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the  
Fourth  
International!

# TORCH

Newspaper  
of the  
Revolutionary  
Socialist League

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JANUARY 15-FEBRUARY 14, 1979

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OF WISCONSIN

## Iran In Revolution

### SHAH'S POWER CRUMBLES

See Pages  
10 - 11



Demonstrators confront shah's soldiers.

## U.S. OUT OF IRAN!

Ever since the first major battles against the shah broke out, the U.S. imperialists have desperately tried to save him. Now the U.S. rulers have given up hope of doing that. But they are still working like mad to come up with some way of keeping Iran a client state of U.S. imperialism.

In early December the CIA and State Department sent an 80-person team of experts to Iran to help the shah map out a strategy for remaining in power. Although the shah is leaving, these specialists in counter-revolution will remain. Then on December 29, Carter ordered the USS Constellation, an aircraft carrier, to head for the Persian Gulf. A stiff warning from the Russians sent the ship back to port.

In recent weeks, Carter Administration officials stated that the U.S. may have to go in to make sure that "sensitive electronic equipment" used to spy on Russia "doesn't fall into the

wrong hands." Others hinted at contingency plans for an emergency evacuation of the 35,000 U.S. civilians still in Iran. Either of these reasons can serve as a cover for military intervention.

The U.S. imperialists have a lot riding on Iran. Oil is the

biggest single reason. For years the shah's army has policed the Persian Gulf, where some 60 to 70 percent of the world's oil reserves are located. Furthermore, Iran is the world's second largest exporter of oil.

(Continued on page 10)



Militants attack U.S. embassy in Tehran.

## Street Fighting Erupts in Jamaica

The crisis of Jamaican capitalism is reaching the breaking point. From January 8 to 10, angry Jamaicans, shouting "The poor can't take no more," took over the streets of Kingston. Barricades were set up and fires

burned at intersections. Demonstrations were also held in Montego Bay, Jamaica's second largest city.

The demonstrations came in response to a government-announced hike in the price  
(Continued on page 12)

## Behind the Vietnamese Invasion of Kampuchea

See editorial  
on page 16

**SECCION EN ESPANOL**

SPECIAL FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

## CHINA

Teng Opens the Door to Imperialism





**our  
readers  
write...**

Send letters to:  
TORCH, PO Box 562,  
N.Y., N.Y. 10036

## Who runs this country?

Dear Editor,

I am writing to thank you for turning me on to the *Torch/La Antorcha* newspaper. I found this paper to be very informative in keeping me up to date with what's happening around the world in the struggles for freedom, justice, and equality. The article entitled "Texas Prisoners Fight Slavery" by Brother Lee Ramie was a shocking report of the hellish conditions that exist in the Texas penal system. This article was printed in the November 15, 1978-January 14, 1979 issue of the *Torch/La Antorcha*. Indeed it is sickening and disgraceful to even imagine such inhumane and barbaric conditions still existing in this so-called civilized nation. This country, America, has been, for so long, professing to be an oasis of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, with freedom, justice, and equality for all of its citizens. How long will America take to live up to its creed?

To go even further, America has been professing to be a land of plenty. If this is the case then why is there poverty, inflation, and unemployment? It is because the greedy, wicked, lustful, and oppressive rich ruling classes (the chosen few) hoard up all the wealth and keep it out of the hands of the poor, the working class, and the minorities. The poor have to pay high taxes, while the filthy rich, vampire millionaires are exempted from paying even one penny of tax. How can the poor pay taxes when they don't even have the money, and why should not the rich pay taxes when they can afford to?

A "government for the people, by the people"? Huh?! It would have made much more sense to hear the government telling the people, from the very beginning, that it serves the rich, and oppresses the poor, the working class, and the minorities. This is exactly what it does. Everyday we see the prices of everything soar and hear complaints from the greedy rich crying for more. It is because of inflation, unemployment, and poverty that people resort to crime for survival. But once they are caught, they are given stiff prison sentences to further oppress them.

From the smallest coin to

the highest bill we see the words inscribed "In God We Trust." But what god does America worship other than the dollar? All the power is in the hands of the ruling classes playing god with the fate of all the masses so the people won't get any in this rich land of plenty because "E Pluribus Unum" means "One Out of Many." No matter how hard this wicked government tries we, the people, will continue to reveal the truth to the masses of the poor, the minorities, and the working class, and, together, we shall continue on in our struggles for freedom, justice, and equality until victory is won, for we are determined not to be stopped.

Your brother in peace,  
MS  
Bland Correctional Center  
Bland, VA

## Legal murder in Florida

Dear Torch,

The Florida Division of Corrections, Correctional Industries will shortly unveil their new product to the public: Legal Murder Incorporated. One hundred and fifteen prisoners are presently awaiting their turn to sit in the electric chair. Florida has the most prisoners awaiting execution out of all the surrounding southern states. The fact that Florida has never executed a white man for killing a Black man surely dispels the myth about the "New South." It comes as no shock that death may soon be employed to remedy overcrowding, racist guard harassment, torture, and denial of essential legal rights to prisoners.

The courts in Florida also enacted a 25-year mandatory sentence, which means that a prisoner must do 25 years before eligibility for parole. As one such sentenced prisoner has stated, "I have been condemned to a living death. In the Florida prison system we are all condemned, whether we are executed or not we must suffer as if we have been executed."

Denial of political material and publications to prisoners, the absence of due pro-

## From Texas prisoners

Comrades,

Would take this time to inform you of our struggle at the concentration camps run by the war criminals employed at the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC).

Thousands of inmates of the TDC refused to work in protest against the brutality, forced labor, convict-guards and other unconstitutional practices and conditions. Many of us who are witnesses for the plaintiffs in the Ruiz suit are now at the Harris County Detention Center waiting to testify. Among our number each has been threatened by the officials of the TDC. They plan to kill us or have their convict-guards do so.

The Justice Department of the United States and the U.S. attorneys representing the plaintiffs have failed to take any steps to protect us from the officials even though they have a duty to do so. We are sure that the Judge in this case will rule in our favor. He will condemn the officials and tell them to comply with the law. The officials will promise this and that, and do their damndest to maintain the status quo.

We have tried to legally redress our circumstances to correct the wrongs done according to the acceptable mode. It seems we have failed. We see nothing that gives us faith in the government. We have tried their justice and find it wanting. The cause has not failed. We intend to prevail. We are

prepared to correct this system by the expenditure of our lives. We stipulate one thing and that is we shall not perish in vain nor alone. All causes are based on the willingness to die rather than suffer the oppression and rule of tyrants. We will shed our blood. The justice we receive will only result in the test of force. History establishes this fact.

What is coming to the Texas prison system will

## "We fight with the spirit of love"

We received the following letter from a comrade of the Revolutionary Marxist League of Jamaica.

Dear Comrades,

Revolutionary greetings to you all. We the comrades here in Jamaica would like to take time out to extend our warmest greetings to you all. As revolutionary brothers and sisters we think that it is our duty to obligate to each other as we are fighting the same struggle for the same reason. One must not think that we only remember you at one stage of the game; to every step that we take toward fighting the class struggle, we fight with a joint spirit. We fight with the spirit of love, the spirit of togetherness, the spirit of one aim, the spirit of one goal, and most important of all, the spirit of victory.

The struggle has stepped up which means more dedicated work, but at the same time one should not get frustrated. Remember that the hotter the battle the sweeter the victory, and without a doubt, victory is a must for the working class.

For too long the workers of the world are suffering under brutal dictatorship and colonial leadership. We must all stand firm on our feet and join hands in hands to bring about the time of victory. What force is stronger than the workers? None. Then what brings about the doubt of victory? To we here, it

make Attica seem pale in comparison.

Each of us in this cause realizes that the officials of Texas would not willingly change. Nor will the inmates willingly give up their thrones. We say, however, the king is dead—the people are king.

We are going to destroy this slave system, tear it down brick by brick, inmate-guard by inmate-guard, kill fascist by fascist, level concentration camp by camp until all who survive may do so with the dignity due a man.

Our message: War. Wait till next year.

Soldiers in the cause,  
TDC Prisoners

seems that there is nothing that brings about the doubt for not having a victory, so that simply means that victory is a must without a doubt.

I don't have much time more to spend, as I have other assignments to take on. Everyone here is just fine, getting down at hard and dedicated work. We do hope that you all are fine.

From yours truly,  
RC

### Support the Prisoner Literature Fund

In the past year, the *Torch* has greatly expanded its coverage of prisoners' struggles. The number of prisoners who read the *Torch* and correspond with the Revolutionary Socialist League has also increased significantly.

The RSL provides revolutionary literature to prisoners to the extent that we can. Also, large numbers of prisoners receive free subscriptions to the *Torch*.

Lack of funds keeps us from sending prisoners all the literature they want. Thus, to increase the amount of literature we can send we are launching a "Prisoner Literature Fund." We encourage all readers of the *Torch* to donate to this fund so that we can supply prisoners with revolutionary literature. Those who can make a monthly pledge, no matter how small, should do so. This money will be used exclusively for providing prisoners with revolutionary literature.

(Send contributions to: Prisoner Literature Fund, P.O. Box 562, New York, N.Y. 10036.)

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# Anti-Apartheid Meeting Sets April Actions

## NY Conference Divides Over Support to Liberation Forces

By WAYNE GORDON

Over the weekend of November 17-19, a conference of the **Northeast Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa** (called NECLSA) was held in New York City. About 1,000 people attended, including students from almost 100 campuses and 26 states. It followed a similar conference in October at Northwestern University near Chicago, and one at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, earlier in November. The goal of all these conferences was to begin to coordinate regional anti-apartheid work.

These meetings show the big growth that has taken place in the movement to support the liberation struggles in southern Africa. They also show the increasing sentiment for uniting the work of different groups and individual militants who are already active in the movement.

The NECLSA conference, for example, decided to call for a **National Week of Support to the National Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa** from April 4-11. Militants also discussed trying to hold one united African Liberation Day demonstration in Washington, D.C., on May 12. Last year there were three such marches on different days.

Despite these unity attempts, however, the NECLSA meeting broke into a hard right/left fight on the

last day. The fundamental question at stake was: What kind of movement are we trying to build? A reformist movement that appeals to liberal politicians and trade union bureaucrats for support? Or a genuine anti-imperialist movement that can win over and mobilize large numbers of workers, students and other oppressed people?

### Support liberation struggles?

The fight at the conference centered on the question of whether to openly support the African liberation forces. It began when the Young Workers Liberation League (YWLL—youth group of the Communist Party), and others who work closely with them, raised a revised resolution on the national week of actions, entitled: "For a U.S. Anti-Apartheid Movement That Can Win Millions to Our Side." The main change made by this resolution to the sponsors' original proposal was that it removed the slogan: "Victory to the Liberation Struggles!"

This right-wing resolution was strongly supported by the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA—youth group of the so-called Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party—SWP). These same forces opposed a later left-wing motion to support the African liberation organizations, listed by name. The YWLL-YSA al-

liance won both votes, largely because the YSA had packed the conference with its supporters.

The YSA forces argued that it was necessary to build a broad, mass struggle against U.S. policy in southern Africa. To do this, the demands must be limited to what the masses of people could easily accept and understand. Too many people, they claimed, would be frightened off if we called for victory to specific liberation forces, like the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe. (Of course, both the YSA/SWP and the YWLL/CP themselves call for the victory of many of these same liberation forces. But heaven forbid that the coalition should do the same thing!)

This whole approach is bankrupt. First of all, many liberals today support the liberation groups. The Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe, the African National Congress and Pan-Africanist Congress in South Africa, and SWAPO in Namibia are all recognized by the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations. The World Council of Churches endorses them. In the U.S., the liberal American Committee on Africa, for example, supports them. The Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party are taking a very, very right-wing position within the movement.

In any case, a militant movement cannot limit itself



South African students demonstrate.

by what might frighten some liberals. More important is to win over the mass of students and working people. If the liberation support movement is to be effective, we have to explain to people why they should support the national liberation struggles. We cannot stop with what many people already think, but must show them what the U.S. is really doing and why the Black masses are right to fight for their freedom.

It may even be possible that demonstrations which call for a victory to the liberation forces might bring out fewer people than ones which merely make moderate criticism of current U.S.

policy. Certainly the number of politicians and union bureaucrats there would be fewer!

But a movement's influence is not only measured by its numbers, but also by its militancy, its intensity, its threatening activism. No movement ever got anywhere by being respectable!

The liberal wing of the U.S. imperialist ruling class, however, is looking for just such a respectable movement. In October, the U.S. State Department had a "World Affairs" conference in San Francisco. Andrew Young and other "African specialists" spoke, complaining that they could not "liberalize" U.S. policy toward Africa without more popular support against the conservatives. When a few radicals in the audience criticized him, Young told them to build a movement around southern Africa like the anti-Vietnam War movement. In other words, the liberal wing of U.S. imperialism wants a liberal anti-apartheid movement to give it more maneuvering room. That is just what the SWP/YSA and CP/YWLL want to build.

### Left-wing opposes reformists

Opposing the reformist forces at the conference were organized political groups, mostly Maoist and nationalist, and independent militants. The groups included the Workers Viewpoint Organization and the Communist Party Marxist-Leninist. Unfortunately, the anti-reformist fight was weakened by the Maoists' sectarianism. At the conference they tried to score cheap points off the SWP/YSA's "Trotskyism," including chants of "Out with the Trots!" And they presented a resolution stating: "...we favor the political and military victory of the liberation movements..." and then listing them.

The resolution should have been voted for in the fight against the SWP/YSA and CP/YWLL. However, as their speeches made clear,

(Continued on page 17)

make Attica seem pale in comparison.

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(Send contributions to: Prisoner Literature Fund, P.O. Box 562, New York, N.Y. 10036.)

### Pigs Murder Latin Worker in Canoga Park

## STOP L.A. KILLER COPS!

On January 20, a march and rally in the Canoga Park area of Los Angeles will be protesting the constant police terror against the Latin barrio and the police murder of Reyes Martinez. Martinez, also known as Ali Baba, was killed last November 18 while in police custody. In response, the Canoga Park barrio has begun organizing with weekly meetings of the newly-formed Justice Committee.

When Ali Baba was arrested on November 18 for being drunk, he was neither ill nor injured. Witnesses agree that he was drunk, but that he put up no resistance. Ali Baba's sister, Paula Apollonia Martinez, told the Torch/La Antorcha that the police began lying to her from the moment of the arrest: "He was in custody when I called them. They could have told me he was in custody. But they said he couldn't be there because he was in a bar. But now they say they don't know what happened because he was in the van. When I called, 'they killed him' is the only thing I could think."

Later Paula found out that Ali Baba had been injured and was in the County General Hospital jail ward, but was unable to have visitors.

She argued her way into the hospital ward and found Ali Baba unconscious, with skull fractures, teeth missing, and bruised limbs swollen to twice normal size. Within a few hours he was dead.

Community people believe Ali Baba was killed by officers Frit and True, two cops known for racist attacks, but no police reports have been issued.

This was the second time Ali Baba had been the victim of police attack. Earlier, reports Paula Martinez: "When they killed [a friend] they shot my brother three times: one in the arm, one in the head, and one in the belly. But he survived. Then afterward they tried to push him all the time to get mad..."

The Canoga Park barrio along Alabama Street has been under attack from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) for some time. Canoga Park and the West Valley area around it are predominantly white middle-class areas. The LAPD is trying to tell the small Mexican community of Canoga Park to "get out of the Valley" and live in other areas of the city.

Despite a long string of police attacks, there has been no organized resis-

tance until now. According to Paula Martinez: "What happened to my brother, I guess it's opening everybody's eyes and maybe they can fight for their rights. Now they think, why should we be pushed around?"

At the first few meetings of the Justice Committee many people swore vengeance for the murder of Ali Baba. Meanwhile, the cops were circling the hall and stopping and harassing people going to and from the meetings. One militant was arrested for jay-walking and then beaten after leaving a meeting.

After several meetings the Justice Committee has divided into two opposing points of view on how to fight the police terror. A group of liberals, made up of a city councilwoman, some community drug counselors, and others, have pushed for the Justice Committee to write affidavits detailing police brutality and to turn in petitions to the cops. In other words they want to take the anger in Canoga Park and turn it into harmless sheets of paper in some bureaucrat's file cabinet.

The more militant wing of the committee, including the Revolutionary Socialist League, the Workers De-

fense Committee, La Raza Unida Party and many individuals from Canoga Park, has pushed for the demonstration and leafletting and organizing in the community. In addition, the RSL has urged people to begin to work toward armed self-defense, similar to the armed anti-KKK demonstrations in Tupelo, Mississippi, this past fall.

As we go to press we have learned that the liberals' fear of even a demonstration protesting Ali Baba's death is so great they have seized on any excuse to stop it. On Saturday, January 13, the Revolutionary Socialist League was expelled from the Justice Committee. The RSL, along with the Workers Defense Committee, had written and distributed a leaflet calling for socialist revolution and armed workers' defense. The liberals claimed it was undemocratic for the RSL to speak to the workers in our own voice, in a leaflet signed by ourselves without... checking with them first! Immediately after the RSL was expelled, the demonstration was cancelled and plans for organizing the community were dropped.



# How Can Gay People Be Free?

The following leaflet was distributed by the Detroit branch of the RSL. We feel it is a particularly clear statement of why a revolution is needed to achieve real gay liberation.

From Florida to California, the right wing is moving against us. We must fight all of their attacks. But more than that—we must fight for freedom. For an end to the closet—an end to hiding who we are because straight-dominated society is "offended" by us. For an end to being beaten up or arrested in Palmer Park—or anywhere else. For an end to having our children taken away from us. For an end to all the in-

sults, the prejudice, the discrimination and the harassment. For an end to an entire society that is organized against us—so that from an early age we know that this world was built for somebody else and we don't fit in. **We must fight to tear this society down and build a new one that meets OUR needs!**

Some people say we can be free inside this society if we convince the rulers to be on our side. They say we should write to Congressmen and convince them to pass laws for us. And cooperate with the police so they'll be nice to us. But this strategy is a loser! For one thing, it will never free the

millions of gay people in the closet—a kind of prison that laws won't even touch. Only tearing down this whole society based on the dollar and the straight family will let people come out of the closet. Secondly, the cops and politicians protect the present system. Their job is to **keep us in our place.** We are not interested in begging them for favors. We don't need to ask them to please treat us like human beings. We need to fight them, to destroy their system, and get them off our backs!!!

We need allies in our fight for freedom. The question is who. They are not the bosses and politicians who control this society. Our allies are

everyone who is powerless and exploited—who grow up like we do knowing that this world isn't theirs. Because, in this society, a small group of men have all the power. They make everyone else slave for them in order to survive. And they create divisions and spread prejudice among their slaves—racism, sexism, and anti-gay prejudice. We must unite with our true allies—all working people and the unemployed; Black, Latin, Arab, Asian, Native American, and white; women and men; **straight and gay.** Together we can free ourselves and overthrow our masters. We can build a new world in which we control our lives,

enjoy and control our work, help each other out instead of having to hustle each other to get over, and express our love freely and be respected as human beings.

We can build a world like this. But we will face fierce resistance from our rulers. We must organize ourselves to overthrow them. This is what the Revolutionary Socialist League is doing. We are uniting the people who hate this society and want to destroy it. We are building a revolutionary party to organize this struggle. And we are working to build a new world in which gay people, and all people, will be free.

**Gay liberation through socialist revolution!**

## A Torch Reader Writes:

# Battered Women: Victims of Sick Society

By DINA H.

Some time ago, the *Torch/La Antorcha* featured an article about battered women. I am writing to elaborate, and hopefully make clearer, some of the ideas expressed in that article.

Battering is so deeply ingrained in this culture that often people either do not recognize it or prefer to ignore it, feeling that this only happens to a few so-called "low-class elements." This is not so. You will find that there are battered women in every sector of this society. The main difference that you will find among battered women is that when middle-class women feel they must leave their home, they are usually able to go to private hospitals, sanitariums, on a trip to Europe or wherever. Poor women are the people who you usually find in battered women's shelters.

When a man beats on a woman—whether he is a doctor, taxi driver, or whoever—he is making a very specific statement about what he thinks women are really worth. Absolutely nothing! There are men from every culture who hold this view.

