

Star Wars Disaster

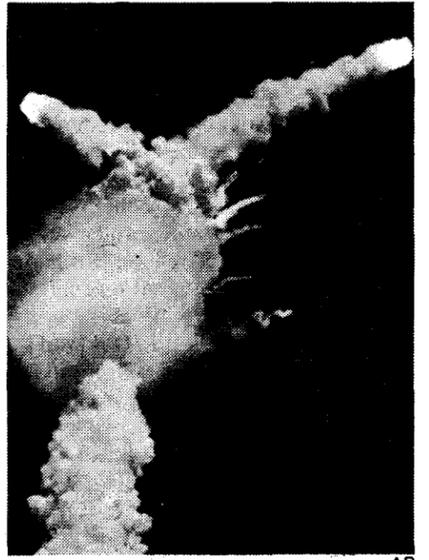
Challenger Blows Up In Reagan's Face

For Ronald Reagan, the Teacher in Space was to be a great prop. "Hero Hour Is Near" heralded the 28 January *Wall Street Journal*, referring to the president's pet gimmick of interrupting his State of the Union speech in order to present a hometown American role model. Unable to talk directly with god in real-time, the Great Communicator would do the next best thing, speaking to the heavens by sending greetings to Christa McAuliffe aboard the space shuttle

Challenger. So the shuttle *had to be* launched by the 28th—the weather be damned—less than 24 hours after a scrubbed mission, the third time it had been delayed in as many days. But the result was quite the opposite of "upbeat," as seven human beings blew up in living color on TV while kids watched in classrooms across the country.

What we feel toward the astronauts is no more and no less than for any people who die in tragic circum-

stances, such as the nine poor Salvadorans who were killed by a fire in a Washington, D.C. basement apartment two days before. They probably never explained to Mrs. McAuliffe that she would be riding atop an allegedly "controlled" bomb. She thought it would be "the ultimate field trip," like going to Disneyland only better. But it's not simply that there are seven dead people who were sitting on top of half a million gallons of liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen and



something went wrong. The nationally orchestrated mourning over the Challenger explosion is an expression of something else, namely grief at what's seen as a blow to American imperialism.

Millions of Americans saw it as a
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Beware of Coups "Made in U.S.A."

Haiti: Duvalier Flees

"The devil Duvalier is gone!" joyous crowds shouted as they swarmed around the presidential palace in Haiti's capital of Port-au-Prince, February 7. In the dead of night, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier and his haughty, fashionable wife climbed into the dictator's favorite BMW sedan and drove to the airport, where they joined relatives and close collaborators to board a U.S. Air Force C-141 transport plane, its engines running, and took off in total darkness for exile in France. Since last November a continuing revolt by youths, workers and slum residents had rocked the black Caribbean republic. But in the end, it was Washington that removed its Haitian puppet—replacing him with an equally pliant military-civilian junta. Just to make sure that everything went as scheduled, the U.S. Second Fleet took up positions off Haiti for "maneuvers" scheduled to start February 6.

This scene marked the end of 28 years of bloody rule by the Duvalier dynasty. The country voodoo doctor "Papa Doc" had come to power in 1957 by demagogically manipulating black resentment against the mulatto social and economic elite. Duvalier Sr. ruled through the terror of the feared "Tontons Macoutes" (bogyman in Creole), a private army of thugs who turned Haiti into what Graham Greene called a "nightmare republic" in his chilling novel, *The Comedians*. The dictator was kept in power by U.S. support: the Macoutes were trained by a U.S. military mission; during popular unrest in 1962 liberal Democrat John Kennedy dispatched a gunboat to prop up the regime; the transition to "Baby Doc" in 1971 was guaranteed by godfather Nixon. Ever since American Marines ruled the country from 1915 to 1934, Haiti has been a de facto U.S. protectorate.

And when the time came to put in a

For Workers Revolution!



Outside presidential palace, Haitian masses celebrate fall of bloody "Baby Doc" regime.

new front man for imperialist domination, the decision was taken in Washington. On January 31, just as Duvalier was declaring a state of siege, White House spokesman Larry Speakes announced to the press that the Haitian leader had fled the country and a new government was in place. Far from a "blunder," this was an eviction notice. Just in case Duvalier Jr. didn't get the message, Secretary of State Shultz repeated it two days later with a call for elections; and

Reagan's main man in the Caribbean, Jamaican strongman Seaga (known at home as CIAga) sent an emissary to warn of the danger if he didn't leave.

Now Washington is taking credit for putting together the new junta, which includes several Old Guard Duvalierists and a pro-U.S. "human rights" lawyer for democratic cover. The new junta is led by General Namphy, head of the regular army and a long-time Duvalier crony; it includes the head of the U.S.-

trained special forces, the "Léopards," who shot down young protesters in Gonaïves. The junta's first task was to organize Baby Doc's escape; then it clamped on a 2 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew, closing the borders to keep out civilian politicians returning from exile. *This is Duvalierism without Duvalier.*

Duvalier's flight caused explosions of joy in the Haitian exile community. In Miami's Little Haiti there was dancing in the streets. And in Brooklyn, some 15,000 Haitians demonstrated all afternoon. But in the midst of rejoicing, there was widespread distrust of the new junta. Women who for years have had their sons and husbands mysteriously disappear at the hands of the Tontons Macoutes were particularly militant, and there was an openness to communist politics. At the Brooklyn demo nearly 650 pieces of Spartacist literature were sold, including over 250 copies of *Le Bolchévique*, the paper of the French section of the international Spartacist tendency. Our signs calling for "*Macoutes au poteau, ouvriers au pouvoir!*" (Macoutes to the wall, workers to power) were greeted warmly.

Haitian workers: *beware of coups "made in U.S.A.!"* So far more than 100 people have been shot down by the army trying to protect the hated Macoutes from the just wrath of their victims. *People's tribunals* to dispense revolutionary justice against the Duvalier regime's professional assassins is an urgent democratic demand. So too is the call for a revolutionary *constituent assembly*, to oust the junta and root out the dictatorship that has oppressed the Haitian masses for decades. But there will be no democracy for the toilers without *workers revolution*, leading the dirt-poor peasantry and extending throughout the Caribbean to the
continued on page 5

Oakland Teachers Win

OAKLAND, February 6—In these days of rampant union-busting and giveback contracts, striking teachers here beat back the Oakland Unified School District's demands to hold down wages, cap benefits, deny annuity to new employees and impose unlimited class size. After a month-long strike, the schools' 3,500 teachers, nurses, librarians and psychologists gained a package that will raise salaries by 20 percent over the three-year contract period, increase substitute teachers' pay, restore annuity for all, maintain uncapped benefits and present class size maximums, and give—for the first time here—an annual stipend to its many bilingual teachers.

Key to the outcome of this solid teachers strike, the longest in Oakland's history, was its near universal popular support, especially among the predominantly black and Hispanic working-class parents. During the strike, the District kept the schools open with \$125-a-day scab teachers and threatened to fail or deny graduation credit to its students, but the overwhelming majority remained out until the strike was settled. When it became clear that the strike could go on indefinitely, pressure mounted against the intransigence of the school board, and recall petitions were initiated. The Oakland *Tribune* (1 February) noted:

"Parents were supportive of the teachers throughout the long strike, keeping their children out of class, marching in candlelight demonstrations and sign-waving rallies and, finally, by organizing recall efforts against board members."

At the ratification meeting teachers shouted for several minutes: "Parents,

parents, parents!"

In contrast, teachers answered with boos and hisses Oakland Education Association president Connie Peoples' suggestion that teachers thank Mayor Lionel Wilson for "helping" teachers in negotiations. Early on, Oakland's black Democratic mayor was broadly attacked for his proposal to loan \$15 million in city money to the Oakland A's baseball team, but not a cent to the ailing city schools. Wilson repeatedly defended this position by saying that a loan to the ball team would generate money for the city, whereas a loan to the schools could never be paid off. Adding insult to injury, it was discovered that the city also had earmarked \$30 million to bring back the Raiders football team. Additionally, the recently initiated California state lottery is raking in millions—more than was expected—and the proceeds are supposed to go to education.

Everyone knows that Oakland's schools are a mess. While this strike settlement was better than many we see these days, it won't change the fact that schools and classrooms for the more than 80 percent minority students are overcrowded, understaffed and severely lacking in textbooks and supplies. Nor will this modest victory for teachers improve the lousy wages and working conditions of many of the other school employees here, such as teacher assistants, cafeteria and clerical workers, and custodians.

While these workers were mostly very supportive of the strike, often bringing food and coffee to teachers walking the picket lines, most of them crossed the

lines, effectively assisting the District in keeping the schools open. Their union misleaders left up to the rank-and-file members the question of honoring the strike. And for their part, the misleaders of OEA put little if any thought into carefully planning for the eventuality of a strike. For six months after the contract expired OEA kept its members working, preferring to stall on a strike vote and pressure the District into negotiating.

Once the strike began OEA did little more than send telegrams notifying the other school unions of the strike and feebly requesting strike support. There should be a single union to unite all school employees and a single expiration date for all contracts. This must be part of the struggle to oust the present bureaucratic misleaders and replace them with a leadership committed to a strategy of class struggle. An injury to one is an injury to all! Picket lines mean don't cross!

Along with its wretched schools, Oakland's black and Hispanic population faces many abuses: high unemployment, cuts in public transit, unnutritious school lunch programs and grossly abusive and inadequate health care. The Highland Hospital "butcher shop," run by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, is a dumping ground for its poorest patients. It is a well-known fact that the infant mortality rate among blacks in Oakland is higher than in some developing countries. Such is life for poor blacks and minorities in racist



People's World
Students and parents stood with striking teachers in largely black Oakland.

capitalist America! As Reagan drives up the military budget for war against the Soviet Union, the budget cuts come down hardest on those who need help most—minorities, the aged and infirm, the poor and working people. And the role of Democratic and Republican city governments alike is simply to enforce these cuts.

The terrible conditions of poor, largely black cities like Oakland cannot be solved simply through trade-union action. It will take a workers government to rip this country's productive wealth out of the hands of Wall Street financiers and Pentagon contractors. For this we need a revolutionary workers party uniting the labor movement and ghetto poor against the capitalists, their parties and their state. On a small scale the Oakland teachers strike demonstrated the potential for such labor/black unity in struggle. ■



TROTSKY

The Russian Revolution and Black Freedom

The rise of the civil rights movement broke the back of 1950s McCarthyite reaction in the U.S. In a 1959 essay, James P. Cannon, veteran communist and the founding leader of American Trotskyism, traced the origins of the civil rights movement to the Russian Revolution:

It is customary to attribute the progress of the Negro movement, and the shift of

public opinion in favor of its claims, to the changes brought about by the First World War. But the biggest thing that came out of the First World War, the event that changed everything, including the prospects of the American Negro, was the Russian Revolution. The influence of Lenin and the Russian Revolution, even debased and distorted as it later was by Stalin, and then filtered through the activities of the Communist Party in the United States, contributed more than any other influence from any source to the recognition, and more or less general acceptance, of the Negro question as a special problem of American society—a problem which cannot be simply subsumed under the general heading of the conflict between capital and labor, as it was in the pre-communist radical movement....

The Reverend Martin Luther King did remark, at the time of the Montgomery boycott battle, that their movement was part of the world-wide struggle of the colored peoples for independence and equality. He should have added that the colonial revolutions, which are indeed a powerful ally of the Negro movement in America, got their starting impulse from the Russian Revolution—and are stimulated and strengthened from day to day by the continuing existence of this revolution in the shape of the Soviet Union and the new China, which white imperialism suddenly "lost."

