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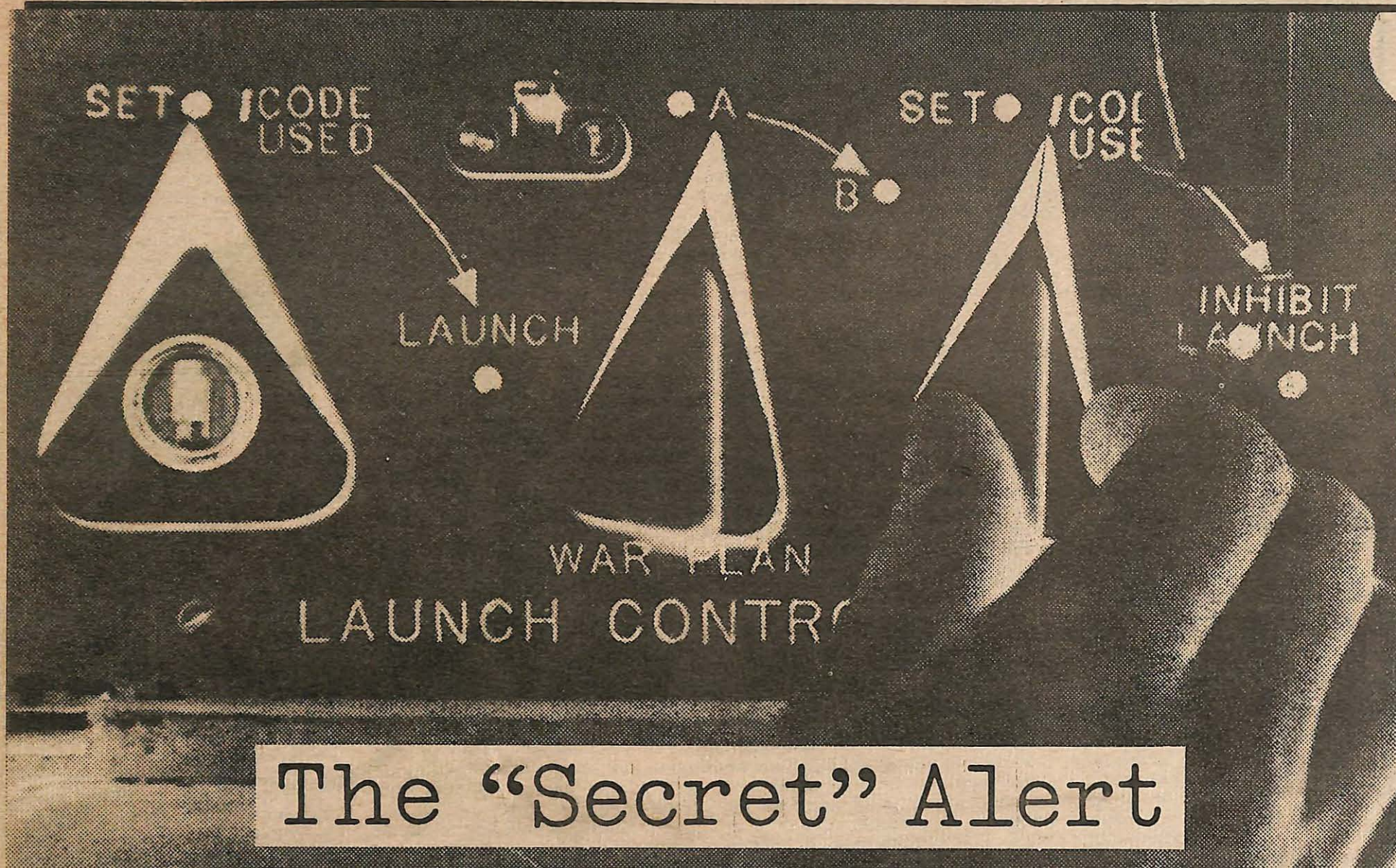
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The "Secret" Alert

On August 11, Ronald Reagan "joked" that he had "just signed legislation which outlaws Russia forever. The bombing begins in five minutes." At the time, this newspaper called the statement a "half-step away from a declaration of war."

This week, a Japanese newspaper published an explosive revelation that underscores yet again the truth of that comment. According to *Yomiuri Shimbun*, a major Japanese daily, a partly-coded message was dispatched by a

Soviet military command in the Far East at 4 p.m. on August 15, just four days after the Reagan "joke" and only hours after the "joke" had appeared in the Soviet press. The dispatch, in the form of a coded signal, was intercepted by Japanese and U.S. intelligence facilities, according to *Yomiuri*, and read: "We are going into a state of war against the United States." The Soviets had responded in kind to the "joke" with an action quite literally "a half-step away."

The newspaper reported that the Soviet

message was sent from Vladivostok, the main Soviet base in the Far East, and directed to Ussurisk, headquarters for a Soviet "special command unit." The *L.A. Times* in a brief item, also apparently based on information from *Yomiuri*, added that Soviet forces were placed on a stage of war alert for thirty minutes before the alert was withdrawn by a second communication, and that "U.S. and Japanese forces responded with a similar alert for the same length of time." At this time, it does not appear that the

alerts involved any movement of military forces in the region.

A U.S. Defense Department spokesman, contacted by this newspaper, stated that he "would not deny nor confirm" the *Yomiuri* article.

As of this writing, the only significant coverage of the story in the U.S. has appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on October 3, despite the fact that the story was major news in Japan and was picked up by the UPI and AP wire services. At

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**If there's going
to be a chance
to make
revolution
and prevent
world war, this
book says how.**



An important new book:

**A HORRIBLE END,
OR
AN END TO
THE HORROR?**

By Bob Avakian

As readers of the RW know, on September 7, 1984 we published information concerning the arrest of the Peruvian revolutionary known as "Meche" by the government of Peru. Below are a number of statements which had been sent to the Peruvian press and authorities and to the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru; copies were forwarded to the RW for publication:

We are in total agreement with Meche's ideas, therefore, we demand her freedom. Meche's arrest has filled us with rage, but we want to tell her that she is not alone, that she can count on the support of hundreds of men and women and that we will follow in her footsteps. Courage, Meche! The people from Mexico are with you.

Farmworkers from Buena, Washington, USA

To the lackey Belaúnde:

I am writing to you from this rotten corpse called the United States. They have given you a hard blow... your government, and your master, the USA, who are tottering. I am referring to our brothers and sisters who are waging a war against you (regime) for their liberation under the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru, known as "Shining Path."

The eyes of the world are on Peru. We are gaining invaluable lessons as well as great inspiration from those who are setting the Andes on fire and who dare to overthrow your cancerous system; those who dare to give birth to a new and bright future.

We know that you have arrested 84 revolutionary women, who have been receiving and continue to receive violent punishment at the hands of your sadists (trained by the USA). We also know that you have kidnapped professor Laura Zambrano Padilla, known as "Meche." Since she is a revolutionary leader, and a woman who does not play her typical role, there is no doubt that every second she is in your hands her life is in danger.

We know very well the methods used by the oppressors to do away with those who righteously rise up and push forward towards a real shining path. Edith Lagos, a young and rebellious woman who was savagely bayoneted to death, lives in our struggle for the world revolution. Your claws are drenched in blood and your days are numbered. Your actions only reveal your weaknesses and only serve to increase the ranks of your gravediggers with more Edith Lagos and Meches....

WE DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF MECHE ALONG WITH THE 84 REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN!!!

FREE MECHE!!!

FREE THE 84!!! AND ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!!!

LONG LIVE EDITH LAGOS!!!

DOWN WITH IMPERIALISM AND ALL ITS LACKEYS!!!

Disrespectfully,
A Young And Rebellious Woman
Houston, Texas

Our outrage and anger demands you free Meche and other political prisoners.

Meche's friends in Baltimore

Dear RW,

The above telegram was sent to Peru to the magazine Equis. We got the funds for it by donations received while selling the RW in downtown Baltimore. Revolutionary-minded proletarians, Black vendors and sympathetic friends of Meche from all strata donated to send this telegram. A confirmation copy was sent to Caretas.

In Struggle,
Meche's Friends
Baltimore, Maryland

Statements Demand...

Free Meche!



We have also received a report that leaflets titled "Save Meche" have appeared on the streets of Lima, the Peruvian capital, signed by the Communist Party of Peru (known in the press as Sendero Luminoso).

Worldwide support for Meche's freedom is developing. In Europe, some supporters have begun sending telegrams addressed to Peruvian president Belaúnde (Plaza de Armas, Lima); to the magazine Caretas (Jr. Camana 615-308, Lima) the magazine Equis (Jr. Soledad 416-3° piso, Lince, Lima); and other magazines, and to the Peruvian embassies in Europe.

In this country, the address of the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru is: 2483 Hearst Ave., No. 225, Berkeley, CA 94709.

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U.S. Contract Out On Nicaragua

For the past three years, whenever it appeared that Nicaragua's Sandinista government might be willing to bend over backwards far enough to agree to this or that specific U.S. demand in exchange for some easing of the U.S. military and diplomatic pressure on them, the U.S. has added new specifics and ratcheted up the military squeeze yet another notch. Public emphasis has been placed on Nicaragua "getting along with its neighbors" — the U.S. neocolonies of Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Guatemala. U.S. officials have also publicly supported the Contadora group — the foreign ministries of four other U.S. dependencies, Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela (with the U.S. being careful to include enough "reservations" to maintain the facade of Contadora neutrality) — as the Contadora group has demonstrated another form of the diplomatic rick being applied to Nicaragua, defining the issues in terms of what is acceptable to the U.S. and generally complementing the combined U.S./Honduran troop maneuvers and *Contra* assault.

Thus, imagine the U.S.'s surprise when, on September 21, the Sandinistas announced that they would accept and sign the proposed Contadora Peace Act, a draft treaty that U.S. officials had assumed the Nicaraguan government would reject as written. And when El Salvador's president, José Napoleón Duarte, and then leading officials from Honduras, Costa Rica and Guatemala, all implied that they, too, would endorse the plan (apparently not realizing that they were supposed to automatically denounce anything Nicaragua agreed to), it was clear that something had gone wrong. Here the U.S. had taken out a contract on Sandinista Nicaragua and now some of the scheduled hit-men had been tricked into sounding like they might be able to live — at least temporarily — in the same neighborhood with the intended target. A diplomatic snafu was threatening the U.S.'s democratic process in Central America.

Immediate action by the godfathers in Washington, D.C. was required. New threats and tales of "increased tension" between the U.S. and Nicaragua were announced, while a combined diplomatic

and press campaign registered the U.S.'s objections to the proposed treaty. For example, the ever-present "senior U.S. diplomat" told *Time* magazine that it was "full of loopholes." Why, there are provisions calling for moving towards troop level and armaments reduction, and the elimination of all foreign military advisors and bases is supposed to go into effect 30 days after the treaty is signed, according to one report. This is exactly the kind of thing the U.S. has been demanding of Nicaragua. But the "loophole" is that in the proposed plan these items are also designated to apply to U.S. clients, and U.S. advisors, bases, etc., might actually be considered in the category of "foreign." Whose turf is it anyway? And then there is the provision to stop any country in the region from assisting "irregular forces" fighting against another government — another one of the U.S.'s big demands on Nicaragua. But here again, the "loophole" is that the treaty might include the *Contras* based in Honduras and Costa Rica among such "irregular forces." Don't these people realize that bombing, kidnapping, sabotage, torture, and murder against those who oppose them is quite *regular* for the U.S. and its Central American clients? Meanwhile, in typical gangster fashion, anonymous U.S. officials told the Mexican daily *Excelsior* that Nicaragua had "hurriedly accepted" the treaty but "in the long run, the Sandinistas will regret their haste."

The hit-men got the message. A *Contra* leader announced that his group would intensify attacks against Nicaragua regardless of any treaty, and that the U.S. could do nothing to stop them; he made the announcement from Washington, D.C., between meetings with various Representatives and Senators. Several Costa Rican Civil Guard officers announced that careful and painstaking searches had failed to turn up any *Contra* bases in their country, despite the fact that their existence — and official government sanction for them — is well known in Costa Rica. One by one, the various independent and sovereign rulers of the U.S.'s "backyard" declared their new-found objections to the draft treaty. The foreign minister of Honduras, which has recently seen a sharp rise in the

number of "disappeared" and the appearance of its first death squad, all in conjunction with the country overall being turned into a U.S. *fort*, declared, "Nicaragua constitutes a problem, because in that country there are no effective conditions for democracy."