The majority of government agencies are no help to battered women. They either criticize the women for breaking up the "sanctity" of her home, complain that actually this battered woman business is just another ploy to get on welfare, or remain uninvolved. The police call battering a "domestic disturbance" and tell the couple to kiss and make up.

When battered women leave home, many of them go to the welfare department to get funds to survive. Many of the workers at welfare have illusions of becoming middle-class people. They take great pains to

make most poor people feel like nothing, and they seem to double their efforts where battered women are concerned. They believe that actually you are not battered and that this is a ploy to get welfare and you will only go back home tomorrow. In most cases this is not true. Think about it: Would anybody who doesn't have to really want to claim in a public place that someone they love has treated them like shit, has broken their bones, has called them every name imaginable, has degraded them so much that they thought the only solution to this was suicide—all just to hustle the welfare department! Believe me, there are easier ways!

Imagine yourself sitting at the case-worker's desk as you are gently told that you are "in this position because you couldn't keep your legs closed!"

One of the most significant things to remember about government agencies is this: Be it the welfare department, the police, family court, or whatever, these agencies want the battered woman to get the message that she is better off getting beaten at home, than out in the world on her own. These agencies are interested in keeping families together because—supposedly—a woman is lost if she doesn't have a man to support her. All they're really thinking about is keeping people off the welfare rolls.

## Women treated as objects

Where does this view of women come from? Most people will tell you that it is learned behavior. By "learned behavior" people mean that men who grew up in violent homes and saw their father

often and brutally abuse their mother will more than likely abuse their wives. Or people mean that women who have seen their mothers, grandmothers, or guardians take abuse usually marry abusive men and have learned to accept the abuse.

This is true to a certain extent but must be taken further. It is not simply a matter of there being a "bad strain" that runs through certain families. Let me repeat my initial statement: **Battering is deeply ingrained in this society.** What these men and women are acting out is something that this entire society has condoned: That a woman is nothing; that a man has the right to treat you as though you were his property—similar to his shoes, pants, etc.

An important factor that is often forgotten when people speak of battered women is the economic question. Most women in society earn much less than the average man—even for the same work. A woman with minimal education and few skills will find herself limited in ways to get out of a battering situation. She can go on welfare till she can get herself and her children situated; she can look for marginal work (department store clerk, waitress), which, for the most part, pays very low; or she can go back home and be beaten.

What are the resources that are open to battered women? One that is now being used more and more is the battered women's shelter. A shelter is a place where a certain number of women live communally with other women and their children. By communally, I mean that they share all household tasks—cooking, cleaning, childcare—and try to generally maintain the upkeep of the shelter. One basic plus of these shelters

is that they do give a woman (for a temporary time) a place where she can stay to get out of a bad situation. They try to instill a sense of pride in oneself and the idea that you are a worthwhile person. But there are two main problems with shelters: 1) There are not nearly enough to adequately meet the demand; 2) as even Erin Pizzey, the director of the Cheswick shelter in England, has said: **"Shelters are like putting band-aids on a cancer."**

Another resource available is to do what people in our neighborhood did with a batterer. One Thursday night, about a week after having given his wife a severe beating, the man across the courtyard proceeded to begin another argument which we all knew would end with the woman getting another beating. What we did was to organize to stop it. We got as many people as was possible at the time out of their beds and onto the fire escapes, and then we all started making lots of noise. We blew whistles, threw soda

cans, and generally shouted things that would let the people around us know what kind of man we were dealing with; what his concept of manhood is. We decided that if he kept it up we would be prepared to put out a leaflet stating in no uncertain terms that this man is a **batterer!**

It worked! We were moderately successful. But eventually the woman left her husband and the man moved out of the building.

In closing I would like to point out a few things. The capitalist system needs to oppress women, just like it needs to oppress gays, Blacks, Latins, and poor people in general. It feeds off of their oppression because that way when things start to get screwy with the economics of capitalism, like they are now, then capitalists have ready-made scapegoats to blame the mess on. The only lasting solution to the oppression of women and everyone else who is being held down by this system is to do away with it completely! **What's the solution? Revolution!**



David

On Nov 10, 1979, New York again killed rights bill over 3,000 protest. The in the mar a leaflet November Torch/La we receive ter from spokesper tion for 1 Rights (CL of The E Rights Mov

Dear RSL:

The leaflet at the CLG onstration sented an a feat of In General W and of the the gay lib which I wo generally however, the second leaflet, w grossly dis CLGR's rol I do not t this, but it



was someone liar with the Coalition, or looking at through foggy

The Coalition what anyone the struggles months would establishment for our goals, on a variety projects, but rulers for ot never been Perhaps you t night's mass confirmation ness of your hostile chara the Coalition that anyone agree. I am pe to leave up to cision as to w "incompetent

As an open olutionary soc been persona repeatedly by t establishment' mayor's office capitalist gay who has seen go through sev efforts by this to destroy it, I snipe was not and unwarrant



# Free?

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...world in  
...r lives.

...enjoy and control our work,  
...help each other out instead  
...of having to hustle each  
...other to get over, and ex-  
...press our love freely and be  
...respected as human beings.

...We can build a world like  
...this. But we will face fierce  
...resistance from our rulers.  
...We must organize ourselves  
...to overthrow them. This is  
...what the Revolutionary So-  
...cialist League is doing. We  
...are uniting the people who  
...hate this society and want to  
...destroy it. We are building a  
...revolutionary party to orga-  
...nize this struggle. And we  
...are working to build a new  
...world in which gay people,  
...and all people, will be free.

**Gay liberation through  
socialist revolution!**

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...cans, and generally shouted  
...things that would let the  
...people around us know what  
...kind of man we were deal-  
...ing with; what his concept of  
...manhood is. We decided  
...that if he kept it up we would  
...be prepared to put out a  
...leaflet stating in no uncer-  
...tain terms that this man is a  
...batterer!

...It worked! We were moder-  
...ately successful. But even-  
...tually the woman left her  
...husband and the man moved  
...out of the building.

...In closing I would like to  
...point out a few things. The  
...capitalist system needs to  
...oppress women, just like it  
...needs to oppress gays,  
...Blacks, Latins, and poor  
...people in general. It feeds  
...off of their oppression be-  
...cause that way when things  
...start to get screwy with the  
...economics of capitalism,  
...like they are now, then capi-  
...talists have ready-made  
...scapegoats to blame the  
...mess on. The only lasting  
...solution to the oppression of  
...women and everyone else  
...who is being held down by  
...this system is to do away  
...with it completely! **What's  
...the solution? Revolution!**



David Thorstad Writes:

## RSL Distorts CLGR's Role

On November 8, 1978, the New York City Council once again killed the city's gay rights bill. The next night over 3,000 people marched in protest. The RSL participated in the march and distributed a leaflet (printed in the November 15 issue of the Torch/La Antorcha). Later, we received the following letter from David Thorstad, spokesperson for the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (CLGR) and co-author of The Early Homosexual Rights Movement, 1864-1933.

Dear RSL:

The leaflet you handed out at the CLGR-sponsored demonstration last night presented an analysis of the defeat of Intro 384 by the General Welfare Committee and of the challenges facing the gay liberation movement which I would consider to be generally correct. I must, however, object strongly to the second paragraph of that leaflet, which contains a grossly distorted view of the CLGR's role in this struggle. I do not know who wrote this, but it is obvious that it



...was someone quite unfa-  
...miliar with the work of the  
...Coalition, or who has been  
...looking at this struggle  
...through foggy glasses.

The Coalition is hardly what anyone familiar with the struggles of the past 10 months would call the "Gay establishment." In fighting for our goals, we have relied on a variety of tactics and projects, but "begging our rulers for our rights" has never been one of them. Perhaps you believe that last night's massive march was confirmation of the correctness of your absurd and hostile characterization of the Coalition, but I doubt that anyone else would agree. I am perfectly content to leave up to them the decision as to who are the real "incompetents and fools."

As an open and proud revolutionary socialist who has been personally red-baited repeatedly by the "entire Gay establishment" (from the mayor's office to most pro-capitalist gay groups), and who has seen the Coalition go through several concerted efforts by this establishment to destroy it, I feel that your snipe was not only stupid and unwarranted, but de-

signed to undermine the only grouping in the lesbian and gay community that is committed to militant and mass struggle for our freedom.

All year, attempts have been made to isolate me and the Gay Activists Alliance in particular by public denunciations of the CLGR as "nothing but a bunch of Trotskyites." This red-baiting, inspired by the mayor's office last January, has failed miserably. (I don't, curiously, recall any support or defense of the Coalition from the RSL in the face of these attacks.) Besides withstanding these attacks and continuing our independence from the establishment, the Coalition is also the only grouping in our community that has actively attempted to reach out to labor and the Black and Puerto Rican community to link our struggles—as well as to other sectors of our city. We have much more to do in this area, but it seems to me that your grouplet would do better to bring your message to other nongay sectors of this city than to carp at gays who are trying to do precisely that.

I would also like to take note here of the fact that the RSL says it supports the fight for passage of a New York City gay rights bill, but when I debated this question on a panel at a gay socialist group a few years ago with Chris Hobson, he took the position that the bill would only benefit middle-class gays. Did your participation in last night's demonstration indicate that you have changed that position? If so, at least that would be all to the good.

**Yours for gay liberation and  
socialism,  
David Thorstad  
Spokesperson, CLGR**



Stonewall Inn 1969: Gays battle cops.



Fight for Gay Rights! New York RSL contingent in June 1977 gay pride march.

RSL Replies:

## You Want Respectable Mov't

Dear David Thorstad:

Before answering some of the broader questions raised in your letter, let me state that the Revolutionary Socialist League has always supported all individuals and groups against red-baiting attacks from the mayor's office or any other pro-capitalist forces. This position has been explicit in numerous articles in our newspaper the Torch/La Antorcha.

In your letter you say that the RSL's leaflet on the most recent defeat of a gay rights bill in New York City was "generally correct." Our leaflet contained three main points:

1) To win concrete gains—like Intro 384—the gay movement must build militant, mass actions to demand gay rights. Lobbying and other forms of bargaining won't get us anywhere.

2) Gay militants have to build unity with other oppressed peoples and the working class. We are all under attack by the same system.

3) The goal of our movement must be the complete liberation of gay people and

all other working and oppressed people from all forms of harassment, attacks and oppression in this society. This means all the exploited and oppressed people smashing the capitalist system.

Supposedly you agree with the general points in our leaflet. However, you are disturbed that we called CLGR part of the gay establishment, which has held back our movement and led us from one defeat to another.

The gay establishment that organized the protests in Dade County, St. Paul, and elsewhere, is openly against the three points listed above. They tell us the strongest power we have is to put "pressure" on the government by voting—even now, when this has gotten us nowhere. They want us to work within the system by begging for our rights with letters and tell us to act peaceful and respectable at our demonstrations—even though we are facing vicious attacks. They say the fight for gay rights is separate from the struggles of workers and other oppressed people—and they oppose gays who want to unite with Blacks, Latins, women, and other workers. And, most of all, they say that all we need are a few gay rights laws to eliminate the oppression we face as gays in this society—even though laws as such mean very little and guarantee nothing. (Just look—the very laws themselves are being stripped away!)

Now is any of this different from what CLGR does? I need only give a few examples:

• CLGR wrote in the Gay and Lesbian Pride Week calendar last June that it has been "deeply involved in organizing letter writing... lobbying, meeting with City Council members...." It went on to say that gays must "pressure our legislators to make Intro 384 the law." That same month CLGR invited Democratic City Councilwoman Ruth Messinger to speak at its forum. She said that the way to get Intro 384 passed was for gays to write letters and to get people to register to

vote!

• Not long after CLGR was formed it showed that it was unwilling to unite with the struggles of other oppressed people in society. At its own educational conference at Columbia University in July 1977, CLGR refused to support a demonstration in defense of the people—mostly Black and Latin working-class youth—who had been arrested during the Blackout Rebellion in New York City. CLGR spokespeople argued that other oppressed people should support gays—but they said CLGR should only get involved in "gay issues."

• You yourself, as spokesperson for CLGR at that conference, said that Black people should support CLGR's fight for gay rights legislation because Blacks had already won their rights! Now this really tells the story. Just like the rest of the gay establishment, what you say is that all it will take to free people who are oppressed by this capitalist system is to get a few laws passed! By saying that Blacks in this country have won their rights, you make a mockery of the word freedom and turn your back on all the working and oppressed people—gay, straight, Black and white—who want to fight for liberation.

Lesbians and gay men are some of the most hated and persecuted people in this society. **Our oppression is built into the capitalist system.** From the moment we are born the system does everything it can to force everyone to fit the roles it says are "normal" for women and "normal" for men. As a result, gays are labeled perverts, driven into the closet, locked up in mental institutions and thrown into prison for what the rulers of this system call crimes. Even with the gains of our struggles in the late '60s, the majority of gay people in this society are still forced to lie and hide in order to get by.

You claim to be an open and proud revolutionary socialist who is committed to the "struggle for our freedom." But real revolutionary socialists don't tell people to rely on Democratic Party politicians to win gay rights. Real revolutionary socialists don't tell people that laws will set them free. Real revolutionary socialists don't lie about the need for socialist revolution to end capitalist oppression.

Real revolutionary socialists tell people the truth (Continued on page 17)





### Klan whips Hines' supporter

The Alabama Ku Klux Klan is stepping up its terroristic attacks on supporters of Tommy Lee Hines. Hines, a mentally retarded Black man, was framed on charges of rape in October and sentenced to 30 years. Many Black, religious and community organizations have joined in his defense.

On December 15, Manuel Whitfield, a Black minister, publicly denounced Hines' conviction at a rally in Cullman, Alabama, where the trial was held. After the rally, three men kidnapped Whitfield, took him into a nearby woods and whipped him. Bill McGlocklin, second in command of the Alabama KKK, boasted that the Klan was responsible.

Whitfield refused to press charges, saying: "It isn't the Christian thing to do." This kind of pacifist nonsense only allows the KKK to spread its racist filth without opposition. During the trial, the KKK organized armed demonstrations calling for Hines' conviction. But according to *Unite!*, newspaper of the Marxist-Leninist Organizing Committee, Black leaders like Reverend J.D. Cotton, reader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference refused to support counter-demonstrations to oppose the Klan.

The Alabama cops and the KKK are joining up to railroad Tommy Lee Hines into prison. His supporters are preparing to fight the conviction in court. But a militant movement to free Hines, prepared to defend itself against racist attacks, will be the surest way of smashing this frame-up.

### Texas keepers move against Ruiz

Texas prison officials are trying to discredit David Ruiz who, along with other prisoners, has filed a lawsuit against the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC). The suit, in which over 100 prisoners are challenging the hellhole conditions in Texas prisons, is one of the most far-reaching prisoner lawsuits in U.S. history.

On December 13, Ruiz was indicted for an alleged sexual assault against a 16-year-old Mexican prisoner. Sheriff Jack Heard, who was formerly assistant director of the TDC and may still be a member of the TDC Prison Board, filed the charges. He ordered Ruiz removed from that section of the jail which houses only witnesses in the lawsuit, and placed with other prisoners in the Harris County Detention Center.

Supporters of Ruiz are writing him to get more details on this case. They suspect a conspiracy between Heard and TDC Director W.J. Estelle to frame Ruiz and weaken the case against the TDC.

### Somers prisoners attacked by guards

At least eight prisoners at the state prison in Somers, Connecticut, face criminal charges for defending themselves against two attacks by racist guards. On December 17, guards attacked three prisoners in the dining room. Later that day, 200 prisoners fought 100 guards armed with clubs and tear gas in the prison gym. The prisoners wounded six guards, putting four of them into the hospital.

According to prison officials no prisoners were injured in the two attacks. But news releases from the prisoners themselves declare that guards beat and kicked prisoners after they were handcuffed. One prisoner who works in the infirmary reports that several prisoners were hospitalized as a result of these beatings.

### In brief...

Prisoners of the Islamic faith at the Green Haven Correctional Facility in New York are fighting back against humiliating strip-frisks and rectal searches. According to members of the Brotherhood of Sankore Masjid, the Muslim standard of modesty forbids them to expose their private parts to other individuals. Last October the Imam and Assistant Imam of the Sankore Masjid, as well as the Imam of the World Community of Islam, were placed in solitary confinement for refusing to submit to rectal searches. Since then, the Imam of the Sankore Masjid has been shipped out of the prison away from his supporters. Rectal searches were declared unconstitutional last year by a judge of the Northern Federal District Court in New York. After watching a videotape of a rectal search, the judge said it reminded him of a slave on the auction block.

The U.S. Bureau of Prisons' weekly newsletter "Monday Morning Highlights" published on Christmas Day included a list of the bureau's "good deeds" for the past year. Under the title "Season's Greetings," it lists such accomplishments as installing SENTRY, "the new automated inmate information system," in three prisons; winning a court case allowing the bureau to transfer prisoners to the Marion control (behavior modification) unit with no time limit on their confinement; and raising sales of the Federal Prison Industries—slave labor by prisoners—to over \$94 million.

### Pontiac Prisoners Declare Support

## August 8th Brigade Trials Set for Spring

The District Attorney of Ulster County, New York, has announced that he intends to start the trials of members of the August 8th Brigade in March or April. This news reached the Torch/La Antorcha shortly before press time. A full story on the coming trials will appear in the future. The Brigade is a group of 10 political prisoners who were indicted for supposedly leading the August 8, 1977, rebellion against Ku Klux Klan guards and intolerable prison conditions at the Eastern Correctional Facility at Nanapanoch, New York.

Below is a solidarity message sent to the August 8th Brigade from the New African Prisoner Organization (NAPO) and the Pontiac Prisoners Organization (PPO). The PPO (which is organized inside the prison, with a few people on the outside) and NAPO are organizations working in support of the Pontiac prisoners who are still under deadlock nearly six months after the July 22 rebellion at the Pontiac, Illinois, prison. At least 15 prisoners are expected to be indicted in mid-February. Earlier charges against guards at Pontiac have been dropped.

Greetings:

On behalf of the Pontiac Brothers, NAPO and PPO, we would like to extend our solidarity and reaffirm our commitment to wage a resolute and diligent struggle against the attempt to legally lynch the Pontiac Brothers in particular and



Photo by LNS

Members of the August 8th Brigade.

the frame-ups of all political prisoners and prisoners of war.

When we look at what is unfolding at Pontiac we can in no way view it in isolation from the repression meted out to oppressed Black and Third World nationalities and working-class people by the imperialist machine. We consider the struggle of the Pontiac Brothers as parcel and part of the overall struggle against tyranny and reaction.

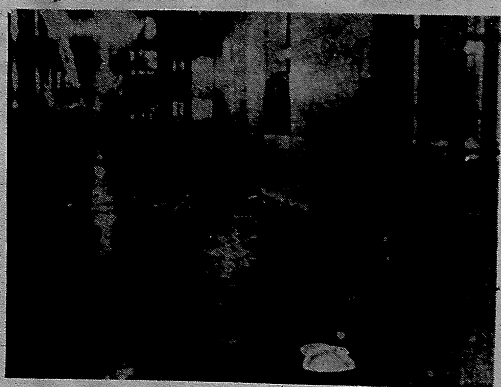
Make no mistake about it, we know this will be a long and protracted struggle. The state has already asked for half a million dollars for prosecution and assembled a team of reactionary prosecutors to carry out the railroad-ing of these Brothers into the electric chair. But we are resolved that with the sup-

port of the people no matter how high the mountain of Imperialism we shall scale the heights. As revolutionaries, who happen to be in prison, we realize that our greatest contribution to the advancing of the revolutionary process must be our contribution in the struggle to smash the frame-up of the Pontiac Brothers, August 8th Brigade, etc., and the struggle we wage daily against the brutality and racism of the prison system.

We again greet you as comrades in arms in our joint struggle against the greatest criminal of all time—U.S. Imperialism. Let this struggle be the catalyst to take us to new and greater heights of unity and solidarity.

**Un abrazo revolucionario!  
Build to win!**

## Cover-Up at Pontiac



These two pictures were taken by the Chicago Tribune at the state prison at Pontiac, Illinois. Top left: Everything is clean and shiny for the reporters who are on an official conducted tour of the facility. Prisoners have plastic bags for their garbage. Bottom left: This is what it's really like. A Tribune reporter got a job as a prison guard and took this shot with a hidden camera.