—James P. Cannon, "The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement," *The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962)



LENIN

A Disavowal

Last December, the Spartacus Youth League at Harvard University put out a flyer calling for protest against a campaign of harassment of homosexuals by the administration, spearheaded by Dean of Students Archie Epps. In harmony with the reactionary social climate of Reagan's America, the university has sent uniformed and undercover cops into men's rooms looking for illicit sex; right-wing bigots on campus have stepped up taunting of gays, and a Harvard lecturer was even arrested for receiving allegedly pornographic materials in the mails. This anti-gay persecution and hysteria fueled by Epps deserves a serious denunciation by anyone who stands for human decency. Yet the Harvard SYL leaflet struck a different note, ending with the slogans: "For a '69 That Goes All the Way! For Queen-Size Beds for Sex and Play! For Rock 'n' Roll! For Booze and Fun! Put Big Brother Epps on the Run!"

As we stated in our article "Reagan and AIDS" (*WV* No. 389, 18 October 1985), we fight "for everyone's right to conduct their sex lives as they damn well choose without being harassed or jailed by meddlesome snoops...." From the standpoint of Marxism and what the Reaganites denounce as "secular humanism," the Spartacist League has indeed distinguished itself by defending all sorts of "far out" causes, from the black MOVE group in Philadelphia to the Man-Boy Love Association, wherever we see someone being abused by the powers of reaction, racism and the capitalist authorities. This of course makes the SL itself vulnerable to victimization by a state seeking to regiment the population through Moral Majorityite sexual hysteria and witchhunting.

The Harvard SYL leaflet, therefore, objectively constitutes something of a provocation, depicting us, quite wrongly and injuriously, as

some kind of lifestylist group like those whose democratic rights we vigorously defend. Unlike such lifestylist groups (and Moral Majority bigots), we have no program for how people should conduct their sexual relations. Our only "position" on sex is in this sense a negative one, that the state should keep its nose out of any and all consensual relations. As Isaac Deutscher remarked in his speech "On Socialist Man":

"Trotsky, for instance, speaks of three basic tragedies—hunger, sex, and death—besetting man. Hunger is the enemy that Marxism and the modern labor movement have taken on...."

"Yes, socialist man will still be pursued by sex and death; but we are convinced that he will be better equipped than we are to cope even with these."

The Boston comrades surely meant well, having been provoked by an abusive campus administration bent on suppressing sexuality. The authors may just have wanted to be outrageous, but whether they meant it or not, they displayed a loss of a materialist outlook. Thus we perforce disavow this leaflet, which represents a qualitative departure from our Marxist program, as confirmed through decades of struggle.

Some of the comrades, when confronted with sharp criticism, responded by resigning from the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League. A youth wrote, "I do not feel that I can be a useful member of the organization at this time because of the recent events in Boston.... While these actions clearly spring from a program other than Marxism, I continue to believe that workers revolution is the only solution to the crisis of decaying capitalism." They all expressed a desire to rejoin at a later time, and for our part we hope that they will return soon, through fighting to recover a communist perspective.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 397

14 February 1986

For Class-Struggle Defense Work!

Build the Partisan Defense Committee

Workers Vanguard is pleased to print below a letter from the Partisan Defense Committee calling on PDC supporters to become regular contributing sustainers. The PDC is an anti-sectarian, class-struggle legal defense organization in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

In taking this step we honor the memory and work of our comrade Toni Randell (1943-1982), a founding mem-

ber and first secretary of the PDC. From her research into the early history of the International Labor Defense to her meticulous indexing of the FBI files on the Spartacist League which laid the basis for our recent legal victory against the FBI, Toni infused the work of the PDC with her rigorous integrity and intelligence, and the compassion and tireless dedication of a hard communist.

10 February 1986

Dear Friends:

We are writing to you because you support the Partisan Defense Committee's work. Our victories—the PDC-supported Spartacist lawsuit challenging the FBI Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines, the lawsuit which compelled the sinister Sun Myung Moon's *Washington Times* to retract its vicious libel of the 5,000-strong Labor/Black Mobilization that stopped the KKK in Washington, D.C. on 27 November 1982, the successful defense against serious felony charges of phone strikers Lauren Mozee and Ray Palmiero for defending themselves and their picket line from racist assault—are your victories. Now we are asking you to become a regular sustaining contributor of the PDC—in short, to make it *your* organization.

Many causes cry out for class-struggle defense. The past year's events confirm both the need and promise of forging a mass class-struggle legal defense organization. The PDC summoned support of union locals and individual unionists to raise over \$23,000 for the courageous British miners in their year-long struggle against Thatcher's vicious union-busting. We contributed to the Soweto hospital workers on strike against their apartheid bosses, and sought to mobilize the power of labor against the execution of ANC supporter Benjamin Moloise. In the United States, the PDC

has contributed to the union defense committees of the largely Hispanic Watsonville cannery workers, the *Chicago Tribune* strikers and the meatpackers who are today fighting against the combined assault of Hormel, the Minnesota National Guard and the sellout national union leadership. They are in the forefront of the growing number of workers determined to beat back the bosses' escalating "concessions offensive."

In Reagan's America racist terror is aided and abetted by the pervasive assault on democratic rights. In support of the families of the victims of racist cop and fascist terror, the PDC has contributed to the Michael Stewart Legal Defense Fund and the Greensboro Civil Rights Fund. The PDC protested the exclusion from the United States of three prominent Soviet Jews, including Colonel General David Dragunsky, hero of the Red Army triumph over Hitler, as well as the attempted deportation of South African anti-apartheid student activist Twiggs Xiphu.

Anti-sectarianism is exemplified in our protest against the exclusion of Healyite youth leader Dolly Short from entry into the U.S. and our contribution to the legal defense of the Freedom Socialist Party, embroiled in a vicious lawsuit imperiling basic rights of political association.

American "democracy" has a place



WV Photo

TONI RANDELL
(1943-1982)
Died 12 February 1982

for those perceived as challenging the racist capitalist order—prison or the grave. MOVE member Ramona Africa faces up to 14 years in prison for surviving the savage racist bombing which bears the signature of the Reagan years. America's foremost class-war prisoner, former Black Panther Geronimo Pratt, the victim of a racist murderous COINTELPRO frame-up, has begun his 15th year in prison. Watsonville cannery striker Amador Betancourt, held on \$250,000 bail, faces frame-up assault charges.

Those jailed for standing up to racist capitalist oppression must not be forgotten. The PDC is reviving the tradition of the International Labor Defense of monthly stipends to class-war prisoners, to help provide some of

the necessities to mitigate the horrors of confinement in some degree. The PDC has begun to send monthly stipends to Ramona Africa, Geronimo Pratt, Amador Betancourt and British miners jailed for their strike activity.

The PDC is proud of its support to these and other causes. Despite our modest resources, we have been able to respond with legal and financial aid, publicity and demonstrations, to bring these cases before the working class, opponents of racist terror and defenders of democratic rights. But this work requires money. Many of you have contributed \$500-\$1,000 during the past year. If you gave \$50-\$100 on a monthly sustaining basis, the PDC could have resources for the fights ahead. For those of you who can afford a couple of hundred dollars over a year's time, you too could become a PDC sustainer at \$15-\$20 per month.

You have supported the work of the PDC because you know the value of legal defense work on behalf of the oppressed and the exploited. We appreciate your support and hope that you will become an active participant in an ongoing way. This period, "Cold War II," is fraught with sinister attacks on labor and democratic rights and racist terror directed against black people and other minorities. Consistent, labor-centered defense work is urgent. Placing the PDC on a firmer organizational and financial basis is an important step forward in the struggle to forge the mass class-struggle legal defense organization which every class-war prisoner and every victim of racist persecution and brutality can look to as his own. We turn to you to become active partisans of the Partisan Defense Committee in order to build the organization we need to defend us all.

Fraternally yours,
Deborah Mackson
For the Partisan Defense Committee

SAN FRANCISCO

SYL Forum

Finish the Civil War! Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Speaker: John Kenney
Spartacist League

Thursday, February 20, 12:00 noon
Student Union, Room B-112
San Francisco State University
For more information: (415) 863-6963

CHICAGO

SYL Forum

Reagan's Anti-Soviet Cold War Drive Means Racist Reaction

Speaker: Bernard Vance
SL Central Committee

Tuesday, February 18, 12:30 p.m.
316 Stevenson Hall
University of Ill.-Chicago (Circle)
For more information: (312) 663-0715

MADISON

SYL Forum

Reagan's Anti-Soviet Cold War Drive Means Racist Reaction

Speaker: Bernard Vance
SL Central Committee

Thursday, February 20, 8:00 p.m.
See "Today in the Union" for room
UW-Madison

For more information: (608) 257-8625

Black History Month Spartacist Events

NEW YORK

Spartacist Forums

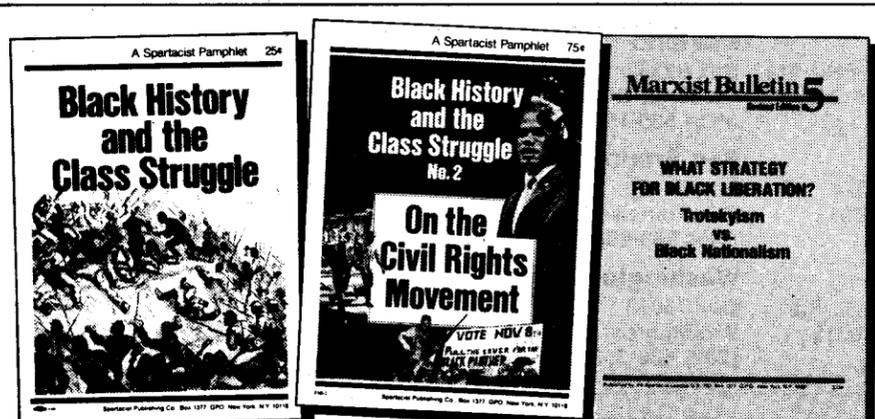
Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Speaker: Ed Kartsen, SL Central Committee,
Spartacist candidate for Borough of Manhattan President, 1985

Thursday, February 20, 7:30 p.m.
Hamilton Hall, Room 517
Columbia University

Friday, February 28, 7:30 p.m.
N-402
Borough of Manhattan
Community College

For more information: (212) 267-1025



25¢ (16 pages)

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Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

LOS ANGELES

SYL Forum

John Brown and Frederick Douglass—Anti-Slavery Heroes Finish the Civil War— Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Speaker: Don Alexander
SL Central Committee

Wednesday, February 19, 7:00 p.m.
North Campus, Room 22, UCLA
For more information: (213) 384-9716

CLEVELAND

SYL Video Showings

"Labor/Black Mobilization Shakes Washington— We Stopped the Klan!"

"We Tore Down the Flag of Slavery!"

Wednesday, February 19, 7:30 p.m.
Mudd Library 050
Oberlin College

For more information: (216) 775-5329

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SYL Forum

From Soweto to Philadelphia: Smash Racist Terror!

Speaker: Brian Mendis
Spartacus Youth League

Friday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.
Blackburn Center Forum
Howard University

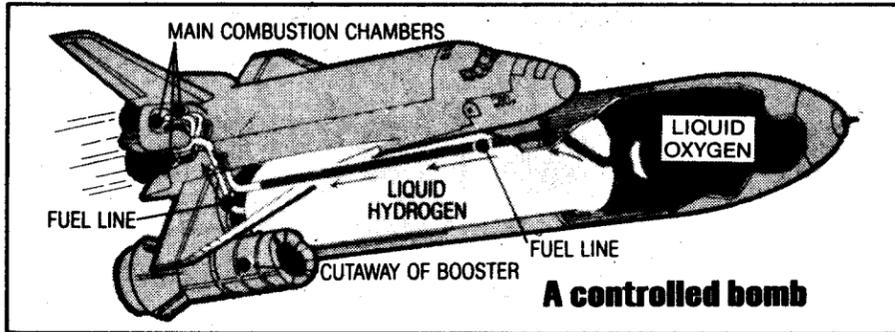
For more information: (202) 636-3537

Challenger...