Of course not. And what better proof could there be that no such conditions exist than the fact that Nicaragua has actually dared to schedule presidential elections for November 4? These elections are not to be confused with those that periodically occur in the rest of Central America — such as the recent exercise in El Salvador that "legitimized" (to some forces) the U.S. imperialist-dominated regime currently run by the above-mentioned Duarte. Oh no. These are most definitely *undemocratic* elections since they would have the effect of "legitimizing" a regime led by those who follow the strategy of the U.S.'s main imperialist rival. This is something that the U.S., desperately searching for a way to clamp down its absolute domination of Central America, finds intolerable in the current world situation. Hence, it has launched a steady stream of diatribe about the "unfairness" of the scheduled Nicaraguan elections, demanding that the Sandinistas make a number of concessions to pro-U.S. forces within Nicaragua and postpone the elections for at least several months.

The forces who worship the U.S. within Nicaragua (those that aren't actually carrying out the military activities, that is) are represented by a grouping known as the Coordinadora Democrática, whose current candidate and leader is Arturo Cruz. Cruz is a banker who formerly worked for the U.S.-run Inter-American Development Bank, but came into opposition to U.S.-puppet Somoza and united with the Sandinistas to overthrow the Nicaraguan dictator; the Sandinistas later appointed Cruz their ambassador to the U.S. for a time, as part of their effort to maintain an historic-compromise government that would be tolerated by the U.S. (while leaving plenty of maneuvering room to increase influence and power for pro-Soviet revisionist forces). However, Cruz eventually had to leave as the U.S. stepped up its attacks on Nicaragua, which

helped push many of these more pro-U.S. bourgeois forces into outright opposition to the Sandinistas.

In July of this year he left his Washington, D.C. home-in-exile and flew to Managua, announcing that he was in close contact with the *Contra* groupings based in both Honduras and Costa Rica and was "a friend" of Edén Pastora, the former Sandinista Commander Zero who now leads *Contra* attacks on Nicaragua from Costa Rica. The Sandinistas made a number of concessions to the Coordinadora in an effort to get Cruz to officially register for the elections, knowing that this would "legitimize" their regime in the eyes of many Western imperialist forces and their camp followers. But the U.S. surrogate had been well-coached. He demanded amnesty and official negotiations with the government for all *Contra* leaders (including the overthrown Somocistas) — which would, of course, "legitimize" them. He also demanded the right to campaign within the Nicaraguan army barracks — in essence, representing the same groups that the army was fighting. The Sandinistas refused, of course, and Cruz refused to register as the deadline expired.

Since then, there have been several extensions of the deadline for registration and continuing negotiations between the government and Cruz. The Sandinistas have proposed postponing the elections if Cruz and the Coordinadora would sign a letter demanding Reagan call off the *Contra* attacks, which they have refused to do; and most recently, the Sandinistas offered to postpone the election until January if the Coordinadora would support a *Contra* ceasefire. Cruz's initial response was to say they had no formal links with the *Contras*, and therefore could do nothing about it. Despite this, the Second (Socialist) International has revealed that it will join in putting pressure on the Sandinistas to postpone the election — and it is most likely that the Contadora group is once again joining in the diplomatic thuggery as well.

In other words, the election campaign is to be used by the U.S. and its allies and

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**U.S. Keep Your Bloody
Hands Off Nicaragua and
All of Central America!**

**Many More Defeats for U.S.
Wars of Aggression!**

**Oppose the Imperialists'
Heightened Escalations
Toward World War 3!**

London Punks "Stop The City", And Greenham Common Women Vs. Lionheart



With the 1984 NATO war maneuvers underway, featuring Operation Lionheart '84 and the movement of 130,000 troops and reservists to West Germany via the English Channel in simulated combat, the British imperialists found themselves waging war of another sort at home. On Thursday, September 27, London's financial center was flooded with cops attempting to dislodge some 2,000 punks/anarchists who had come for, what they called, a "Stop the City" demonstration. And from September 20-30, thousands of women converged at Greenham Common U.S. Air Force Base in the largest encampment of women at Greenham ever held.

Reports on the "Stop the City" demonstration are sketchy, principally because the British press has worked so diligently to keep it tightly under wraps—but what seems to be occurring is a British-style "secret upsurge." A September 28 UPI report stated, "Hundreds of people, most of them young 'punks' with spiked, brightly dyed haircuts, demonstrated in London's financial district yesterday in a protest aimed at paralyzing its operation." Sources in Britain reported to this newspaper that the demonstration was in fact much larger, numbering around 2,000. "Hundreds of

people" more appropriately describes the total of those arrested which reached nearly 500. Excerpts from leaflets building for "Stop the City" read, "This demonstration... is to expose the true way in which financial institutions, multinational companies, etc., make their profits, putting profit before people... the demonstrations are against exploitation... this profit is obtained by means of exploitation, suffering, oppression, war and blatant disregard for any kind of life form... especially in London millions of pounds are changing hands every day in the city but during that same day millions of people are starving around the world..."

Although previous "Stop the City" actions have been held, this one was particularly targeted for attack by the authorities. The "Stop the City" action, with its 2,000 punks/anarchists converging on and exposing London's financial center so aptly symbolic of British imperialism, occurred just as Britain was launching the largest troop movement since World War 2 and readying the populace for another. As clusters and individual groups of youth began to arrive on the narrow streets of the financial center they were confronted by a horde of police who had been amassing since dawn. The demonstration was im-

mediately declared illegal with police tactics geared toward preventing the protesters from gathering. People in groups of twos and threes were indiscriminately arrested.

With a reported 470 arrests the cops had their hands full. Youth on motorcycles disrupted traffic. Bank windows were smashed. The slogan "Reagan = warmonger" was spraypainted on the London Stock Exchange building. Some groups dispersed to other areas of the city spreading the protest with them; the fountains in Trafalgar Square ran red that day. Another "Stop the City" action is being planned to take place on October 11 in the city of Birmingham.

Greenham Common

Meanwhile at the Greenham Common U.S. Air Force Base thousands of women staged a ten-day protest coinciding with Operation Lionheart. (Some women from Greenham also went to London for the "Stop the City" action.) Newspaper accounts estimated 5,000 women at the encampment on one day and 7,000 on another. Encampments were set up at all of the gates of the base. One woman who was present reported, "It's the first time that such a large number of women have ever camped there on Greenham Common. You may know it's illegal to camp

and to put up structures on the Common so that just the very act of staying there and sleeping there is itself a sort of act of civil disobedience."

The ten-day action drew forward a wider array of forces than previously present at Greenham. A majority of women who came had never been to Greenham before with large numbers of "fresh forces" arising, including older and younger women new to political protest. There were more women from the oppressed nationalities and there were also some wives and relatives of striking British coal miners. The call to come to Greenham was also answered to by women from numerous countries: Holland, West Germany, Ireland and Northern Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and women from all over the U.S. including eleven women from the Seneca Peace Encampment in upstate New York. One woman from New Zealand mortgaged her house in order to raise the money to go to Greenham.

That there were a large number of new forces at Greenham did not go unnoticed by the police who made a point of being particularly rough with women they either recognized or surmised were playing an initiating role (for instance women blockading the roads were picked up and thrown off the street at a swift clip). Over the course of the ten days experiences were exchanged and ideas for future actions discussed, including how to strengthen the presence at Greenham for the winter months ahead, especially since the encampment is under the threat of yet another eviction.

Actions over the ten days included cutting the razor- and barbed-wire fortified fences surrounding the base with some women going onto the base, blockades, and vigils along the road to Greenham. Repeated cutting and shaking of the enormous fences surrounding the base kept British military personnel busy repairing the fences. And on two occasions women also spotted the largest number of American military personnel yet seen at Greenham, out guarding the security zone where it is believed cruise missiles are stored.

The British authorities have virtually blacked out any news of both the "Stop the City" demonstrations and the ten-day protests at Greenham, for good reason—Operation Lionheart '84 has triggered important protests and outbreaks of resistance to the imperialists' war plans. □

Nicaragua

Continued from page 3

compradors to create the greatest possible turmoil and upheaval inside Nicaragua, thereby preventing further consolidation of Sandinista rule and perhaps even laying the groundwork for U.S. and/or client intervention on the grounds that the situation is approaching "anarchy" (remember Grenada?). The Sandinistas are therefore anxious to conduct their elections prior to those in the U.S. and hopefully "legitimize" their regime before the expected "ringing endorsement" of Reagan and reaction in the U.S. that could provide the momentum for a U.S.-sponsored invasion, including perhaps directly involving a large number of U.S. troops. (If by chance there should be a big surprise in the U.S. election, Nicaragua will not be any better off. Mondale has already publicly come out to the right of Reagan, warning that

he might "quarantine" Nicaragua if he is elected, a fact which has apparently not stopped the Sandinistas or their followers in the U.S. from telling those in the U.S. who oppose American aggression against Nicaragua that the main thing they should do is "dump Reagan.") And the U.S. is stepping up its demands that the Nicaraguan election be postponed, with the implicit threat of a great deal more imperialist military activity if Nicaragua goes ahead with its game plan.

Indeed, Sandinista junta leader Daniel Ortega's announcement before that UN that they have become aware of U.S. plans for an invasion on October 15, involving *Contra* groups from Honduras and Costa Rica assisted by U.S. troops, should not be dismissed as empty "revisionist grandstanding." An invasion is a real possibility, if not on that date then on some other date. And the chorus of "how absurd" from a plethora of U.S. officials only underscores the possibility. Clearly, U.S. imperialism is driven to stamp out all opposition in the region and the pro-

spect of a political, diplomatic or certainly military setback is increasingly intolerable. The fact that Rapid Deployment exercises on the Nicaraguan border involving U.S. and Honduran troops have been taking place continuously since July is certainly relevant to this situation.

But it is also important to remember that the U.S. has been desperately trying to avoid such a major and direct escalation, precisely because of the danger of getting stuck in the quagmire of a Central American war prior to their all-out confrontation with the Soviets. Should they perceive their national interests as demanding a direct move into the region, there is the possibility of this unleashing forces far beyond the U.S.'s control, providing perhaps unprecedented opportunities for the revolutionary proletariat in a number of places, including the U.S. itself. All revolutionaries should be acutely aware of the situation and ready to oppose any U.S. moves into the region—and to seize every opportunity that the imperialists' compulsion may provide. □

Trouble At Fulda Gap

As information continues to flow in from Europe about the mass resistance to NATO's Autumn war maneuvers, the picture emerges of unpredictable, highly variegated and determined actions.

September 22, Hildesheim, West Germany. A successful demonstration of 7,000 was held "to make a statement against the preparations for war" aimed at the British "Lionheart '84" exercises taking place in that region of West Germany. Some participants set the British Union Jack on fire, others carried banners calling for "civil disobedience against nuclear death." That morning there had been several "instances of disruption" in the districts of Hildesheim and Hamlin, where British troops were moving through the countryside. A government spokesman in Hanover reported that thanks to massive deployment of police the roads were once again passable.

Tuesday, September 25, Fulda, West Germany. U.S. Army spokesmen said that protestors had successfully broken into a barracks Monday night and painted antiwar slogans on tanks. The next morning 150 people (according to government estimates) sat down and blocked the main entrance to the Army's Wildflecken maneuvering ground near Fulda, until carried off by riot pigs. In another incident, also in Wildflecken, demonstrators cut the brake lines on 40 rail-transport cars, spraypainting them with the slogan "Amis go home" in English. (Amis is German slang for Yankee.) Meanwhile, at the Fulda Cathedral, 46 miles northeast of Frankfurt, the service opening the congress of West German Catholic Bishops was disrupted by demonstrators waving a banner saying, "With God Against Rockets!" They were removed.