The prisoners have been on deadlock ever since the Pontiac uprising last July. For almost six months they've been locked in their cells 24 hours a day, with no showers, no visitors and no exercise. No prisoner has any job assignments. That means nobody cleans or mops. The guards don't give a damn because they don't have to live in the filth. The state wants to reduce the prisoners to less than human beings to break them so they don't resist.

One prisoner slashed both his arms so the shrinks would send him to the state mental hospital.

## RSL

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November 24 through...  
Fourth National...  
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Forward to th...

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Revolutionary...  
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Photo by LNS

gade.

port of the people no matter how high the mountain of imperialism we shall scale the heights. As revolutionaries, who happen to be in prison, we realize that our greatest contribution to the advancing of the revolutionary process must be our contribution in the struggle to smash the frame-up of the Pontiac Brothers, August 8th Brigade, etc., and the struggle we wage daily against the brutality and racism of the prison system.

We again greet you as comrades in arms in our joint struggle against the greatest criminal of all time—U.S. Imperialism. Let this struggle be the catalyst to take us to new and greater heights of unity and solidarity.

**Un abrazo revolucionario!  
Build to win!**

## ntiac

These two pictures were taken by the Chicago Tribune at the state prison at Pontiac, Illinois. Top left: everything is clean and shiny for the reporters who are on an official conducted tour of the facility. Prisoners have plastic bags for their garbage. Bottom left: this is what it's really like. Tribune reporter got a job as a prison guard and took his shot with a hidden camera.

The prisoners have been in a deadlock ever since the Pontiac uprising last July. For almost six months they've been locked in their cells 24 hours a day, with no showers, no visitors and no exercise. No prisoner is given any job assignments. That means nobody cleans the mops. The guards don't give a damn because they don't have to live in the cells. The state wants to reduce the prisoners to less than human beings to break them so they don't resist.

One prisoner, slashed with his arms so the guards would send him to a state mental hospital.

# RSL HOLDS 4TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

For three days, from November 24 through 26, the Fourth National Convention of the Revolutionary Socialist League met in Chicago. During this time, the delegates elected by the various branches discussed the major questions before the League in the coming period. In addition, there was much informal discussion among comrades and friends of the RSL: people talking about their experiences in trade union, community and prison organizing.

For a lot of people, this was their first RSL convention. Particularly exciting for many RSL members was

meeting comrades from the recently formed Los Angeles branch for the first time.

The Convention opened with the reading of some of the messages of solidarity we received from friends of the RSL. A message from our sister organization in Jamaica, the Revolutionary Marxist League (RML), was read. The entire Convention stood and cheered when they heard: **"We [the RML] have unanimously accepted a proposal for the fusion of our two organizations into a single democratic-centralist international organization."**

The major discussion of the Convention was on the

strategy and current tasks of the organization. Aspects of the RSL's strategy for the current period have been discussed in the centerfold series in the last three issues of the **Torch/La Antorcha**. The presentation and discussion focused on concretizing our approach in the practical work of the League.

The Convention then moved to sessions on international developments. A comrade from Chile addressed the convention on the lessons of the Chilean defeat in 1973. The highlight of the international discussion was a detailed report on the Revolutionary Marxist

League's work in Jamaica by one of its leading members, Comrade Patsy Christie.

Workshops on trade union organizing, the **Torch/La Antorcha**, and prisoner work had lively discussions. The trade-union workshop was particularly crowded, since the vast majority of League members are union members or active in workplace organizing.

The last part of the Convention was spent on a discussion of sexism and in the election of a new central committee. The session on sexism examined the impact of sexism in the society on the ideas and functioning of

the League. We found that the organization has spent too little time in fighting women's oppression in the society as a whole, and that some of society's more subtle anti-women and anti-gay values had shown up in the League. One product of this discussion was the establishment of a National Women's Commission.

Below are some of the messages sent to the Convention. For space reasons, we could not run them all. In addition, other messages sent from prisons across the country were ripped off by the prison keepers and never reached us. □

## MESSAGES OF SOLIDARITY

### From the RML (JA)

We of the Revolutionary Marxist League (RML) of Jamaica wish to express our deepest solidarity and warmest fraternal greetings to this Convention and all the comrades of our sister organization, the RSL.

This Convention comes at a time of frequent and intense outbreaks of the class struggle in many parts of the capitalist globe: In Peru, the struggle simmers on; in Nicaragua, the rebels have been thrown back but are not defeated; and in Iran, there are masses in the street on an almost daily basis, struggling for their liberation from the yoke of the shah's brutal capitalist dictatorship. It comes down also at a time of steady growth both numerically and politically of our two organizations as the correct ideas of Marxism-Leninism-Trotskyism and our revolutionary strategy and tactics begin to steadily attract the most conscious worker-militants and win us new influence among the working and oppressed people.

It is because we of the RML have seen and understood these developments, we have unanimously accepted a proposal for the fusion of our two organizations into a single democratic-centralist international organization. For as the storm clouds of proletarian revolution gather as we build and consolidate our struggle, we are sure that victory is inevitable, the workers and oppressed people of the world must be free! The revolutionary struggles will continue till then.

**Long Live the RSL/RML!  
Build the World Party of Socialist Revolution!  
Forward to the Socialist Revolution in Jamaica, the U.S.,  
and Worldwide!**

### "Solidly with you"

Revolutionary greetings from behind the walls of this capitalist prison!

On the eve of your Fourth Convention allow me to express to all the comrades associated with the important work of informing the American Working-Class of the crimes being committed against the class by this capitalist-killer through our most sincere congratulations for having moved progressively.

Though our Marxist-Leninist Study Group here is small, and our struggle at times is viewed as being limited, we share a commonness that defines our purpose as one that all true members of the Marxist persuasion should readily comprehend.

The struggle waged behind the high walls of America's jails and prisons by men, women and children are characterized by a dedication that is often lacking in free-world groups functioning at will.

Though we are unable to be with you physically at this great celebration, we are

joined solidly with you in an honest spirit of revolutionary zeal, love and solidarity. Your joys are ours, your pains we likewise share.

In prison, where the oppression is great, your willingness to discuss the revolutionary aspects of the worldwide struggle, your kindness and caring attitude manifested in the free prisoner subs are viewed as a sacrifice and a contribution to our personal growth and understanding of the teachings of Marx, Lenin and the great proletarian leaders of this century.

We are a captive audience, an audience politicized by the oppressive realities of prison life. That you have chosen to work with us, and with other struggling prisoner groups, is indeed a most appreciated reality. Stay strong, remain dedicated, increase your knowledge of the continuing struggle so that you may instruct us in our limited struggle.

**National Prisoners Coalition  
Bland, Virginia**

### Green Haven Muslims write

Greetings, with peace and well-wishes from the incarcerated Muslims of Green Haven Prison.

We offer this message to you, acknowledging your work and position against

### "Destroy our common enemy"

Dear Comrades,

Greetings of revolutionary love and solidarity to you and to all the comrade brothers and sisters there at the **Torch/La Antorcha** and the RSL. I am writing you now in behalf of myself and the other political prisoners and POWs here at the walled city in the desert—the Arizona State concentration camp prison at Florence, to send our message of revolutionary love and solidarity to your fourth national convention.

Keep on with the struggle and stand united, for we stand united with you against one enemy, in peace (cold war) or in war (getting down) always. All over the land, third world comrade brothers and sisters and all oppressed people must come together in unity and in solidarity, in brotherhood and sisterhood as one **united front to destroy forever our common enemy!** And to build the new system of the people for always.

We the following political prisoners and POWs send you our revolutionary love and solidarity.  
**In the struggle,  
(Signed by 36 prisoners)**

### From a Tennessee prisoner

Greetings to the RSL on its 4th National Convention. I wish to send a message of solidarity from this slave plantation run by the state.

During a time when the fascist oppression grows stronger, when revolutionary actions are condemned as wanton terrorism or the work of deranged persons, when the term "revolutionary" is loosely applied to armchair intellectuals, it is the RSL whose "torch" throws enough light to let us see that the revolution still lives and will succeed.

My best to all members.  
**JWP  
Fort Pillow State Prison  
Fort Pillow, Tennessee**

the capitalistic ruling class of this society, and commend you for your zeal and outspokenness in dealing with it, in defense of those who are affected by it.

Brothers and sisters, for years the Muslims of the prison system have fought endlessly for their right to the freedom of religion, only to be beaten, gassed and thrown in confinement. This may sound hard to believe, being done by a country whose history purports to be founded upon the right to religion, but nonetheless it exists, and is very much real.

We thank the brothers and sisters from the **Torch/La Antorcha** for their unrelenting aid and support in the affairs of the Muslims in Green Haven. Although our

### "Rastafarians in solidarity"

Hail comrades and compatriots:

Revolutionary Greetings! It's the deepest of our sincerity and the heights of our revolutionary perspective to endorse the participants of this convention by sharing our comradely solidarity on a global scale.

We cannot explain how much it makes us feel to acknowledge that comrades of various nationalities can come together for one common cause; the cause of combining one's ideologies for laying a revolutionary foundation of a global strategy such as to accelerate the struggle against our com-

mon enemies and traitors of Marxism-Leninism.

We as political prisoners are in total agreement with this progressive convention. It is one step forward on achieving a just unification among revolutionaries; only through this action could we as revolutionaries make our theory a practice in order to seize the legitimate support of the poor and oppressed proletarians who are under the bondage of Capitalism, Imperialism, Social-Imperialism, Colonialism, and Neo-colonialism. All these are enemies of our people.

It is highly important for us as Rastafari comrades to point out that although we are in the "Belly of the Beast," we strongly recognize the fraternal relationship that has been established among the two workers' parties: the Revolutionary Marxist League of Jamaica and the Revolutionary Socialist League, U.S.A. This can be used as a model to other groups that are striving for the said goal. We have hailed this magnificent collaboration as an act of building a world revolution-

Peace and Blessings be upon you all.  
**KMT  
Sankore Masjid  
Green Haven Prison**



# Tomato Pickers Fight for Union

By ADELE LOHMAN

Last August, 2,000 migrant farm workers went on strike in northwestern Ohio, leaving almost 30 percent of the tomato crop to rot on the vines. The strike lasted 28 days—almost the entire length of the tomato season.

The workers who struck are migrants who travel from Texas and Florida for the harvest. This year, many of them plan to go back to Ohio to continue the strike and spread it.

The workers are demanding union recognition; a wage increase from 24 cents to 35 cents a hamper (33 pounds); a minimum wage of \$3.25 an hour; a guarantee of 28 hours' work every two weeks (or 28 hours' pay if it rains and they can't work); health insurance and paid transportation from their home state.

The struggle is being organized by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC). On January 4, FLOC held a meeting in New York City to build support for the strike. Raymond Santiago, secretary-treasurer of FLOC, and staff member Sara Rios spoke at the meeting about the history and problems of the strike. They also dis-

cussed FLOC's plans for continuing and strengthening the struggle.

The strikers are fighting not only the growers and the canneries but the government as well. For example, as soon as last year's strike started, immigration cops showed up and arrested a number of undocumented workers for deportation.

The tomato pickers work for the growers, who are mostly small farmers who sell their tomatoes to the big canneries. The farmers are the ones who hire migrant workers and pay them starvation wages.

Most of the workers are Chicanos (Mexican-Americans), and many of the farmers are racist. Strikers have been told to "go back to Mexico." Some have been threatened by farmers with rifles. One family of migrant workers was sprayed with pesticide, and in another incident, a cross was burned near the tent city FLOC set up to house the strikers.

Despite the racism and hostility of the farmers, FLOC's point of view is that the farmers are not the real enemy. FLOC leaders argue that the big canneries that control the whole tomato industry are the striking

workers' main enemy. The strike is directed primarily against Libby's and Campbell's, who are the biggest canners in the business and set the prices for the whole industry. The canneries sign

eries on one side and the workers' demands on the other. They don't think they can win concessions from the giant corporations. So they come down hard on the workers and try to squeeze more profits out of them.

One of FLOC's main demands is to participate as a third party in the annual contract talks between the growers and the canneries. The union is trying to convince the farmers that they should ally themselves with the workers against the canner-

training session in Ohio for strike leaders and picket captains. They've issued a call to all migrant workers, asking them not to come to Ohio if they can't afford to stay out and lose a season's pay. The statement says: "The simple act of boycotting the state is as good as having walked out of the fields on strike."

The workers are also trying to get support from the cannery workers. If they walked out in sympathy during the harvest season, the tomato strike could be won in no time. But the cannery workers belong to the Teamsters' union. And the Teamster leadership is not supporting the strike. Ohio's Central Labor Council held a meeting to endorse the strike. The Teamsters didn't show up. Last August, when 200 FLOC pickets shut down the Libby's plant in Leipsic, Ohio, for a day, Teamster officials escorted workers across the picket line. A number of Latin workers who refused to cross the line lost their jobs.

The tomato workers have got a long battle ahead. They're asking the whole working class for help. They need money for a strike fund. And they want an organized consumer boycott of all Campbell's and Libby's products, including Nestle's, which is Libby's parent company. For further information, write to: Farm Labor Organizing Committee, 714 1/2 S. St. Clair Street, Toledo, Ohio 43609. □



September 8, 1977—Ohio tomato strikers reach Columbus after 104-mile march.

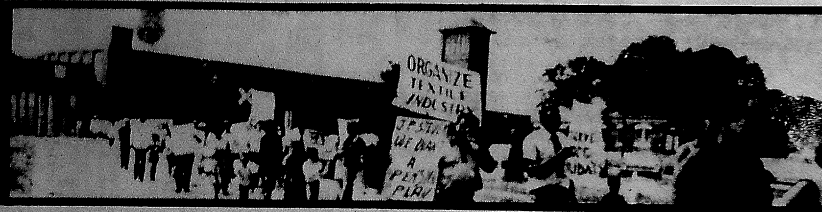
a contract with the growers before the crop is put into the ground. They dictate the price and furnish the plants, which they start down south earlier in the year. They even inspect the fields and tell the farmer what and when to spray.

The farmers feel they're being crunched by the can-

ies, which are their common enemy. But so far, the farmers don't see it that way.

FLOC is digging in for a long fight this coming season—for as many seasons as it takes to win. Staff members have been visiting workers in their home states to prepare for the strike. This month FLOC is holding a

## LABOR IN STRUGGLE



### Newark teachers protest layoffs

The city of Newark, New Jersey, can't lay off 1,100 teachers and other school workers without a proper public hearing, according to a ruling by Judge Leo Yanoff. The 98 workers laid off in December will have to be reinstated, and the school board has to go through all the required legal bullshit before they can start firing people.

Last December, the mayor announced he was going to close the budget gap by cutting back services and laying off 2,200 city workers. He claims the city is broke.

On December 21, thousands marched through downtown Newark chanting: "Strike, strike, strike!" Union leaders were cheered at a mass meeting when they called for a general strike.

The teachers led the fight against the layoffs. They closed most of the city's schools in an informal job action. Only 500 out of 4,000 teachers showed up for work. Over 8,000 school workers were all set to strike on January 16, if the city went ahead with more firings.

The rank and file wants to strike, but obviously the union bureaucrats don't. Why else did they go to court to stop the layoffs? Now they're pretending the judge's ruling is a big victory. But it isn't. The school board will make their layoffs legal by holding public hearings. Meanwhile, workers are getting fired in other city departments. And the unity that could have won against the city has been destroyed.

### OCAW swallows 7 percent

The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union (OCAW) settled for Carter's seven percent, in spite of all the noise about fighting government wage guidelines. OCAW President A.F. Grospron worked out a deal with Gulf Oil Corporation that will set the pattern for contracts with all the other companies.

The proposed contract will include a 73-cent-an-

hour raise the first year—that's eight percent—and five percent the second year. There's a clause to reopen money talks next year, but the union says they'll stay within Carter's guidelines.

The union authorized a strike. But they allowed workers to complete all major maintenance work before the contract ran out. That meant supervisory personnel would be able to keep the plants running during the strike. The workers could strike but they couldn't shut down the industry.

Right now, Carter and his gang are crowing over the first victory of their guidelines. Maybe they'll sing a different tune later this year, when autoworkers and Teamsters fight for their new contracts.

### Rubber co. blackmails workers

The General Tire Company plans to close its old truck tire plant in Akron, Ohio. They say they'll build their new plant in the South, unless the workers agree to a new contract including: a 50-cent-an-hour wage cut; an increase in the weekday shift from six to eight hours; and two 12-hour shifts added on weekends.

General Tire wants the contract changes now to "test" them in the old plant for the next two years. If they make enough profit on the deal, they'll build their new plant in Akron. At least, that's what they say.

The company figures the workers will put up with almost any conditions to save their jobs. Over 25,000 jobs have left the Akron area since 1950. Last year alone, plant closings left almost 4,000 workers jobless.

What is the United Rubber Workers union (URW) doing to fight the plant closings? URW President Peter Bommarito has announced a legislative drive. The union misleaders want the government to pass a law to stop "unjustified" plant closings. This law would include so-called inducements for companies to modernize their existing plants—inducements

like lower wages and longer hours for the workers.

Meanwhile, the local union has agreed to all the conditions demanded by General Tire. The company got what they wanted without a fight. But the workers have no guarantee that they won't lose their jobs anyway.

### In brief...

Teamster warehouse workers and drivers ended their four-month strike against four California supermarket chains by voting on November 22 to accept compulsory arbitration. They had no other choice after Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons made a deal over their heads to arbitrate. The main issue of the strike was a computerized speedup system put in by Safeway.

Five women workers had themselves sterilized because they were afraid of losing their jobs at American Cyanamid in Willow Island, West Virginia. The company was going to transfer them to low-paid jobs because their jobs in the pigment department exposed them to lead dust, which could harm their unborn children. "It was not a joint decision on our part," says Donna Martin. "We made the decision individually, and we did it because we were afraid." The women range in age from 26 to 46 years.

A government-sponsored study has discovered what shift workers have known all along: Rotating shifts are bad for your health. Shift workers suffer from more stomach problems, cramps, colds, chest pains, menstrual problems and fatigue. They also have more accidents. The human body needs three to four weeks to adjust to a complete reversal of schedule.

The capitalists don't give a damn if they're killing the workers. They save a lot of money by running their plants around the clock.

—AL



training session in Ohio for strike leaders and picket captains. They've issued a call to all migrant workers, asking them not to come to Ohio if they can't afford to stay out and lose a season's pay. The statement says: "The simple act of boycotting the state is as good as having walked out of the fields on strike."

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Workers had themselves sterilized out of fear of losing their jobs at Willow Island, West Virginia. Management is trying to transfer them to low-paid jobs in the pigment department. Lead dust, which could harm their health, was not a joint decision on our part. "We made the decision to do it because we were afraid," said a worker aged from 26 to 46 years.

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Don't give a damn if they're killing you. We have a lot of money by running the clock.

# Shipyard Workers Plan Strike

By LARRY TXABI

**HAMPTON, Virginia**—Thousands of shipyard workers voted this past December 10 to authorize a strike against the giant Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company. This could be the biggest strike ever against a single employer in the South.

The shipyard is contesting the validity of the election last January in which the United Steelworkers union (USWA) scored an organizing breakthrough in the traditionally anti-union South. The new Local 8888, with close to 15,000 members, is

the biggest in the USWA and the largest single bargaining unit organized labor has won anywhere in decades. The steelworkers' union ousted the 30-year-old Peninsula Shipbuilders Association (PSA), a company union. It was a hard-fought battle between the USWA and the shipyard workers on one side, and the PSA and the company on the other.

This past October the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) recognized the USWA as the legitimate bargaining agent for the shipyard workers. However, the shipyard and its parent company Tenneco, the

Houston-based conglomerate, have refused to negotiate with the union. They think they've found a legitimate cover for their union-busting attempt. The shipyard's workforce is predominantly Black. The company claims that the union in its organizing campaign had improperly used so-called racial appeals to gain support among the workers.

Instead of going to the skilled white workers first, which has been the traditional approach of most of the labor movement, the USWA concentrated on organizing the mostly unskilled Black workers. This

is not to say that the USWA is anti-racist; on the contrary. But most of the white workers belonged to the PSA. So the union knew it had to reach out to the Black workers first. That was the only way to get a toe-hold in the fight to win over the entire shipyard.