(continued from page 1)

heart-rending human tragedy; to Ronald Reagan it was an unfortunate wrinkle in his war plans against the Soviet Union. He immediately set his media managers to work channeling the outpouring of emotion into renewed commitment to the shuttle. The bourgeoisie's tears are not for the seven dead astronauts but rather for their military space program. "I don't see how it can't have an effect on SDI," moaned a Senate staffer about the "Strategic Defense Initiative" or "Star Wars." "The shuttle has been used again and again as an example of how high-technology can succeed" (*Wall Street Journal*, 30 January). So there may be some small benefit from the death of these seven people in that it makes a mockery out of Star Wars, where an enormously sophisticated system must work perfectly without testing.

For the Reaganauts, it's all about high tech for the "high frontier"; in his eulogy the president kept stressing the "pioneer spirit." In fact, confirming what we all knew implicitly, R.W. Apple reported in the *New York Times* (2 February) that "Mr. Reagan had planned to build his State of the Union message, scheduled for the evening of the very day Challenger came to grief,



U.S. News & World Report

Atop half a million gallons of liquid hydrogen and oxygen, Challenger astronauts rode uncontrolled bomb.

resorting to the Big Lie, cloaking the military role of the shuttle in the raiments of Man's Quest for Knowledge. With a straight face, Reagan told schoolchildren: "We don't hide our space program, we don't keep secrets and cover things up"—this from the man who ordered a news blackout on military shuttle launchings!

Playing along with Reagan, most media described Challenger's main payload innocuously as "the world's largest privately owned communications satellite," called the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite. The TDRS network is actually part of the Pentagon's "command, control, communications and intelligence" network known as MILSTAR, and the purpose of TDRS is to relay critical data across space

agenda for American schoolchildren. NASA, a civilian space agency created by Eisenhower, churned out propaganda about the pursuit of science in challenging the "space frontier." But veteran space scientist James Van Allen (discoverer of the radiation belt around earth named after him) knew the real truth:

"For those of us who remember the national trauma following the successful launching of the first Soviet satellite in October, 1957, there is little doubt that the military uses of space have provided the most powerful incentives for our subsequent effort. Indeed, President Lyndon Johnson once said that the benefits of the U.S. system of satellites for military reconnaissance had more than paid for the entire national program in space."

—"Space Science, Space Technology and the Space Station," *Scientific American*, January 1986

In short, the space program has always been propelled fundamentally by imperialist—more specifically, anti-Soviet—military considerations. Any scientific benefits have been secondary by-products, while the expensive manned vehicles helped sell the program to the public.

This is particularly true of the space shuttle, authorized by Nixon in 1972, in the waning days of the Vietnam War when NASA's civilian budget was being squeezed by the military. As the *New York Times* (21 December 1984) revealed: "By the mid-1970s, with Apollo winding down, NASA wooed the Air Force into the shuttle project by promising to build a launching vehicle whose design would be dictated by military missions of the future." In 1980 NASA and the Defense Department signed a deal giving the military priority in getting on board the shuttle, and in the Reagan years the Pentagon has virtually taken it over. According to a February 1985 Reagan directive, at least eight shuttle launchings a year are to be devoted to military missions. The Pentagon has built its own shuttle launch facility at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

More than anything else, the manned shuttle is slated to play a key role in Reagan's first-strike "Star Wars" scheme. In this fantasy, every white middle-class American is to be shielded against global nuclear war by a "layered" defense of high-tech weapons in space—nuclear-pumped X-ray lasers, kinetic energy rail guns, particle beams, etc. Testing and deploying such vast systems would be facilitated by having quick, easy access to space, and that's where the reusable shuttle comes in. In mid-1987 the shuttle is scheduled to test the pointing and tracking ability of a laser weapon: "the shuttle has the advantage of allowing the laser systems to be controlled, adjusted and repaired if necessary by a human crewman" (*Aviation Week*, 19 August 1985). The shuttles were also conceived as "service vehicles for the space station," notes scientist Van Allen, and the shuttle itself is potentially a powerful anti-satellite weapon.

NASA Cover-Up

Ironically, imperialist plans for the shuttle were undermined by the very system of "free enterprise" which it was supposed to promote. The investigations into the Challenger disaster read like Federal Aviation Agency post-mortems of the skyrocketing number of

plane crashes since airline deregulation went into effect. Except instead of squeezing in more seats in front of emergency exits in the scramble for profits, NASA was trying to squeeze in larger spy satellite payloads to the detriment of safety considerations. (A few weeks ago the head of NASA, James Beggs, was forced to step down after being indicted on charges of defrauding the army on a weapons contract years ago.) In the past week it has been revealed that:

- the original shuttle Columbia had ejection seats and many more sensors for detecting troubles, but these were removed on Challenger to save weight for the big payloads;

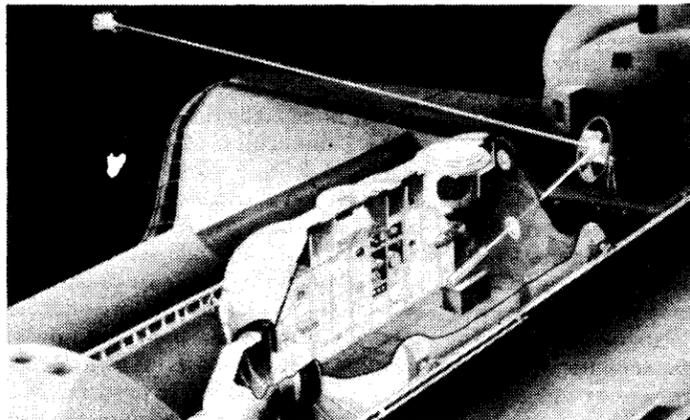
- the Lockheed company has been speeding up the ground crews to meet the accelerated schedules—up from four missions in 1983 to 15 this year—resulting in many more safety violations and accidents;

- seeing pictures of ice on the launching pad, Rockwell International, the prime shuttle contractor, called up NASA minutes before liftoff to request the launch be aborted because of potential danger to heat-shield tiles from icicles;

- it was known all along that the solid fuel rocket boosters (SRBs) fuel core could crack in cold temperatures below 40 degrees, leading to flames cutting through the 3/8 inch side of the SRB (on the morning of the launch the temperature dipped to 28 degrees);

- the solid fuel rocket boosters now suspected of being the source of the disaster were considered "not susceptible to failure," according to NASA's acting administrator William Graham, and so they had no sensors.

NASA has attempted to clamp a lid on public information during the inquiry, but the *New York Times* (9 February) published a damning exposé based on internal space agency documents. One memo, dated 23 July 1985, warned NASA higher-ups of the "charring of seals" at a joint near the booster rocket nozzle, the precise area where the plume of flame appeared on Challenger's right-hand booster moments before the explosion. The memo, by Richard C. Cook, prophetically warned that "failure [of the seal] during launch



Aviation Week

Anti-Soviet Star Wars: Plan for laser weapons system mounted on space shuttle, to be tested in 1987.

around this notion of the 'new frontier'. Conquering space was to be America's new Manifest Destiny, with Star Trek fantasies of orbiting space stations with killer lasers replacing the Great White Fleet. But Starship Free Enterprise just blew up in Reagan's face. Those who died were the victims of the U.S. imperialist anti-Soviet war drive, like the 200-plus dead Marines in Beirut or the passengers on the KAL 007 spy plane.

Reagan's scriptwriters responded with a gigantic brainwashing operation. While ships and helicopters went out to pick up the pieces, the media dredged up child psychiatrists to tell parents and teachers to talk it all over with the kids and allay their "undirected fears." (Like children's fear of nuclear annihilation?) "Such a disaster challenges our basic trust that the world is a predictable place," said one. Reagan could only re-establish that innocent "trust" by

directly back to the U.S., "thus eliminating America's politically sensitive dependence on foreign ground-tracking and data-reception stations," such as the CIA/NSA Pine Gap station in Australia (Jack Manno, *Arming the Heavens: The Hidden Military Agenda for Space, 1945-1995* [1984]). The real purpose of the Challenger was perhaps best described by the Polish army newspaper *Zolnierz Wolnosci*: "consciously or unconsciously the crew members participated in a program aimed at achieving domination in outer space for a future victory in a confrontation on earth" (*New York Times*, 30 January).

Space: The Final Free-Fire Zone

Since the day the Russians launched man's first *Sputnik*, the "space race" has been an integral part of the U.S. imperialists' arms race. Science and engineering were put at the top of the



AP
Teacher Christa McAuliffe, victim of Reagan's Star Wars mania.

would certainly be catastrophic." The issue was discussed as early as 1982 and repeatedly from July to December 1985, but nothing was done except to note the problem was a "budget threat" because it would be expensive to correct!

We are inevitably reminded of astronaut Gus Grissom's half-joking comment about his worries at takeoff time, namely that the whole thing was put together by "a crowd of lowest bidders." (Grissom died in 1967 with two other astronauts when a flash fire broke out in an Apollo capsule on the launch pad.) These are the guys who would build and maintain the incredibly complex "Star Wars" weapons system. And they are moving toward ever more deadly games in their global anti-Communist mission. The real horror is that if Reagan gets his way, the image of that fireball on TV will become a preview of mankind's last moment. ■

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Haiti...

(continued from page 1)

imperialist centers. It must be led by a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party, whose potential cadres are to be found among the tens of thousands of Haitian proletarians in the diaspora, notably New York and Montreal.

Mass Revolt Sweeps Haiti

The latest round of the Haitian revolt began ten days before Duvalier's fall, when at the end of a Sunday mass in the northern town of Cap-Haïtien a lone voice cried out "A bas Duvalier!" The cry was taken up by the congregation, and soon 30,000 people took to the streets. The national highway from Port-au-Prince to Cap-Haïtien, where Baby Doc used to race his sports cars, was repeatedly blocked by the angry masses. But the demonstrators exhibited a dangerously misplaced faith in U.S. imperialism, the army and the Catholic church. Demonstrators frequently carried American flags and chanted "Viv lamé Dayiti" (Long live the Haitian army)—in effect calling on the army and Reagan to stage a coup, which they did. (The same call was made by Christian



After Duvalier's fall, many Haitians look to Yankee "democracy." Remember Reagan's rape of Grenada!

Democratic politicians Hubert de Ronceray and Grégoire Eugène.) And while Catholic radio stations and priests have sparked protests, with Duvalier gone, Archbishop Ligonde is now warning the masses to beware of the "communist danger."

Duvalier's response to Washington's premature announcement of his flight was to tour the capital. "We are here, strong, firm as a monkey's tail" (*Nou kampé red tankou you ké makak!*), he declared, using a Creole expression. He ordered a crackdown by his Macoute bullies, whose initials in French (VSN) are said to stand for "vagabonds without a country." More than 50 were killed in the first day alone in Port-au-Prince, but this only provoked further protests. On Monday and Tuesday, businesses closed in response to a call for a general strike. In the north, starving crowds sacked CARE warehouses looking for food supplies. And

while beatings and snootings by the VSN thugs restored a temporary "calm" in the capital, everyone could read the writing on the wall.

So when he got his signal from Washington, Baby Doc was already packing his bags. His wife, Michèle Bennett, dressed for the occasion in an elegant white turban and black cocktail dress, as their Gucci and Louis Vuitton luggage was loaded onto the U.S. Air Force Starlifter which would ferry them to a gilded exile. Ostensibly granted an eight-day visa, Duvalier joins ex-emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic whose gifts of diamonds to former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing bought him an "eight-day" visa over two years ago. Duvalier took his family with him: from his father's coffin to father-in-law Ernest Bennett, who is wanted by Interpol and the U.S. on charges of cocaine smuggling.

"Human Rights Coup" Means Mass Slaughter

Having supported Duvalier father and son for nearly three decades, the U.S. is now hailing the commitment of its "human rights junta" to establishing "democratic" law and order. Similarly, in 1979 in El Salvador, the U.S. sponsored a "human rights coup" to oust the hated General Romero, giving rise to a military-civilian "revolutionary junta"... which promptly carried out mass shootings in the working-class districts of San Salvador. This reign of terror set the stage for the bloody civil war which continues to ravage the tiny Central American country to this day. The U.S. will tolerate "reform" juntas only so long as they safeguard U.S. interests. Only a revolutionary workers and peasants government can carry out even the most elementary of democratic reforms. This is the lesson of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.