Saturday, September 29, Fulda. A massive demonstration of 30,000 converged on Fulda. That same day the authorities released their estimates that the preceding actions and sabotage of military maneuvers had resulted in damages going into many millions. In one incident alone, several demonstrators broke into a U.S. rocket installation at Finkenberg am Main and spraypainted the sensor of the radio control equipment of three rockets with paint. □

Alert

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the *Los Angeles Times*, which published a four-sentence mini-item in a round-up of world events, an editor said only that the story "was prominent" in his paper. An editor at the *Chicago Tribune*, which displayed the piece similarly, claimed that the story was too "sketchy." No shocked calls for explanation from the U.S. and Japanese governments have been issued, even though *Yomiuri* reported that "The Japanese and U.S. governments, greatly alarmed, consulted on the situation" during the thirty-minute period of alert. No politician has called Reagan to task for helping push the world toward a nuclear confrontation; indeed, alerts triggered by flocks of geese have caused greater outrage. In short, the war communication from the Soviets was treated exactly as was the original Reagan "joke": nonchalantly, no great attention, no apologies. Nuclear war has become very thinkable.

Moreover, six weeks passed before the interception of the Soviet message ever reached the light of publicity. Writes *Yomiuri*: "Because the 'zero hour' message was followed by the cancellation message... it ended up as a secret incident known in Japan only to a handful of high government officials, including Premier Nakasone, and some defense agency and foreign ministry officials." It seems likely that the story would have stayed under wraps, too, if not for some maneuvering and public-opinion-making on the part of the Japanese government. Only two weeks before the *Yomiuri* article, the Japanese Defense Agency had published its annual "White Report" which warned that "an unrelenting military buildup" by the Soviet Union had increased the "latent threat" to



People who have broken into the U.S. Army firing range at Wildflecken, West Germany, create obstructions for pursuing cop cars.



"Today maneuvers, tomorrow war."

Japan and the rest of Asia. Several days later, a joint U.S.-Japan "advisory commission" issued its report which also warned of "major deficiencies" in the Japanese military and called for joint U.S./Japanese efforts to build new military systems. The leak of the Soviet war communications adds convenient hysteria to such war fever, and so may have been deliberately put out for that reason.

The secret incident is a shocking sign of how fast and aggressively the two imperialist blocs are pushing toward their showdown. The U.S., of course, has been on a roll through a whole series of weapons deployments, military actions, provocations like the 007 incident and Reagan's "joke." The Soviets were well aware of what the "joke" meant from the beginning and published an official statement calling Reagan's remark "unprecedentedly hostile." So it is likely that the Soviet war communication was a deliberate muscle-flexing in retaliation for the Reagan "joke." Imperialist gangsters in their own right, the Soviets can scarcely afford not to assert their power in some unmistakable way. *Yomiuri* writes, "some Western officials reportedly suspect that the Kremlin itself ordered the message... Soviet officials knew that the message might be taken seriously." And because of this "it would have been extremely dangerous to send such a message in Europe, where Soviet SS-20 missiles and U.S. Pershing II missiles could reach their targets in minutes with nuclear warheads. The

message was sent in the Far East where the United States has not installed Pershing II's."

The fact that the Soviet communications were issued only in the Far East does indeed indicate that the message was a Soviet answer-in-kind to the Reagan joke. It is also not impossible that the Soviets were reluctant to take any such steps in Europe, as *Yomiuri* states, although it seems likely that Europe would have been more seen as politically than militarily sensitive — the Pacific, after all, is home to U.S. submarine-launched nuclear missiles capable of reaching the Soviet Union rapidly enough.

But what stands out most is the fact of a bone-chilling Soviet threat precisely in the area of the KAL 007 downing. It is perhaps no accident that the threat came here, and also almost exactly one year after the 007 affair, through which the Soviets came under concerted propaganda attack by the West as well as suffering some embarrassing lapses in its air defense. This time it was *their* turn to stick it to the U.S., assert their standing as a "tough" imperialist power, and perhaps, gain a little intelligence bonanza of their own as they watched the U.S. and Japanese forces react.

There is even a further significance to the timing of the Soviet state-of-war communication, as noted by the San Francisco Chinese-language newspaper, *Center Daily*. August 15 just happens to be the 39th anniversary of the defeat of Japan in World War 2. The Soviets are

not going to win any awards for subtlety here! Indeed, the Soviet pressures against the Japanese imperialists have taken on an increasingly open and belligerent bent, pointedly evoking Japanese imperialism's defeat in the last world war and specifically the dropping of the atomic bomb. Of course, this has gone in tandem with the increasingly open and belligerent flying of the anti-Soviet banner by the U.S.-Japan alliance. When the Japanese Premier Nakasone visited Reagan in Washington last year, for example, he declared that his goal was to build up Japan militarily as a "big aircraft carrier" against the Soviets. Moscow responded by warning Japan of another Hiroshima and Nagasaki and pointing out that aircraft carriers can be sunk.

All this said, it is also worth noting *Yomiuri's* comment that "sources do not rule out the possibility that the Kremlin mistook moves by U.S. ships and planes and actually considered" that war was in the making.

As it turned out, August 1984 will not go down in history as the date when the buttons were pushed, tanks and troops sent rolling across the plains of Europe and through the corridors of the Korean peninsula. But no one can dismiss the implications of these actions by the rival imperialist chieftains — revealing ever more clearly where the world stands at this moment, on the threshold of the most destructive and criminal war in history. □

It has been a month now since Azania erupted into the most widespread and sustained uprisings since the 1976 Soweto rebellions. And although the South African apartheid regime has diligently tried to keep the lid on the situation, their efforts have so far been in vain. While the uprisings seem to have, to a small degree, ebbed somewhat in intensity, over the last two weeks they have spread broadly throughout Azania and have included some very sharp confrontations with the South African state.

There have been continued battles with the police in the townships surrounding Johannesburg. In Tembisa, the situation was recently described by state officials as "very bad" and the state-run bus company, PUTCO — which transports blacks from their townships to their city jobs — has suspended all service. In all of the townships police patrols, military and state vehicles and buses have all been constant targets of stone-throwing youth.

During the weekend of September 21st to the 23rd, funerals were held in a number of townships for some of the people murdered during the previous three weeks. Most of the funerals held last month defiantly turned into political rallies and battles with the police. Although the details concerning these most recent funerals have not been thoroughly reported, the reaction of the state seems to indicate that they too were politically charged events. In Sharpeville, the scene of the sharpest uprisings in the beginning of September, 33 people were arrested at one funeral for "attempted public violence." In another township, Bothelong, 132 people were arrested. In the face of these arrests new fighting broke out in this township and the government was forced to postpone the funeral and order those in attendance to disperse and go home. During the same weekend 500 people were arrested at a funeral attended by 2,000 in Sebokeng. This time the charges were "attending an illegal meeting" and "contravening certain restrictive orders" placed on the funeral. The South African police have refused to elaborate on either the charges or on what happened at the funeral. However, it should be pointed out that since the beginning of September the government has declared it illegal to attend a gathering — both indoors and outside — where the government is criticized and has forbidden any and all political agitation in connection with funerals. (This ban has even included casket-carrying processions through the townships to the cemetery.)

In addition to the townships south and east of Johannesburg, the Vaal Triangle area, rebellions have also begun to break out in many other areas. The September 27 issue of the *Washington Post* describ-

Protests, Rebellions Spread in South Africa

ed "rampaging mobs" in places like Port Elizabeth, Soweto, and other townships in the eastern cape and Natal provinces. The situation in Soweto, which is the largest black township in the country (a population of two million), has caused the government quite a bit of concern recently. *The Star*, an English-language "liberal opposition" newspaper in Johannesburg, has frequently fretted over the "tense and simmering" mood in Soweto today. Since the September 12 police attack on a large memorial for Steve Biko (a leader of the Black Consciousness Movement murdered by the police in 1977), there have been dozens of reported clashes between residents of Soweto, especially youth, and the South African police. On September 19 thousands of Soweto residents stayed away from work as part of a protest against the government. The usually crowded buses attempting to transport some people to work were half empty and were so frequently attacked that they had to have a police escort in order to complete their routes. And although the work stoppage was only called for one day, many people continued to stay away from work in protest for a number of days afterwards.

School boycotts have continued to play an important part in the current uprisings. Three weeks ago the government closed down all black schools in the country until September 26 in an attempt to take some of the steam out of the school boycott. On September 24 meetings were held in the various townships with school principals, parents and religious ministers to discuss ways of convincing boycotting students to return to school when the government reopened them on September 26. Yet when the schools reopened 93,000 students in the Vaal Triangle and 100,000 students in Soweto remained boycotting.

Gold Strike

One of the most concentrated and in-

tense outbreaks during the last two weeks was the strike of 45,000 black gold miners on September 17. The strike was over wage demands by miners organized in the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM — one of the first legally recognized black miner unions). The strike lasted two days and in the course of it seven miners were killed by police and approximately 400 were injured. Ironically, this strike was built up as the first "legal" strike by black miners in the history of Azania; a status which supposedly meant that the police would not necessarily be called out to shoot and whip the strikers (although the mining companies still retain the right to fire striking miners at will and openly bragged about having tens of thousands of blacks throughout the region who would be more than willing to replace any strikers fired). On the day the strike began, the true meaning of such niceties as "legal status" was brutally driven home to the striking miners as the police were immediately called in and attacked the miners with tear gas, whips, shotguns and dogs.

The gold miners' strike was potentially very dangerous for the South African ruling class. First of all, a successful and prolonged strike would have severely affected South Africa's already crisis-ridden economy. Secondly, within the context of the overall situation in Azania today, a gold miners strike could have developed very quickly into yet another heavy arena of battle. The potential of the strike could be seen in a number of different developments. For one thing, the fact that it happened at all was very significant. While there has been some very sharp battles between the South African ruling class and black gold miners in the past, traditionally these miners have been somewhat reluctant about taking on the government. In part, this has to do with the fact that, for the most part, black gold miners in South Africa are migrant workers from other countries in southern Africa and from the Bantustans who are kept in prison-like

conditions for the duration of their contract.

It is also the case that the climate of defiance and rebellion in Azania today had a tremendous influence on what went down with the miners. The NUM only represents miners at nine out of fifty mines run by the South African Chamber of Mines (approximately 45,000 out of 500,000 miners) yet the strike very quickly spread to a number of mines not covered by the NUM. One of the sharpest areas of confrontation with the South African state was centered in the same general area of the township rebellions — that is, outside of Johannesburg. The heaviest confrontation broke out at the Western Areas mine (not covered by the NUM) where 8,000 miners carried out a pitched six-hour battle with the police on September 18. Even after the government worked out a compromise agreement with the union and the strike was called off, a wave of wildcat strikes continued to break out throughout the area.