Right now it is not certain when the strike will be called. Virginia Governor John Dalton has stated to

the press that if the shipyard goes out on strike he will use the Virginia State Police as "professional strikebreakers." If Dalton carries out his threat, this strike may be more bloody than the 1967 shipyard strike. At that time, workers took on the police and the strikebreakers with stones, bottles, and guns in downtown Newport News and closed down the city's business district. □

## Iacocca Takes Over: Workers Pay Price for Chrysler Crisis

By An AUTOWORKER CORRESPONDENT

**DETROIT**—On January 8, over 15,000 Chrysler workers were laid off in the Detroit area. Most of the layoffs were because of slow sales, but 1,200 of the jobs are being eliminated. Chrysler has permanently cut 2,000 jobs in Detroit in the past two months. These layoffs at Chrysler, the largest employer in Detroit, are not a fluke or an exception but the beginning of a period of intense attacks on the Chrysler workforce. The reason: The Chrysler Corporation is in deep financial trouble.

In the first three quarters of 1978, Ford and GM made record profits, but Chrysler lost \$247 million. This loss is almost as much as during the worst part of the '74-'75 recession. Chrysler has not shown a profit for three out of the last five years.

All the auto companies are facing a crisis of insufficient investment funds, slowing sales and a falling profit margin. But these problems are the most intense at Chrysler. Its plants are the oldest and least efficient of the Big Three. It has the fewest financial resources. Chrysler makes the smallest amount of its own parts, so it is the least efficient. It costs Chrysler \$500 more to make each car than it costs GM or Ford.

### Iacocca cracks the whip

The owners of Chrysler think they have found a solution to their problems. They have hired former Ford Motor President Lee Iacocca as president of Chrysler. Iacocca has a reputation among capitalists as a man who knows what he wants and how to get it.

What is Iacocca's plan for Chrysler? He is talking about increased productivity: "We have to get more productive, to build more cars per man-



Lee A. Iacocca.

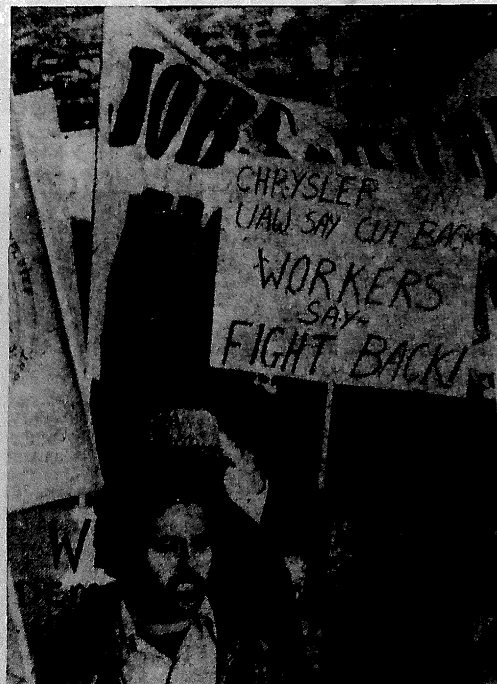
hour. That's what it's all about." (Detroit News, 12/22/78.) He's also ready to come down hard on an un-disciplined management that won't meet budgets or schedules, or make a good quality product.

Iacocca's tactics can already be seen at Lynch Road

Assembly in Detroit. The plant was down for 13 weeks last summer for \$57 million in renovations. After workers were called back, the line took weeks to get going at management's desired speed. Iacocca fired the plant manager and a crack-down began. Soon the line was running full speed.

### More layoffs ahead

If Iacocca won't hesitate to fire a plant manager, what's in store for Chrysler workers? There'll be more layoffs, especially in plants that make cars that aren't selling. More speedup and overtime to increase profits, especially at the Tank and Truck Assembly plants which are profitable. Health



1973: Detroit autoworkers march against Chrysler cutbacks. New wave of cutbacks is planned.

and safety conditions will get worse. Plants will get dirtier.

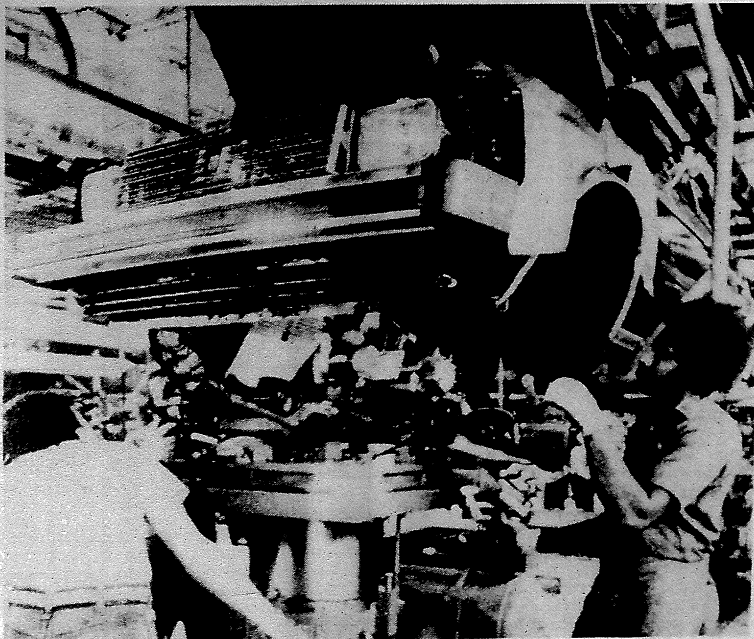
To carry this out, Chrysler will try to break up and prevent any organizing by the people in the shop. They'll

be looking to fire militants, break up tight work groups and come down hard on shop-floor struggle.

Iacocca will also try to get the UAW bureaucrats to back him in this productivity drive. He will tell the union hacks that the company will go under unless the workers give up more. Judging by everything the UAW officials have done in the past, we can expect them to fall for this line.

### Organize to fight back

But this doesn't have to be. Chrysler workers are already fighting back. Every day in every plant there are workers who don't go along with the BS coming down. A lot of resistance here and a little bit there is the beginning but not the end of a successful fight. In September the new auto contract with the companies will be signed. Now, before the new contract is signed, is the time to get organized. Workers should be getting together to plan how to fight the companies and the union bureaucrats, and begin the struggle for what they need. This is what the Revolutionary Autoworkers Committee is trying to do. □



Chrysler assembly plant.





Iranians in Tehran demonstrate against the shah.

# Iran In Revolution

## Shah's Power Crumbles

By TONY CURZO

The revolution against Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in Iran continues to rage. After several months of general strikes and clashes in the streets, the shah has his back to the wall. Since last November, he has been desperately searching for a way to make a deal with the opposition, but without success.

On December 29 the shah, and the U.S. imperialists behind him, found an opposition politician willing to front for them—the deputy leader of the National Front, Shahpur Bakhtiar. The hope was that the appointment of an opposition politician to head the government might calm things down and save the shah's throne.

The maneuver has failed. Bakhtiar has been expelled by his own group, the National Front, for going over to the shah. On January 6, the day that Bakhtiar was formally appointed, 100,000 people marched against the shah and Bakhtiar in the city of Qum. The strikes by the workers continue, and so do the daily clashes with the army. "Unless the shah leaves soon," said a government official to R.W. Apple of the *New York Times*, "we won't last very long." As we go to

press, it looks like the shah will leave the country in the next few days.

Since the Bakhtiar government appears to be shaky, there has been increasing talk of an army coup. But an army takeover would not be likely to end the revolution. The shah's generals have killed thousands of people through a whole year of revolts. If they take power, the strikes and rebellions will continue.

Why has Iran exploded now, after 37 years of the shah's rule? The answer can be found in the huge economic and social dislocations that have hit the country in the last five years. During this period the shah and his hangers-on have become fabulously wealthy, while the masses of workers and peasants have endured increased poverty and exploitation.

The dislocations in Iran's economy go back to 1973, when the price of oil increased 400 percent. Iran is the world's second largest exporter of petroleum and a tremendous amount of cash flowed into the shah's hands. The shah bragged that he would use this revenue to modernize Iran within 25 years. But all he has managed to accomplish is the destruction of the traditional economy without putting anything in its place.

The modern plants that the shah has set up are highly automated assembly plants that put together products made overseas. They provide high profits to the imperialists, but they create very few jobs.

Unemployment is widespread. An estimated 700,000 people are out of work in Tehran alone. The shah provides no unemployment or welfare benefits.

The massive sums from oil sales have also produced an inflation rate of 50 percent or more a year. Prices in the cities are like those in Paris or New York, but the legal minimum wage is \$3 a day, with many workers making even less. The most "privileged" workers get no more than \$1.75 an hour.

Some 60 to 70 percent of a worker's pay goes for housing, yet most workers live in one-room shacks because of a huge housing shortage.

Things are worse in the countryside. Agriculture is in a shambles. More than a third of the peasants have no land. Ninety percent of the rest work on barren lands where the yield isn't enough to survive. Around half a million of them flock to the cities every year, where they join the growing number of unemployed.

Meanwhile, the shah and his friends have been living in unbelievable luxury. Waste and corruption have been rampant. Tens of billions of dollars have been spent in speculative foreign investments and in kickbacks to the shah's loyal hacks. The shah has thrown away \$36 billion on the purchase of sophisticated military hardware from the U.S. and Europe. He made himself the policeman of the Persian Gulf, in the interest of U.S. imperialism.

This combination of tremendous misery among the masses and staggering corruption in high places explains in part the depth and fury of the revolution against the shah.

Another factor that accounts for the fury of the revolt is the reaction of the Iranian people to long years of ruthless repression. The shah's infamous secret police, SAVAK, has arrested, tortured, murdered and caused the "disappearance" of hundreds of thousands of militants and revolutionaries.

Moreover, by doing away with most opposition groups, the shah eliminated virtually all avenues for expressing dissent. The shah didn't have a "loyal opposition" that could keep struggles limited to reforms.

Because of the heavy repression,

only two major opposition groups managed to survive: the National Front, and the mullahs (Muslim priests) of the Shi'a branch of Islam. Today these groups are the leadership of the anti-shah revolution.

The National Front is a coalition of bourgeois-nationalist parties. According to Nicholas Gage, a U.S. reporter, it is "a motley group of political parties without national organizations." Their organizations were smashed by the shah. All that remains of the National Front is a collection of old politicians who go back 25 years to the government of Mohammed Mossadegh. Mossadegh was the prime minister who nationalized the oil industry and very nearly got rid of the shah. He was overthrown by the CIA in 1953.

For years the National Front politicians have been dreaming of setting up a bourgeois democracy in Iran. But when the revolution came, they showed their true colors. More than once they stated their willingness to cooperate with the shah to curb the rebellion.

Last October 19, the leader of the Front, Karim Sanjabi, declared that the organization was willing to form a government under the shah. A few days later Sanjabi backed down, under pressure from the religious leaders, and began taking a hard line. Because of its public hard line against the shah, the National Front is likely to grow substantially in the period ahead.

### The Muslim opposition

Besides the National Front there are the religious leaders, the mullahs. They are under the general leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, who directs the movement from exile in Paris. Khomeini is widely recognized as the most uncompromising foe of the shah among the religious leaders.

The mullahs have a lot more organi-



Top: Shahpur Bakhtiar and picture of Mossadegh. Bottom: Ayatollah Khomeini.

zational muscle than the National Front. They have 80,000 mosques (Muslim churches) under the supervision of 180,000 mullahs. They also control an organization of "procession leaders" (of which there are an estimated 5,000 in Tehran alone). The mullahs get strong financial backing from the bazaaris, Iran's traditional merchants and moneylenders.

The mullahs were key support-

(Continued on page 11)

## U.S. OUT OF IRAN!

(Continued from page 1)

This is why the U.S. reinstated the shah in 1953 through a CIA coup. This is why it armed the shah to the teeth. And this is why U.S. intervention continues.

The U.S. imperialists are now shifting tactics. They have stopped threatening military intervention. They have asked the Iranian army not to take power. Instead, they have thrown their weight behind Shahpur Bakhtiar, the shah's puppet.

The reasons for this shift are not hard to find. Bakhtiar was appointed by the shah and approved by the shah's handpicked parliament. And he has the reluctant support of some wings of the shah's army. The U.S. wants to salvage as much as possible of the shah's apparatus (particularly the army). Bakhtiar offers the best chance to do this. The more thoroughgoing the revolution is, the more the shah's apparatus is destroyed, the more likely it is that the U.S. gets kicked out of

Iran. But if and when Bakhtiar falters, the U.S. will once again prepare for intervention. And it will call on the Iranian army to revolt.

Seymour Hersh of the *New York Times* recently interviewed ex-CIA agent Jesse Leaf on past U.S. intervention in Iran:

"Mr. Leaf said... a senior CIA official was involved in instructing officials in the SAVAK on torture techniques... The CIA's torture seminars, Mr. Leaf said, were based on German torture techniques from World War II."

Said Leaf, "I know that the torture rooms were toured and it was all paid for by the U.S.A."

This is the relationship U.S. rulers have always had with Iran. This is the relationship they want to maintain. To maintain it, they will do anything.

U.S. workers and all anti-imperialist militants must demand: U.S. imperialism out of Iran! Hands off the Iranian revolution! □

(Continued from page 10) ers of the shah when langed by the Mossade in 1953. At that time Ay and Ayatollah Borou statement saying that taken over by commun the shah.

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### Shah's repression helps mullahs

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(Continued from page 10)

ers of the shah when he was challenged by the Mossadegh government in 1953. At that time Ayatollah Kashani and Ayatollah Boroujerdi issued a statement saying that Iran was being taken over by communists and needed the shah.

But in the early 1960s, the shah turned against his former allies. The mullahs were Iran's second biggest feudal landlord. The shah seized their lands and destroyed their economic power. He ended their monopoly over education by secularizing the schools. He also took some tiny steps to improve the conditions of women. (Under the Koranic law of Islam, women are practically the property of husbands and fathers, who have the power of life and death over them.) These actions by the shah turned the mullahs against him.

The mullahs' opposition to the shah is from the right. They want to return to the constitution of 1906 which sets up a supreme council of five mullahs who would have veto rights over all laws. "If they found the laws repugnant to Islam... they could reject them," says Ayatollah Shariatmadari. In effect, the mullahs want to set up a theocracy (a religious, church-dominated state).

If the mullahs came to power they would not tolerate bourgeois democracy any more than the shah did. In a book quoted in the *New York Times* last December 30, Ayatollah Khomeini has written: "Since Islamic government is a government of law, it is the religious expert and no one else who should occupy himself with affairs of government."

The mullahs in power would drive women out of jobs, universities, etc., and put them back behind the walls of Iran's family compounds. This is symbolized by their insistence that women wear the traditional Muslim veil covering their entire head except for the eyes.

Already, in response to the mullahs' pressure, the shah has abolished a department of women's rights. He has also drafted laws that would lower the marrying age for women to 15 years, forbid women to serve in the military, and make abortion a capital crime.

A government of the mullahs would recognize no trade union rights. It would outlaw independent workers' parties and, like the shah, it would brutally repress the left. In a word, such a government would be a disaster for the working class and the oppressed of Iran.

## Shah's repression helps mullahs

How did a conservative force such as the mullahs manage to put itself at the head of the revolution? There are several reasons for this. The first and most important is that the mullahs were the only organized opposition force, because the shah had smashed all others. People who hated the regime went to church to find a way to organize against it.

Another reason behind the rise of the mullahs is the rejection of modernism, which the masses identify with the shah and Western imperialism.

There has been a rise in religious fervor which is an explicit rejection of the ruthlessness, plunder, and social rot represented by the imperialist West. People have been going to church to look for a way out of the mess that the shah and the imperialists have made of Iran. But many other people who probably have no illusions in the mullahs, have also blocked with them because that seemed the only way to bring down the shah.

The repression under the shah forced people with widely different interests and backgrounds to unite under the mullahs. The lifting of the lid after the shah is gone will allow these people to form political groups which correspond to their class interests. The population will begin to differentiate itself politically. What now may look

like a solid majority for the mullahs will begin to look quite different.

## Support the revolution

Even though the revolution is led by the mullahs, it has to be supported. While the mullahs may become the enemies of the future, the shah is the enemy in power right now. Until he is driven out, it is necessary to bloc with the mullahs and all other forces that are fighting the shah.

Where does the Iranian revolution go from here? What will happen when the shah leaves? To answer these questions it's useful to look at the social forces involved in the revolution, and try to assess their programs and prospects.

If the mullahs took over, Iran would probably follow a non-aligned foreign policy. U.S. imperialism could no longer use Iran to police the Persian Gulf. And the rise of an Islamic state would provide a boost for the Palestinian struggle against Israel. But the mullahs would still not be a step forward for Iran. They would impose on Iran a narrow, brutal, theocratic dictatorship that would not be essentially different from the shah's. In particular, the mullahs would wreak havoc on the working class and all the oppressed.

The mullahs' chances of coming to power, however, are not great, except perhaps in coalition with some other force. They have too many actual and potential enemies: the sizeable middle class, the proletariat, the bourgeoisie, and the army. And they have their own internal differences.

## Workers must continue revolution

The National Front wants to set up a bourgeois-democratic regime. As its influence expands, it is likely to gain a substantial base, particularly among the middle class. But the prospects for bourgeois democracy are not bright. Iran's bourgeoisie is extremely thin. It is made up of the shah's family and its hangers-on. It is almost totally tied to the state through joint ventures with the shah's government. This bourgeoisie clearly prefers a return to strongman rule.

In addition, Iran is a key prize for the imperialists in the Middle East. They

## Workers Show the Way

What is the biggest single thing keeping the capitalists in power? The first thing that comes to mind is the army and the cops. The capitalists have the guns. But that is not the main thing keeping them on top.

The biggest single factor is that most workers are made to feel powerless. From the time we are young, we are told: "Workers are dumb. Workers are weak. If they had anything on the ball, they wouldn't be workers." The subtle message coming through is, workers are natural-born slaves. It's a feeling capitalists constantly push on the workers in a variety of ways. When we talk to workers about the need for a workers' revolution, we often hear things like, "The capitalists are too strong," or "We workers don't really control anything."

The Iranian revolution proves that this is not true. The Iranian workers have brought down the most powerful ruler in the Middle East, a dictator backed by a 420,000-man army equipped with the most sophisticated military hardware the U.S. could supply. How did they do it?

For months the workers have refused to work. There have been general strikes by oil workers, steelworkers, bus and truck drivers, railway workers, public utility workers, textile workers, government workers, and others. The strikes have brought the economy to a standstill and left the shah no option but to give up his throne.

The most crucial strike, that of the oil workers, deprives the government of \$60 million a day in export earnings. Nothing has been able to smash it. The Iranian navy tried to run the oil wells. That failed. The army arrested strike leaders and shot down workers on the picket lines. That only spread the strike further. Pay raises of 60 to 100 percent didn't pacify the workers.

And when the leaders of the anti-shah forces—like Ayatollah Khomeini and Karim Sanjabi—asked the oil workers to return to work "for the good of the nation," the workers refused. They told them that the workers alone and no one else would decide when to re-open the wells.

Iran's workers are not well-organized. They are not armed. They have no revolutionary party. They are not yet in a position to challenge the capitalists for power. But just by stopping production, they have smashed the brutal 37-year rule of the shah.

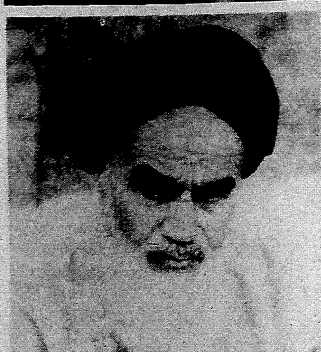
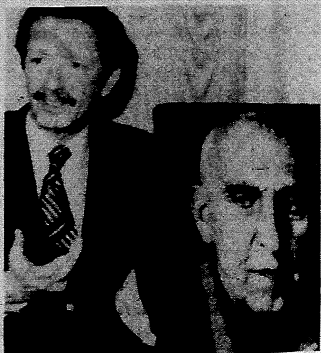
Imagine what they could do if they were armed and if they organized themselves in a revolutionary party! They would not only bring down the shah; they would be able to smash the capitalists and take over the country for themselves.

will not leave it alone. Whichever power comes out on top as a result of the current upheavals—the U.S. or Russia—it is not likely to place its bets on an unstable bourgeois-democratic regime. It will want a "strong state" which can guarantee its interests and keep its rivals out.