The history of Haiti offers a classic proof of the danger of leftist support for "progressive" coups. In the revolutionary upsurge which followed the end of World War II, government attempts at repression sparked student demonstrations in January 1946, developing into a general strike which led to the fall of the U.S.-sponsored Lescot regime. The Haitian Communist Party (PCH) formed a bloc with bourgeois elements under the name of the United Democratic Front. The Popular Socialist Party (PSP), another pro-Moscow Stalinist formation, split away denouncing the Front's "class collaboration" with the mulatto oligarchy. But both the PCH and the PSP supported the regime of Dumarsais Estimé which came to power in the wake of the coup. With the onset of the Cold War, Estimé passed anti-Communist legislation and massively repressed the unions. But this was not enough for the bourgeoisie. In 1950 Estimé was overthrown in a coup by General Magloire, who in turn was replaced by... François Duvalier.

The slogan "No to Another 1946" raised by some Haitian groups means nothing if it is not generalized into a program of "No to class collaborationism, no to the popular front." Yet today the Parti Unifié Communiste Haïtien (PUCH), successor to the PSP and PCH, trots out the tired rhetoric of

Spy Shcharansky Is Guilty as Hell!

FEBRUARY 11—Today Anatoly Shcharansky was released by the Soviet government in exchange for five captured Soviet bloc agents (three Germans, a Pole and a Russian) held by the West. The trade took place at Glienicke Bridge between West Berlin and Potsdam, dubbed the "bridge of spies" for the number of intelligence operatives exchanged there over the years.

Ever since Shcharansky was convicted of spying for the U.S. in 1978, he has been a Cold War cause célèbre. That cause has been fulsomely embraced by Reagan, Israeli Zionists and South Africa's white racist rulers. Apartheid butcher No. 1, P.W. Botha, recently offered to free heroic black leader Nelson Mandela in exchange for Shcharansky (along with Andrei Sakharov). And for years, Shcharansky has been the symbol of the Zionists' campaign to "free Soviet Jewry." His wife Avital now lives in Israel where she is closely associated with the fascistic Gush Emunim.

Shcharansky was not imprisoned for his beliefs, his repulsively anti-Communist and Zionist politics. The *New York Times* (11 February) observed: "Mr. Shcharansky is the only major dissident ever charged with espionage since the days of Stalin, instead of the usual charge of anti-Soviet agitation." That's because he was not simply a pro-imperialist "dissident" but some-

one who betrayed military secrets to his country's imperialist enemies. Our front-page headline at the time, over seven years ago, said "Shcharansky Is Guilty as Hell!" (*WV* No. 212, 28 July 1978).

This was not a Stalinist frame-up. Shcharansky passed on to an American "journalist" in Moscow, one Robert Toth, the names of Jews who were refused exit visas because they were working or had worked in secret defense establishments. Toth then published an article entitled "Clues in Denials of Jewish Visas: Russ Indirectly Reveals 'State Secrets'" (*Los Angeles Times*, 22 November 1976). Furthermore, there is hard evidence linking Toth to the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency. As one State Department official told *Newsweek* (24 July 1978): "What Shcharansky did, in effect, was give Toth a list of secret defense plants.... In Soviet eyes, Shcharansky is guilty as hell."

In 1978 we wrote: "Anatoly Shcharansky is guilty of a crime against the world proletariat—transmitting military secrets of the USSR, a degenerated workers state, to the imperialists." Now, the Soviet Union has gotten something for this imperialist fink by exchanging him to secure freedom for five men and women in the front line of defending the Soviet Union against those who threaten to annihilate the homeland of the October Revolution.

alliance between the working class and the "progressive" bourgeoisie, calling for "a minimum program which should make it possible to bring together the broadest possible patriotic and democratic forces truly interested in improving the national situation" (*Haiti Progrès*, 5 February). The country is in turmoil, the masses are in the streets and the PUCH calls for a "minimum program" that is little different from the U.S. State Department's—"Duvalierism without Duvalier"—protecting the interests of the bourgeoisie. Some "communists"!

For Haitian Trotskyism!

The struggle for the class independence of the laboring masses is necessarily international, and this is doubly true in Haiti. The fight against IMF-imposed austerity means confronting the U.S. imperialist banks and their domestic capitalist allies, not merely the Duvalier clan but the "social-democratic" liberal bourgeois PRD regime next door in Santo Domingo. As a Spartacist sign at the February 8 Brooklyn demonstration declared, "Haitian, Dominican Workers—Smash the IMF, For Workers Revolution!" Yet the Haitian Stalinists claim that IMF austerity also oppresses "a good fraction of the bourgeoisie," whom they classify as "patriotic and democratic forces." A Haitian revolutionary party can be built only in close alliance with the highly politicized Dominican workers in the other half of the island of Hispaniola, and with the overwhelming bulk of the Haitian proletariat in the diaspora.

In the United States, Haitian refugees are held behind chain-link fences in Reagan's concentration camps, at Miami's sweltering Krome Avenue detention center and the frozen Lake Placid Olympic village. The Spartacist League fights for "Full Citizenship Rights for Foreign-Born Workers." The persecution of Haitian refugees is not only an expression of visceral Reagan racism, but a reflection of the U.S. obsession

with the "Communist threat" in the Caribbean. When Haitian demonstrators raise the slogan "Môle St. Nicolas Is Not For Sale" they grasp a key element of Reagan's anti-Soviet, anti-Cuban war drive. This harbor is located just across from the U.S. base at Guantánamo, Cuba, and for the U.S. control of the strategic Windward Passage poses the fundamental "Russian question,"



Daniel Lainé

Hated Tontons Macoutes now face vengeance of their victims.

the question of international socialist revolution.

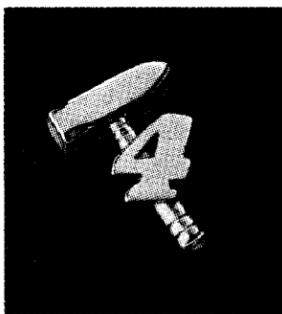
At the time of the Haitian Revolution of 1793-1804, which established the first black republic in history, the freeing of the slaves by the great Haitian revolutionary Toussaint L'Ouverture sent shock waves through the Caribbean, inspiring slave revolts in Jamaica, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, Grenada, Dominica and Curaçao as well as the American South. Today, the Haitian masses, beset by decades of U.S.-imposed dictatorship and IMF-dictated starvation, can spark a revolt against capitalist wage slavery, for workers revolution throughout the region. This is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution, the program of the international Spartacist tendency. ■

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In Defense of Permanent Revolution!

How Revisionists Betray The Struggle Against Apartheid

"South Africa is a capitalist country, and that has oppressed us," said "Comrade Lucas," a 14-year-old black militant in the eastern Cape Province, to an American reporter. "So now, all of us, in Cradock, are Communists." Last summer in Cradock the red flag with hammer and sickle of the Soviet Union and the banner of the outlawed South African Communist Party were displayed at a funeral for martyred black leaders. Lucas and his comrades may only vaguely understand what communism is about, but they know what apartheid capitalism means and they hate it. For them communism symbolizes total opposition to their oppression. As another young black militant declared: "Capitalism has no future in this country. Look where it has gotten us. There must be an equalization of wealth, a socialist state" (*Newsweek*, 16 September 1985).

But according to Socialist Workers Party (SWP) leader Jack Barnes, there is a bright future for capitalism in South Africa, and anyone who talks of socialist revolution is an "ultra-left sectarian." In a report adopted by the SWP last summer, he claimed:

"...a mass revolutionary movement in South Africa today cannot and will not be built around a socialist program... A communist movement in South Africa would be smashed on the rocks if it tried to impose its full, socialist program on the national, democratic revolution that is on the agenda in South Africa today."

—"The Coming Revolution in South Africa," *New Internationalist*, Fall 1985

Echoing the social-democratic reformists that the Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky fought against, Barnes declares that the "Freedom Charter" of the African National Congress (ANC) is "the minimum program" for bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Culminating more than two decades of revisionism and political degeneration of the SWP, a couple of years ago Jack Barnes publicly renounced and denounced the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution. Based on the experience of the 1905 and 1917 Russian Revolutions, Leon Trotsky held that in countries of belated capitalist development, notably colonial and semi-colonial countries, the historic achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution can be realized only under the rule of the proletariat, at the head of

all the oppressed. Nowhere is this clearer than in South Africa, where the capitalist class is white and the working class non-white and completely disenfranchised. Therefore the most elementary democratic demand such as "one man, one vote" not only strikes at the very heart of apartheid, but directly



South African black militants carry red flag of Soviet Union at funeral near Pretoria last fall.

poses the question of which class shall rule.

In contrast, the SWP honcho openly embraces the Menshevik/Stalinist doctrine of "two-stage" revolution: bourgeois-democratic revolution now, and proletarian revolution later—i.e., never. (See Spartacist pamphlet, *The Socialist Workers Party: An Obituary* [1984].) Now over South Africa Barnes is dotting the i's and crossing the t's, insisting: "What is on the agenda in South Africa is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, not the democratic stage of the socialist revolution." He goes even further, declaring "these are not merely stages of a single revolution; they are two revolutions" (our emphasis).

The essence of this program was captured in a crude cartoon put out last fall by a lash-up of social democrats (International Socialists, Workers Power, Socialist Unity). Two black miners are digging a grave marked apartheid and turn to the white mine owner, saying: "No gold today—we've got to finish this job first." Supposedly, then, after apartheid is overthrown South Africa's black toilers will continue to be

superexploited by the Randlords and their partners on Wall Street and in the City of London!

Barnes is constantly denouncing "ultra-left sectarians," who in his world exist in dizzying profusion. However, the SWP line on South Africa is not only blatantly rightist, it is in the truest

ists are really chasing after is not Mandela nor even Tutu, but Teddy Kennedy and his colleagues. And their "opportunity" to make common cause with the Democratic liberals depends on the assurance that "the coming revolution in South Africa" won't touch capitalist property. Barnes warns:

"One of the obstacles to doing this is the sectarian tic of thinking that our contribution to this struggle is to explain that if the revolution really gets rolling in South Africa, then a lot of capitalist property is going to be taken over and we will all be fighting for socialism. No. Let the rightwingers and friends of apartheid in Washington keep trying to make that the issue."

Today Barnes & Co. are a rather shoddy outfit, with little chance of becoming the "best builders" of a liberal anti-apartheid movement in the U.S.: the DSA social democrats and CP Stalinists are far better placed for this job. So in recent months, much of the SWP's energies have been thrown into building solidarity with... Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta). Here Barnes & Co. have the distinct advantage of being the sole bidder for the Ouagadougou franchise. To atone for his "ultra-leftist" sin of criticizing the ANC's Freedom Charter in a 1980 pamphlet, SWP Africa expert Ernest Harsch is now polishing the "anti-imperialist" credentials of the captains in power in Ouagadougou (and defending them against neighboring Mali in the recent border war). Even Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings of Ghana comes in for praise as a "revolutionary" officer! But

sense sectarian. This dogma is opposed to the revolutionary aspirations of the most militant black toilers in South Africa. Black and coloured (mixed-race) workers and radical student youth are certainly *not* striving for "democratic, non-racist" capitalism like Reagan's America or Thatcher's Britain.

Interestingly, while Barnes categorically rejects any hint of socialist revolution, the reformist South African Communist Party fudges the question. Thus the SACP's new constitution calls for "the establishment of one united state of People's Power in which the working class will be the dominant force and which will move uninterruptedly towards social emancipation and the total abolition of the exploitation of man by man" (*African Communist*, Third Quarter 1985). It may seem paradoxical that the ex- and now virulently anti-Trotskyist SWP insists on bourgeois-democratic revolution while the South African Stalinists put on "socialist" airs. The SACP, you see, has to address the South African masses, seething with revolutionary fervor, while for Barnes the black upsurge in South Africa is above all an opportunity to embrace the American liberal and not-so-liberal bourgeoisie in the name of fighting apartheid.