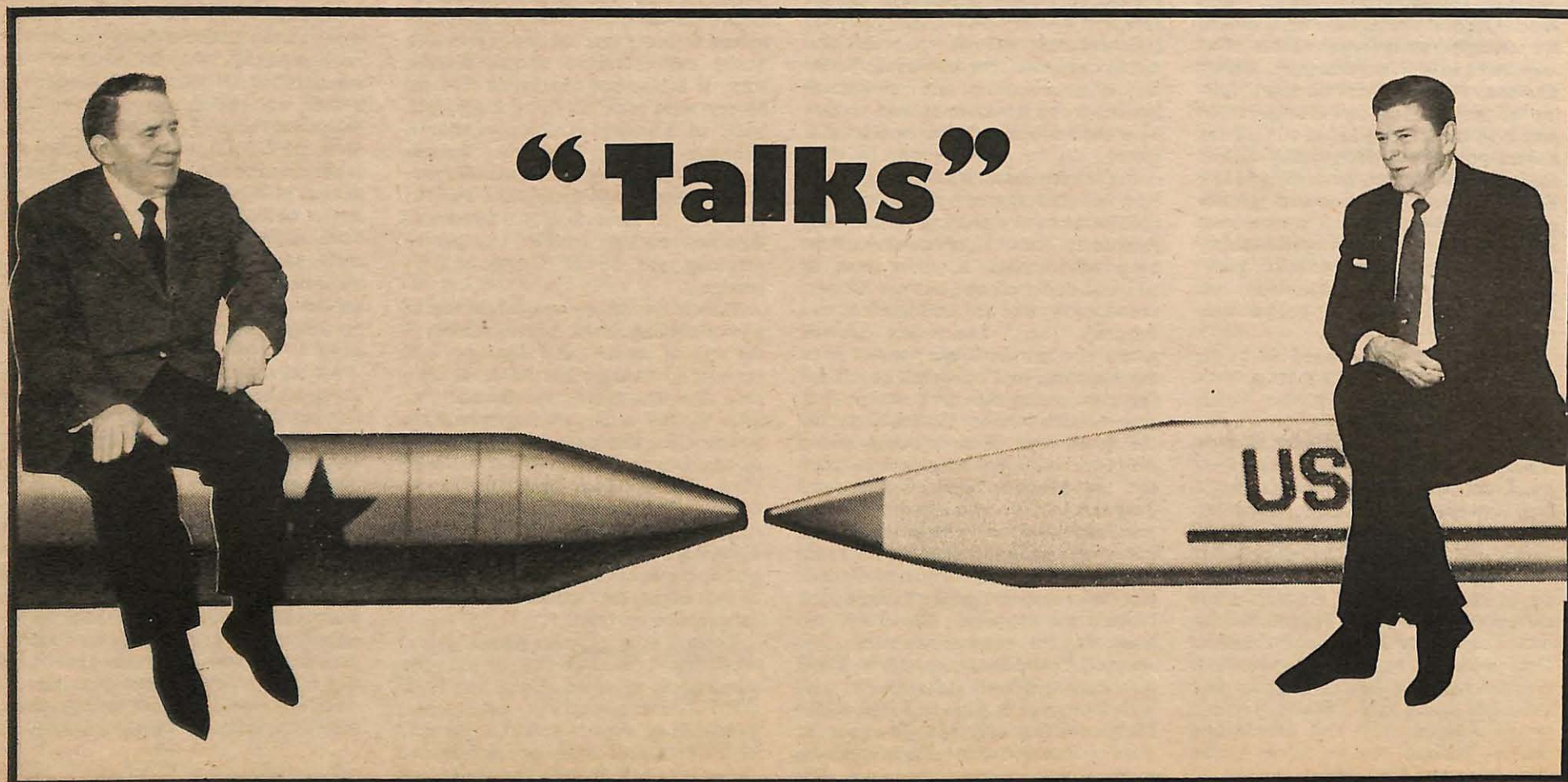
Two Prongs

In response to the overall situation in Azania today the South African ruling class has continued its two-pronged maneuvering. On one side, the brutal repression unleashed by the government has continued and intensified. The climate for this activity has been greatly enhanced by the commentary and editorials appearing in the "liberal opposition" press. In the course of the last month this press has gone from "criticizing" the government for "overreacting" to openly fretting about the situation getting "out of control" and "high-principled protest" turning into "thugery" with "no good cause."

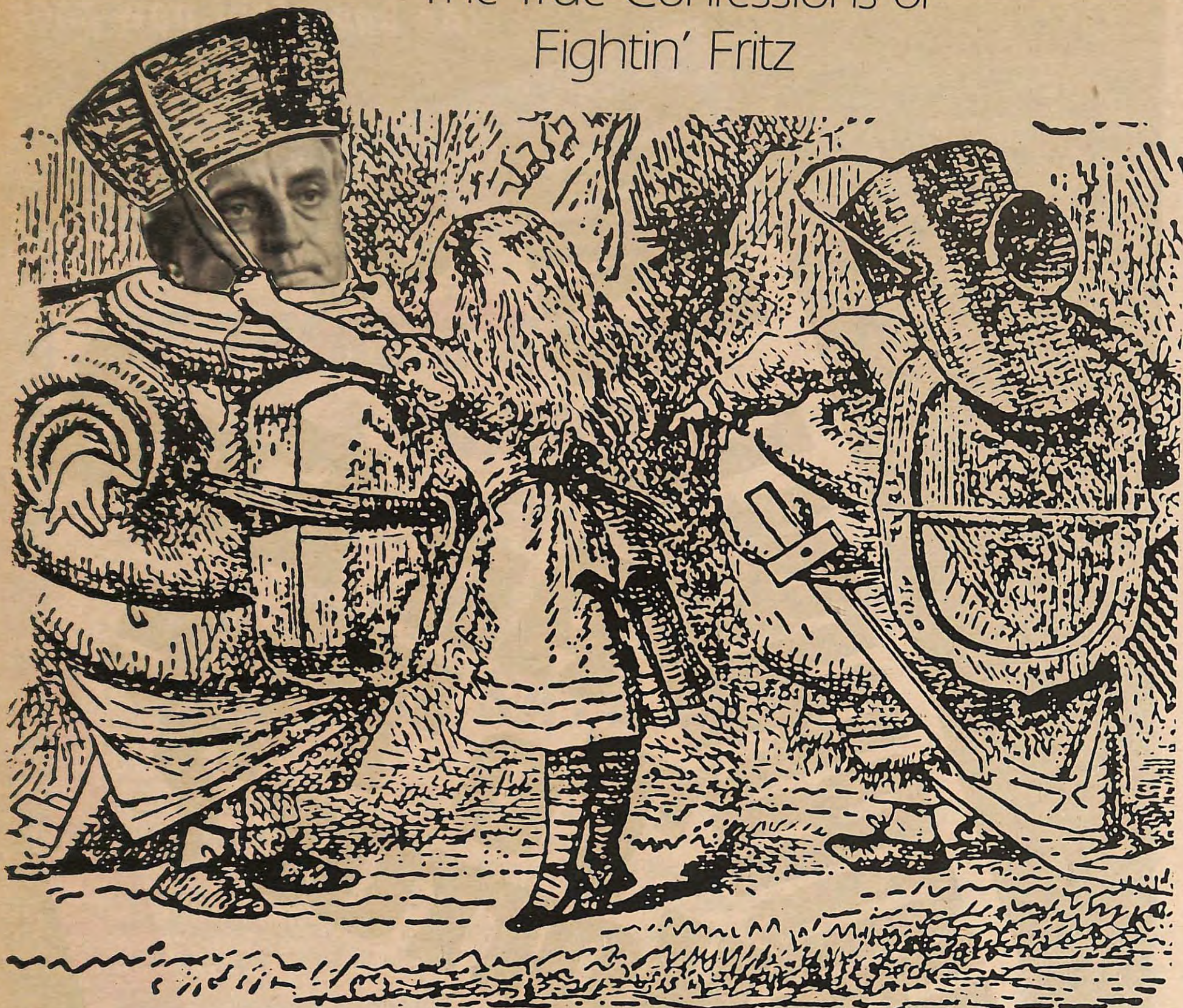
On the other side, the South African government has been attempting to play up its "reasonable and responsible" steps towards reform quite a bit. Botha has made a lot of noise about his appointment of two nonwhite people to his new government cabinet. According to the South African rulers this is a sure sign of how the new constitution in South Africa is "a step in the right direction." Interestingly enough, these two new cabinet ministers have been made ministers without portfolio which essentially means they are powerless within the government structure.

The government has also been recently playing up its "willingness to be reasonable" in relation to the black people in Azania who have been totally cut out of the new government structure. While still upholding the Bantustan homeland policy as the cornerstone of government policy in

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The True Confessions of Fightin' Fritz



The scene was typical, the message increasingly familiar. Mondale beating his chest before an auditorium the press described as "half-filled" and "sporadically applauding." This time it was the mummies of the 66th Annual American Legion Convention in Portland. Mondale speaking:

"There is not one party that believes in America's greatness and one that does not. There is not one party that is patriotic and one that is not. There is not one party that believes in God and one that does not. And let's stop all this nonsense that there is one party of weakness and a party of strength."

Fair enough. And true enough. Unfortunately "all this nonsense" about a "lesser evil," a substantial split in the ruling class over war and a subsequent "real choice" before the voting population persists. Luckily, Mondale has not limited

himself to the kind of general statement quoted above. If it hasn't been clear enough already, Mondale eliminates any confusion: he is vying for the blood-drenched job of imperialist commander in chief and waving political credentials to back his bid.

On Central America

The big news here was that Mondale told the *New York Times* in a detailed interview published Sept. 18, that he would have invaded Grenada, that he would use military force "to go in there and protect American lives" and that his personal investigations into Grenada reports now convince him that "a reasonable estimate at that time would've been that they were in trouble. And that being true, I would've used American power to protect them." This is something Mondale has not said before.

Let me be blunt, Mondale is saying, I will not only openly defend the most gruesome rape of defenseless countries, I will even pay lip service to those ridiculous justifications that *no one* takes seriously. I am, he drives home, not only as utterly shameless as "that other guy," but just as willing to run all the "standing tall" rhetoric to get the war juices flowing.

And the stance is quickly applied to the practical politics of Central America: Mondale fully endorsed the standard American justification for its strangling of Nicaragua, the supposed export of arms and subversion throughout the region into its peaceful democratic neighbors. He endorsed Duarte. He in-

sisted that overthrowing the Nicaraguan government was not an alien idea to him: "I've been very condemnatory of the Sandinista government. I think it is an increasingly totalitarian state. . . ." Asked by the interviewer how he would respond to the introduction of Soviet-built MIGs into Nicaragua and whether he agreed with Reagan's policy of "we would take them out, if they didn't take them out," Mondale replied, yes, indeed: "If the Soviets did that, it would be intolerable. I made it clear that anything of that kind, permanent Soviet bases, introduction of Soviet aircraft, that sort of thing — that moves the whole matter up to top level national security risks, and it has to be seen as such." "What does that mean?" the *Times* asks. And Mondale continued, "What it means is that the Soviets have to get out of there and it means we have to take such steps as to bring about that result. They can be under no illusions as to the seriousness of it."

But while endorsing Reagan on Grenada and on MIGs in Nicaragua, Mondale also made headlines by forging new ground — he called for a quarantine

of Nicaragua "if it uses any force outside its borders," something even Reagan has not yet done, and amounting to threats of war against the Sandinistas even apart from claims of "Soviet bases." It was, as the press quickly pointed out, a position *to the right* of Reagan's!

What then is Mondale's "criticism" of the current U.S. imperialist policies in the region?

First, he attacks the military buildup in Honduras and "Reagan's illegal war in

Continued on page 10

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Avakian surveys the contemporary social and political terrain to reveal how and under what circumstances U.S. imperialism might be brought down. Yet what makes this such a compelling study is not merely its insights into revolutionary strategy but its insistence that these issues be viewed in the larger setting of the historical advance toward, and the problems attendant to, the achievement of socialism and communism.

Avakian casts his analytical gaze on the shortcomings of the movements of the 1960s, the recent assaults on Leninism, Marxist-Leninist military theory and experience, the enslaving essence of modern democracy, the role of dissent in socialist society, the centrality of the woman question to the revolutionary process, and the ideological roots of accommodationism and capitulationism within the revolution. Here, as in all his writings, Avakian articulates a Marxism for which revolution cannot be a halfway affair.

A Horrible End, or An End to the Horror? is not airy speculation but a lucid and riveting assessment of the problems, tasks, and opportunities that this critical historical period presents to revolutionary-minded people. It may be objected to but can no more be ignored than can the imperialists' plans for nuclear war: the world situation is just that acute and the approaching possibilities for the revolutionary seizure of power are just that real.

The True Confessions of Fightin' Fritz

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Nicaragua." In the context of his other remarks, what can this mean other than a preference for naval tactics over direct land invasion from Honduras as the means of initiating war, coupled with an insistence that any such war should be fought legally, declared and openly. This dovetails well with the "lesson of Vietnam" as summed up by liberal Democrats: that the U.S. should hold back from involving U.S. ground troops in regional conflicts until other military means have been exhausted and that the political dimensions of such infamous police actions should be handled "differently."

The second and more prominent criticism of Reagan's policies should, by now, be familiar to all — it is that Reagan is too psychologically rigid to hold enough "talks." Mondale: "I think the evidence is pretty clear that while the Administration talks about negotiations, in fact their heart has never been in it. I think the main thrust of the Administration's policy in Central America is to win by force." We too think the "evidence is pretty clear" — that Mondale does little more than echo the main outlines of Reagan's established policy: pressure the Sandinista government by combined political and military means, offer the "Contadora Process" as a political means of Nicaraguan capitulation to U.S. domination, while using armed force and threats of greater aggression and American invasion as a seriously considered option.