The only road forward lies in the workers taking over the society through a second revolution, as the Bolshevik workers did in Russia in October 1917. A workers' revolution would permanently eliminate imperialist interference in Iran; would really smash the shah's state apparatus (the army in particular); and would guarantee democratic rights to the peasants, women, gays, youth, and the oppressed nationalities.

Iran's three million workers have a lot of power. They are at the heart of the economy and control the all-important oil tap. In recent weeks they have shown an admirable fighting spirit and class independence (see box).

However, they are not yet in a position to take power because they are only now beginning to organize themselves. There is no revolutionary workers' party in Iran, and building one will take time. It is possible that Iran will now experience an interim period of bourgeois democracy. A democratic government will be both temporary and unstable, but it can be used by the workers of Iran, and those supporting them, to organize and get ready for the next round. □



Top: Shahput Bakhtiar and picture of Mossadegh. Bottom: Ayatollah Khomeini.

zational muscle than the National Front. They have 80,000 mosques (Muslim churches) under the supervision of 180,000 mullahs. They also control an organization of "procession leaders" (of which there are an estimated 5,000 in Tehran alone). The mullahs get strong financial backing from the bazaaris, Iran's traditional merchants and moneylenders.

The mullahs were key support-

(Continued on page 11)

## Hands Off the Iranian Students!



On January 2, 2,000 Iranian students attacked the Beverly Hills mansion of Princess Chams, the shah's sister. Shouting "Death to the Shah!", the militants broke through the gates, smashed windows and started fires in the underbrush surrounding the mansion. They fought with cops and security guards who used tear gas, hoses and rubber bullets against the students. At least 32

demonstrators and several cops were injured. Two days later, Attorney General Griffin Bell ordered a review of the visas of more than 200,000 foreign students attending school in the U.S. He also threatened Iranian students with deportation. Already, 70 Iranian students have been arrested and charged with felonies or visa violations.

Hands Off the Iranian Students!





## Fascists launch offensive in Turkey

At least 105 people were killed and over 1,000 injured in rioting which swept Turkey on December 23 and lasted for three days. It was probably the single biggest clash in Turkey in 55 years. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's government was forced to declare martial law in 13 provinces to bring a temporary halt to the fighting. The Turkish government claims the cause of the violence was religious strife between Sunni Muslims, who include 80 percent of the population, and the Shi'a minority. About two million of Turkey's 43 million people are Shi'as, or Alevis, as they are called in Turkey. Most are also Kurds, an oppressed nationality.

In reality the fighting was a continuation of the political struggles which have been tearing Turkish society apart. Over 1,000 people were killed in street battles between leftists and fascist gangsters last year.

Because they are a religious and national minority, the Alevis are a prime target for the fascist leaders of the National Action Party (NAP). Turkish and Sunni chauvinism is being whipped up and used against the Kurdish Alevis. The Alevis generally support the left groups in Turkey.

The NAP is using the Alevis as scapegoats for the collapse of capitalism in Turkey. The country owes over \$10 billion in foreign debts. Some 45 percent of its industrial capacity is shut down. One out of every five workers is unemployed, while prices shoot up at a 70 percent annual rate. The Turkish ruling class has no answers for this crisis. The real political battles are taking place in the streets. Now the rightist opposition leaders are demanding a free hand for the army in restoring "law and order."

It's no accident that the right is going on the offensive now. It's worried by the revolution in neighboring Iran. The fascists want to force a return to military rule before the Turkish people follow the Iranian example.

## European workers on strike

A wave of militant workers' struggles is exploding across Western Europe. In Spain, 300,000 workers in the railway, construction and metal working industries went on strike on January 11. They are demanding a 16 percent wage increase.

In Britain, militant strikers are rebelling against Prime Minister Callaghan's five percent wage guidelines. Last fall Ford autoworkers smashed the guidelines to win a 17 percent settlement. On January 3 this year, 35,000 truckers began a wildcat strike demanding a 25 percent raise. After a week, the Transport and General Workers Union approved the strike and extended it to include 60,000 workers. A day later, 35,000 drivers belonging to the United Road Transport Union joined the walkout. The strike threatens to bring Britain's economy to a standstill. Meanwhile, on January 22, 1.5 million public workers will stage a one-day national strike for a 15 percent raise and a 35-hour week. Finally, in West Germany, steelworkers launched a six-week strike for the 35-hour workweek—the first steel strike in over 50 years. They returned to work on January 7, after union leaders sold them out on the shorter workweek demand.

## Nicaraguan struggle continues

The Nicaraguan people are continuing their struggle against the dictatorship of General Anastasio Somoza Debayle. On January 10 a nationwide strike marked the first anniversary of the murder of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, an opposition newspaper editor killed by Somoza's thugs. In Managua, the national capital, 10,000 people marched in a demonstration against Somoza. As the march ended, troops fired into the crowd, wounding at least 10 people. Troops also attacked demonstrators in five other Nicaraguan cities.

Since the first of the year, liberation fighters in the Sandinista National Liberation Front have stepped up their attacks against Somoza. On January 1, Sandinistas fought government troops in northern Esteli province and along Nicaragua's southern border with Costa Rica. They have also carried out attacks in the cities of Leon, Managua and Granada.

At the urging of U.S. mediators, Somoza has tried to buy support among business leaders and conservative politicians in the opposition movement by granting a few reforms. On December 15 he agreed to relax censorship of radio and television, and grant an amnesty to all political prisoners.

But on December 27 Somoza rejected a U.S. plan for an internationally supervised plebiscite to determine whether he should resign as president of Nicaragua. His refusal smashed U.S. hopes of heading off a new wave of struggle in Nicaragua by replacing Somoza with a government of conservative politicians loyal to U.S. imperialism. The recent national strike and the battles in the countryside are clear signs that this upsurge has already begun.

—PB

# Fighting in Jamaica

(Continued from page 1)

of gasoline. The price was raised 20 cents per imperial gallon, bringing the total price to \$3.20 Jamaica (\$1.77 U.S.). Nearly \$2 of the \$3.20 total is a government tax. This price rise was only the latest in a series of austerity measures which are driving the living standard of the Jamaican people to starvation levels.

According to the latest reports, protesters in Kingston shut down the city's transportation and commerce. Demonstrators set up roadblocks in Montego Bay, Negril and Ochos Rios. Bauxite miners went out in wildcat strikes. To try and break the back of the protests, the government has ordered a ban on public meetings. Prime Minister Michael Manley also sent in heavy security forces to suppress the demonstrations. At least three militants were

killed and dozens injured by government troops.

The initial protests were organized by the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP). Despite its name, the JLP is actually a right-wing capitalist party. Its leaders claim they are mobilizing the people against the injustices of the ruling People's National Party (PNP) government.

In December, the Revolutionary Marxist League of Jamaica (sister organization of the RSL) explained the real goals of the JLP. In their newspaper, *Forward*, they wrote: "For all the sweet talk of its leaders, the JLP campaign has nothing to do with equal rights and justice for the toiling masses. Instead, it is purely a move by that party to strengthen its hand in the contest with the liberal PNP rival for capitalist political power."

But it appears that the JLP got more than it bargained

for once workers went into the streets. The masses were not willing to accept a campaign of "peaceful resistance" under JLP control. Instead, they turned the JLP protest into a rebellion against the ruling class.

Jamaican workers and farmers have every reason to fight against the Manley government. Although he claims to be a socialist, Manley has handed over control of Jamaica's economy to the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund (IMF). Under IMF orders his government has jacked up prices of basic foods and vegetables, slashed public services, and forced the layoff of hundreds of workers.

Reports indicate that the protests in Jamaica have ended for now. A full report from Jamaica on the demonstrations will appear in the next issue of the *Torch/La Antorcha*. □

# Boat People Left to Die on High Seas

Thousands of Vietnamese refugees are sailing the South China Sea, looking for a place to land. Every day we see horror pictures on the news—hundreds of people being pushed back out to sea, hundreds more drowning within sight of the shore, hungry mothers and sad-eyed children sitting and waiting for some country to let them in. Who are these "boat people?" Why are they fleeing Vietnam in leaky fishing boats and rusty freighters?

Most of the refugees are middle-class shopkeepers, and 85 percent of them are ethnic Chinese. The Vietnamese rulers are taking over their shops and businesses, and resettling them in the so-called New Economic Zones. These are rural areas where the settlers are supposed to grow food on land that was destroyed or defoliated during the Vietnam War.

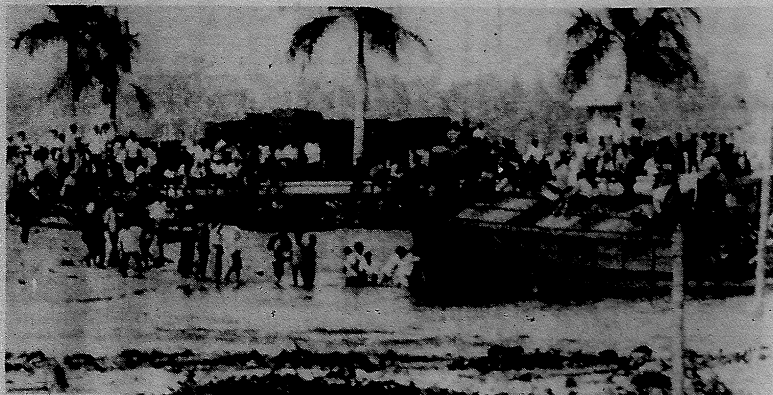
The Chinese people in Vietnam have lived in the cities for generations. They know nothing about farming. The state-capitalist government has given them three

choices: Settle in the countryside, starve, or leave. Many are choosing to leave Vietnam and take their chances on the high seas.

There are more than 45,000 Vietnamese refugees in Malaysian transit camps. Almost 10,000 arrived in the first two weeks of November alone. Thousands more are in camps in other Asian countries. Nobody knows how many more thousands are lost at sea. Estimates are that at least 120,000 "boat people" will need homes by next spring.

Neither Malaysia, nor Thailand nor any other Asian country will allow any more boats to land. They want the Western countries, especially the U.S., to take the refugees.

The U.S. and the other Western countries don't want them either. But lately all the publicity about the refugees has made the imperialist countries look bad. Here are these freighters anchored off the shores of Malaysia and Hong Kong, with thousands of sick, hungry refugees begging for some country to let them in:



Boat of Vietnamese refugees being pushed back to sea by Malaysian villagers. Boat later capsized and 200 people drowned.

# Has

By LEE RAMIE and RO

On January 1, 1979, the People's Republic of China full diplomatic relations. The mainland government has abandoned its long-staport for the so-called China on Taiwan, or wh used to call the "sole an government of China." Th are important, but they surprise. They are only the in the process of forming economic and, ultimate alliance between the U.S.

This new U.S./China pe having an earth-shaking world politics. By linking China, the U.S. has greatened its political position.

First, it has regained a the Southeast Asian main it hasn't had since it lost Vietnam. Second, it has ou Russians, who now face th China allied against the southern front, and the U.S allied against them on the front. Finally, by moving China, the U.S. government door for U.S. businesses t potentially huge Chinese

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## Teng's program for China

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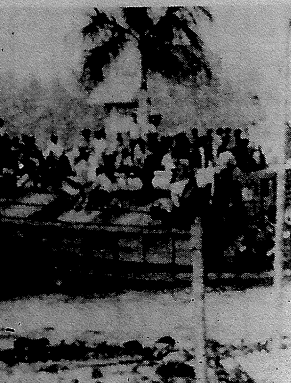
## to Die

So the imperialists make a gesture and accept a few more people.

The Carter Administration has almost doubled the quota for this year. This is still very little compared to the numbers of people waiting for resettlement. And the only people who are let in are the ones that have skills the capitalists can use.

When the U.S. imperialists were trying to hang on to their rule in Southeast Asia, they claimed to stand for freedom. They called the middle-class people their allies. They were going to "save them from communism." But since the U.S. got kicked out of Vietnam, they don't need these people any more. To the U.S., they're just some Asians looking for a home, and the U.S. rulers don't give a damn if they drown in the ocean or rot in refugee camps. So much for "freedom" and "honoring U.S. commitments."

Given their class background, many of the refugees probably supported U.S. rule in Vietnam. But at this point, that is not the issue. We support their right to leave Vietnam and go wherever they want. Open the borders! □



by Malaysian villagers. Boat later

# TORCH/La Antorcha

## SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

# Teng Opens the Door to Imperialism

# Has China Come Full Circle?

By LEE RAMIE and RON TABER

On January 1, 1979, the U.S. and the People's Republic of China established full diplomatic relations. By recognizing the mainland government, the U.S. has abandoned its long-standing support for the so-called Republic of China on Taiwan, or what the U.S. used to call the "sole and legitimate government of China." The new ties are important, but they were not a surprise. They are only the latest event in the process of forming a political, economic and, ultimately, military alliance between the U.S. and China.

This new U.S./China partnership is having an earth-shaking effect on world politics. By linking up with China, the U.S. has greatly strengthened its political position in Asia.

First, it has regained a foothold on the Southeast Asian mainland, which it hasn't had since it lost the war in Vietnam. Second, it has outflanked the Russians, who now face the U.S. and China allied against them on their southern front, and the U.S. and NATO allied against them on their western front. Finally, by moving closer to China, the U.S. government opens the door for U.S. businesses to reach the potentially huge Chinese market.

From the Chinese side, the impact of diplomatic recognition is equally great. The Chinese rulers are giving up even the pretense of leading a struggle against Western imperialism. Now the fight against Russian imperialism, "hegemonism," takes top priority and justifies any tactic, no matter how treacherous. In return for this alliance with the U.S., the Chinese leadership has opened up the country to U.S. economic domination, thus reversing one of the gains of the Chinese Revolution.

## Teng's program for China

The turn toward the U.S. is only a piece of a larger plan of the new Chinese leadership. Teng Hsiao-p'ing, the real man in charge in Peking, was restored to the post of deputy premier in July 1977. Since then he has moved sharply to reverse the policies of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, who died in September 1976. Teng has continued and deepened the campaign against Mao's old supporters that was begun only one month after Mao's death. At that time, the new chairman of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Hua Kuo-feng, arrested the so-called Gang of Four (the leaders of the Maoist Faction in the CCP).

Teng is also rehabilitating tens of thousands of party leaders and cadre purged as "rightists" before and during the Cultural Revolution, and removing Mao's old supporters from their posts. The CCP is stopping the practice, begun under Mao, of having managers, scientists and intellectuals engage in manual labor. Their job now is to run things. Wage differentials are increasing. A greater flow of luxury consumer goods will make the differences between classes more glaring. The CCP is re-opening universities and technical schools and bringing them up to date. High grades rather than politics



January 1979: Chinese peasants march in Peking demanding food, human rights and democracy.

will be the criterion for admission. The cult of Mao is being liquidated and the Chinese people are being told to worry about production and leave politics to the leaders.

Teng's main goal is to build China into a modern industrialized society by the year 2000. This is the purpose of the Ten-Year Plan for Industrial Development drawn up by Teng and presented to the Fifth National People's Congress in March 1978. The plan is for the period 1978 to 1985. The plan's success hinges on modernizing agriculture by importing heavy-duty equipment, such as tractors and combines, and advanced irrigation systems. The plan also calls for transportation to be drastically improved.

There are two reasons why the Chinese rulers need to modernize agriculture quickly. First, China suffered severe drought in recent years and had to import record amounts of grain. They can't afford to keep this up. Modern technology will make China's farms less vulnerable to natural disasters.

Second, and more important, industry requires workers, but a majority of China's working population is in the countryside. This is because of the primitive methods used in Chinese agriculture. Mechanization will mean less people can do more work faster. This will allow hundreds of thousands of workers to go to the cities. Because of this, the urban Chinese working class will grow rapidly in the next few years.

The industrialization program is very ambitious. Among other things, it projects tripling steel production and doubling farm output. The plan calls for building 120 major industrial projects by 1985. Most of these plants will be bought outright from the U.S., Western Europe and Japan. Most of the rest will be developed jointly with foreign capitalists under a plan that will allow them to own up to 49 percent of a given factory.

Massive trade is a key part of the plan. In January 1978, China and Japan signed a trade agreement that committed them to \$20 billion in trade between 1978 and 1985. Later agreements have raised the estimated trade to around \$80 billion.

The Chinese government is ready to accept commercial loans, joint development programs and government-to-government loans, and has asked for

\$100 million in UN aid.

Finally, China is seeking military aid and equipment from Western Europe (and is expected to ask the U.S. as well). China is buying Harrier jets from Britain, tanks and modern artillery from France and Italy, missiles and guidance systems from West Germany.

The Chinese people will pay a high price for this "development." Teng is selling China lock, stock and barrel to Western and Japanese imperialism; this is the course explicitly rejected by Mao. Mao wanted to keep China free of the world market. He tried to make the economy reach the level of the advanced capitalist countries simply through hard work and sacrifices from the workers and peasants. Since this proved impossible, it may seem that by relying heavily on imports Teng is simply "being realistic."

But just as in the 1800s, imperialism will drain more out of China than it puts in. At that time, the imperialists wanted silver and the Chinese got opium in return. Today the imperialists want coal, oil and iron ore, and the Chinese get modern factories and Coca-Cola. Chinese industry will increasingly rely on imperialism for technical assistance, spare parts and innovations. This will be even more true for the military. The Chinese economy will be weighed down by a rapidly-mounting international debt, which could go as high as \$30 to \$40 billion by 1985. In short, China will be increasingly tied to U.S. imperialism.

## Events shake Maoist movement

In addition to their profound effects on international politics and China itself, recent developments in China are shattering the Maoist movement—a political current that once had major influence on the left in the U.S. and elsewhere. For many years, revolutionary workers and intellectuals looked to Mao's China as a revolutionary model. But the new CCP leadership is openly renouncing Mao, repudiating his policies and consolidating an open alliance with U.S. imperialism.

As a result, the Maoist movement in

the U.S. is splitting into two wings. One, led by the so-called Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (CPML), is following the Teng leadership right into the lap of U.S. imperialism. To these people, anything the Chinese leadership does is revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist, and just fine with them.

The other wing of the old Maoist movement includes the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), the Marxist-Leninist Organizing Committee (MLOC), and others. This wing defends Mao against Teng and his colleagues and no longer points to China as a model socialist country. To its credit, this wing has chosen to stick by its principles, even though this has meant breaking with China. This wing believes that Teng has led a counter-revolutionary coup in China and has placed China "firmly on the road to a restoration of capitalism."

Although the RCP/MLOC wing of the Maoist movement is closer to the truth (that is, they recognize that China isn't socialist), both wings are wrong about what is going on in China. For instance, on the one hand, it is clear that the present Chinese leaders are not revolutionary Marxists and that China is no stronghold of workers' rule. It's a strange Marxism that



Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing.

justifies tying China to the bandwagon of U.S. imperialism. But on the other hand, what China has experienced in the past two and a half years is not a counter-revolution.

A quick and bloodless power struggle at the top cannot be called a counter-revolutionary overturn. A counter-revolution means one class kicks another class out of power and sets up its own rule. If China were socialist (or moving toward it) such a counter-revolution would involve the expulsion of the working class and peasantry from power. Could the millions of Chinese people be so quickly and easily overthrown? If they were, when did it happen? Why wasn't there much of a fight? How come the country isn't in the midst of a civil war? Unless one twists the facts beyond recognition, the theory that the recent events are really an anti-socialist counter-revolution is not very convincing.

Despite what the RCP/MLOC wing may think, the recent developments in China have not changed which class controls the state. The political struggle in China has been a battle between



two wings of a state-capitalist ruling class—one radical and the other conservative—over how to modernize China and lead it politically. The recent events represent the decisive victory of the right-wing faction.

There has been no counter-revolution in China in the last few years. But neither is China a socialist country. To see why this is so, we must take a brief look at the history of the Chinese Revolution.

## China under imperialism

At the time of World War I, China was a poor, underdeveloped country, completely under the iron heel of imperialism. Although formally independent, China was carved into so-called "spheres of influence" by the competing imperialist powers. The French, British, U.S. and Japanese imperialists ruled through brutal warlords and freely robbed the people and natural resources.