The SWP not only proclaims the African National Congress the vanguard of anti-apartheid struggle; in this country they hail Nobel Prize winner Tutu, urging American students to sign a "Freedom Letter" to the anti-communist bishop (*Young Socialist*, November 1985). And Barnes waxes ecstatic that "a bipartisan group of capitalist politicians" raised money to rebuild the firebombed home of Winnie Mandela, wife of the long-imprisoned and revered ANC leader, Nelson Mandela: "That's not a problem. Not for us. Not for Winnie Mandela. It is an opportunity." Who the SWP opportun-



Formation of black "super-union" COSATU last December.

the South African masses are not struggling to replace apartheid slavery with the threadbare military regimes that are the scourge of independent black Africa.

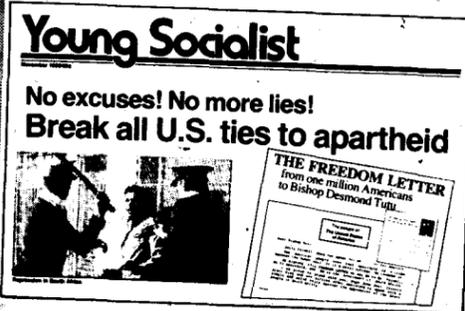
Anti-Trotskyists and Pseudo-Trotskyists

Barnes's denunciation of the theory of permanent revolution makes it easy for various revisionists to posture as upholders of orthodox Trotskyism, using the SWP as a foil. Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USeC) declared in a 1983 resolution that the South African

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Pushing "Freedom Letter," SWP's Young Socialist tails "liberal" imperialist Teddy Kennedy and his anti-communist South African cohort Bishop Tutu.



American Workers Revolution Will Avenge MOVE Martyrs!

The bombing of black Philadelphia last May 13—burning alive eleven members of the back-to-nature MOVE commune, including five children, burning down 61 houses and leaving 300 black residents homeless—was one of the most grotesque racist atrocities in the history of this deeply racist country. It was a coldly calculated conspiracy to commit racist state terror, organized from the city hall of black Democratic Party mayor Wilson Goode right up to the White House of Klan-endorsed Ronald Reagan and his top cop, Edwin Meese. This fact was only underlined by Goode's hand-picked "commission of inquiry" last October. Convened to provide a cover-up, the commission, try as it might, could not conceal the deep involvement of the feds who participated in the planning and provided the heavy arms and high explosives used in this grisly massacre.

The hideous Philadelphia inferno inflamed racist reaction across the country. Rampaging racist mobs chanted "MOVE! MOVE!" at black and interracial couples who had recently bought homes in Jim Crow southwest Philly. Last November, Timothy Lee, a black youth, was actually lynched—not in the Deep South, but the San Francisco Bay Area. Everyone from Meese and L.A. police chief "Choke Hold" Gates to Goode's black Democratic colleagues rushed to praise the man whom the kin of MOVE victims aptly called the "Mayor of Murder." The MOVE massacre was meant to send a message to all black people and anyone else who might "get out of line" in Reagan's America: *watch your ass, you could be next!*

The bourgeois press got the message as did even some black press like "Uncle Tom" Tatum's *Amsterdam News*. To alibi racist murder of the MOVE group, which had attacked no one, Goode exclaimed: "We cannot permit any terrorist or any revolutionary group... to hold a whole neighborhood or a whole city hostage." Goode was only replaying Reagan/Meese's murderous "terror" scare tactics of smearing perceived political opponents as "terrorists" and "outlaws" in order to commit real state terrorism against them. And the bourgeois media, black as well as white, picked up this refrain. MOVE was portrayed as wild-eyed, violence-prone crazies who presumably "provoked" and "assaulted" the massively armed Philadelphia police force as these murderous cops poured more than 10,000 light and heavy calibre rounds into 6221 Osage Avenue and twice tried to blow the MOVE home off the ground before they dropped the high-explosive bomb.

Now, nine months after this unspeakable racist atrocity, a lash-up of leading Democratic Party "black elected officials," liberals and their reformist left tailists have called a "March Against Racism" in Philadelphia February 15. It is no accident that the official call for the march, issued by the "National Mobilization Against Racism," while alluding to "the police bombing of West Philadelphia," *does not mention MOVE*. They refuse the slightest degree of solidarity with the martyred dead of the Philly massacre. The name Wilson Goode does not appear, nor the slightest criticism of the mayor who admits he



May 1985 Philly holocaust: eleven people of the black commune MOVE died when Democratic mayor Goode and the White House/FBI firebombed them.

gave the green light to the bombing and vowed, "I would do it again"! Nowhere in all the march propaganda will you find the elementary demand for freedom for Ramona Africa and the other MOVE prisoners. Nor the call for working-class justice for Goode, his cops and his bosses in Washington for the racist murder they committed on Osage Avenue! In fact, there are no demands at all.

The Philly "March Against Racism" is worse than the usual attempt at an implicit pro-Democratic Party popular front—it is an *explicit* bloc with the capitalist Democrats. Endorsers include black Democratic Congressmen John Conyers and George Crockett, New York State assemblyman Roger Green, Boston black politico Mel King, Pennsylvania state representative Dave Richardson, and others. The march call states the obvious, that "The Philadelphia outrages flow from the national climate of racism promoted by the Reagan Administration." But it is the *Democratic-controlled* Congress which has rammed through Reagan's budget cuts; it is the Democratic Party big city mayors from Chicago to Philly who are the black front men for Reagan reaction—breaking strikes of black municipal workers, policing the ghetto, and giving the go-ahead for the bombing of black America! Any fight for black freedom requires a *break* from the Democrats and Republicans, partner parties of racist American capitalism.

The February 15 march is being organized and built by the Workers World Party and its myriad front groups including the "All-Peoples Congress" and "People's Anti-War Mobilization," the *Guardian*, as well as prominent supporters of the Communist Party. For these outfits, the continuing cover-up of Wilson Goode's crimes flows logically from their whole "Rainbow Coalition" strategy of getting Reagan's black hatchet men elected in the first place. The anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is also supporting the march, and continuing the whitewash they began last May when they sympathetically reported Wilson Goode's keynote speech at the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights conference in Philadelphia—with the blood of the MOVE martyrs

still fresh on his hands!

Last May, a similar lash-up which included the SWP, the Consumer Party and others called a May 30 "protest" of the bombing. During the planning meetings they had the gall to *debate* whether they would permit the MOVE survivors to speak, and if so what they would be allowed to say! Confronted with this obscene "debate," MOVE pulled out. The Spartacist League withdrew in solidarity with them, although we had called a full mobilization for Philadelphia and were working to draw in other organized forces as well.

Why They Sound Like Racists

Wilson Goode is in plenty of trouble, and the reformists are out to give him a hand, to reinforce suicidal illusions in "progressive" Democrats. In the aftermath of the Philly inferno, the same groups who today can scarcely bring themselves to utter the word MOVE

were churning out apologies for Goode. The cravenly reformist Communist Party, in order to defend the political career of a black Democrat, blamed the MOVE victims for Reagan/Goode's crime: the CP's *Daily World* (16 May 1985) wrote, "Many residents in the area concur that the group, called MOVE, was an anti-social nuisance and wanted it out of the neighborhood." They demanded the resignation of everyone responsible for the Osage Avenue holocaust...except Goode. Likewise, Workers World Party guru Sam Marcy rushed to assure everyone that "Mayor Goode was merely informed of the planned assault and was not a participant in the plans" (*Workers World*, 30 May 1985). The *Guardian* (29 May 1985) wrote, "Neither Fire Commissioner William Richmond nor the mayor knew the contents of the explosive, nor did they seriously consider the possibility of fire."

The MOVE massacre was an acid test for the left. Most failed miserably, not least the myriad of little sects who posture verbally to the left of the mainstream pro-Democratic Party popular front while in practice capitulating to it. The minuscule League for a Revolutionary Party (LRP), the bastard grandchildren of Max Shachtman (who abandoned defense of the Soviet Union on the eve of the Nazi invasion), also blamed the victims for the slaughter:

"When MOVE set up quarters in West Philadelphia, its lifestyle understandably alienated many neighbors. In addition, MOVE reportedly used loudspeakers to blare obscenities at neighbors as well as cops and had several scraps with community people. In fact, the immediate excuse for police intervention was complaints by local residents. MOVE's isolation opened it up for a police siege."

—*Proletarian Revolution*,
Summer 1985

Lifestyle? Loudspeakers? Blaring obscenities at cops?! For the LRP these "crimes" are reasons to *excuse* the

continued on page 8

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Free All MOVE Prisoners!

Ramona Africa Convicted for Surviving Philly Holocaust

After a five-week trial in an ornate Philadelphia courtroom, Ramona Africa, the sole adult survivor of the hideous MOVE massacre, was convicted February 9 of "criminal conspiracy" and "riot" and now faces up to 14 years in prison. She was acquitted on ten other counts of "aggravated assault," "simple assault," "reckless endangerment" of a cop and "resisting arrest."

There was a criminal conspiracy, all right—an official conspiracy to commit racist murder. It went from black Democratic Party mayor Wilson Goode and his former police commissioner Gregore Sambor right up to Ronald Reagan and his top cop, Edwin Meese. And there was a riot—a police riot, with .50 calibre machine guns and military explosives supplied by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and Meese's FBI. Serving as her own defense counsel, Ramona stated the bitter truth: "The only thing I'm guilty of is hiding in the basement, trying to protect my children, MOVE children. Nobody was

supposed to survive."

The purpose of the trial was to "prove" that the MOVE victims were guilty of the massacre—one of the most grotesque racist atrocities in the history of this deeply racist country. According to Goode and Sambor, the police fired 10,000 rounds into the MOVE house, twice tried to blow away its walls with explosives, and finally dropped a powerful bomb, creating a firestorm that was allowed to burn out of control for over an hour, consuming 61 homes in this black neighborhood, because MOVE was supposedly "assaulting the police."

But as Ramona Africa, deeply scarred from burns over her arms, legs and back, said in her opening statement, "It seems that every charge against me fits the police." She called a parade of witnesses to prove her case, including Sambor and Goode. She also called Officer William Klein who built the bomb, and Lt. Frank Powell who dropped it, but they refused to testify on

grounds of self-incrimination, realizing that they could end up on homicide charges.

Had she been convicted on all charges, this brave black woman would have faced 55 years in prison. But the jury of seven whites and five blacks, after 13 hours of deliberation over three days, acquitted her of all the charges alleging specific crimes. It is a testament to the Reagan/Meese years that sweeping "conspiracy" charges can be imposed even where the alleged specific crimes are never proved. At the same time, the cops were not able to make their story stick and ram through a verdict to "justify" racist state terror. Ramona Africa's backup attorney, public defender Daniel Stevenson said the verdict showed "the police were down there to kill" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 10 February).

The cops wanted MOVE dead in a vendetta that went back at least to 1978 when one of the cop gunmen was killed during a 600-strong police onslaught on another MOVE house in Philadelphia. For defending themselves at that time, nine MOVE people are languishing behind bars on 30 to 50 year sentences. Sue Africa, who lost a son, Tomasa, in the May 13 massacre, is in prison from a 1977 cop frame-up. Called to testify by Ramona, she told the judge: "The whole city of Philadelphia is trying to wash the blood of MOVE people off their hands and they're using you as the water."



Costello/Philadelphia Inquirer

Free Ramona Africa, sole adult survivor of MOVE massacre!

Ramona Africa is facing the prospect of the next 14 years of her life in a jail cell. Today, every MOVE member is either behind bars or dead. The freedom of all MOVE prisoners must be made labor's cause. The future American workers government will avenge the martyrs of May 13. ■

MOVE...