Israel and "Terrorism"

These two subjects provide another quick fix on the Mondale swagger.

Mondale has announced he would "strengthen strategic cooperation" with Israel (!) and "end the fiction that Jerusalem is not the capital of that good country." It should be noted that by call-

ing for the relocation of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, Mondale in effect does what no ruling President has yet done: insist that the U.S. endorse the permanent annexation of eastern Jerusalem by Israel, and by implication the annexation of the West Bank as a whole and other conquered lands of the 1967 war.

Mondale scolds Reagan for treating "Israel like an adversary. He embargoed F-16s she needed for defense," sold jets to Saudi Arabia, and conducted "400 hours of so-called official talks between this administration, Yasir Arafat and the PLO." Of course this is precisely the continuation of a policy that has been followed at least since Andy Young opened the public-but-unofficial contact with the PLO under Carter/Mondale. But then as now the Zionist dog was well-fed by the U.S. master.

Reagan it seems is soft on "terrorism," not just politically (by talking to the PLO) but militarily. Mondale, the man's man, accuses Reagan in the wake of the latest Beirut bombing of letting "terrorists" in Lebanon "humiliate us, and push us around, and kill our people," saying that the current President "acts as though terrorism is like an earthquake, a force of nature that can only be endured, not controlled."

Now, no imperialist, including Mondale, has the right to speak about "terrorism" — in the Middle East, their acts of terror have been hideous. Mondale's own contribution to this bloody hypocrisy is to call Reagan not tough enough on "terrorism."

Here Mondale has made a habit of differentiating himself from past bourgeois policy through repeated statements about tone, image and sincerity. He has charged that Reagan has "engineered an arms race." At the University of Southern California, he pleaded (in front of the usual "hundreds of booing and jeering students"): "What kind of people are we? Are we the kind of people who don't care that children have nightmares about nuclear war? Are we the kind of people who don't care about an arms race in space? Are we the kind of people who don't care about a nuclear winter that

begins on the day after?" On Sept. 17, in Michigan, Mondale had said, "Today, I'm putting Mr. Reagan on notice. I will make the question of war and peace a major issue in this campaign. The fact of it is that four years of Ronald Reagan has made this world more dangerous. Four more will take us closer to the brink."

At the same American Legion Convention mentioned at the start of this article, Mondale laid out his major programmatic difference: "I am announcing now that on my very first day as President, I will call on the Soviet leadership to meet me within six months in Geneva for fully prepared substantive negotiations to freeze the arms race, and to begin cutting back the stockpiles of nuclear weapons." And finally, in the *New York Times* interview, he added that he thought that Reagan's approach to arms control "is going to be his biggest failure" — every other American president has held summit conferences and all have at least introduced treaties for discussion.

Now thanks to Mondale's decision to make "war and peace a major issue," we have some more detailed knowledge of what these grandiose criticisms and programs actually mean.

Coming out of his meeting with Gromyko — Mondale reiterated that in his discussions with Gromyko he had expressed (1) a desire for talks, and (2) the perspective that these should be "discussions right down the line" and that their goal should be to have "verifiable terms." For those who follow these "peace war" maneuverings, these buzzwords are precisely the current official U.S. position. "Discussions right down the line" means that Mondale endorses Reagan's refusal to have any talks with the Soviets that don't include talks on intermediate-range missiles. "Verifi-

able" has been the U.S. excuse for rejecting any treaty not in their own military interests, since "verifiable" means unrestricted U.S. rights to inspect sites of their own choosing within the USSR, something the Soviets have never, and will never, agree to.

As for what Mondale would announce, in the unlikely event that he gets a "very first day as President" — the anti-Star Wars talk has now become a question of announcing a "temporary moratorium" on the testing and deployment of space weapons. Mondale's key foreign and military affairs advisor, David Aaron, then further defined "temporary" as a "pause" of six months. What this means is a postponement of the ASAT weapons scheduled for this fall until the summer — a position the *current* State Department has reportedly fought for *within* the Reagan administration. A week later, by September 30, this "pause" was further redefined as a "short enough period so that it would in no way interfere with America's national security" and Mondale was explaining that "We've already tested the ASAT weapons. Ours is more sophisticated than theirs."

As for the Freeze itself, it is what it has always been: a sufficiency argument which claims that enough U.S. nukes are already on line and that the military weaknesses of NATO lie elsewhere. In this light, Mondale hints that Reagan's policy remains fixated on Soviet nuclear strength, while other military spheres demand attention. Mondale insists (echoing the Hart "new ideas" on military affairs) that the key military preparation for world war now lies in strengthening the conventional leg, and in foregoing new weapons systems that will only become operative in a decade. The criticism of Reagan's "Star Wars" proposals is that they are too long-term. Mondale in the Sept. 18 *Times*: "Compare that theoretical way-out stuff and all the costs and the destabilizing consequences of that, to the real contribution to our security from what *now may be*

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According to fanatics, Armageddon is the spot where the final battle between good and evil is to take place. That battle is to mark the "end of time" in that the earthly form of god's creation ends, and spiritual rule by the Almighty kicks in directly. God takes charge of human destiny. He descends from heaven and defeats the wicked. On the day of Judgment they are damned for all eternity, while the virtuous believers are admitted into eternal life. In an earthly millenium where Christ rules directly as King, and after the thousand years with Satan chained up for all to see, eternity begins.

Needless to say, the prophecies are woven of scattered and fantastic snatches. The various elements are incoherent and garbled in the Biblical texts. Both divine and earthly players are foretold; there is an Antichrist, the Beast and Satan (though their relationship to each other is unclear), there is Jesus, his avenging hosts of angels, and earthly nations like Gog and Magog. Somewhere in these events there will be great "Tribulations" when the believers will be tormented and branded with "666, the mark of the Beast." There will be the "Rapture" where they are taken to god. There will be Judgment. And there will be Armageddon itself.

That, in a nutshell, is the raw material provided by obscure passages in the Bible. What has now been done is the crafting of those hoary myths into a quite-modern political program that strictly corresponds with the war plans of U.S. imperialism. The darkest reaction is cloaked as the inevitable, foreseen outcome of god's "mysterious ways." According to select modern theologians, irradiated glazed earth is part of divine providence, prophesied by ancient seers as initiating the end of all pain, sin and suffering.

In Falwell's pamphlet *Armageddon and the Coming War With Russia*, written in the last few years, the Reverend argues that "the stage is rapidly being set even today in the Middle East" for two wars, the "Gog and Magog" war and Armageddon, which he believes run together into one. Labeling the earthly nations by their contemporary names Falwell has declared that "the pieces are falling into place even today before our very eyes" for "the future invasion by Russia into Israel." Hal Lindsay, in his book *The Late Great Planet Earth*, explains at length that Gog was what the prophets of old called the people north of the Black Sea. In this war, Russia is already fated to be "soundly defeated," in the course of the battle the Antichrist will take over the Middle East from a base in the Common Market of Europe and there will be the "final holocaust" of Armageddon where Chinese, Russian, Israeli and NATO armies collide. As Falwell preaches, "the old heavens and the old earth... will be destroyed by a nuclear blast... the communistic threat will cease forever."

In classic American fundamentalism, the Antichrist (that whore of the seven hills, described in "Revelations") was always targeted as the Pope, his church was the whore in Rome (the city of seven hills).

Such a view, however, is impolitic for an American religion in 1984, and that interpretation of holy scripture has quietly been given the deep-six.

Similarly, versions of the "enddays," which were promoted in the 1960s, had China as the "Army from the East" which was going to enter Jerusalem and

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Who has not seen the cartoon image of the wild-eyed religious fanatic, robed and barefoot, admonishing the heathen, "Repent! The end is near!" Since 68 AD, when the Book of Revelations was first penned as an early Christian pamphlet predicting the return of the Emperor Nero as the Antichrist, and his destruction, its mystical message of a Second Coming of Christ has been proclaimed: the terrible swift sword of Jehovah would take an earthly form, and the wrath of Judgment Day would befall the ungodly.* Since 1925 and the Scopes Trial, apocalyptic religion has been largely a joke within the imperialist superstructure, a lingering current in the rural backwaters. No more.

Last week, we examined the forging of legions of Christian Soldiers (see *RW* No. 274), and mentioned that the classical Christian mythology of Armageddon has been refurbished and put at the disposal of the preparations for World War 3.

Here are some more of the juicy details of how far into obscurantism imperialism has to crawl to stiffen the spines of its followers.

Last October 18, Reagan telephoned Thomas Dine, the executive director of the American-Israel Public Affairs Com-

mittee to thank him for lobbying in favor of the recent American Marine occupation of Beirut. According to a transcript of the conversation, Reagan said: "You know, I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs foretelling Armageddon, and I find myself wondering if — if we're the generation that's going to see that come about. I don't know if you've noted any of those prophecies lately, but believe me, they certainly describe the times we're going through."

About a month later, interviewers for *People* magazine (that fount of somber spirituality) pursued the question with the President:

"Question: In the *Jerusalem Post* you were quoted as saying that this generation may see Armageddon, that a lot of Bible prophecies are being played out today. Do you really believe that?

"Reagan: I've never said that publicly. I've talked here with my own people because theologians, quite a while ago, were telling me that never before has there been a time when so many prophecies were coming together. There have been times in the past when we thought the end of the world was coming, but never anything like this.

"Question: You've mused about this?

"Reagan: Not to the extent of throwing up my hands and saying 'Well, it's all over.' No, I think whenever that time comes, the generation that is here will have to go on doing what they believe is right."

To get a sharper picture of what they "will have to go on doing," a few details about the myth of Armageddon are in order, and particularly details about how our highly American prophets have more

* In the collection *Marx and Engels, On Religion* (New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1969) there is an essay by Frederick Engels, "The Book of Revelations," dissecting that book of the Bible using historical materialism, not only laying bare the roots of the spiritualist upswing in corners of the Roman empire, but actually digging up the real symbolic meanings of such "mysteries" as "666, the mark of the Beast," and the opaque descriptions of the "Antichrist."

Dear RW:

Out here in the San Francisco Bay Area, there's a pretty sizeable community of African people (several Nigerian students, e.g., are enrolled at UC Berkeley). A number of African and African-influenced bands have settled here as well.

So the announcement of an impending U.S. tour by one of Nigeria's top musicians, FELA ANIKULAPO KUTI, was very big news indeed. Just a few months ago, another Nigerian star, King Sunny Ade, played to a large amphitheater in Berkeley. Now, the legendary Fela was coming HERE... the man who could fill a Lagos stadium with 100,000 fans... who has recorded over 50 albums to international acclaim... who has influenced people like Brian Eno and the Talking Heads....

As the scheduled night came near, however, complications arose. His band, Africa 80, was in the U.S.; but Fela wasn't. After a previous postponement (from Aug. 24) due to "visa problems", his publicity director made an announcement that the band would play as scheduled (Sept. 8) without Fela, who was being detained in Nigeria for "currency violations." In fact, his visa had been seized, and he couldn't even reapply for another until the tour ended. The details of this detainment have been highly suspicious. Fela has a reputation for exposing governmental corruption... yet the authorities claim he had violated a law preventing Nigerians from taking more than a nominal amount of foreign capital out of Nigeria. (Nigeria, in many ways, is economically similar to Mexico... oil-rich yet tied to a multibillion dollar debt to IMF loans.

The Detention of Fela Kuti



This has led to austerity measures, following the military coup in January.)

This is not the first time Fela has run afoul of the authorities, e.g., in 1980, prior to a European tour, he was busted by Italian customs officials for 50 kilos of herb found in his luggage. SURPRISE! A Black American woman, who had recently joined his band, LATER admitted to having planted the stuff!

