. I was one of those prisoners and there were a number of other members of the Palestine Red Crescent who were also prisoners. Some have since been released, many are still in detention and are being held in a detention camp in the village of al-Asnar which is in the region of Nabatiyeh in the south of Lebanon.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has now been able to visit those prisoners in accordance with the Geneva Convention. There are 8,000 prisoners at al-Asnar camp, only one-half of whom are Palestinian. The other 4,000 are Lebanese, Syrians, and other various nationalities....

The conditions of detention, if they are compared to the conditions under which I was kept and many of the other prisoners, at least for the first several days in the Convent School in Sidon, will mean that quite a few of the prisoners will not survive. An Israeli newspaper has since reported that the Israeli guards at al-Asnar are not regular soldiers, they are not even reservists — they are prisoners of common law from Israeli prisons, Israeli citizens who committed crimes in Israel and now as their punishment are given the task of guarding over the prisoners in the al-Asnar prison.

The other problem posed by the question of prisoners is that more than 8,000 men were taken into detention. Many more. And even counting those who have since been released, this means that there is a considerable number that have simply disappeared. Are there other detention sites? There is a prison in northern Israel, a place called Migiddo. I was there for 5 days. The International Red Cross has not been given permission to visit the prisons in Israel. There are reports that there may be other detention camps but none so far have been made known to the International Red Cross.

There are other human rights violations that are continuing, especially in the south of the country. Due to Phalangists and Haddad militias — these are the militias that are responsible for the massacres at Shatila and Sabra camps — there are reports coming out every several days of women being raped and killed, elderly men being shot, young boys being beaten until they finally acquiesce and eat their own feces. It is simply not as sensational as the 2,000-4,000 people who were killed in Sabra and Shatila. But these human rights violations do continue. The North American press reports on them — from time to time — and never in detail.

I would like to deal with the medical consequences of the war, the socio-economic consequences of the war as it pertains to the situation during the war and afterwards in the south of the country and the Bekaa Valley.

First of all I would like to give you a short background of what the medical situation was like before the Israeli invasion. Lebanon is a country of the third world. Therefore, number one, the medical facilities are concentrated in the capital. In most areas of the third world the peripheral areas are neglected; Lebanon is no exception. The capital and a couple of large cities concentrate almost everything in the way of specialized facilities. The hospital of which I was the director in Nabatiyeh is the only hospital in the region which serves a population of 110,000 people scattered about in 40-50 villages in the hills and mountains. There were four outpatient clinics run to serve the population but the only functioning hospital was our hospital.

Also in the third world you will find that the population is reduced so that over 50% of the population is under 16 years of age. If you went to the refugee camps in the more populated areas in the cities of Lebanon you would be struck by what seemed like hordes of children, simply children and children and children. And when you conduct a war with saturation bombardment, at time pinpoint bombardment, at time indiscriminate, and you do have numerous cases of amputations and other injuries that cause handicapped effects, then it is not just a human problem of an injured child. It is also a socio-economic problem. That is the future generation of the Palestinian and Lebanese people. A crippled person in this society is a very heavy burden on their family. In the third world the crippled have only one vocation open to them — begging....

Another point of the third world is that a great deal of the problem you have to deal with is due to infectious diseases, diseases that today here in the United States and Canada you only hear about but never really experience any more, only on very narrow occasions, such things as tuberculosis, polio and TB, anemiasis and typhoid, diabetes and hepatitis, are endemic in most countries of the third world and they are endemic in Lebanon even in the best of times. Every summer

there were hundreds of cases of infantile distresses like diabetes and typhoid. Every summer.

In the refugee camps there are open ditches, open sewers, that ran in front of the doorways of the houses. And many of the refugee camps had been placed at the foot of hills so that when it rained — and in the winter where we were staying at it rains very heavily — large areas of the camp were flooded. To get to the Gaza Hospital from the Arab University area you went downhill and it was sometimes very steep. And during the winter rains you very often had to cross the street in water up to your knees in order to get to the hospital. And with open sewers, open ditches, what it meant was that you were quite literally walking in shit.