The peasantry suffered unbearable exploitation. The small farmers paid up to 60 percent of their crops in taxes. They were underpaid for their crops and usually just plain robbed by corrupt officials and marauding bands of warlords' soldiers. Millions died of starvation. It was common for men to sell their wives and daughters in a last-ditch stab at survival.

The workers were hardly better off. Crowded into the cities, they lived crammed together in tiny hovels. They worked long hours for pennies in wages. They didn't have the right to

seives. They couldn't expel the imperialists and unite the country because they were bound to the imperialists. Nor did they have any interest in improving the conditions of the workers and establishing a democratic government. The basic tasks of the Chinese Revolution had to be solved by some other class.

The peasants could not do it, although they had shown a powerful will to struggle throughout the centuries. The peasants had never been organized into a single movement with a common aim. They had an extremely narrow outlook and were primarily interested in their villages and small plots of land. They had little if any conception of China as a national entity. In the past, peasant rebellions either had been defeated or had only succeeded in putting a new family of emperors in power.

## Workers' upsurge in the 1920s

In 1919 and 1920 the working class emerged as the class which could defeat the imperialists and unite China, carry out the agrarian revolution, and establish a democratic government. Though small, the working class was heavily concentrated in the large industrial centers such as Shanghai and Canton. Thousands of workers had gone to Russia and Europe during World War I and experienced workers' revolution first hand. As a result of their potential power, organization and class consciousness, they were well placed to lead the peasants

imperialists. Shanghai, Canton and Wuhan were hit by general strikes lasting for months on end. The peasants rose up throughout many parts of China, killed the landlords, and seized and divided the land. If the CCP had followed a revolutionary policy, the workers might have taken power.

In late March and early April 1927, the workers rose up and seized control of Shanghai. But Stalin said that China "was not ripe for the socialist revolution"! Instead, he said, the revolution had to occur in two distinct stages, one bourgeois and the second socialist. Following the orders of the Comintern, the CCP told the workers not to take power but to hand power over to Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the right wing of the KMT. Taking advantage of this situation, Chiang turned on the workers, smashed their organizations, and killed tens of thousands of workers. The Kuomintang expelled the CCP from its ranks and physically attacked it, killing most of its members. The few leaders who survived fled to the countryside.

From that time on, the CCP never again had a mass base among the working class. Instead, the party devoted all its efforts to organizing in the countryside among the peasants.

## How the Communist Party took power

From 1928 to 1934, the CCP established "Soviet base areas" in Kiangsi and neighboring provinces in south-east China. It built up its military strength, seized the land and divided it among the peasants. It also established mass organizations and governments which involved the masses of people but were not controlled by them. In this way, the CCP carried out the agrarian revolution from above.

After four unsuccessful tries the Kuomintang finally drove the CCP out of Kiangsi in 1934. This began the heroic, 6,000-mile retreat known as the Long March. The Long March welded the party together and established Mao Tse-tung's leadership. The CCP set up its new base area in Shensi in the northwest in 1935. In December 1935, the CCP began to put itself forward as the force that could unite all classes in China and lead the struggle against Japan, which had invaded Manchuria in 1931. In 1937, when Japan invaded the rest of China as well, the CCP forced the Kuomintang into a "united front" to fight Japanese imperialism.

At this time, the CCP drew up a program for uniting the Chinese people, including sections of the landlords and capitalists, in the struggle to kick out the Japanese imperialists. This program was not socialist. From 1937 to 1945, the CCP emphasized nationalism and the liberation and unification of China. In all areas of its work it suppressed the struggle of the peasants and workers. In the areas under its control, the party junked the policy of land seizures to show the capitalists and landlords that it was serious about not threatening their interests. Where the peasants tried to take the land anyway, the CCP stopped them.

But the CCP did institute reforms. In place of the old bureaucracies, it set up new governments. The CCP reduced rents and interest and ended tax extortion, usury and corruption. It also set up schools and mass organizations.

But most important, it built up its army and waged a consistent struggle against the Japanese troops. Meanwhile, the Kuomintang spent most of its time avoiding battle with the Japanese and attacking the CCP and its armed forces. It was this situation, more than any other, that enabled the CCP to win the support of the peasants and almost all other classes of Chinese society. Between 1937 and 1945, the CCP, its armies and the mass organizations under its control grew through defections from the Kuomintang and by the liberation of new areas

in northern and central China. By the end of the war, the CCP ruled over areas that included millions of Chinese peasants.

By 1945, Japan had been defeated both in China and throughout east Asia and the Pacific. In China, an uneasy truce between the CCP and the Kuomintang lasted until 1947. From 1947 to 1949, the CCP fought the Kuomintang. Then in September 1949, the CCP drove out the Kuomintang armies and took control of all China.

## Was the 1949 revolution socialist?

But what kind of revolution was this and what kind of society did it set up? Was the Chinese Revolution a socialist revolution? Did it set China on the road to socialism?

To answer this, we need to ask another question: What is a socialist revolution?

As the Russian Revolution showed, a socialist revolution is a mass revolutionary uprising of the working class. This uprising includes strikes, demonstrations, pitched battles with the police and government troops. The workers seize factories, mines, and railroads. They set up factory committees, workers' councils (soviets), and other mass organizations which involve millions of people in running the economy.

The workers seize the state power. They smash the old capitalist state and set up a state of their own, based on the councils, committees and other organizations. They place the factories, mines, railroads, etc., in the hands of the state and smash the power of the capitalists. Through their revolutionary state—the dictatorship of the proletariat—the workers and their allies actually run society. And they embark on the path of building a new society in which there is no poverty, no oppression, no classes and no state.

As Marx showed, only the working class can lead this kind of revolution. The working class is strategically placed, concentrated in the cities—the heart of capitalist production. The workers are organized by the production process and learn to work collectively. Because of this, they are able to develop a socialist consciousness, to

learn the skills needed to overthrow capitalism and build a new society.

As Marx made clear in the **Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte** and other writings, the peasants cannot do this. They are removed from the cities, and dispersed over the countryside. The nature of small farming means that organization and cooperation among the peasants is hardly developed. In most societies, the peasants have few means to communicate among themselves and do not develop a revolutionary socialist consciousness.

In short, because of the nature of their livelihood, the peasants do not have the strategic position, the organization, and the consciousness required to make a socialist revolution. While they are capable of powerful revolutionary struggle, the peasants either follow the lead of another class, or their rebellions lead to little concrete social change.

The Chinese Revolution did not look like the socialist revolution sketched above. It was not led by the working class. In fact, the working class played no revolutionary role (indeed, almost no political role at all) after 1927. There was no mass workers' insurrection in 1949. The workers did not rise up, arms in hand, to overthrow their oppressors. They didn't form workers' councils and factory committees. And they didn't seize state power.

The CCP told the workers to stay at their jobs, not to strike, to keep working under the same bosses as before. Moreover, the CCP was not a workers' party. By 1949 only about one percent of the CCP was in the cities. The overwhelming majority of members were peasants, students and intellectuals.

The Chinese Revolution was not a workers' revolution, and it did not set up the dictatorship of the proletariat. The CCP program itself, written in 1945, explicitly denied that the dictatorship of the proletariat was the immediate goal of the revolution. Instead it called for two stages: first a "New Democracy," and a second stage, at some future time, when China would "grow over into socialism." Mao wrote, in **On Coalition Government**, that "a new-democratic state is different in principle from a socialist state under the dictatorship of the proletariat." In short, the CCP program did not even call on the workers to seize power.

Nor did the peasantry take power. Although the army and the party consisted largely of peasants, the peasantry as a class did not control either. Instead, the leadership of the party



Mao on horseback during civil war (1947). Communist Party built peasant-based armies to take power in China.

form unions or organize to defend themselves in any way. The foreign and domestic capitalists worked them into starvation, and if they died, the capitalists simply hired someone new.

At the end of World War I, there were three inter-related democratic tasks facing the Chinese revolutionary movement. The first was to drive out the imperialists and unite China. The second was to achieve the agrarian revolution—seize and divide up the land—and end the degradation of the peasantry. The third was to kick out the semi-feudal government and establish some form of democratic rule.

But which class would be able to carry these out?

The landlords were the main social base for the old regime. They supported the imperialists, who leached off the peasants. The landlords' very existence was bound up in the disunity of China and the exploitation of the peasants and workers.

The Chinese capitalists couldn't carry out the tasks. They could not lead the agrarian revolution because their roots were in the landlord class, most being absentee landlords them-

in revolutionary struggle.

The Russian Revolution in 1917 had shown that the working class could lead the peasants in a struggle to achieve the democratic tasks. They would do this not by putting the capitalists in power but by destroying Chinese capitalism and setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat. To do this the working class had to be led by a revolutionary party. Such a party existed in China; the Communist Party was formed in 1921. A key task of the party was to fight to establish the leadership of the workers over the peasants and other oppressed classes. If it failed in this task, the Chinese Revolution would come under the control of the capitalists, who would use it to establish their own class rule.

In 1923, the Communist International (Comintern) ordered the CCP to enter the Kuomintang (KMT—a party of the capitalists and middle-class intellectuals). The CCP did so and, under Joseph Stalin's orders, dissolved its own independent organizations.

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Chinese agriculture still uses primitive methods.



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controlled the peasantry. The leadership itself was essentially an elite of revolutionary nationalist-minded intellectuals.

In its many years of organizing in the countryside, this elite had built up a huge political and military machine, an embryonic state. Using this apparatus, and supported by its mass base in the countryside, the CCP surrounded the cities and seized state power. This meant that the workers were not involved in the revolution. The CCP then built a new state apparatus, uncontrolled by, and standing above, the workers and the peasants. Although the majority of the peasants and workers supported this government, it was not their government. It was a government of a new, nationalist, ruling class.

## State capitalism vs. workers' rule

In terms of what it achieved, the 1949 Chinese Revolution was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It kicked out the foreign imperialists and unified China to a greater extent than ever before. It destroyed the landlord class and the warlord armies based on it. The revolution eliminated the comprador capitalists and subordinated the smaller capitalists to the revolutionary government. It made possible the elimination of most of the starvation and disease which used to kill millions of people. In short, it cleared away the pre-capitalist rubbish and turned China from a pork barrel for the imperialists into a unified, independent nation.

But there were many differences between the Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution in 1949 and bourgeois revolutions in the past. Since the Chinese bourgeoisie was too small, weak and tied to imperialism to lead this struggle, and since the workers had been cut out of the action, this bourgeois-democratic revolution was led by revolutionary nationalist intellectuals. It destroyed the old capitalist system in China and laid the basis for state capitalism—a new form of capitalism first created by the Stalinist counter-revolution in Russia.

Capitalism is a social relation between classes, based on their relationship to the means of production. Capitalist society is divided into two

main classes: the working class, which owns only its labor-power (that is, its ability to work), and the capitalist class, which owns the means of production and hires labor for a wage. The workers have no choice but to sell their labor-power to the owners of the means of production. The capitalists pay the workers wages more or less equal to how much the workers need to survive and raise a family. But what the workers produce is worth more than



Lin Biao, Mao and Chou En-lai with PLA troops.

the wages paid and this extra value is pocketed by the capitalists. The workers are exploited.

This social relation, and the exploitation it involves, should not be confused with the form it takes in any given country. In the U.S., for example, capitalism is "private." The capital is owned and controlled by privately-owned banks and businesses. Capitalism makes production social by organizing the workers into huge factories, but profits remain in the "private" hands of the capitalists, who are a small minority.

Under state capitalism the same relation exists, but in a disguised form. Property is still private. In the sense that it is held apart from the control of the producers (the workers). But instead of individual ownership of the means of production, the state owns them. **Capitalist relations remain in force; the workers are still exploited.** State ownership of the means of production does not, by itself, mean socialism.

What matters is: Which class is the ruling class? Which class has state power? If the working class controls the state, then nationalization is the first step toward socialism. But if the working class does not control the state, then the capitalist class does. In that case, nationalizations only serve the interests of the capitalists.

Many Maoists would admit that the 1949 revolution was not a socialist revolution. They say that this was the first stage of a two-stage revolution; that a second stage followed later. For example, William Hinton, author of **Fanshen, Iron Oxen**, and other books on revolutionary China, claims that this second stage occurred around 1957. But what happened in 1957? Was there another revolution? Did the workers rise up and seize power? No.

In 1957 industry and agriculture were nationalized. The relations of production did not change; they remained capitalist. Only now the state itself owned the means of production. The nationalizations did not create socialism. They did not represent "New Democracy" turning into the dictatorship of the proletariat. The nationalizations only completed the consolidation of the state-capitalist ruling class.

## Struggle over how to develop China

China remained capitalist after the CCP took control, but important changes took place nevertheless. The new state-capitalist class was not the same as the old capitalist class. The old capitalists sold China to the imperialists; the state capitalists were nationalists. They wanted to make China

independent of the imperialists and build it into a strong country. They also wanted to end the curses of the old China: the mass poverty and starvation, the illiteracy and superstition.

As a result, they set out to industrialize and modernize the country. The industrialization of China, however, was no simple project. China was a poor and backward country. There was a small amount of industry, concentrated along the southern and eastern coasts and in Manchuria. Production was weak: China only produced 158,000 tons of steel in 1949. Almost four-fifths of the population was in the countryside, where they lived barely above (and often below) a subsistence level. The interior was cut off from industry because there were only 12,000 miles of railroad, which ran mainly between the industrial centers. Roads were little more than cart-paths.

In order to develop China, the CCP had to change all this. They had to build up industry, develop agricultural production and overcome the tremendous economic gap between the towns and the countryside.

The monumental task of industrializing China split the CCP into two warring factions. Each faction stood for a different approach to unifying and modernizing the country.

One faction, the so-called Reds, which was led by Mao, stressed the importance of keeping China independent of the imperialists. To increase production Mao's faction wanted to mobilize the Chinese people through political means ("moral incentives") and have them participate in (but not control) the management of production. To get the people to work hard and follow labor discipline, Mao urged them to "make sacrifices and go all out to build socialism." As part of this, Mao wanted to make sure that the CCP did not turn into an arrogant ruling elite ("new emperors"), who unnecessarily abused people and sucked up resources that could have been plowed back into production.

The other faction, the "experts," led by Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-p'ing, saw things differently. They wanted to unite China and overthrow direct imperialist control. Once in power, they put China's economic development ahead of everything else. They consistently sought foreign trade and the importation of foreign technology, believing that China could not modernize rapidly "by its own efforts." They wanted to downplay politics and get people to produce more by emphasizing wage differentials (more pay for more, or more skilled, work; less pay for less, or less skilled, work) and production bonuses ("material incentives"). Above all, they wanted to create a skilled, well-paid, technocratic elite that would manage the economy unhampered by worker participation. This is the faction, led by Teng, which now controls China.

## "Experts" lead in the early '60s

The struggle between these factions for leadership has boiled in the CCP in one form or another since 1949. At one point, this faction fight became so intense that it threatened the very rule of the state-capitalist class as a whole. This happened during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR). Since many people in the revolutionary movement believe that the Cultural Revolution was proof of the socialist nature of China, it is worth discussing it in some detail.

The immediate roots of the GPCR lay in the political and economic events of the late '50s and early '60s. In these years, a series of natural and political disasters had discredited Mao's policies. As a result, the "experts" were able to get some parts of their program adopted in 1961, and pretty much ran things for the next four years.

The "experts" put their people in leadership at all levels of the state apparatus and pushed Mao's followers



Chinese agriculture still uses primitive methods.



aside. They emphasized profit as the goal of industry. They allowed more and more land to be farmed for private profit. A number of peasants amassed sizable land holdings and hired poor peasants to work the land. The gap between the classes widened. Regional bureaucrats became more independent of Peking and in some cases began to build up their own private armies.

A similar process occurred in industry. To the "experts," then as now, the job of workers is to work, and the job of management is to manage. As opposed to Mao's political methods of boosting production, the "experts" stimulated output through competition for production bonuses and prizes. They reintroduced the absolute authority of plant managers and bureaucrats.

In the schools, the "experts" began to emphasize teaching Western cultural values, methods and technology. They downplayed politics and relied on grades as the measure of educational achievement, which discriminated against students from working-class and peasant backgrounds. As a result of these policies, unrest developed in the schools, particularly in the universities.

## China explodes: The Cultural Revolution

In 1966 this unrest exploded in the mass movement known as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Mao used the GPCR as a weapon in his struggle to defeat his opponents in the party, to re-establish his leadership and put his policies into practice.

The movement that became the GPCR began in November 1966 when Yao Wen-yuan wrote an article attacking a play called "Hai Jui Dismissed From Office." The play had been written in defense of a supporter of Liu Shao-chi who had been purged in 1959. In other words, Yao's article was an attack on the "expert" faction.

Liu and Teng suppressed circulation of this article until May of 1966. In that month radical students at Peking University put up wall posters demanding the article be published nationwide.

Until August of 1966, Mao tried to limit the GPCR to a struggle over "bourgeois ideology" in education and the arts and didn't name any specific opponents. But the movement grew as radical students formed the organizations known as the Red Guards. They began to put up wall posters attacking various CCP leaders. This forced Mao to change his tactics.

In August the CCP passed a resolution written by Mao which identified the target of the GPCR as the "handful of capitalist roaders in power." Mao stressed that 95 percent of the party was healthy and revolutionary and should unite against the five percent that was reactionary. He also tried to maintain leadership of the growing movement by raising radical slogans such as: "It is right to rebel" and "dare to make revolution."

Despite Mao's efforts to limit the movement to reformist goals, it soon flared completely out of control. Violent clashes broke out among both students and workers. Mass strikes rocked Shanghai and other cities.

By February 1967, the struggle was getting too dangerous for the Chinese rulers. Mao and Chou En-lai (then premier of China) gave up trying to use the movement and began working to stop it completely. They used the "95 percent" slogan to keep the majority of party cadre, who the masses wanted to get rid of, at their posts. China's armed force, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), was used to impose labor discipline under the slogan "grasp revolution, promote production." In response, wall posters appeared, questioning Mao and Chou's aims and calling Chou a "capitalist roader."

The PLA's main tool in restoring order was the "revolutionary three-in-one committees." Each committee had a

PLA representative, a party member, and a non-party worker. This gave control to the CCP and PLA, who used it to stop the struggle.

But the left wing was not easily defeated. In the summer and fall of 1967, leftists raided PLA armories and launched armed struggles. They burned the British embassy in Peking and organized anti-British riots in Hong Kong.

One of the most important developments in this period was the formation of Shen Wu-lien, a coalition of over 20 rebel organizations in Hunan Province. Shen Wu-lien declared that China was ruled by a "red capitalist class," denounced the PLA, and called for a new revolutionary party. In 1968 they issued a political manifesto which proclaimed:

**"We publicly declare that our object of establishing the People's Commune of China can be attained only by overthrowing the bourgeois dictatorship"**



September 1978: Hua reads warm CCP greeting to shah of Iran.

and the revisionist system of the revolutionary committees with brute force. Let the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie tremble before the true socialist revolution that shakes the whole world! The China of tomorrow will be the world of the Commune."

Eventually, Mao and Chou were able to put a stop to this movement. The PLA "restored order" in the factories, and Mao and Chou finally defeated the leftist students by sending worker and peasant work teams to the universities. Thousands of left-wing students and intellectuals were exiled to the countryside to "learn from the masses." The real aim was to break up their organizations, isolate them from one another and, most importantly, from the working class.

## Mao and "experts" strike a deal

The Cultural Revolution ended in defeat for the masses. A truce was declared in the party and a deal between Mao's faction and the "experts" was arranged. The "experts" kept their posts in the economy and foreign affairs, though "watchdogged" by a standing committee of the leaders of the GPCR (including the "Gang of Four"). The Maoists had control of propaganda and culture. Lin Piao, a leading member of Mao's faction, kept command of the PLA but the majority of officers supported the "experts." Not surprisingly, the majority of bureaucrats and functionaries supported the "experts" as well.

The Cultural Revolution did not lead to the "deepening of socialism" in China, as many Maoists claim. In fact, it showed that China was still dominated by a ruling class. In addition, it revealed that Mao was part of this ruling class; that he preferred to make a deal with his opponents within the state-capitalist class rather than line up with the masses. It was when the mass struggle threatened state-capitalist rule that Mao turned against it.

and brought it under control. And he was so frightened of the mass movement that he made a deal with the "expert" faction which laid the basis for their complete triumph after his death.