The imperialists have many reasons for wanting Fela kept inside his own

village (friends call it the Kalakuta republic). His music has strains of funk, soul and jazz, as well as being rooted in African national forms... including the ancient griot tradition of "singing" the news. Indeed, his slogan is "Music is the weapon" (altho' it's not THE weapon, it's definitely A weapon). He picked up a lot of his sounds while playing in England with Ginger Baker in the Cream; and in 1969 he contacted the Black Panthers in LA

with whom he says he did "a lot of reading" (!), and relearning of African cultures. James Brown was influenced by African music; but Fela was also influenced by James Brown!

Upon returning to Nigeria in 1970, he formed his band in a poor section of Lagos. The village soon grew into a cultural and political center of resistance to the Westernization of Nigeria. Kalakuta's lifestyle, which adopted some tribal customs alongside some elements of Black liberation, stood out in the face of the junta (or "showcase of democracy," depending on the time). And as Fela's records and fame spread internationally, the authorities eventually ordered Kalakuta's destruction. On Feb. 1977, 1,000 Nigerian soldiers attacked Kalakuta with a lot more than "music"... they had machine guns and bazookas. His own mother, Funmilayo, died of complications from a beating, the women were raped, and Fela was sent (or forced) into exile to Ghana for a year. (In a protest march against the junta in 1979, he presented his mother's coffin to the doorsteps of the junta.)

It's apparent that this recent "detainment" is only the latest attempt to wall Fela's music off from the rest of the world. I must say that I really enjoyed the Berkeley concert (the music and dancing were a totally new and rebellious experience for me). But the Nigerians I talked to after the show were terse in their response... "NO COMPARISON."

A reader and punk record fanatic

WARMONGERS AND REVELATIONS

Continued from page 11

spark Armageddon... that too has been quietly ushered out of prophecy.

What emerges now is a religious version of the most likely scenario of "the coming war with Russia" — where some regional conflict spirals into nuclear exchange between blocs. Halos and horns have been assigned and the Beast looks remarkably like a bear. Linkages of this scenario to various passages of scripture are tenuous — but then clarity has never been the lifeblood of prophecy. Linkages to U.S. imperialism are rock steady, as Falwell exhorts his followers to "die for that flag."

The Commander in Chief

Clearly, the bourgeoisie feels that the time for jokes and mocking is passed! In our previous article we described how the theory of Armageddon is being put forward straight-faced in high-brow discussions by the Secretary of Defense in elite institutions like Harvard, and by the Secretary of State in Senate hearings.

Central to this campaign of divine prophecy stands the corpus of Ronald Reagan, a political figure who until now was hardly known for piety. Now, commenting on a spate of books which situate Reagan in a distinctly religious cosmology, the liberal *New York Times* feigns understatement by writing, "there are strong suggestions that he has been divinely ordained to govern." The following is a sampling of the tone on Christian stations. It is taken from a segment of the *700 Club* in the celebration following Reagan's first inauguration. The event, it seems, had been foretold, at least according to host Pat Robertson:

"Robertson: I had been several times praying... God told me that Ronald Reagan was going to win the election and I was very happy to see that happen. Afterward, as I was praying at year end, He said that He was going to bless him, that we were not to criticize him...."

Then Robertson introduced Rev. Harold Bredeisen, a member of the board of directors of CBN, who told the audience about a spiritual encounter he had with Reagan toward the end of his first term as governor of California. The incident was revealing—if not exactly inerrant:

"Bredeisen: Actually, it was right at the

height of the campaign that he invited us to come... I can still remember his face as it was framed in the door receiving us. It had such a boyish, carefree expression... He showed us around his private home... And then Governor Reagan, to my great joy, began to tick off the prophecies that have been fulfilled. Now, I'd been in his home... when he was an actor and to see the difference that had already taken place in his character and in his closeness to the Lord really impressed me very much, because he seemed to be amazingly consonant with the Scriptures....

"Robertson: I understand after the discussion of Bible things [you] began to pray. Did you join hands, you and Pat Boone, George Otis [another fundamentalist broadcaster] and Ronald Reagan?"

"Bredeisen: Yeah, that's right... George had his left hand, I had his right hand as we prayed, and George let out in prayer and suddenly his prayer changed into prophecy. I'm sure you've seen this happen. And in it God was saying that if he would walk in His ways, He said, 'I will put you in 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue,' which is the address of the White House.

"Robertson: Whoa! Wait! That's 1970 and George Otis, speaking in prophecy as unto the Lord said, 'I will put you in 1700'? Whew! That's electrifying.

"Bredeisen: Well, I'll tell you—was Reagan electrified! I had his right hand and, Pat, it was wobbling like this. Honestly, I've never seen an arm wave so under the anointing of God!

"Robertson: It's incredible!

"Bredeisen: Interestingly enough, Pat Boone tells me that he called him right after the election and said, 'Mr. President, do you remember that day?' and he said, 'Do I ever!'

"Robertson: Somebody just said, by the way... it's 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. That was my fault. It's 1600 Pennsylvania...."

"For thou didst gird me with strength for the battle...."

King David, Psalm 18:39

"Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy and

nothing shall injure you."

Luke 10:19

In its most virulent form the vision of Armageddon is: We will nuke the Russians to death... the earth will die... and it's all good, because of god's plan... and because we, the chosen, are promised eternal life for serving him.

This religion is being promoted not just because it maintains a hold on a particularly valuable political reserve of the bourgeoisie, the still numerous reactionary hicks — but it is being especially promoted now far beyond its traditional crevices because, as we pointed out last week, it is ideal as head-stuffing for nuclear warriors, and for generating the kind of intolerant righteousness needed on the home front. It was coldly, cynically and even "scientifically" selected from among numerous other ideological options to be a major wrapping in which the current war is to be decked out. Certainly in itself this is a sign of a system preparing for the most gruesome acts in its deaththroes.

One useful example of how this religion is turned to military utility is a recent exposure made by an anonymous "Captain X" in the book, *Holy Terror*. This "Captain X," coming from his own (quite liberal and quite imperialist) concerns about national defense, talks about the penetration of fundamentalism into the elite and highly technological Air Force, obviously a key in modern nuclear warfare.

"It's almost like an air force within the Air Force," he said, "the fundamentalist network is becoming parallel to the 'good old boy' drinking network. You always had sergeants or colonels who would drink together and reminisce over old times, bloody battles in World War 2 or shared bombing raids over Hanoi. Now there's this different network of people who attend Bible studies together. They form allegiances, little social and political groups within special working situations. You feel the subtle pressure to join... The military uses faith as a base and these fundamentalists come in and try to turn people into Christian supersoldiers... This group is creating its own distinct personality type. On the surface they seem to be highly stable individuals. They have good positive

temperaments at all times... They never display anger or other intense emotions. They internalize everything. They interpret any situation that comes up in relation to the Bible. And very often, they respond in a kind of laid-back monotone."

"Captain X" goes on to give a particular example: "A case came up involving a major who was a fundamentalist Christian. He had been through the Navigator's training program and was very active in the base Christian community. In the course of a routine conversation, I asked him, 'Suppose you found yourself in a situation where you were confronted with a potential global nuclear confrontation, and you were under extraordinary pressure and critical time requirements. How would you respond?' And he smiled at me and said, 'Well, if that ever came to pass, I would simply put my faith in the hands of the Lord.'... I asked him again, I said, 'You know, to be an officer you have to be a leader. You have to make very fast judgments, important decisions based on a limited amount of information.' I said, 'As an officer, how do you feel about that sort of thing?' And he said, 'Well, I feel that basically I'm here because God wants me to be here. And whatever moves I make, that's basically all in God's design. It's all in God's will, and whatever happens is what Jesus has put in the Holy Spirit for me to enact.'"

Once, in what seems a long time ago, nuclear war was known as "the unthinkable." Clearly imperialism has dredged up an ideology quite useful for making human beings into "the unthinking," capable of carrying out their orders precisely, whatever they are, while fitting the entire proceeding into a mystical fantasy world of demons and angels. It illustrates precisely the meaning of Reagan's words, cited above, "whenever that time comes, the generation that is here will have to go on doing what they believe is right."

Twisting their own idiocy completely out of context, it seems fitting to cite a bible passage:

"There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

Proverbs 14:12

□

In a remote area of southern Illinois 350 miles south of Chicago, situated amidst winding rural roads and rolling hills, is the heaviest maximum-security prison in the U.S., the Marion Federal Penitentiary. Hailed as the "new Alcatraz" when it opened in 1963, Marion was to provide the ultimate the prison system had to offer in breaking men's bodies — and their minds.

To enter the main part of Marion Penitentiary, one passes through a metal detector and five sets of electronically controlled steel gates that bang shut one after another with a nerve-jangling clamor. The Control Unit, housing up to 70 men, is at the end of a separate wing fortified by five more steel gates. Prisoners passing through these corridors are constantly tracked by TV cameras until reaching a steel door. Entry is gained only after a pair of eyes peer through a viewing slit.

The Control Unit has been officially known as the worst punishment the U.S. penal system can give a man short of execution. It is a prison-within-prison, the ultimate "hole," where a man typically spends months — sometimes years — in solitary confinement under conditions that have given it the highest suicide rate in the prison system.

Beginning after the stabbing death of two guards last November, the Marion administration has moved to apply the notorious conditions of the Control Unit to the prison's entire population of 250-350 inmates (with the exception of about 40 prisoners in the "honor unit"). Attention has been drawn to the year-long clampdown at Marion by a class action lawsuit filed by Marion prisoners soon at be heard in federal court.

Historically the Bureau of Prisons has always maintained that the brutal suppression of the Marion prisoners is

necessary because housed here are the most vicious psychopaths imaginable, the dregs of society. As the former warden remarked to the *Chicago Tribune*, "Judges sentence criminals to prison to protect society. Wardens send prisoners to Marion often to protect other inmates." And, "You have to consider the type of men imprisoned here. They're here because they're vicious; they're here because they're savage."

Imprisoned at Marion are those who have resisted the straitjacket of the prison regimen in any way, such as jailhouse lawyers or, for example, the inmate who was transferred here when he refused to work in a prison factory job for eight months after almost having a finger cut off. Any prisoner in the federal system who has attempted escape or seriously assaulted a guard or sometimes another inmate is sentenced to the Control Unit. But most especially, Marion is reserved for those prisoners who have a history of rebellion, particularly political activism, on the outside and at other prisons.

Leonard Peltier, the Native American political prisoner who was framed up for his participation in the armed self-defense of an Indian encampment under attack from government agents, is jailed here. Peltier has been the target of top-level government assassination attempts but has continued to resist the monstrous treatment of the Marion prisoners, most recently through a religious fast. Prisoners have steadily been transferred here for participating in rebellions from Walla Walla in Washington State to New Mexico, and most recently for participating in a work stoppage at the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary. Former warden Ralph Aron very bluntly defended the real role of the prison in 1975: "... the purpose of the Marion Control Unit is the control of revolutionary at-

The Marion Torture Chamber

titudes in the prison system and in the society at large," he said.

From its very conception, Marion was designed to contain rebellion. It was with this in mind that the prison was divided into various subsections which can be rapidly sealed off in case of an uprising; but far from containing the virus, Marion has provided the conditions to incubate and spread the contagion. The Control Unit itself was set up in 1972 to crush a work stoppage. From late 1980 and into 1981, Marion prisoners conducted the longest strike in the history of the federal prison system. Unable to break the solidarity of the prisoners the administration became increasingly harsh, pulling out all educational, cultural and work programs and banning lawyers from the Marion Prisoners' Rights Project (MPRP) who were mounting legal challenges around the inmates' grievances.

The current offensive that has turned all of Marion into a giant Control Unit (except for those who have "adjusted well" to the lockdown in the "honor unit") is the culmination of this long-standing battle. It began last year, early in November, with a systematic and coldly calculated form of "police riot" preplanned and coordinated at the top levels of the Bureau of Prisons. Several dozen guards from throughout the federal system were purposefully assembled at Marion and outfitted in stormtrooper gear — jumpsuits without name tags, flak jackets, helmets, face masks, heavy gloves and boots, and carrying three-foot-long clubs fitted with a heavy steel bead on the end.