It also meant that a great deal of the water supply was simply unclean to drink and many of the people took it as a natural matter of fact that they drank bottled water, it was not because people liked mineral water, it was quite simply that it was the only safe water to drink.

Now that is without a war situation....

... Today there are many thousands of people who have found temporary shelters in churches, mosques, schools, unfinished buildings, public buildings, in the south of the country and in the Bekaa Valley. They are separated families. You have most of the males in the south of the country either dead or in prison or having left. So you have women with 5, 6, 7 children on their hands, no money, no wages. They've been separated from their men, many of them have fled from their houses, they've tried to get out of the zones of combat and hostilities. Those people are now spread across the landscape in the south and Bekaa Valley. And many of them have already had a bout or two of diarrhea, they've been malnourished, for the last several months they've been under stress.

It is only about a month ago that permission was given to the United Nations Relief Fund to set up tents in the camps as shelter. The tents only began being put up this week. Many of them have been burned by the refugees — they refuse to live in tents. They have been asking for months to set up some form of semi-permanent dwellings and have been refused. In the Bekaa Valley this has been done on a very ad hoc basis, sometimes simply stones, no mortar, and then covered with a zinc sheet, aluminum sheet. Many people were living under garbage bags that were cut open and spread out and then hung amongst the branches of the trees.

The winters in Lebanon can be very very severe. It snows in the mountains and there is much rain. Much of that population that is living in those dire circumstances that have survived the war, survived the hostilities, is not going to survive the winter.

The Palestine Red Crescent has had six of its hospitals closed down and only one of the original seven hospitals is still functioning in the Bekaa Valley. In the mean-

## Life and Death Under the Pax Americana in Lebanon

time two new hospitals have been opened up — this in a matter of only several weeks. And they are basically the basements of public buildings. One in the northern city of Tripoli and another in the northeast. The International Committee of the Red Cross has supplied much medical equipment in terms of surgical tools and so forth. Much of it has been donated by groups in various countries — ad hoc groups that grew up during the summer — and by organized relief agencies and then transported through Syria to Lebanon.

But once again even with this effort to meet the social and medical needs of the population in the Bekaa Valley and the north, the Red Crescent is not allowed to work in southern Lebanon. The Israeli occupation authorities have indicated that only two organizations can deal with the Palestinian population. Lebanese organizations, Lebanese ministries can deal only with the Lebanese population. The Palestinian population must be dealt with either by the International Committee of the Red Cross or the Israeli Army. Other relief organizations that wish to provide medical relief, social relief or aid to the Palestinian population have to, (1) go through Tel Aviv and not Beirut and, (2) do it as a cooperative venture with the Israeli Labor Federation. Now neither the ICRC nor the Israeli Labor Federation are really staffed and equipped to actually operate hospitals and so they set up outpatient clinics. But hospital and surgical staff — no.

So much of the population in the south of the country is bereft of means and has to seek treatment in private hospitals or has to try to get to Beirut. If necessary surgical care is to be provided they must leave the south which is exactly what is wanted by Tel Aviv, and go to the Bekaa Valley or private institutions or about anywhere they can get help provided....

And much of what has happened over the summer and much of the socio-economic situation that now exists in much of the country, has been nothing less than the attempt to destroy the institutional presence of the Palestinians in Lebanon. Much has been the attempt to destroy the PLO politically and militarily, but also the social institutions, medical institutions and economic institutions.... even the physical presence of the camps. Often the camps were 80-90% destroyed through bombardment and shelling. They were then, whatever was left, bulldozed. And one of the small camps in the area of Sidon, Niomieh, which was not heavily damaged by shelling and bombing, was then bulldozed anyway.