(continued from page 7)

burning alive of eleven men, women and children. A Spartacist forum in New York last July 11 was a Leninist "tribune of the people," as MOVE family members LaVerne Sims and Louise James spoke of their rage and their pain in a powerful indictment of the "mayor of murder." It was here that the LRP took the floor to attack the SL for providing this platform for MOVE, denouncing us for being insufficiently polemical toward the speakers at a public meeting specifically called to honor the memory of the MOVE martyrs (see the Spartacist pamphlet, "Massacre of Philly MOVE").

For months an embittered coterie of ex-Spartacists who quit during the Reagan years (formerly the "External Tendency," now calling themselves the "Bolshevik Tendency") were mute on the MOVE massacre. Now they have gone into print *not* to denounce the bombing, *not* to defend Ramona Africa, but to intimate that these victims of racist cop terror are supposedly in collusion with the cops! "SL's Cop-Baiting Celebrity—'Powerful Testimony'... to the Police" is the headline of their despicable article on our July forum. (This piece was published in the ET/BT's 1917, available as No. 4 of our series "Hate Trotskyism, Hate the



WV Photo

For mass labor/black action to smash racist terrorism! 1982 Spartacist-initiated mobilization kept KKK off streets of Washington, D.C.

Spartacist League.)

So one of these rat groups says MOVE is an anti-social nuisance, another implies they're finks for the cops... and yet another "left" outfit says MOVE ought to be treated like fascists and put out of commission by workers' defense guards! This piece of filth comes from the tiny Ann Arbor, Michigan-based sect of Peter Sollenberger, the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), which offered itself up to do the racist capitalist state's dirty work:

"The MOVE supporters lived in a black neighborhood and apparently caused

real problems for their neighbors. They violated numerous health and building codes and harassed people repeatedly. "If there had been organized black self-defense in Philadelphia, this would have been an easy problem to deal with. The defense units could have told MOVE that its anti-racist rhetoric did not justify its harmful behavior toward the black community. If persuasion failed, the defense units, backed up by the entire community, could have intercepted MOVE members on the street and administered some more powerful forms of persuasion."

—*Fighting Worker*, June 1985

Faced with the elementary duty to come to the defense of the MOVE victims against the state, the RWL obscenely perverts the revolutionary call for labor/black defense against racist terror into a call for *racist vigilante squads* in the service of the capitalist state.

Regular readers of *Workers Vanguard* will remember that the Sollenbergerites reacted to the SL-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in 1982 by attacking the Spartacist League as "Carpenters on the Prowl." In despicably utilizing the language of the Southern racists against those who fought for Black Reconstruction after the Civil War, the RWL betrayed its utter hostility to the fight for black liberation in this country, the key question of the American revolution.

The 5,000-strong 27 November 1982 Labor/Black Mobilization was organized *against* the reformists and black

Democrats. Black mayor Marion Barry's cops threatened to seal us off down at the Capitol, while Walter Fauntroy, head of the Congressional Black Caucus tried to divert protest with free food handouts at a distant site. And while black Washington was marching triumphantly down the same route the Klan had sworn to march, the Marcyite goons were miles away at a Democratic Party gab fest in McPherson Square, linking arms trying to prevent black militants from joining the battle! Demonstrators got a taste of power that day—the labor/black power that can stop the white sheet, the burning cross, the high-explosive bombs and the whole arsenal of the racist terrorists in this country.

In deeply racist America when you touch the black question, you touch the Achilles' heel of capitalist oppression. The grotesque response of these creeps to the MOVE massacre is their guarantee to the popular front reformists and their Democratic Party masters that "you have nothing to worry about from us." Philadelphia blacks and unionists: don't let the class traitors of "March Against Racism" shackle your power to those who have massacred your brothers and sisters. We communists of the Spartacist League offer another road: revolutionary struggle based on the independent mobilization of the exploited and oppressed against all wings of the racist rulers to avenge the MOVE martyrs and win black freedom. Forge the multiracial revolutionary workers party! Black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

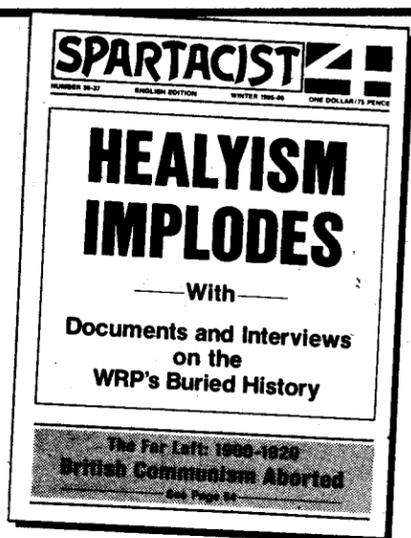
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NYC Transit Workers Turn Out to Defend James Grimes

FEBRUARY 10—"Drop the charges against brother Grimes! It's the TA which commits the crimes!" Some 40 New York City transit workers demonstrated today outside Brooklyn criminal court and Transit Authority headquarters demanding a halt to the railroading of fellow worker James Grimes. It was the second time in little over two weeks that many had come out to defend their courageous union brother. Grimes, a black token clerk with 17 years seniority, is facing criminal charges and possible TA discipline, including firing, for an act of elementary self-defense.

Last month, while transporting \$1,490 in TA cash from his subway booth late at night, Grimes shot one of

three attackers who jumped him. The wounded mugger died on the eve of Grimes's first scheduled hearing January 23, which was adjourned until February 10. At today's hearing the prosecutors were granted another postponement, to March 17, to take Grimes's case before a grand jury where they are likely to seek heavier felony charges.

The Transit Authority and Brooklyn district attorney hope to dissipate the widespread support for Grimes and the determination of his coworkers to defend him. Transit workers who turned out today, many of them token clerks who face the same dangerous conditions on the job, vowed to return March 17. But



WV Photo

the entire 33,000-member Transport Workers Union Local 100, the powerhouse of New York City labor, must be mobilized to defend brother

Grimes.

Drop the charges against James Grimes! No TA discipline! For the right of armed self-defense!

Apartheid...

(continued from page 6)

revolution "will take the form of a process of permanent revolution." Yet these fake-Trotskyists are just as hostile to the program of proletarian revolution in South Africa. And while they denounce Barnes's blatant enthusiasm over the liberal nationalist African National Congress, they all support the ANC's line of pressuring Western imperialism to put the squeeze on the apartheid state (sanctions, divestment, etc.). Thus the USec—to which the American SWP is still "fraternally" related—is divided between cheerleaders for radical petty-bourgeois nationalism and social-democratic tailists of the

speech minus all his laudatory references to Machel. As for AZAPO, its official publication, *Frank Talk* (November-December 1984), printed a speech by Zimbabwe's top cop under the title, "Zimbabwe: Problems and Prospects of Socialist Development." Robert Mugabe's neocolonial regime has carried out tribalist terror against the minority Matabele people and imposed slave labor legislation on Zimbabwean workers in the interests of imperialist investors and domestic (white) capitalists.

While one section of the Mandelites look to the aspiring Machel and Mugabe, other elements of the notoriously dis-United Secretariat are looking for a South African Lech Walesa. The American Socialist Action group is enamored of Polish Solidarność, the

zilian Workers Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores/PT)." But the PT is a reformist labor party, now affiliated to the Second International, and the FOSATU leadership has no serious interest in building any kind of workers party.

In the past FOSATU argued strongly for independence of the black trade unions from the ANC. This position, however, was used to justify a narrow shopfloor economism. During the past year and a half of massive black revolt in the segregated townships, FOSATU and the other black unions have been kept on the sidelines by their leaders. One result has been a marked increase in the authority of the ANC, including among black workers. Thus the top leadership of the new COSATU is close to ANC-style nationalism, and its president, Elijah Barayi, is himself an old ANC activist from the 1950s. Socialist Action uncritically hails the formation of the new "super-union," while covering up the danger that the black and coloured proletariat will be used, as we have put it, as "cattle to haul the ideological cart of nationalism."

For South African Trotskyism

To be sure, COSATU is not now subordinate to the ANC. Rather, its leadership combines trade-union economism with passive support to petty-bourgeois nationalism. COSATU leaders, like the ambitious head of the National Union of Mineworkers, Cyril Ramaphosa, want to carve out room to maneuver between the white ruling class and the ANC. In his keynote speech at the founding of the new labor federation, Ramaphosa stated: "It is important for us to work in alliance with other classes in society. But if we are to get into alliances with other progressive

organisations, it must be on terms that are favourable to us as workers" (*Congress News* [undated]).

But what is needed in South Africa is not greater trade-union participation in a popular front of "progressive organizations" under the leadership of the ANC nationalists. What is urgently needed by South Africa's workers is a racially integrated communist vanguard party capable of taking power in the name of the proletariat, leading behind it the oppressed black African, coloured and Indian masses. Such a party can be built only through political opposition to all forms of petty-bourgeois nationalism. What Trotsky wrote to his South African followers in 1935 is, if anything, even more acutely true today:

"The Bolshevik-Leninists unmask before the native masses the inability of the [African National] Congress to achieve the realization of even its own demands, because of its superficial, conciliatory policy. In contradiction to the Congress, the Bolshevik-Leninists develop a program of revolutionary class struggle."

—Writings of Leon Trotsky (1934-35)

Trotsky also explained how a Leninist party had to be built in South Africa, noting that "in the conditions of an approaching political crisis, there must be created special illegal nuclei of the party apparatus, which will develop as the need arises." He further stated, "...for the given period, the most important part of the illegal and semilegal work of revolutionaries is the work in mass organizations, particularly in the trade unions." For the oppressed to triumph in the inevitable civil war in South Africa, the key is the leadership and organization of a class-conscious vanguard infused with the conviction that those who labor must rule. ■



Social democrats' cartoon presents reformist program for capitalism without apartheid.

labor bureaucracy.

One section of the Mandelites favors the narrow black nationalism of the Azanian People's Organisation and the AZAPO-led National Forum. An article in the USec's English-language organ, *International Viewpoint* (30 September 1985), states that "this current carries on general propaganda for socialism, and seems to suggest in some of its documents that the road to resolving the democratic tasks involves the fight for socialism." Yes, unlike the ANC, which looks to liberal imperialist Kennedy and bargains with South African mining magnates, these heirs of the Black Consciousness Movement talk of a "socialist Azania." But what they mean is "African socialism," the ideological cover of bourgeois nationalist despots who rule the impoverished states of neocolonial black Africa.

In his address to the founding conference of the National Forum in mid-1983, Neville Alexander held up Samora Machel's Mozambique as a model for the South African revolution. Yet six months later Machel signed an agreement, the Nkomati Accords, with apartheid butcher P.W. Botha to suppress all ANC military activity on Mozambican territory! Significantly, the same *International Viewpoint* printed a shortened version of Alexander's

militantly anti-Communist "free trade union" beloved of Ronald Reagan, the Vatican and Frankfurt bankers. Indeed, the *Socialist Action* masthead is modeled on the Solidarność logo. Interestingly, when this yellow union's bid for power was spiked in December 1981, many of its supporters emigrated to the apartheid state to enjoy the privileges of the white caste there. The Tory London *Economist* (7 January 1982) commented:

"Polish refugees have escaped with little more than their skins, but those skins are white. As a result, hundreds of them are already on their way to South Africa, where they may help ease the shortage of skilled labour."

Socialist Action's line on South Africa is to counterpose the black trade-union movement to the ANC and its Stalinist backers, writing that "A significant number of South African trade unionists, in fact, have spoken of the need to fight for workers' power" (*Socialist Action*, January 1986). In particular, they laud the FOSATU labor federation which recently merged into the new, broader Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Socialist Action portrays FOSATU in its own social-democratic coloration, claiming that "FOSATU has made clear its support for Solidarność" and has "published articles supporting the Bra-

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Class War in "Hormel Town"

AUSTIN, Minnesota—After six bitter months, the strike at the Geo. A. Hormel & Co. meatpacking plant by Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) has turned this company town inside out. Strikers wear buttons and sport bumper stickers with the slogan "P-9 Proud." Picketing is a family affair, often with three generations on the line. Scabs cringe in their cars as they cross the picket lines—but they are crossing, by the hundreds. P-9 is up against it, facing a hard-nosed company, scab-herding National Guard and city cops, and also vicious backstabbing from the International union. The first thing you see as you pull off Interstate 90 at the Austin plant is a sign, "UFCW International Sucks." Yet the Austin strikers are not alone. Labor militants around the country are looking to the Hormel strike as the spearhead of union resistance to the bosses' takeback offensive.