Over a three-day period, attack squads dragged every prisoner from his cell, naked or in underwear, with hands cuffed behind his back and punched, shoved, manhandled and cursed him. Throughout interviews, lawyers from MPRP have documented at least 40 serious beatings where one handcuffed prisoner was kicked, stomped and beaten with clubs and fists and almost always kicked repeatedly in the genitals by five to twenty guards who were quick to remind each other, "Don't hit him in the face!" Guards issued death threats like, "This won't be over for you until we have you hanging."

Singled out for special treatment were any prisoners who have protested conditions in the past or have stepped to the forefront in any way as leaders. Prisoners who protested the beatings of others or refused to submit to a forced "rectal search" — accurately considered anal rape by prisoners — were held down and beaten and their rectums forcibly probed or were subjected to repeated x-rays. One inmate reported having the steel bead of the riot club rammed into his rectum. Although serious after-effects like vomiting and urinating blood for days were reported, medical treatment was denied.

With this as baptism, prisoners were initiated into a regimen of unmitigated brute force that has lasted for nearly a year now. Beatings continue sporadically. All prisoners (except the "honor unit") are locked in their cells at least 23 hours a day. So-called recreation cages have been built in the Control Unit while in the general population a prisoner can pace up and down outside his cell for 30-60 minutes.

All food, with guards sometimes spitting into it or putting out cigarettes, is served in the cell on trays that must be placed on the toilet or floor since there is no furniture. During the initial shake-down, all property — every moveable thing — including shelves, clothes, books, bedding, tables and legal documents, was removed and only a few of the personal possessions have been returned to date. Religious artifacts, particularly for Native Americans and Muslims, were ransacked and stolen and con-

tinued to be denied. As for the furniture, in the Control Unit the prison is in the process of installing concrete, immovable shelves and concrete slabs complete with steel rings for chaining prisoners to their beds, already a popular practice.

For those who refuse to crack under this physical deprivation, there is psychological torture inflicted by the "boxcars" or "sensory deprivation units" that continue to be used despite years of court battles. These cells, equipped with a solid steel door, are noiseless and dimly lit by a source not controlled by the prisoner, leading to disorientation, even hallucinations, and what one prisoner called "an induced state of paranoia."

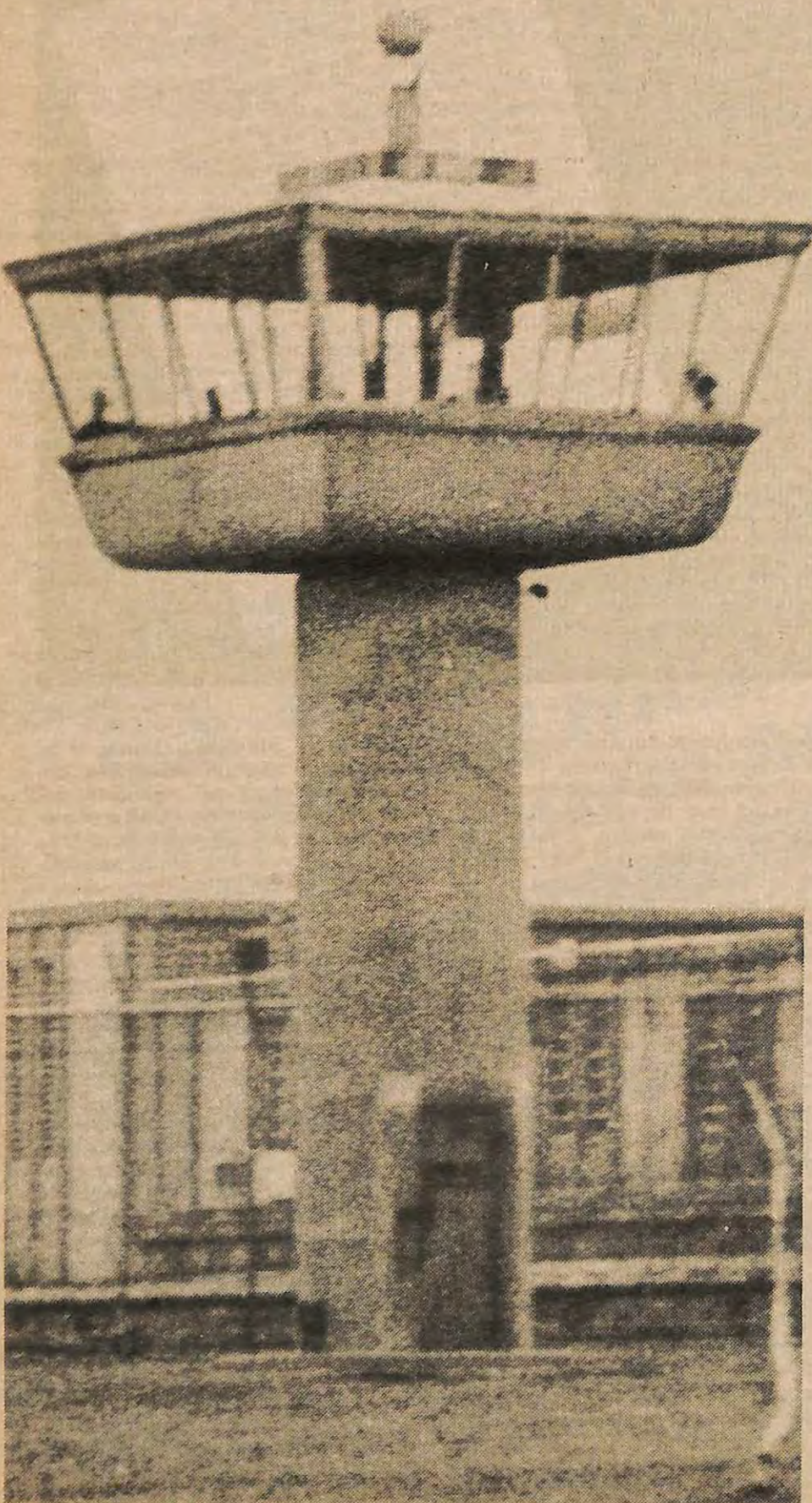
A federal judge ruled that the boxcars must be modified and so some cosmetic changes were made. However, while the courts wink and turn their heads the other way, the prison has introduced the very same boxcar cells as a disciplinary unit for the general population and in the hospital, pointing out that the judge's ruling applied only to the Control Unit.

A crucial aspect of breaking down the prisoners is isolating them from the outside world, from family, friends, supporters and lawyers. Basic to this is literally shackling every movement a prisoner makes. Since the lockdown began, whenever a prisoner leaves his cell, whether for a visit or a transfer, he is first thoroughly strip searched. The same procedure is repeated upon return. At least three guards, all armed with clubs, shackle his ankles together and place another chain around his waist to which he is handcuffed like an animal trussed up and ready for slaughter. For a shower or recreation the same procedure is used, minus only the waist chain.

Obviously these occasions are also an invitation to beatings and harassment. Standing Deer, the 62-year-old Native American who exposed the plot on Peltier's life, has asked lawyers not to visit him anymore because of this. As he suffers from a degenerative disk disease, he is unable to bend over on command to spread his cheeks and fears this will provoke more beatings.

Also, under these conditions and given the fact that contact visits have been banned and replaced by monitored telephone conversations through a plexiglass window, some prisoners have urged their families not to visit at all. Communication with the outside world has been further restricted through lack of postage stamps, the allowance of one 10-minute phone call per month and the loss or delay of mail.

The situation at Marion is not simply the result of some sadistic bureaucrats running amok. Washington is fully aware of the clampdown due to a Congressional hearing held last March by the Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties and the Administration of Justice. A full panel of witnesses was heard including representatives of the Marion Prisoners' Rights Project. Norman Carlson, director of the Bureau of Prisons, used the hearing as a platform to agitate against "the increasingly sophisticated, gang-oriented and violent offender population" and to call for the return of the federal death penalty. Nothing has changed at Marion since last March. In the meantime, prisoners are being pushed to the limits. Under these conditions the Marion prisoners have struggled not to be isolated, to maintain contact with the outside world and expose the crimes of the lockdown through letters and through the lawsuits coming up. They have fought back in various ways, from Leonard Peltier's religious fast to a hunger strike of three Spanish-speaking prisoners — a Cuban and two Puerto Ricans — who have been singled out because they don't speak English. □



Contribute to the Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund

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



Shine the Light of Revolution Behind the Prison Walls

RW:

Would you please send me a free subscription to the *Revolutionary Worker*? I don't have any money and can't promise any, but I can and will propagate, promulgate, propound, proselytize for our correct cause and faith! I'm a novice as in regards to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, but I'm learning fast and couldn't agree more. I have a friend who takes your paper, but the slavemasters are probably going to split us up pretty soon — they make sudden moves on prisoners often, and I'd like to continue reading the *RW* and getting hard-core facts against the imperialist bastards, and also our comrades in the Revolution.

Sincere Thanks,
Comrade X
Huntsville

Struggle, Forever and a day, till we have it our way!

Dear Comrade, *Revolutionary Worker*,
I am a Black prisoner here in the XX Correctional Facility who recently has discovered your publication, *Revolutionary Worker*. After having borrowed a friend's copy August 10th 1984, "Perfect Soldiers," I am sincerely interested in this newsweekly. However, I am indigent, totally without the funds to purchase a subscription, and I humbly beseech you to please waive the cost and provide me a subscription. Newsweekly papers of this sort are not well known in this institution like the more recognized capitalist publications, and my friend and I circulate whenever we can get hold of one. So again please provide me this subscription and may I refer a few others to you for a waived subscription as well? But of course I would want to hear from you first. Also, will you please send these back:

1. August 10th 1984 "Perfect Soldiers," "The Murdering Marauders of Dallas," "A Matter Of Survival—Study of Nuclear Winter."
2. "Infant Mortality—A Systemic Disease."

Please respond to these requests. And thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Ohio

The True Confessions of Fightin' Fritz

Continued from page 10

doable...." He goes on to call for an agreement on the "way-out stuff" coupled with a shift of American military emphasis. The "tilt," as Mondale says, toward nuclear weapons (by this he means only *certain* new systems like the MX) has allowed the Atlantic Alliance "to grow flabby" and has resulted in a failure to press Western European allies on increasing their military efforts by 3% annually as they had pledged. At the same time Reagan has supposedly "overburdened" international relationships "with harsh rhetoric." Note that all these arguments are well within the terms of American "strength" — an argument on the best way to ready for war. A beefed-up military alliance, and an arms policy that underlines the pressing time frame of the confrontation with the Soviet Union... this is the stuff of a progressive opposition!

Mondale now even denies that Reagan should get credit for the "reassertion of American strength throughout the

world" — he says: "...I think the buildup in conventional weaponry, the essential buildup, which was started before he came in office was necessary in light of the Soviet buildup and irresponsible assertion of power in Cambodia, Afghanistan and so on." And in fact, Mondale claims that under Reagan, the United States and NATO has "ended weaker not stronger" and that the same applies for the Middle East and Latin America. Culminating his *New York Times* interview was a self-assessment: "...we have a platform that came out overwhelmingly for real increases in defense spending, for a moderate but internationalist (meaning militarily engaged!—*RW*) foreign policy; for strength but arms control, against the immediate abandonment of first use, and in many other ways demonstrated a realistic appraisal of the threat of Soviet power. Of the sophistication required for the use of power. The understanding that's needed to be a mature and responsible leader in this complex world."

This "realistic appraisal" of the Soviets was fleshed out in *USA Today* this week in a special "Guest Column":

"We are realists. We know the Soviet

leaders are cynical, ruthless, and dangerous. They repress their citizens. They suppress human rights and export instability. In Poland they destroy Solidarity. In Afghanistan they murder. In the Middle East, they sabotage peace. We know we must never negotiate with them on the basis of trust."

Just as Mondale accused Reagan of plagiarism in his UN speech, certainly Reagan could now answer that Mondale in fact is borrowing precisely the evil empire phrases! Mondale has even taken distance from the Carter "Human Rights" policy saying that while something similar should be used as "realistic expression of American values that makes our policy more sustainable and more credible" it must be cast so as to work "harmoniously with our security objectives." Could it be that Mondale is making a distinction here between pro-U.S. "authoritarians" and pro-Soviet "totalitarians"?