The socio-economic conditions that now exist, in spite of the medical relief effort by quite a number of organizations, is such that the Palestinian people and much of the poor Lebanese people in the Bekaa Valley and southern Lebanon are facing a catastrophe. □

## L.A. Forum Exposes U.S. Role

Continued from page 13

the party should be supported and defended even if they did not agree totally with its line—then the representative from the Lebanese National Movement raised that the forum would discuss U.S. imperialism and its role in Lebanon, and this was enough reason not to sponsor it. While this was challenged by some in their group — saying what's wrong with

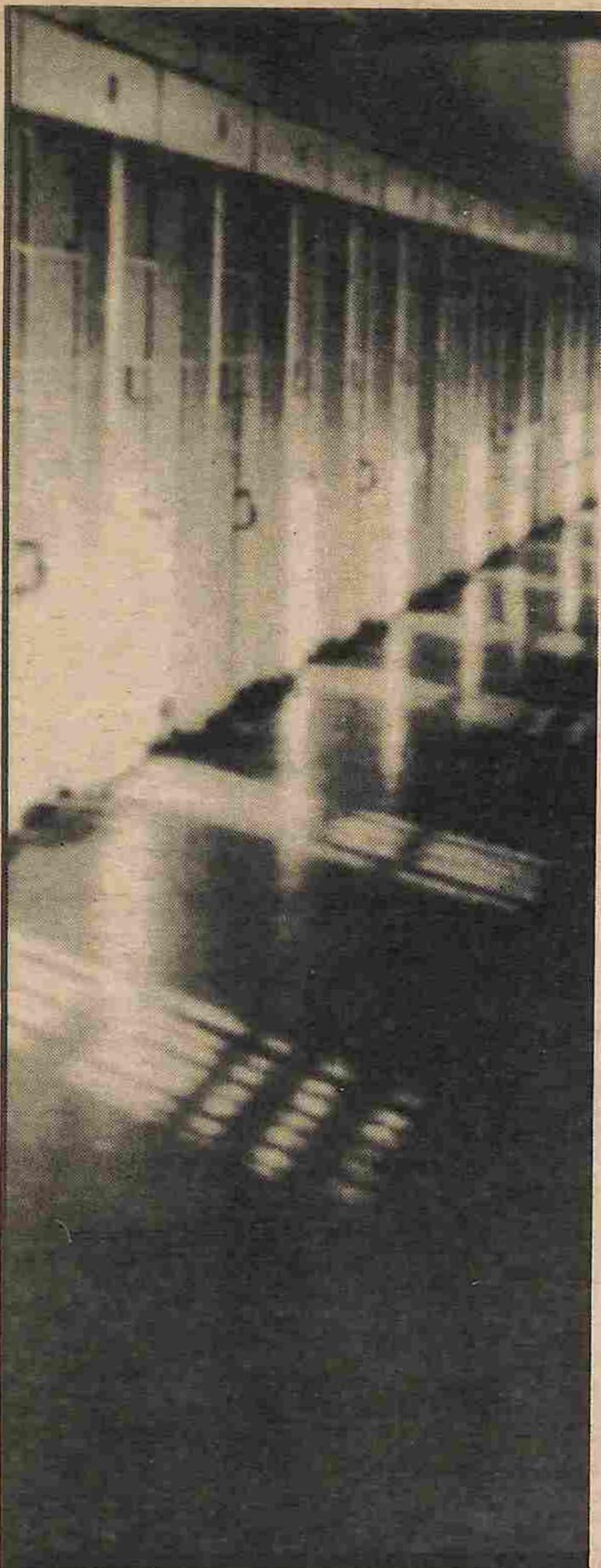
that — the group as a whole decided not to sponsor the forum, but someone from the group came forward to sponsor it by forming a new group on campus. There were even attempts to convince one panelist not to appear by raising these same arguments. When this panelist made it clear that he was participating anyway, he was told the forum was going to be a flop due to bad attendance. His response was that he felt this forum was important to do and as to success or failure he would take responsibility for that. And when all else failed, he was asked not to be a panelist as "a personal favor."

Furthermore, the forum took place in a political atmosphere where discussion of

the role of U.S. imperialism in Lebanon has apparently been banned, not only by outright Phalangist types, but by pro-Soviet revisionist forces as well. It is interesting to note that a recent demonstration against Begin's visit to Los Angeles organized by the U.S. Anti-Imperialist League and forces associated with the militantly pro-Soviet Line of March group made it a principle of unity that the role of the U.S. in Lebanon should not be discussed. In the light of these and other such attempts to rule out of court an analysis of the U.S.-backed invasion of Lebanon and the current U.S. occupation of Lebanon, the forum was especially significant.