In the period following the Cultural Revolution, the "experts" consolidated their position in the party, army and state apparatus. On the domestic front, CCP policy was a compromise between Mao's policy and that of the "experts," but the "experts" increasingly gained the advantage. The target of Mao's political attacks was primarily the so-called ultra-left, those in his faction who rejected or were uncomfortable with Mao's deal.

This ultra-left included Lin Piao, the head of the army. Lin was also the author of "Long Live the Victory of People's War." This article outlined an aggressive anti-imperialist strategy which was never put into practice.

The shift to the right was increas-

ingly clear on the international front. As border clashes with the Russians occurred more frequently, Mao became increasingly worried about Russian imperialism. He was more and more skeptical that the policy of People's War could provide security from a Russian invasion. As a result, he and Chou began to orient openly toward making a deal with U.S. imperialism.

In 1971 and the years following, the foreign policy of the Chinese government became increasingly right-wing. Probably because of disagreements over this policy, Lin Piao was purged and eventually killed. (He was reportedly shot down in a plane trying to escape to Russia.) These developments further strengthened the hand of the "expert" faction in the Chinese government.

As long as Mao lived, however, the "experts" could not fully consolidate their power and openly implement their complete program. Mao retained too much prestige and influence. It was only logical that when he died, the "expert" faction would move quickly to wipe out the remnants of Mao's old grouping, and consolidate their own power.

As we have seen, this is precisely what happened.

For people who believed China to be socialist or heading in that direction, recent developments may be disorienting if not downright demoralizing. But in the long run, the impact of the events will be positive. For one thing, revolutionaries with illusions in China and Maoism may now have to reconsider their views. They may become open to revolutionary Trotskyism; to the view that the so-called socialist countries are really state-capitalist. But more important than this will be the reaction of the people in China.

In dropping its revolutionary socialist pretensions (or at least most of them), the Chinese state capitalists are making it easier for the Chinese workers and peasants to identify their class enemies. The masses will be able to see them for what they are: the Chinese capitalist class. In addition, the developments of the past few years may lay the basis for a future upsurge in the Chinese class struggle.

In the short run, Teng's policies may enjoy a considerable degree of popular support. He has promised more consumer goods, especially products from the West. He has indicated that he will end the puritanical social atmosphere that is undoubtedly stifling the young people. He has promised to stop the mass campaigns that the Chinese people are probably tired of. Moreover, he has promised to end the periodic purges that fed everybody's insecurity, and to introduce a more democratic regime. All of this is likely to build Teng's support among the people—for now.

But this will not last forever. Teng's vision of the future may be appealing to many Chinese workers and peasants, but what if reality doesn't match? The money to import consumer goods and the latest technology and military hardware will have to come from somewhere. This "somewhere" will be the people—through speedup, increased management harassment and stepped up "labor discipline" in general.

Material incentives, in the form of increased wage differentials and production bonuses, etc., may please the scientists, technicians and skilled workers. But what about the people on the bottom, the mass of workers and peasants?

While the middle classes and skilled workers may be able to buy decent homes, fancy clothes and other treats from the West, will the poorer sectors of society be satisfied with Coca-Cola? Will they find the cultural values of the West (which accompany Western imports free of charge) any less alienating than they are for those already "fortunate enough" to enjoy them?

Teng and his cynical friends promise more democracy to ease the insecurity of the middle classes and make themselves acceptable to the "democratic" imperialists, but the people may just decide to test their sincerity. Teng hopes that the wall poster "democracy" will allow the masses to blow off steam, but it can lead to the masses wanting to do something about their complaints other than just write about them.

Already, there have been mass demonstrations in Peking and elsewhere concerning this. On one march in Peking on January 8, demonstrators carried banners that said: "We don't want hunger, we don't want to suffer anymore. We want human rights and democracy." While some of these demonstrations are sponsored and organized by the regime, this may not be true of all of them.

One poster recently appeared in Peking demanding a review of the case of three young men from Canton. Apparently, these men were sentenced to "labor reform" in a coal mine for putting up a poster in 1974 that attacked the CCP as a new ruling class! Noting that a number of former CCP leaders who were purged in the past are being rehabilitated, the supporters of the Cantonese radicals demanded: "How about looking at the case of someone who had no fame or background?"

In short, the present CCP leadership may just be taking more of a gamble than they realize. They hope to buy off China's workers and peasants with wall-poster democracy and material incentives. However, if the Chinese people begin to struggle for their needs, and their struggle begins to threaten the state capitalists, will the rulers be able to suppress them? The Chinese workers now number in the tens of millions. They are more central to the economy and potentially more powerful than ever before. And they have not suffered a serious defeat since 1927.

When the working class goes into motion, the smug state capitalists will find that the revolutionary spirit of the Chinese workers is still very much alive.

# Steel and C

By PAUL BENJAMIN

Since November 11, striking steel haulers have turned Ohio and Pennsylvania highways into a battleground. Strikers posted at highway overpasses fire at scab trucks below. Truckers who leave their rigs unattended return to find slashed tires. Roving highway patrols have been organized by the strikers to slow down shipments of scab steel.

The violent strike, now more than two months old, was called by the Fraternal Association of Steel Haulers (FASH). FASH's members include most of the 30,000 independent truckers who transport steel from mills around Pittsburgh, and Gary, Indiana, to the fabricating plants.

## What truckers want

FASH is demanding exemption from the anti-trust laws that prohibit its members from bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choice. FASH members are also fighting for higher pay rates and improved working conditions, demanding a higher percentage of the shipping rate for the haulers and uniform leasing arrangements. In addition, FASH wants to eliminate excessive layover time for drivers and "deadhead"—the practice of giving drivers one-way trips with no return payloads.

The steel corporations and the government have joined hands with the shipping companies to try to break the strike. Seven steel companies have gotten injunctions against FASH in federal courts. Meanwhile, the FBI has harassed strikers who have interfered with shipments of scab steel.

All this has had an impact on FASH's ability to make the strike effective. On December 30, 400 FASH leaders met in Ohio to discuss their next step. They voted to continue the strike, deciding to increase picketing activities around Gary, where U.S. Steel Corporation's major plants are located. Earlier picketing had shut down a steel processing plant in Toledo, Ohio.

Despite these efforts, it appears that the FASH strike is losing steam and may end in defeat. Although some shipments were stopped or delayed, steel companies were able to keep up deliveries by switching to rail transport. Many drivers are being forced back to work through fear of losing their jobs.

One of the reasons for the weakness of the strike—and its violence and bitterness—is the fact that FASH is trying to fight two battles at once. Not only are the steel haulers taking on the shipping companies who have ripped them off for years, but the FASH leadership is



# Steel Haulers Fight Companies and Courts

By PAUL BENJAMIN

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FASH is demanding exemption from the anti-trust laws that prohibit its members from bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choice. FASH members are also fighting for higher pay rates and improved working conditions, demanding a higher percentage of the shipping rate for the haulers and uniform leasing arrangements. In addition, FASH wants to eliminate excessive layover time for drivers and "deadheading"—the practice of giving drivers one-way trips with no return payloads.

The steel corporations and the government have joined hands with the shipping companies to try to break the strike. Seven steel companies have gotten injunctions against FASH in federal courts. Meanwhile, the FBI has harassed strikers who have interfered with shipments of scab steel.

All this has had an impact on FASH's ability to make the strike effective. On December 30, 400 FASH leaders met in Ohio to discuss their next step. They voted to continue the strike, deciding to increase picketing activities around Gary, where U.S. Steel Corporation's major plants are located. Earlier picketing had shut down a steel processing plant in Toledo, Ohio.

Despite these efforts, it appears that the FASH strike is losing steam and may end in defeat. Although some shipments were stopped or delayed, steel companies were able to keep up deliveries by switching to rail transport. Many drivers are being forced back to work through fear of losing their jobs.

One of the reasons for the weakness of the strike—and its violence and bitterness—is the fact that FASH is trying to fight two battles at once. Not only are the steel haulers taking on the shipping companies who have ripped them off for years, but the FASH leadership is

also trying to replace the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) as the bargaining agent for steel haulers.

The Teamsters represent about 10,000 steel haulers through the Iron, Steel and Special Commodities Supplement to the Master Freight Agreement (MFA), which covers most truckers. However, Teamster leaders have always ignored the needs of the steel haulers. In 17 years—from 1950 to 1967—they won only one rate increase for steel haulers. Clearly, steel haulers have good reason to be dissatisfied with the IBT.

In 1967 steel haulers rebelled against the Teamster leadership by organizing a nationwide wildcat strike. They formed their own organization—FASH—after the strike was over. FASH led a nine-week strike in 1970 which won steel haulers higher rates and the right to vote on their own contract. It also organized a tie-up on the highways to protest higher gas prices in 1974.

But in 1976, Teamster leaders went to court and stripped steel haulers of the



Angry FASH strikers stop scab truck at U.S. Steel plant.

all steel haulers their own union, and allow FASH to participate in elections to choose a bargaining agent for steel haulers. But the NLRB has always ruled that the owner-operators in FASH are "small businessmen," with no union rights—including the right to strike. This means that as "businessmen," owner-operators

lifted on this basis. A federal court in Pennsylvania is considering this.

Most of FASH's strike demands are progressive reforms which all workers should support. They are fighting for the same things all workers want—a decent income and the right to bargain collectively for their needs. Moreover, they are fighting the enemies of all workers—the steel companies, the police and the courts.

Nevertheless, there are aspects of the strike that are questionable. First, FASH is demanding that the maximum weight limit on payloads be set at 80,000 pounds. Most states have set limits around 73,000 pounds. Raising the weight limit would increase the danger to all drivers. Some owner-operators are willing to take this risk because they are paid by weight. Teamster drivers, who are paid by the hour, however, would face increased danger with no raise in pay. Second and most important, FASH is striking and trying to split the Teamsters at precisely the moment the union is in contract negotiations with the trucking companies and is facing stepped-up attacks by the government. This raises serious questions about the motives of the FASH leadership which, at least in the past, has included small fleet owners who have little sympathy for the working class and its organizations.

As a result of FASH's tactics, Teamster members are divided in their opinions about the strike. In Somerset, Pennsylvania, 22 Teamsters who struck in solidarity with the FASH strike were fired. Others are sympathetic to the steel haulers, but oppose FASH's efforts to split the union. They also don't understand why FASH is striking now; instead of waiting until April when the MFA expires and all Teamsters are negotiating contracts.

Most owner-operators are not anti-union. They simply

see no reason to stay in a union whose leadership always sells them out. They are striking now because they have no say in the MFA contract and have every reason to suspect that their demands will be ignored and sold out in the negotiations over the MFA. Teamsters who ask the steel haulers to wait for the MFA expiration are asking them to trust the same leaders who took away their vote and betrayed them in 1976. Naturally, the steel haulers don't buy this.

## Oppose a split

Nonetheless, a split between the steel haulers and the Teamsters would only weaken all truckers. Militants should be fighting to unite their forces rather than divide them. Teamster militants can fight against a split by supporting the FASH strike and the legitimate demands of the steel haulers. This includes fighting inside the Teamsters' union for the steel haulers' right to elect their own representatives and vote on the supplement covering their work, as well as supporting FASH's economic demands. If the steel haulers see Teamster members supporting their struggle and defending their rights against the Teamster leadership, they will be more open to remaining in the union.

Moreover, the steel haulers can be a valuable ally for Teamster militants who are trying to drive out the bureaucrats and rebuild the union. In the past few years a powerful opposition movement has sprung up against Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons and his cronies. Teamster militants have everything to gain by joining forces with the steel haulers, who also hate the Teamster leadership. By supporting the steel haulers' strike, they can unite all the forces opposed to Fitzsimmons in a movement to take over the union.

## Who Are the Steel Haulers?

The great majority of steel haulers are owner-operators, independent truckers who own their own cabs. A few are small businessmen who own a fleet of trucks and hire workers to drive them. In addition, some steel haulers don't own a cab and work for the steel companies at hourly wages.

The owner-operators are required by federal regulations to lease their rigs to the shipping companies in return for a percentage of the shipping rate, anywhere from 60 to 75 percent. They must pay the full cost of fuel, upkeep, insurance, taxes and licenses out of this share of the percentage. Many work 80 to 100 hours a week and still clear only about \$15,000 a year after expenses. This is less than most Teamster drivers earn.

Most owner-operators dream of earning enough to start their own trucking business. But in fact their "independence" is largely a sham. Many go deeply into debt to buy their cabs, and end up working for the banks. Moreover, the long hours and the heavy loads combine to make steel hauling a very dangerous job. Many drivers are killed driving overweight loads or by shifting loads which crush them in their cabs.

right to vote on the supplement. Then they negotiated a contract which cut the steel haulers' pay rate on shipments for each of the past three years.

Now the Teamster leadership is cooperating with the companies and the cops to crush the current strike. Union officials are helping the police escort trucks through FASH patrols. They are supporting companies who fire drivers for refusing to work. In Monroeville, Pennsylvania, a Teamster Local 800 official organized his own goon squad to attack a FASH rally.

FASH has gone to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) three times trying to decertify the Teamsters as the bargaining agent for steel haulers. It has requested the NLRB to grant

can be charged with "conspiring to restrict interstate commerce" under federal anti-trust laws if they organize job actions. The federal courts have backed up the NLRB by issuing permanent injunctions against FASH strikes in both 1971 and 1974.

## Is FASH anti-union?

FASH leader Bill Hill claims that in 1975 FASH kicked out the fleet owners who did not actually work for a living as steel haulers, restricting its membership to owner-operators and unionized drivers. He says FASH now deserves recognition as a labor organization, and is trying to get the injunctions



60 Years After Her Murder

# Remember Rosa Luxemburg!

## — A Great Revolutionary Fighter

By JANET LATHAM  
and WILLIAM FALK

On January 15, 1919, 60 years ago this month, Rosa Luxemburg was murdered in Berlin, Germany. She was killed by people who called themselves socialists. But in fact Rosa Luxemburg was a great revolutionary leader of the workers' movement, although today few workers have heard of her. The world is ruled by people who try to stamp out all trace of Rosa Luxemburg and what she stood for. Like other revolutionaries, she sometimes made mistakes, but she clearly understood that class war was a reality, and that either the working class would win this war through socialist revolution or capitalism would create barbarism. And Luxemburg hated the people who called themselves socialists, but who really wanted the workers to beg for favors or meekly suggest how capitalism might be better run.

Rosa Luxemburg was born in Poland in 1871. At that



Workers' militia in Germany, 1919.

in Poland, there were a large number of Polish revolutionaries in Switzerland. (At that time all Marxist revolutionaries called themselves and their organizations "Social-Democratic.")

But what Luxemburg is best known for, and what she was killed for, is the

economy as a whole had had a chance to grow. German imperialism was beginning to be a force outside Europe, and this added to the wealth of the country. On the basis of this prosperity, some of the leading members of the socialist movement of Germany began to think that capitalism had solved its biggest problems.

### Reformists defend capitalism

One of these leaders was Eduard Bernstein. Bernstein said that trade unions, by winning better working conditions, would eliminate exploitation. And the workers' party, by winning more seats in the parliament, would enable the workers to take it over and use it for their own purposes. In other words, Bernstein said that capitalism was getting nicer and nicer for the workers and would some day turn into socialism.

As a result, Bernstein called for the SPD to devote all its time to organizing the trade unions and winning elections. He wanted the SPD to officially state that the socialist revolution was unnecessary and the road forward was to work for reforms within capitalism. He called for junking anything Marx or Engels said that contradicted this. Because he wanted to revise Marxism, Bernstein and his followers became known as "revisionists."

Bernstein's theories split the party into three wings: the revisionists, the left wing led by Luxemburg, and a group in the middle led by Karl Kautsky. Kautsky's group didn't want to junk orthodox theory, but didn't differ with Bernstein over what the party should actually do. (Later Kautsky's group became known as the "Marxist Center." For this reason, "centrist" is still a name for groups that are revolutionary in words but reformist in practice.)

Luxemburg was one of

Bernstein's sharpest opponents. She was one of the first to realize that Kautsky attacked Bernstein but didn't differ with him in practice. Luxemburg knew that the period of economic boom and political calm was temporary. She knew that when it was over the capitalists would attack the workers' living standards and organizations. She knew that they would never give up their power without a fight. As a result, she argued that the workers could only win socialism by seizing power through a revolution. Use the democracy we have now, Luxemburg urged, to organize the workers for the revolution that is necessary to save them from ruin. Rosa Luxemburg fought stubbornly for this position and rallied the party's left wing against Bernstein.

As a result of her efforts, Bernstein's resolutions were defeated at the SPD conventions. But in practice the Social-Democratic Party became more and more reformist. The SPD had trade unions; it had soccer clubs; it had youth groups; it had representatives in parliament; it had daily newspapers in dozens of German towns; it had several theoretical magazines and journals. It had all these things but it wasn't organizing and training workers to make a socialist revolution.

### Luxemburg's fight: reform or revolution

The fight between reform and revolution was fought over and over in the German party. Sometimes the debate took different forms, but underneath the issue was the same.

One of the most important of these fights was over the political mass strike. In 1905 the workers in Russia rose up against the Tsar. Railroad workers stopped the trains, factory workers stopped the machines and set up workers' councils (soviets). The soviets were made up of

representatives from all the factories and workplaces. They organized and coordinated strikes and other struggles against the Tsar and the capitalists. Workers often struck over political issues rather than just economic ones. And they organized huge demonstrations in the cities and fought pitched battles with the police and army. After a year, the revolution was defeated. But the 1905 Revolution prepared the Russian workers for the Revolution of 1917. And it gave new hope to revolutionaries all over Europe.

Luxemburg, suffocating in the atmosphere of the SPD, saw the mass political strike as a tactic the working class could use to organize and build for the revolution. She saw that at the heart of the mass strike were the very things that the electoral strategy of the SPD lacked: It was a direct attack at the capitalists; it used the most important power the working class has (the power to withhold our labor); it organized thousands of workers for united action; and it prepared them for future struggles.

To Rosa Luxemburg, the mass strike symbolized all the creative revolutionary energy of the working class. It was the opposite of the reformist tactics of the majority of the SPD.

The party majority was scared of the mass strike for the same reasons that it appealed to Luxemburg. At most, they saw it as a



Rosa Luxemburg.

time, a large section of Poland had been taken over by Russia. The Polish language was suppressed and any expression of Polish nationalism was forbidden. In other words, Poland was an oppressed nation controlled by imperialist Russia.

Rosa Luxemburg had all the wrong qualifications for getting ahead in Russian society: She was Polish and not Russian; she was a Jew, not a Christian; and she was a woman instead of a man.

In high school, Luxemburg made contact with revolutionary organizations. As a teenager, she was involved in organizing workers' circles, leading strikes and helping to create the beginnings of a trade union movement.

After high school, Luxemburg went to Switzerland to study. But much of her time went to the work of the Polish Social-Democratic party. Because of repression

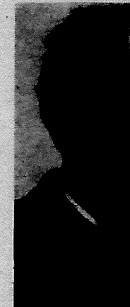
years and years she fought for revolution against the reformists in the workers' movement in Germany.

### Germany and the Social Democrats

Rosa Luxemburg moved to Berlin, Germany, in 1898, when she was 27, and began to work with the German Social-Democratic Party (SPD). The SPD was the largest and most important party of the international socialist movement. It had hundreds of thousands of working-class members, but little revolutionary experience.

Germany was booming economically in the years Luxemburg first lived there. Germany had become a single unified country in 1870. Since then, industry, the banking system and the

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Karl Liebknecht.

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attitude was their action at a  
conference of SPD trade  
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gates voted not to discuss  
the mass strike at all and  
passed a motion which read:  
"The trade unions need  
peace and quiet above all."

From 1905 to 1914, the  
right, left, and center in the  
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the party.