What then is the difference between the two candidates and the two parties? David Aaron put it, "While there are three or four important issues today, the campaign will come down to whose finger will be on the nuclear trigger." Are the Democrats then claiming that we are faced with a nuclear madman set on unleashing world nuclear war, à la Goldwater 1964? Hardly.

Remember Mondale's loving insistence that Reagan (of course) did not mean it when he "joked" about bombing Russia? Well, the "respect among gentlemen" is being fleshed out: On October 1, in New Brunswick, New Jersey, Mondale talked of Reagan's "good intentions" and continued, "There is no reason to doubt Mr. Reagan's desire for peace. He dreams the same dreams we do. But a President also must master, command, learn and lead."

And there you have the "substance" of the Democratic electoral criticism. Reagan has been OK, he has built on the "chill" imposed by Carter on U.S.-Soviet relations. Mondale even added in *Time*: "I think that Reagan's tendency to give an optimistic feeling about the country is good." But then there is Mondale's devastating proof that Reagan was not up to the job. He gave as an example that Reagan had not known that 75% of Soviet missiles were land-based. Knowledge of such details (you see) are the true credentials of a peacemaker. Mondale's arguments boil down to the insistence that he would be a better standard-bearer for the world war ahead, that as an American Hitler-in-waiting he would be just as bloodthirsty, more sophisticated, more adept at striking the credible defensive, democratic pose. Truly a vile performance! □

The Chicago Breaker Ban

A summer night on Rush Street in Chicago. A crowd of 150 gathers in a large circle to watch two all-Black performing groups on a small triangular piece of asphalt where three streets intersect. One group does acrobatic routines, skillfully flying 15 feet in the air and catching each other. While they rest, a break-dance troupe of about eight youth perform dancing, skits and a 10-minute poem written and rapped by two 16-year-olds. "Until recently," comments a booking agent for a blues band standing nearby, "we've never had anything like this.... This one group I saw had really creative minds. This is street art... beautiful."

Something isn't quite right, though. Occasionally the performers glance over their shoulders and one person is purposely not dancing but watching the area. Suddenly a patrol car circles the area and pulls up. Two cops get out and arrogantly approach each performer, totally disrupting the show, asking them if they have a license allowing them to perform. They order the acrobats to leave, saying two groups can't perform within 100 feet of each other. Another squad car pulls up, a reminder that a few weeks previously 36 people were arrested for refusing to disperse while watching break dancers. Eventually the police pull away but continue to watch the break dancers from their car. By now most of the audience has dispersed.

This scene typifies a months-long campaign to suppress break dancing by Black youth on Chicago's North Michigan Avenue and Rush Street. On September 6 this culminated in a city ordinance which outlawed the plying of dramatic arts on these two streets. This bill was passed by the Chicago City Council, which on many other issues has been deeply fractured by bitter infighting between the racist old guard and a new breed of bourgeois Black and white liberal aldermen backing the mayor. The bill passed *unanimously*. In early September Mayor Harold Washington, whose election has often been touted as a step towards the liberation of Black people, refused to veto this ordinance. Although an American Civil Liberties Union lawsuit has temporarily stopped this law from going into effect until a November court hearing, its intent to suppress break dancers on Rush Street and North Michigan Avenue was clearly expressed by its sponsor, Alderman Natarus, a member of the mayor's bloc in the city council: "With break dancing, the biggest complaint I get is if you're out with your wife or girl-

friend, the language is not good.... The people who are performing are insulting people, calling them dirty names. They're blocking the entrances and causing traffic jams."

In other words, snaps the new, liberated city government, "we don't want Black youth in this area. Break dance in the courtyards of your housing projects, on your concrete-covered playgrounds, or even occasionally in the downtown Loop, but not in this area which is, for God's sake, Chicago's 'window to the world'."

This area north of Chicago's Loop is known for such luxury construction as Water Tower Place, the John Hancock Center and the mansions of the "Gold Coast." The North Michigan Avenue strip includes the city's premier shopping area and plush office suites. Rush Street is a mixture of favorite nightspots for conventioners — complete with such imperialist "entertainments" as porno shops and high-class prostitutes — together with hipper music clubs. It's the kind of area where tuxedoed drivers charge \$20/half-hour for a ride in a quaint horse-drawn carriage. As one breaker told the *RW*: "When people come for conventions and stuff this is the Chicago they want them to see. They want to paint a nice, pretty picture like Chicago is the big Windy City, ain't no poverty in Chicago, nothing negative about Chicago." For this reason Black youth have historically been "off limits" here, although "respectable" Black patrons have been allowed into some clubs. Groups of youth crossing over from Cabrini Green, a huge all-Black housing project a few blocks to the west, have been stopped by the police, carded and arrested for lack of ID or curfew violations.

This past summer, however, with the election of a Black mayor many Black youth hoped for a loosening up of some long-standing racial barriers in this, one of the most segregated of U.S. cities. As break dancing became more popular many began entering Rush Street and North Michigan Avenue (as well as other areas) to perform and collect small donations. They joined a Rush Street scene in which street art was already growing: jugglers, acrobats, puppeteers and musicians of various sorts attracted small audiences on different street corners. Transforming narrow strips of asphalt and concrete with pieces of cardboard and linoleum, dressed in old sneakers, kneepads, spiked armbands, headbands and accompanied by an old box, the better of these break-

dance groups soon began attracting multinational crowds of several hundred.

That is the scene on this night, with the breaker regulars working their moves, even while they keep one cautious eye out for the cops.

Baby Smooth is a freshman in high school who tests at college level in math and reading. He practices breaking every day, with a group which includes performing breakers in an entire spectrum of ages from 10 to 20. The group's male leader encourages some young Black women practicing on the sideline: "Even if you mess up, don't give up, the audience will be with you." Despite the fact that there are few female breakers — in fact because of it — the audience shouts encouragement and many applaud as the sisters dance. As the performance continues in front of a large crowd the two older rappers try to get Baby Smooth to join them with his rap routine. When it comes time for him to rap, though, several times he gets stage fright and says nothing. Finally on the fourth and last try he quietly raps some lines he has composed. "My life is like that," he says later. "I'm always looking for a challenge. I can't sit around the house looking at TV."

Baby Smooth, like many other breakers, sees his performance as smack up in the face of racist stereotypes: "If you're from the ghettos it's like you have brain damage," he says, "rogues who go around beating people up."

JD-Threepio, a 26-year-old breaker who has been listening on the sidelines, joins in. He is the outreach coordinator for the United Break Dancers Association, a loose grouping of Chicago's breakers. He learned break dancing while doing a seven-year-stint in the Army in West Germany, Korea and Japan and then, after the army, while living in Los Angeles before moving to Chicago. "For me for a while I lived off this stuff," he says. "I paid my rent, I ate, I came out on the street, it was like a job. Sometimes I would come out in the morning and I'd dance until the nighttime. But I did it every day. I got me a group and now we do shows, but we still come out here on the streets." JD-Threepio agrees with Baby Smooth that the dancers are up against racial stereotypes, and adds, "Why do people break? You got all that energy, you meet people, you might get discovered. That's not the prime motivation for why people break, though. You try to reach the height of what you can do. You find out about a move — new moves come out all the time, all the time.

The level of difficulty steadily increases. And it's a challenge. 'Oh man, so and so got the helicopter, so and so got this, so and so got that....' You really work at it to get better and better, to get more precision and get better execution with your moves, get more speed with your spins, all of that."

JD-Threepio describes one performance by Baby Smooth and his group, in which the dancers begin seemingly uncoordinated and generally untogether. With that stereotype on stage, the group then proceeds to tear it apart, going into an elaborate series of moves and rapping.

Of course, this isn't the only reason for performing. Making some money is a motivation for just about all the dancers. One Rush Street group consists entirely of a family, whose electricity and gas had recently been shut off. The star of the show is a thirteen-year-old girl who sings and breaks, accompanied by her brothers. "If we didn't come down here we wouldn't eat," their mother tells us.

As a whole, the breakers know damn well why the city wants them out of the glittery Rush Street area. Says Baby Smooth,

"If the Shah of Iran came around do you think they'd take him to Cabrini Green? You think they'd take him to the West Side? If somebody important like Princess Diana and the Prince of Wales came and they said, 'OK, I want you to take me to New York, Los Angeles, Hollywood and Chicago.' They would lock up anybody who was even dressed like a break dancer."

For these youth, the expectation of a new day for Black people under a Black mayor is fast evaporating: "It's the Uncle Tom complex," Baby Smooth remarks.

Break dancing is, of course, on the front cover of *Newsweek*, in Pepsi ads, and the subject of movies: Lionel Richie even tried to incorporate the form into the Olympics' closing ceremonies. Millions of Black kids are told that life as a famous break dancer is right around the corner, a specially Black portion of the American Dream. Yet as soon as youth set out on this glamorous road to success, traveling the few short blocks from Cabrini Green to Rush Street, they find themselves hounded and harassed, slandered and now lawfully banned from the area.

It is a cold picture of what — outside the TV world of "you can make it" promises and show-business sparkle — is really in store for the ghetto youth. □

South Africa

Continued from page 6

relation to black Azanians, the government has recently announced that it will start granting 99-year leases to blacks living on the outskirts of Cape Town, an area previously designated as a "colored preference" area under apartheid. Most of the black Azanians currently living in this region are living there illegally. Of course, there is a catch — in order to stay in this general area the black Azanians must first consent to being moved into a newly created township further away from the city of Cape Town than their current shantytown dwellings. In the words of the government, this has been done so that the black people "can be better controlled."

And the apartheid regime has also begun to release some of the political activists that they had arrested over the last two months. The catch here is that many of those arrested under Section 28 of the Internal Security Act have been automatically placed on the "Consolidated List," which means that they may not be quoted and cannot participate in any political organization or activity

once they have been released from jail. And they will certainly be closely watched.

Related to this, a few words should be mentioned about the group that has come to be known as the "Durban 6" — the six people associated with the United Democratic Front who have sought refuge in the British Consulate in order to avoid being rearrested by the South African regime. Most interesting has been the response of the British imperialists to this situation. For one thing, the apartheid regime and the imperialists have quickly seized on the "Durban 6" to remove the worldwide focus of attention from the uprisings and general unrest in Azania. Moreover, the British in particular have been put in a very uncomfortable position — unable to flat-out evict these people from their consulate because of domestic and international repercussions and yet unwilling and unable to offend the apartheid regime by offering sanctuary. Here it should be noted that the supposed tiff between the apartheid regime and Britain over this affair is more of a propaganda event than a real spat. In response to Britain refusing to expel the Durban 6 from their consulate, the South African government invoked the "doc-

trine of reprisal" and refused to send four South Africans accused of arms smuggling back to Britain to stand trial. These four, together with four British people, supposedly violated the international arms embargo against South Africa by smuggling sophisticated weaponry from Britain to the South African regime. Can anyone really believe that the British imperialists are actually all that upset about losing out on the chance to publicly prosecute these arms smugglers? After all, such a trial would have a good deal of potential for shedding quite a bit of light on the methods through which the South African regime has been armed to the teeth for decades (and not just by Britain, of course).

As for the U.S., its general response to the situation in Azania has remained the standard "great concern" and "carefully watching developments" routine, the maintenance of distance between itself and its "stinking torture state." The Durban 6, in a display of their own political naiveté and reformism, also appealed to the U.S. for sanctuary, since in their view the U.S. "opposes apartheid." The U.S. simply responded with yet another series of "careful consideration" and "serious thought" remarks.

And now, another twist comes with the publication in the *New York Times* (as well as in the British magazine *The Economist*) of the results of an "opinion poll" conducted among black Azanian factory workers. The poll showed that black Azanian workers favor U.S. investment in South Africa. These workers just love American capital exports and, moreover, by a very large majority! The poll, of course, was commissioned by the U.S. itself, and its results come cheap and easy: it is illegal in South Africa to advocate U.S. divestment.

The presidential inaugural ceremony of P.W. Botha last month was orchestrated to emphasize "the strength" of the apartheid regime, and its viciousness. Quoting from his Bible, Botha cited Romans 13: "Whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil...."

God, appropriately, divines the rule not only of master states, but client states as well! However, judging from the actions of the "ruler" over the past period, "the evil" has managed to strike "a terror" of its own. □

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