In preparation for the forum and in the

discussion the panelists and those attending struggled over a number of important questions: Can people do more than take a "good stand" in support of the Palestinian people in what appears now to be a very pessimistic situation for the Palestinian revolution; is world war on the agenda and is the situation in Lebanon part of the process; and what chances are there for revolutionary advances by the Palestinian people now. As the situation in the Middle East develops further, there is bound to be continued struggle over these and other questions; but one thing for sure is that the panelists were very excited about the forum and are planning to continue doing them — not a very good sign for U.S. imperialism! □



## Shine the Light of Revolution Behind the Prison Walls

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

I received an early release from prison almost 2 weeks ago and have enclosed the label from the envelope for reference so that you can cancel any further copies from being sent there. At the moment all is unprepared, disorganized and unemployed. I will as soon as possible send some money to aid in your efforts to offer subscriptions to prisoners. Any good reading papers are very scarce and feel your efforts are worthy. Thank you.

Indianapolis, Indiana

Bros & Sisters of the RCP, USA:

First let me explain that I find myself confined in the Wyoming State Pen, a victim of the "Old West" form of justice (a blatant set up for an ounce of grass) for the crime of operating a Tat-2 shop in the conservative, reactionary community of Casper, Wyo. Not unlike others of my age (39) that were raised in a mid-western big city (Chicago) who have always felt an alienation from our social structure, and when not alienation, just motivation for the sake of individual advancement, and like many others have chosen not to play the game.

To find a little sanity in the face of all this madness, corruption and greed, I have found the Marxist-Leninist teachings to be the most sincere and scientific means to achieve a workable society. I have struggled with some theory but on a limited basis but wish to devote much more of my energy to the struggle ahead. I would appreciate if you could send me on a regular basis the *RW* and any other literature which will keep me informed on the movement and help me with a stronger theoretical background so that I may help contribute in the struggle ahead. I am not able to contribute financially at this time but can contribute in a more progressive way behind these walls. If possible could you send *Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions*.

Proletariat Unite  
Rawlins, Wyoming

Dear Comrade,

I am writing you from one of the most suppressed dungeons in the U.S. I am doing a twenty-five (25) year sentence in a Texas hellhole, with no end to the daily ignorance being pushed upon me by the imperialists pig suckers in sight. I am totally alone in my predicament, without funds and entirely without proper material guidance for my needs in maintaining truth. I have read a copy of your fine, and very much accentual paper. I would like very much to receive the *Revolutionary Worker* on a regular monthly basis, but am unable to pay the few pennies it takes. I am asking you, brothers and sisters to take into consideration my plight and put me on your mailing list to receive the information that is needed in the *Revolutionary Worker*. A subscription would go far in spreading the word, with it being passed from brother to brother.

Thank you for being!

Sincerely,  
Huntsville, Texas

RE: *In the battle to win refugee status for Comrade Avakian*

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed please find the necessary proof in the ongoing struggle to expose this PETTY \*BOURGEOIS justice system.

Forever in the STRUGGLE TO ESTABLISH  
PROLETARIAN DIALECTICAL THOUGHT  
Huntsville, Texas

*This is an excerpt from a legal brief written by this prisoner, sent as testimony to the RW:*