After hundreds of pickets surrounded the Hormel plant January 20, Democratic governor Perpich ordered in the National Guard to "maintain law and order." On January 31, some 400-500 unionists from around Minnesota and neighboring states drove to Austin to protest the Guard strikebreaking. For the last two weeks, all access to the plant was sealed off except by the north gate where scabs entered through a corridor of Guardsmen. But fearing a confrontation, and trying to force the union into a sellout "deal," Perpich pulled back the Guard for a few days. On Friday morning, while the legal limit of three pickets stood by a flaming oil drum at the gate, a couple hundred supporters gathered across the street. Legal niceties were abandoned when the first scabs arrived. Within minutes several strikers' cars broke down right in front of the entrance, as the crowd surrounded scabs. The road belonged to P-9.

When the scabs tried to circumvent the pickets by heading for another gate, the line moved to the end of the I-90 exit ramp. For more than three hours pickets formed a militant, shouting gauntlet, turning all cars back onto the highway. The scabs just didn't make it to work Friday. Meanwhile, just across the



Victory to the Hormel strike! Five hundred unionists and others at P-9 solidarity rally in St. Paul, January 19.

A member of the Marine Engineers from Two Harbors, north of Duluth, told *WV* he had been on strike himself since August against a \$3/hour wage cut and came to Austin "to shut the damn place down and keep the scabs out!" What *didn't* show was the muscle of the industrial unions from Minneapolis and St. Paul, even though leaders of the UAW (auto workers) and USWA (steel workers) formed the National Rank and File Against Concessions and the Twin Cities P-9 Support Committee. Hormel strikers were glad to see their brothers and sisters from the Upper Midwest, but *there should have been ten times as many there.*

That evening almost 500 P-9 members and their families gathered in their union hall in the Austin Labor Center for their nightly mass meeting. People were eager to hear reports from the teams of roving pickets the union had dispatched to other Hormel plants around the country. They were enthusiastic, giving a standing ovation to any militant speech. But there was little speechifying. One after another the picketers came to the mike and in plain talk said they had accomplished a lot, but they had to do much more in order to win. One striker toward the end of the meeting summed it up: holding his thumb and forefinger an inch apart, he

never get it back."

Next up were the picketers who had been sent to Fremont, Nebraska. They had a tougher time of it: starting times at the plant are staggered and workers milled around the UFCW Local 22 hall not knowing what to do. The tide turned against the P-9ers when a union vice president and exec board member headed for the plant; only about 65 stayed out. One picket said what Fremont needed was an "educational process": "First we'll show them what a union hall is. Then we'll take 'em to a meeting. Then we'll tell 'em the truth—then we've got them!"

At the FDL packinghouse in Dubuque, Iowa the local president was out at the plant gate herding workers through the picket lines, and the whole time the P-9 team was there they were followed around by a squad car. They had trouble getting a place to hold a meeting, and finally had to hold it clandestinely in the parking lot of a shopping mall, but scores of workers came. Finding that many low-paid younger workers had little union consciousness, one picket said he told them: "Hey, kid, want to earn \$10.69 an hour? Just come over here and stand on this side of the sign instead of that side."

In Atlanta, Georgia the roving pickets didn't try to shut down the plant, discovering that the Hormel operation there was only half-organized and by setting up lines they would only get the union members fired. The mere presence of the P-9ers was enough for the local authorities to mobilize a SWAT team of 50 cops and paddy wagons. The squad discovered that many of the workers had dropped out of the union, which only met once every four months at a union hall 40 miles out of town. P-9ers told them, get in the union and we'll take care of the International. They signed up 35 new union members and vowed to come back.

Another team was just back from Texas, and there was a report from the West Coast that workers at a Hormel plant in Stockton, California had just signed a contract for \$13.50 an hour and improved pensions. But they were represented by the Teamsters, not the UFCW, which a bitter sign in the Austin Labor Center said means "United Front for Cutting Wages."

A high point of the meeting was the report from the women who had shut down the corporate headquarters. And there were many thanks for the support of out-of-town unionists whose caravan had shut down the Austin plant that morning. But what about Saturday, when Hormel's was rumored to be bringing in a cleaning crew? The women suggested they should link arms and form a chain in front of the north gate. Ray Rogers, a labor consultant whose "Corporate Campaign, Inc." was hired to help plan strategy for the fight against Hormel, worried that things could get

out of hand, explaining how he had asked the cops for permission to cool things out on Friday. But the proposal was adopted, and people vowed to be out on the line at 4:30 a.m.

The next morning there were only about 125 people on the line. Even so, they were inspired by Friday's success and as soon as the first scabs showed up a pitched battle ensued. Strikers managed to turn several cars away before the cops mobilized. In one case they fought a determined scab for three or four minutes. Pickets surrounded his car. One woman pounded on the hood, yelling, "What's the matter with you? You're taking food away from my kids." While the scab kept gunning his motor, people in back lifted up the rear wheels while those in front pushed him sideways on the icy road until he was pointed away from the plant and finally gave up. But after this had gone on for a while, Rogers showed up to call the pickets off, warning that if they kept it up the Guard would be called back. Wrong. It was the threat of militant mass picketing that convinced Perpich to pull the Guard out, not "good behavior" by strikers following the bosses' rules.

By constantly preaching "nonviolence" (at most turning a blind eye to a little early morning "rock-and-roll" with the scabs' cars), Rogers and the P-9 leadership accept the bosses' lie that defending picket lines from scabs trying to run down strikers and cops trying to beat them up is "violence." For the most part the scabs go in unmolested, which demoralizes the pickets and helps explain why the numbers on the line are dwindling. Only twice have they been stopped, both times when union contingents from the Twin Cities and other areas showed up and the crowd broke out of the legalistic straitjacket that has been placed on them. At any point on Saturday they could have shut the plant down tight, but that would "violate the injunction," as the leaders kept repeating. The company, cops and courts would also claim it's against the law if several hundred strikers had rushed the plant, kicking out the scabs and management personnel and sealing it off with a *sit-down strike*. Such a bold tactic, which won the 1933 Hormel strike, could have been easily accomplished and would have dramatically reversed the fortunes of the strike.

In spite of all the pressures on the P-9 strikers, they are still proud and determined. On Saturday night, about 1,000 union members met in the Austin high school in response to the report by the governor's "fact-finder," which simply repeated a mediator's proposal which had been twice turned down. Recognizing that a vote on that takeaway "offer," even if it were turned down by a narrow margin, could weaken the strike, the strikers vowed "no third vote" and decided to hang tough. P-9 president Jim Guyette told the media after the vote that "the strength of any union is to honor picket lines, especially their own." But when asked about the militancy on the lines that morning, he promised to "get it back under control." On Monday, the Guard was back, and through the week hundreds of scabs rolled into the plant unimpeded. Every union member in Austin has to be asking himself what they will do when the company tries to start up the hog kill again.

The Hormel strike hangs in the balance. What will determine the outcome is if the strikers allow themselves to be straitjacketed by the bosses' rules, or instead fight to win. Everyone senses that a victory here could unleash a wave of struggles. The whole country is watching. Will Austin, Minnesota be Hormel town or a union town? ■



Women strikers and supporters defiantly form human chain to stop scabs, January 31.

road, a group of women blockaded the gate to Hormel's corporate headquarters, locking the staff in with a company padlock and eventually forcing them to evacuate. This sent the bosses into conniptions. A Hormel spokesman declared, "It seems that law and order means something everywhere in America except in Minnesota" (*Austin Daily Herald*, 31 January). Mower County sheriff Wayne Goodnature said a state of "mob rule" existed outside the plant and called on the governor to bring back the Guard.

The biggest turnout Friday was from the Twin Cities and Duluth building trades, with busloads of IBEW members, carpenters, iron workers and laborers. UE members drove in from Sioux Falls, South Dakota and hospital workers from Cambridge, Minnesota.

said, "We're either this far from winning, or this far from losing."

The meeting began with cheers for the "A Team," which had returned for the weekend from successfully picketing out Hormel's plant at Ottumwa, Iowa. The picket captain led off the two dozen pickets, telling about a friend who broke down and cried on the way back, knowing that they had totally shut down the Ottumwa plant (Hormel retaliated by firing almost 500 workers), while back in Austin former union members were scabbing. He reported one Ottumwa worker's comment—"life didn't begin with Hormel"—and emphasized the P-9ers' heavy responsibility to keep fighting until everyone gets their job back. Another P-9er reported that in Ottumwa "people talk about losing their jobs. But if you lose your future, you'll

How They Did It in '33

When Hormel workers shut down the company's Austin packinghouse in November 1933, they struck like lightning. Led by experienced union militants of the Industrial Workers of the World, they seized the plant and held it hostage, along with its \$500,000 cooling system and 20 million pounds of meat. This was one of the first sit-down strikes of the 1930s. Jumping to the defense of Hormel's capitalist property rights, Minnesota's Farmer-Labor Party governor Floyd Olson complained to the strikers, "You were in illegal possession of the plant."

Nevertheless, within four days the strike was won, establishing the Independent Union of All Workers, forerunner to Local P-9, and spurring industrial unionization throughout the Midwest. Here's how they did it.

The strikers picketed peacefully until late Saturday morning. Then at 11:00 a.m. word spread along the picket lines that non-union workers were still inside the plant slaughtering sheep. These rumors both alarmed and enraged the pickets, and while several

were confused as to what action should be taken, others decided to use force to stop all further activity inside the plant. Within a few minutes, parts of the picket lines menacingly advanced toward the plant doors behind a few shouting leaders... Four hundred men, many of them armed with clubs, sticks, and rocks, crashed through the plant entrance, shattering the glass doors and sweeping the plant guards before them. The strikers quickly ran throughout the plant to chase out non-union workers. One emboldened group crashed through the doors of a

conference chamber where Jay Hormel and five company executives were meeting and declared, "We're taking possession here. SO MOVE OUT!"...

One hour later a dull quiet closed over the entire scene... Ropes were stretched across all routes into the plant and squads of militant strikers were detailed to guard them. The atmosphere was tense but control had been re-established among the pickets. The principal difference was that now company officers and non-union workers were on the outside looking in!

—from Larry D. Engelmann, "We Were the Poor People"—The Hormel Strike of 1933," *Labor History*, Fall 1974

Hormel Strike...

(continued from page 12)

worries that "The Austin workers' battle is only the most vocal and volatile of many union disputes nationwide that portend a new wave of labor problems" in the meatpacking industry. In particular this mouthpiece for finance capital is concerned that "the backlash has spelled doom for leaders of union locals who went along with wage and benefit concessions." By far the most treacherous of the capitalists' agents within "the house of labor" are the national union tops, in this case the UFCW International leadership of President William Wynn.

Over the last several years Wynn & Co. have relentlessly forced pay cuts down the throats of packinghouse workers across the country. From John Morrell & Co. in Sioux Falls, South Dakota to Oscar Mayer in Nashville and now the Thorn Apple Valley plant in Detroit, meatpackers have struck against the massive concessions jointly engineered by the industry and their loyal UFCW henchmen. Dumping local "giveback" misleaders and using roving pickets and mass picketing, UFCW workers throughout the industry are fighting hard to defend union wages and working conditions. Coordinated national strike action, led by a democratically elected strike committee and not the traitorous Wynn bureaucracy, can smash the meatpacker bosses' offensive.