After several years of prep  
(Continued on page 15)



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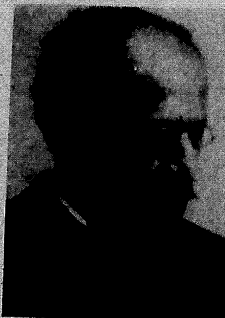
self-organized, peaceful revolution that could be used to bring a new law through parliament. Typical of their attitude was their action at a conference of SPD trade unionists in 1905; the delegates voted not to discuss mass strike at all and passed a motion which read: "Trade unions need to be quiet above all." From 1905 to 1914, the left, and center in the SPD fought over the role of the trade unions, the social-democratic approach to elections, the purpose of the mass strike, the nature of imperialism and other questions. In 1914, the struggle over revolution flared up. But this time it split the party.

After several years of preparation

(Continued from page 14)

aration by the major imperialist powers, World War I, between Germany and Austria on one side, and England, France and Russia on the other, began in August 1914. For years the SPD had committed itself to opposing the coming war. The party argued that the war could only be an imperialist war, a war for loot and plunder, that the workers had to oppose. At the very least, this meant that the party's members in parliament had to vote against war resolutions and budget appropriations for the war machine.

On August 4, 1914, a vote to approve war credits came up in the German parliament. The SPD leaders ordered the party's members



Top: Eduard Bernstein.  
Bottom: Karl Kautsky.

in parliament to vote for the war credits. This was a betrayal of the party's pledge to oppose the imperialist war. "Since August 4, 1914, German Social Democracy has been a stinking corpse," wrote Luxemburg. A few days later, one member of the SPD left wing, Karl Liebknecht, broke ranks and began to vote against the war. But most of the Social Democracy helped the government mobilize the trade unions and other working-class organizations for the war.

Under the pressure of the patriotic fever, the Kautsky group had dropped all pretense and openly revealed itself to be as nationalistic and reformist as the party's right wing. Lenin, who had been fooled by Kautsky and had often taken Kautsky's side in disputes with Luxemburg, was shocked and disgusted. In October 1914, he wrote: "I hate and despise Kautsky now more than anyone else.... Rosa Luxemburg was right when she wrote, long ago, that Kautsky has the 'subservience of a theoretician' serving the majority of the party, serving opportunism."

Luxemburg, Liebknecht

and other revolutionaries attempted to carry out a revolutionary internationalist fight against the war. In 1915 Rosa Luxemburg was sent to jail for five months for "inciting German soldiers to disobedience."

She was released in February of 1916, and organized the Spartacus League, a revolutionary organization that fought against the imperialist war. By 1916, the German people were growing tired of the war. They were suffering from lack of food and clothes and the loss of loved ones in the Kaiser's war for imperialist loot. On May Day, Karl Liebknecht, also a member of Spartacus, made an anti-war speech before thousands of workers. He ended his speech with the shout, "Down with the war! Down with the government!" and was arrested on the spot. The day his sentence was read, 55,000 munitions workers went on strike. In July 1916, Luxemburg was re-arrested and held in "protective custody" for the rest of the war.

But it wasn't only in Germany that anti-war sentiment was growing. In March 1917 (February on the Russian calendar), Russian workers overthrew the Tsar and a coalition government took power. The Russian Revolution had begun. The struggle mounted throughout the year.

In November 1917 (October on the Russian calendar), Russian workers rose up again, this time against the fake socialists of the coalition government (the Kautskys of Russia) and took power in their own hands. This was the "October Revolution of 1917," led by the Bolsheviks.

The imperialist war continued, but the real contest was now within each country. The real nature of the war was becoming clear to the workers of Europe, and they began to mutiny and rebel, especially in Germany and France. By November 1918, the German bourgeoisie, faced with no prospect for a military victory, and with increasing rebellion at home, surrendered.

Within Germany, the bourgeoisie was forced to retreat in the face of the struggles of the workers. The workers had risen up and formed councils in many cities. In the navy the sailors mutinied and demanded that the Kaiser be thrown out and a workers' republic be set up. The masses of the German workers, peasants, soldiers and sailors supported the revolution. The Kaiser fled the country and the power was turned over to the German Social-Democratic Party.

The SPD had proven throughout the war that it would be a loyal servant of capitalism. But a majority of the workers still looked to the SPD as their own party, and the bourgeoisie thought they could use it to prevent the workers from overthrowing capitalism.

The workers opened the prison doors and liberated one of their heroes, Rosa Luxemburg, with the same revolution that put her dead-



After Rosa Luxemburg died, the fake socialists in Germany seized on her mistakes to justify their capitulations to capitalism. Lenin defended Luxemburg as a great revolutionary, saying: "Eagles may at times fly lower than chickens, but chickens can never rise to the height of eagles. In spite of her mistakes Luxemburg was—and remains for us—an eagle."

last enemies in power. Along with Karl Liebknecht (who had been released from jail shortly before), she took over the day-to-day leadership of the Spartacus League once again. At the end of December 1918, they joined with other revolutionaries to form the Communist Party of Germany, which declared its solidarity with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

## German revolution grows

Despite the flight of the Kaiser and the formation of a republic, the discontent and rebellions of the German working class were still growing. The bourgeoisie and the SPD became increasingly afraid that the German workers would make a second revolution and form a soviet government in Germany, just like in Russia. To prevent this, the bourgeoisie and the Social Democrats plotted to attack the revolutionary workers and kill their leaders, first and foremost Rosa Luxemburg. In January 1919, they provoked the young revolutionary workers

of Berlin into an uprising before they were strong enough to win.

Although Rosa Luxemburg knew that the uprising could only end in a slaughter, she joined it and tried to lead it as best she could. She refused to leave the city even though she knew that the Social Democrats were looking for her. On January 15, they got her. Government troops kidnapped Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. They bashed their heads in with rifle butts, shot them, and threw their bodies into a canal.

The young workers were left confused and leaderless. And the government smashed the uprising.

Rosa Luxemburg lived and died for a Marxist, working-class revolution. The struggles she fought, the years she spent in prison, the life she sacrificed—these were for the same principles, the same ideals for which we fight today.

Rosa Luxemburg made mistakes. She did not defend the right of nations to self-determination. She did not understand why revolutionaries must support the rights of oppressed national-

ities in order to win them to socialism.

When she was in prison in 1918 she incorrectly criticized the Bolshevik government in Russia. When the Bolsheviks legalized peasants' division of the land and dispersed the Constituent Assembly dominated by the landlords and capitalists, she did not understand why and opposed these measures. When she was released, however, she changed her view and did not publish the essay she had written about this.

Most important, she did not understand democratic centralism. She supported the Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks in the 1903 split of the Russian party. And she hesitated to split the SPD, even after it supported the war. She delayed forming a Bolshevik-type revolutionary party in Germany until December of 1918.

But despite these and other mistakes, Rosa Luxemburg was a great revolutionary. She always saw things from the viewpoint of the working class and she always fought the smug reformists and centrists, the fake socialists who thought they knew what was best for the oppressed masses.

A few years later, a new set of fake socialists tried to use Luxemburg's mistakes to justify their own anti-Leninist policies. Lenin compared those people to the chickens in an old Russian proverb: "Eagles may at times fly lower than chickens, but chickens can never rise to the height of eagles."

He concluded with words that speak for us today: "In spite of her mistakes," he said, "she was—and remains for us—an eagle. And not only will Communists all over the world cherish her memory, but her biography and her complete works will serve as useful manuals for training many generations of Communists all over the world."

## Books by Rosa Luxemburg available from Haymarket Books are:

- Reform or Revolution (From the fight against Bernstein).....\$1.95
- The Mass Strike, Political Parties & the Trade Unions (On the lessons of 1905).....\$1.25
- The Junius Pamphlet (On the war-time betrayals of the SPD).....\$1.60
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# EDITORIALS

## Defend Kampuchean Independence!

The Vietnamese ruling class is waging an imperialist war against its neighbor, Kampuchea (Cambodia). The Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea has been overthrown and a new government, a client regime of Vietnam, has been set up.

In December an army of 100,000 Vietnamese troops and 20,000 Kampuchean opponents of the Pol Pot government invaded Kampuchea. By January 7 they captured the Kampuchean capital, Phnom Penh, and overran most of the country. Kampuchean army units are continuing to resist the invaders with heavy fighting.

From the beginning of the serious clashes between Vietnam and Kampuchea in late 1977, we said: "Revolutionaries should defend Kampuchea against the expansionism of Vietnam. Despite the fact that the Kampuchean Stalinists have resorted to various barbarous methods to consolidate their rule, revolutionaries should defend Kampuchea's right to exist as an independent nation." (*Torch/La Antorcha*, February 15, 1978.)

The apparent conquest of Kampuchea has exposed the imperialist ambitions of the Vietnamese ruling class. Revolutionaries should condemn the invasion and defend the national rights of the Kampuchean people.

The Vietnamese government and its Russian allies deny that Vietnamese troops are taking part in the fighting. They claim the war is a liberation struggle by Kampuchean revolutionaries opposed to the "reactionary clique" of Pol Pot. This is a lie.

It is true that the Pol Pot government was a brutal dictatorship that oppressed and terrorized the Kampuchean people. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have confirmed reports of forced resettlement, destruction of towns and villages, forced labor, starvation and murder in Kampuchea. The Kampuchean people have every reason to rise up and overthrow this regime.

But nothing of the sort is taking place. The "Kampuchea National United Front for National Salvation," which the Vietnamese government claims is leading the "uprising," was actually formed on December 3, only a few weeks before the invasion. Most of its members are former army officers or lower-level officials of the Pol Pot government, who lost out in power struggles within the Kampuchean ruling class. These "liberators" helped enforce the oppression of the Kampuchean people until they were kicked out of the government and fled to Vietnam. Now they are trying to climb back into power on the backs of the Vietnamese army.

The only Kampuchean forces taking part in the war are 20,000 refugees recruited and trained by the Vietnamese government. According to most reports they have played almost no role in the fighting. Instead, they are following the Vietnamese advance, occupying the territory conquered for them by Vietnamese troops.

The Kampuchean military forces are not being defeated by a popular insurrection of the Kampuchean people. They are being beaten by the overwhelming force of an invading army. The Vietnamese invasion included almost twice as many troops as the entire Kampuchean army. The Vietnamese military has over 1,000 tanks at its disposal. The Kampuchean army is rumored to have only 10. The Vietnamese have an air force of over 300 planes. The Kampuchean army has none. In conventional warfare, it's no surprise that the Vietnamese can defeat the outnumbered and outgunned Kampuchean army.

It is equally false to claim that the Vietnamese government is invading Kampuchea only to liberate the masses from their oppression, and will recall its troops once they have crushed Pol Pot's army. Those who believe this should take a close look at the Vietnamese occupation of Laos.

Four years after the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Laos, between 25,000 and 50,000 Vietnamese troops remain in the country. Rice grown by Laotian farmers is confiscated to feed the occupying army. Village leaders say their villages are visited and searched by Vietnamese units up to five times a month. Despite its formal independence, Laos is really a client state of Vietnam. This is a warning of what lies in store for the Kampuchean people.

The Vietnamese ruling class wants to gobble up Laos and Kampuchea into a "Southeast Asia Federation" under its domination. They already control Laos. Now they are trying to conquer Kampuchea. Under the cloak of "liberation," the Vietnamese leaders are building an empire.

The war in Kampuchea raises fundamental questions about the nature of the regimes now in power in Southeast Asia. Both Vietnam and Kampuchea claim to be socialist states. In reality the governments of these countries represent a new capitalist class, based on state-owned industry and land. Workers in industry

sell their labor-power for wages just as they do in other capitalist countries. Peasants work in the fields with no voice in agricultural policy. The oppressed masses have no control over the state which directs their labor. Instead, the wealth they produce goes into the hands of the state-capitalist ruling class.

Like all capitalists, the Vietnamese rulers try to increase the resources under their command by expanding at the expense of weaker neighbors. The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea cannot be excused as a "mistake" by an otherwise progressive or socialist regime. It is the action of a capitalist ruling class driven by the need to accumulate wealth not only by exploiting the working masses within its borders, but also by imperialist aggression against less powerful rivals.

Many revolutionaries in this country are confused and demoralized by the events in Southeast Asia. They believed that the victory of the national liberation forces in Southeast Asia against U.S. imperialism in 1975 meant the triumph of socialist revolution throughout the area. They expected a

new era of peace and prosperity to follow this victory. Instead, they are confronted with the sight of one "socialist" state waging a war of conquest against another.

The truth is that the peoples of Southeast Asia won political independence by driving out U.S. imperialism. But they did not achieve socialism. Instead they are enslaved by a new form of capitalism—state capitalism.

The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea is a clear sign that the old forms of capitalist oppression are re-emerging under the new rulers of Southeast Asia. Laos and Kampuchea are once again under the thumb of a foreign power. Vietnamese workers and peasants are used as cannon fodder for the ambitions of their leaders.

The struggle for socialist liberation in Southeast Asia remains to be won. It will not be completed by state-capitalist rulers masquerading as liberators. Instead, it can only be won when the workers and peasants of Southeast Asia rise up in a new revolution, smash their new masters, and set up governments actually controlled by themselves. □

## Support The Body Politic

The *Body Politic*, Canada's most widely known gay and lesbian publication, went on trial January 2 in Toronto, Ontario. This is a political trial. What is at stake is the right to be openly gay and to discuss issues of importance to the gay community.

Specifically, Pink Triangle Press (publisher of *The Body Politic*) and its three officers are charged with "possession for the purpose of distribution of obscene written matter" and "use of the mails for the purpose of distributing... obscene, indecent, immoral or scurrilous" material.

The first charge refers to *The Body Politic's* book series carrying *Loving Man*. *Loving Man* is a male sex manual similar to *The Joy of Sex* or any of the scores of heterosexual sex manuals that are available in any city department store or bookshop.

The second charge refers to an article on youth sexuality in the December 1977/January 1978 issue of *The Body Politic* called "Men Loving Boys Loving Men." This article discussed the possibilities, problems, and good and bad experiences of older men and adolescents having sexual relationships. The right wing flipped out over this. Not only do they want us to believe that homosexuality is immoral, but we are also supposed to pretend that young people's sexuality doesn't exist.

After several attacks in the Toronto Sun by a well-known anti-gay columnist, Claire Hoy, the police pornography squad raided *The Body Politic* offices on December 30, 1977. (See *Torch/La Antorcha*, January 15-February 14, 1978, for details.) They confiscated everything in the office, including all past and present subscribers' lists. Six days later, the defendants now on trial were indicted.

During the trial it has become clear that the government's case has nothing to

do with what is, or (as in this case) isn't, obscene. Rather they have put homosexuality itself on trial. The main prosecution witnesses are the two most famous gay-baiters in Canada.

One is columnist Claire Hoy, whose attacks led to the police raid in the first place. Hoy has said that defining a "decent homosexual" is like trying to define a "decent sleazebag."

The other witness is the Reverend Glen Campbell, whose organization (Renaissance Canada) was the Canadian sponsor for Anita Bryant's tours.

If *The Body Politic* is found guilty, each of the three officers of the corporation could be sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a \$2,000 fine. And a legal precedent will be set for future prosecutions. But much more important will be the political precedent—that being gay itself is obscene.

*The Body Politic* is on trial for exposing the myths about people's sexuality that society tries to maintain in order to oppress us all. It must be defended. We call on all working-class and oppressed people to support *The Body Politic's* fight against this right-wing attack. Final arguments in the trial will be heard January 16. In the next issue, the *Torch/La Antorcha* will report on the trial and the verdict. □

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# Anti-Ap Sets

(Continued from page 3)  
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But the decay of the Chinese Revolution, Cuba's support of Russia against China, Vietnam's aggression against Kampuchea, Ethiopia's aggression against Eritrea and the Ogaden, and other events have proven the dangers of romantic illusions in leaders of national liberation struggles. All lib-

# "Rastafari

(Continued from page 7)  
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new era of peace and prosper- ity to follow this victory. Instead, they are confronted with the sight of one "social- ist" state waging a war of conquest against another.

The truth is that the peo- ples of Southeast Asia won political independence by driving out U.S. Imperialism. But they did not achieve socialism. Instead they are enslaved by a new form of capitalism—state capital- ism.

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The struggle for socialist liberation in Southeast Asia remains to be won. It will not be completed by state-capitalist rulers masquerading as liberators. Instead, it can only be won when the work- ers and peasants of South- east Asia rise up in a new revolution, smash their new masters, and set up govern- ments actually controlled by themselves. □

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# Anti-Apartheid Meeting Sets April Actions

(Continued from page 3) the writers wanted to ex- clude anyone who did not have complete political agreement with the leader- ships of the national libera- tion organizations.

But the decay of the Chinese Revolution, Cuba's support of Russia against China, Vietnam's aggression against Kampuchea, Ethio- pia's aggression against Eritrea and the Ogaden, and other events have proven the dangers of romantic illu- sions in leaders of national liberation struggles. All lib-

eration forces must be de- fended against imperialism. But communists must be political opponents of any bourgeois-nationalist leader- ships, no matter how "Marx- ist-Leninist" their words. Only a socialist revolution, with the workers leading the peasants, will fully defeat imperialism.

The Maoist policy of all- or-nothing "political and mil- itary" support has two dan- gerous sides to it. Either they capitulate to the na- tionalist leaders (including neo-colonialists like Nkomo of the Patriotic Front)—or

they refuse to support genu- ine liberation struggles, be- cause they don't have full agreement.

In Angola, for example, the Maoists supported the neo-colonialist FNLA and UNITA against the radical- nationalist MPLA; Mao was in alliance with the CIA and the South African army. The Maoists also tell the African liberation movements not to take arms or aid from state- capitalist Russia or Cuba. Real supporters of African liberation forces would ad- vise them to take arms from wherever they can—but to

watch out for Russian imper- ialist treachery.

Fortunately, most of the independent militants do not agree with the Maoists on Angola or taking aid from Cuba and Russia. Many of these militants are young and new to political move- ments. Many were shocked and disoriented by the orga- nized "left" with its reform- ism and sectarianism. On January 13, many NECLSA independents held a meeting at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, to dis- cuss the future of the move- ment.

The left wing of the move- ment needs a non-sectarian

unity of all those who hate the reformism of the SWP/ YSA and the CP/YWLL. To- gether we can take the move- ment from the more elite campuses to the working class. We must go to the unions, the prisons, the community colleges and the Black and Latin communi- ties. What we need is not alliances with union bureau- crats and liberal Democrats, like the reformists want, but direct ties to rank-and-file workers and community ac- tivists.

We should work together to build the southern African liberation support movement into a revolutionary anti-im- perialist movement. □

## "Rastafarians in solidarity"

(Continued from page 7) any workers' party! There- fore we support it 100 per- cent.

We hope to hear that this convention was fruitful, and a formal agreement on strategy adopted, based on the revolutionary objectives of the working class.

Nevertheless, we have to in some ways try to mature our political ideological con- sciousness since we have seen a disarray in the capi-

talist economic system. For us to support this conven- tion and the just struggles of the world we therefore impart our contribution as "Ras- tafarians in solidarity" on a world basis. We want the brothers and sisters to know that their struggle for nation- al freedom cannot be pas- sive. Neither can they dem- onstrate only the rottenness of capitalism, but also the unavoidability of the new social order; too long we've been asking for freedom. We

support the revolutionaries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

Revolutionaries of all fac- tions unite! And defeat imper- ialism and its running dogs! Workers and op- pressed youths of the world unite! Wage class war on all reactionary fronts! No one will break your chains but yourselves!

Comrade CD, and supporters of the convention Eastern Correctional Facility Napanoch, NY

## RSL Replies...

(Continued from page 5) about the struggle for free- dom. We say openly—in our literature, in our chants, at demonstrations, when we talk to people—that the only way gay people will win their freedom is by uniting with all working and oppressed peo- ple to overthrow the capital- ist system which exploits and oppresses us all. To real revolutionary socialists, social- istic revolution isn't just a good idea, but the goal we dedicate and fight our whole lives for.

Nationally the Revolution- ary Socialist League has been among the loudest and most militant voices in the immediate battles for gay rights legislation. You and

everyone else who has seen, heard or marched with our contingents in gay rights demonstrations know this. We stand on our record. But this has never stopped us, and will never stop us, from showing people how to build our movement into one that can win the war for complete gay liberation—death to the capitalist system. This is the task of revolutionary social- ists. For only if we win that war will we be able to build a new, socialist society based on freedom and self-determi- nation for all the working and oppressed people of the world.

Bruce Glauber  
For the RSL

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