IV. STATEMENT OF CLAIM:

1) Plaintiff would show unto this Court that on July 30, 1982, at approximately 11:00 a.m., and while he was in his assigned cell-block and cell (A3-1-9) at the Wynne Unit of the Texas Department of Corrections and under administrative segregation, and in the ministerial custody of all the Defendants named herein, Defendant Kelly approached Plaintiff's cell and informed him that he was going to be placed in solitary confinement. Defendant Kelly then demanded that Plaintiff relinquish all of his personal property. Plaintiff requested the reasons for such punishment and Defendant Kelly refused to give Plaintiff any reasons for his actions. Plaintiff informed Defendant Kelly that no one had served him with a written violation notice notifying him of any pending disciplinary charge against him, and that he had never appeared before the unit disciplinary committee with attendant rights to cross-examine his accusers and call witnesses on his behalf as required by prison rules and mandated by the U.S. Constitution concerning prison disciplinary hearings. Defendant Kelly left the sight of Plaintiff's cell and returned shortly thereafter with Defendants Ritter, Shaw, Jiles and White. Without any warning all the Defendants rushed into Plaintiff's cell and knocked Plaintiff down on the floor and proceeded to willfully, maliciously and wantonly kick, hit, punch and stomp Plaintiff with their feet and fists while he was on the floor causing several cuts, bruises and lacerations about the physical body of Plaintiff. Defendant Ritter then proceeded to strike Plaintiff in the face and body with a pair of steel handcuffs maliciously and with a state of deprived mind which resulted in Plaintiff suffering additional cuts, bruises and lacerations about his face, arms and chest. Defendant White then struck Plaintiff on the back of his neck with karate-like blows temporarily paralyzing Plaintiff from the neck down. Defendant Shaw and Jiles stomped Plaintiff's legs with their shoed feet and grinded their body weight on Plaintiff's feet and

legs causing additional cuts, bruises and lacerations about his legs and feet. Defendant Kelly kicked Plaintiff in his ribs and back which caused additional suffering and pain and cuts, bruises and lacerations about his midsection. After about fifteen (15) minutes of being physically assaulted in the manner described above, Plaintiff was then handcuffed from behind by Defendant White and the continued use of physical and unnecessary and excessive force and violence proceeded by all the defendants. Plaintiff was then picked up off the floor and carried into cell number three (3) and while being carried was repeatedly physically assaulted by the Defendants and each of them. Plaintiff was then thrown into the cell and the Defendant White put his knee to Plaintiff's stomach knocking his wind out. Defendants and each of them, then continued to repeat their physical assault on Plaintiff while he was handcuffed and pinned down on the floor by Defendant White which lasted about another ten (10) minutes. Defendant White then removed the handcuffs from the wrists of the Plaintiff and they left Plaintiff's cell. Plaintiff's cell was completely stripped of everything, including deprivations of mattress, sheets, soap, toilet tissue and he was never provided with any type of medical treatment for the cuts, and lacerations that he received as a result of the unlawful physical assault committed on him by the Defendants.

2) Plaintiff submits that the reasons he was subjected by the Defendants to summary punishment and physically assaulted by the Defendants was because of his efforts to attempt to assist, and for his assisting inmate Mohammad Gholamin, TDC No. 304679, an Iranian, who was being constantly denied his legal rights by the Defendants, pertaining to legal matters; for his repeated complaints via grievance procedures complaining about ill-treatment from several prison officials and sub-standard prison conditions, and because of his involvement as a potential Federal Court witness on behalf of the Prisoner-Plaintiff Class in Prison Reform Lawsuit styled *Ruiz v. Estelle*, and which was the proximate cause of being so subjected because of the Defendants Estelle, Costilow and Lawson's failure to establish adequate procedures pertaining to the supervision of their officers pertaining to the adequate protection of potential witnesses in *Ruiz v. Estelle*, and their direct failure and deliberate indifference to the rights of the Plaintiff to adequate protection from harm because of a gross level of failure to adequately supervise prison guards and because the Texas Department of Corrections' practice, policy, custom and usage of the use of unnecessary and excessive violence and force committed against its inmates by staff members at the Wynne Unit of the Texas Department of Corrections.

## A call to prisoners in the U.S. imperialists' dungeons:

At this time, in the battle to win refugee status in France for Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCPUSA, statements are needed from prisoners documenting political repression and "routine" acts of torture—repeated beatings, denial of food, bedding, clothing, prolonged periods of isolation, administering of drugs, sexual violations, etc.—on the part of police or prison personnel. This testimony will be a vital part of exposing the nature of bourgeois democracy and the torture and terror inherent in the normal functioning of the justice system in the U.S.A.

Please send your statements to the address below. You may want to do this through your lawyer or relatives or friends on the outside. We will notify you that we have received your letter.

RCP PUBLICATIONS  
POB 3486  
CHICAGO, IL 60654