In the fall of 1984 Hormel unilaterally cut wages at its Austin plant to \$8.25 from \$10.69 per hour. When the local finally struck after its contract expired last August, the UFCW tops tried to get P-9 to accept Hormel's "final offer." Besides leaving wages far behind the pre-1985 level, this would have imposed a draconian no-strike clause, different expiration dates within the Hormel chain (enabling the company to whip-saw union locals) and a company reign of terror on the shopfloor. By the time

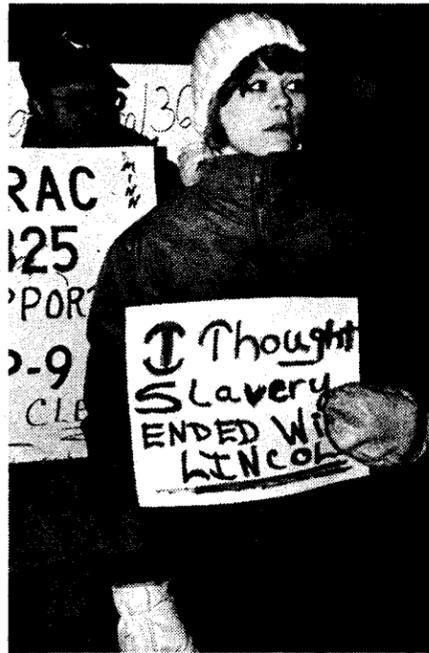
P-9's roving picket lines went out in mid-January, valuable months had been lost to Wynn's bureaucratic maneuvering. But the pickets were dispatched, and the effect on the Austin strikers was electrifying.

Having sampled the power of labor solidarity, P-9 members can see victory almost within reach. Yet it is clear to all that the situation in their home plant increasingly threatens to undermine and defeat the strike. Roughly a third of the membership have quit the union and are now crossing the lines. Meanwhile, the intervention of the bosses' government has transformed the struggle into a bare-knuckle political battle between labor and capital. Although local union leaders in the Twin Cities have mobilized hundreds of workers to Austin to support the strike, this is far from sufficient to stop the scabbing, especially with the Guard now firmly in place. It won't be long before Hormel tries to resume its slaughtering operations. *The hard truth is that the Austin plant must be shut down, and soon, or the strike will lose.*

P-9 is now getting much bigger turnouts at its meetings than on the picket lines, indicating that a section of the local has stepped back to become passive observers rather than union fighters. This is partly due to a lack of clear direction on the picket lines. Even when the relationship of forces at the plant gate has favored the union against the scabs, "Corporate Campaign, Inc." consultant Ray Rogers has been harping incessantly on the necessity for Martin Luther King-style nonviolence. Rogers & Co. push nonviolence as a way to garner public support in order to pressure Hormel. But "civil disobedience" only produces arrests without stopping the scabs. *Hormel workers don't need pressure, they need power.* Public opinion won't sway Hormel; mass labor action that shuts down the company and cuts off its profits will. Right now the pacifism of the strike leadership is a roadblock to the strike's success.

Oust the Labor Traitors! For a Workers Party!

The National Guard can be beaten; it has been beaten. In 1934, in addition to the Trotskyist-led Minneapolis Teamster strike and the Stalinist-led San Francisco dock strike, there was a third ferocious labor battle: the Toledo Auto-Lite strike, led by the American Workers Party, which fused with the Trotskyists at the end of that year. In Toledo the Guard tried to smash the workers' mass picket lines—and lost! Strikers' first harangued the troops, explaining the issues in their strike; some Guardsmen were induced to quit on the spot and go home. When the Guard fired on the strikers the next day, killing two, 6,000 enraged workers returned to battle the troops. This militant struggle forced the Guard's withdrawal as local unions voted for a general strike. A few days later the company capitulated, recognizing the union. This laid the basis for organizing the entire auto industry,



WV Photo

Hormel: A battle labor must win.

from Toledo to Detroit and Flint.

Austin should be swamped with trade unionists—not hundreds but thousands and tens of thousands; not to hold a vigil but to shut Hormel down tight! The strike leaders' pressure tactics ultimately rely on the capitalist state to salvage the situation for the workers, whether in the guise of Austin mayor Tom Kough (a striking P-9 member) or DFL governor Perpich. In recent years National Guard troops have been mobilized to break three significant strikes: Iowa Beef Packing in Nebraska, Phelps-Dodge copper miners in Arizona, and Hormel meatpackers. In every case it was a Democratic governor who ordered these professional strikebreakers into action. Ever since Reagan crushed the nationwide air controllers union, the Democrats have been smashing local PATCOs all over the country. *Labor's ties to the Democrats are a noose around P-9's neck.*

The mass labor action needed now to defend P-9 runs straight up against that alliance with the bosses' Democratic Party. Take for example the Twin Cities P-9 Support Committee, dominated by leaders of the National Rank and File Against Concessions. NRFAC leaders head some of the most powerful union locals in Minnesota, including iron miners, auto workers and steel workers. A political strike by any one of these locals demanding removal of the National Guard would electrify the labor movement and shift the scales dramatically to P-9's side. Yet the best the P-9 Support Committee could do was to offer a resolution demanding "that the National Guard stop being used to break the P-9 strike!"

This oh-so-polite resolution, designed to put minimum pressure on Perpich, *doesn't even demand the Guard's removal.* The resolution was uncritically reprinted in a *Socialist Action* supplement on the Hormel strike, which also failed to call for the National Guard out of Austin. That's nothing new for these fake-Trotskyists, who see their role as "socialist" waterboys for the machinations of liberal union bureaucrats. A

couple of years ago in San Francisco, Socialist Action leader Nat Weinstein helped ATU bureaucrats sell out the Greyhound strikers by organizing a goon squad to prevent militant workers from shutting down the bus terminal during a mass rally.

But where Socialist Action tails "progressive" bureaucrats, the *Bulletin*, newspaper of the recently ex-Healyite Workers League, seems to prefer old-fashioned Cold War labor traitors. David North's WL calls on William Wynn to defend P-9 by organizing a nationwide meatpacking strike. That's like asking a rattlesnake to suck the venom out of your wounded leg! Similarly, last year the WL's then-godfather Gerry Healy in Britain called on the Trades Union Congress to wage a general strike in defense of striking coal miners—at the very moment the TUC tops were actively trying to break the mine strike! The *Bulletin* also calls on the AFL-CIO tops to organize a "labor party." If the CIA's top labor lieutenant Lane Kirkland, William "Rattlesnake" Wynn and their ilk ever did anything of the sort, such a racist, giveback "labor party" would be another weapon for the bosses to break militant struggles like the Hormel strike.

Referring to the 1934 Minneapolis strike, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon said:

"All modern strikes require political direction... Our people were prepared for that since they were political people, inspired by political conceptions. The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups. They put no reliance whatever in Roosevelt's Labor Board; they weren't fooled by any idea that Roosevelt, the liberal 'friend of labor' president, was going to help the truck drivers in Minneapolis win a few cents more an hour. They weren't deluded even by the fact that there was at that time in Minnesota a Farmer-Labor Governor, presumed to be on the side of the workers. "Our people didn't believe in anybody or anything but the policy of the class struggle and the ability of the workers to prevail by their mass strength and solidarity."

—James P. Cannon, *The History of American Trotskyism* (1944)

Against the political power of the capitalist state the working class must organize its own political power, a workers party committed to the fight for a workers government. Such a party won't try to put band-aids on the profit system but will stand for the revolutionary expropriation of industry to lay the basis for a rationally planned economy. A class-struggle workers party must fight for *all* the oppressed, mobilizing unemployed workers to help win strikes through mass picketing, organizing union-based integrated defense squads to defend minorities from racist attacks. But Lane Kirkland and the other labor lieutenants of capital will never build such a party. A workers party will be constructed by labor militants as part of the fight to oust the backstabbing bureaucrats from the unions. *Victory to the Hormel strike!* ■

Special Sub Rate for Hormel Strikers

At the February 8 labor march in Ottumwa, Iowa more than 100 copies of *Workers Vanguard* were sold and over 1,000 WV supplements "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win" were distributed to the crowd of 2,000 workers and farmers. Over the past month Hormel strikers and strike supporters have eagerly snapped up and read more than 300 copies of WV. You can continue to receive the paper that fights for the working people, with a special introductory subscription for strikers of \$1 for ten issues. Arm yourself with a program for victory!

WORKERS VANGUARD



Striking meatpackers and supporters turn out to stop scabs, but P-9 leaders are still playing by bosses' rules. Labor's gotta play hardball to win! WV Photos

All Out for Meatpackers Strike!

Hormel: Mobilize Labor— Drive Out National Guard!

AUSTIN, Minnesota—The militant strike here by Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) has become the front line of labor's fight to beat back the bosses' war on the working class. Since 1981, when the AFL-CIO tops criminally let the PATCO air controllers go down, working people have suffered one defeat after another. But after taking it on the chin for several years, in the last few months there have been a series of drawn-out strikes against company "takebacks." From Massey coal miners in West Virginia to Watsonville cannery workers in California, isolated groups of workers have fought hard, often in the face of sabotage by their own national union leaders. Hormel is one of those strikes, with one crucial distinction: they are trying to spark a national labor fightback.

Using a class-struggle tactic practically unheard of in recent years outside the Mine Workers, P-9 has dispatched roving pickets to Hormel facilities from Georgia to California. But here in "Hormel, Minnesota" strikers face a massive scabberding operation by National Guardsmen along with state and local police. Last week the P-9 rank and file overwhelmingly refused to vote on a report by the governor's "fact-finder," who simply repeated a mediator's proposal twice rejected by the local membership. Thereupon an additional 500 Guardsmen were dispatched to Austin, and several hundred deployed around the plant. Scores of strikers were arrested as they tried to approach the gates, and a local D.A. charged union leader Jim Guyette and labor consultant Ray Rogers under "criminal syndical-

ism" laws left over from days when unions were tried for sedition.

After nearly six months on the picket lines, the Hormel strike has reached a showdown. P-9 can win, and P-9 must win! The local's roving pickets have effectively shut down Hormel's Ottumwa, Iowa plant, which normally accounts for 16-18 percent of the company's production. Pickets have also made inroads at the Fremont, Nebraska facility. But hundreds of scabs are streaming into the main Austin plant, responsible for more than half of Hormel's meat products. *This crucial plant must be shut down!* Saturday speechifying won't save the strike! Union leaders who say wait till Novem-

ber and vote Democratic are already writing P-9's epitaph. The labor movement must mobilize *now* to get the Guard out of Austin and shut down Hormel!

So far the best response has come from Ottumwa, Iowa, where Local P-1 of the United Packinghouse Workers was formed back in the '30s. When P-9 pickets arrived from Austin, they virtually shut the Ottumwa plant down. On Saturday, January 25, there was a mass labor march, filling the road "ditch to ditch" with unionists as one Austin picketer put it. The company responded by firing 478 members of the UFCW Local 431 for refusing to cross picket lines. So on February 8, some 2,000

unionists, their families and friends again rallied in Ottumwa, including dozens of UAW members from the local John Deere plant and the Maytag plant in Newton, Teamsters and packing-house workers. The mayor of this staunchly labor town drew hearty applause when he declared, "you've got a right not to cross that picket line." Even the Catholic priest, Father James Grubb, showed more consciousness than many union misleaders, putting up P-9 picketers in the church and telling CBS-TV News (9 February):

"...ever since the air controllers strike ...there has been almost a concerted effort throughout the United States to break the unions. And an easy way to do it is one at a time."

From throughout the Midwest, unions should be sending large contingents into Austin—flood the city with strike supporters and send the scabs packing! Minnesota labor must undertake political strike action demanding that Democratic "Farmer-Labor" governor Rudy Perpich demobilize the Guard. A big victory against Hormel could ignite a long overdue labor offensive, from Eastern Airlines to U.S. Steel, auto workers and phone workers.

Shut Down Hormel!

The capitalist rulers recognize the importance of the Hormel strike, and they're going all out to defeat it. The DFL governor poses as a "friend of labor" but calls out the National Guard to disperse the picket lines. The bosses' press crows that the strike is losing, yet the *Wall Street Journal* (5 February)

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Bosses' state in action: National Guard called out by Minnesota Democratic governor Perpich to break Hormel strike. Levison/Minneapolis Star and Tribune