

## Free South African Black Leader!

# Nelson Mandela Defiant

For 22 years, Nelson Mandela has been a prisoner in a country that is a prison for its black majority. The 66-year-old Mandela is head of the long-hanned African National Congress (ANC) and the most respected black leader in apartheid South Africa. His jailer, President P.W. Botha, heads a powerful white supremacist police state. But that state has been shaken by mass revolt, and now it is the jailer who is looking for a way out. At the end of January Botha announced that he would consider releasing Mandela if the ANC leader would renounce

"violence," namely the campaign of sabotage and guerrilla attacks against military targets—this from a government which has slaughtered over 150 blacks in the last year alone!

Mandela has lost none of the dignity and courage he showed in the dock in the early 1960s. In a defiant statement read by his daughter Zinzi to a crowd of 9,000 in Soweto he declared, referring to Botha:

"Let him renounce violence. Let him say that he will dismantle apartheid. Let him unban the people's organization, the African National Congress,

let him free all who have been imprisoned, banished or exiled for their opposition to apartheid. Let him guarantee free political activity so that the people may decide who will govern them.... I cannot sell my birthright nor am I prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free"

—*New York Times*,  
11 February

And in an interview with Britain's Lord Bethell in January (clearly granted to set the stage for Botha's "offer"), Mandela reaffirmed the obvious fact that the armed struggle had been forced on South Africa's blacks by the



Camera Press

Nelson Mandela

regime and vowed to defy any restrictions should he be released.

At this point Botha is stalling.  
*continued on page 9*

## Butcher of the Belgrano Meets Grenada Invader

# Thatcher and Reagan: Enemies of the People

Margaret Thatcher is coming to Washington leaving a trail of blood behind her. This is the "Iron Lady," the British prime minister who sent 368 Argentine sailors to a watery grave for the sheer pleasure of it, who presides over the daily terrorist slaughter of the Irish people, and who this very minute is sending out waves of cops to batter and smash the British coal miners' eleven-month-old strike. Now she comes to meet Evil Emperor Reagan, who destroyed the air traffic controllers union and invaded black Grenada, as he initiates his second term of bleeding the working class, the poor and minorities to fuel his arms buildup for an anti-Soviet "Star Wars" Armageddon. You can be sure this meeting between two certified enemies of the people bodes ill for the workers and oppressed of the world.

British capitalism is in deep trouble. After six years of Thatcherite austerity, five million are chronically unemployed, factories are folding and the once-mighty pound sterling is almost at parity with the dollar. Thatcher is widely hated among the masses, so much so that when an IRA bomb almost blew her away last fall, a worker's joke was that the police would have a hard time making arrests because there were 50 million suspects. While she vows to be "vindictive in victory" in the coal strike, the 130,000-strong striking miners have dug in for a fight to the finish. And fully 60 percent of the British public think Thatcher has handled the strike badly—only 21 percent in a recent opinion poll thought she understood the country's problems (*New York Times*, 11 February).



Imperialist war criminals meet: British prime minister Margaret Thatcher murdered 368 Argentine sailors aboard the *Belgrano* (right).

Even the divided Labour Party, which moreover experienced a major split a few years ago, is neck and neck with Thatcher in the polls. And just recently a jury acquitted top level civil servant Clive Ponting, whom Thatcher had wanted prosecuted for leaking embarrassing secrets about the *General Belgrano* affair to the Labour opposition. The judge's directive to convict

him was defied by a hand-picked jury—a clear message from the bourgeoisie that they want to preserve parliamentary government. Even spineless Labour leader Neil Kinnock felt emboldened enough this week to tell Thatcher in Parliament, "I do not believe you," when she claimed to have had nothing to do with the prosecution of Ponting. "Unprecedented," gasped the London

*Guardian* (13 February)! No doubt Thatcher thinks a visit to Washington, including Yankee Doodle ceremonial pomp at the White House, might boost her sagging fortunes.

### Murder Most Foul

From El Salvador to South Africa to Thatcher's Britain, Ronald Reagan's "Free World" is marked by bloody repression. For over two years now Thatcher has been dogged by the ghosts of the hundreds of Argentine sailors who died when their cruiser, the *General Belgrano*, was sunk by Thatcher's navy in 1982 during the Falklands/Malvinas war, that bizarre conflict between two reactionary capitalist regimes. When numerous "leaks" about this affair started coming out in early 1984, we concluded that "If Thatcher dispatched those Argentine boys to the bottom of the sea, she richly deserves hanging" (*WV* No. 353, 27 April 1984). Now the published facts are overwhelming: the Iron Lady should swing.

During and after the Falklands/Malvinas conflict, British officials had bragged to the world that their navy operated under strict civilian-issued "Rules of Engagement" in the undeclared war—"minimum force" and "a civilized code of conduct" were the keynote according to Commander Christopher Craig, commanding officer of the HMS *Alacrity*, writing in the U.S. *Naval War College Review* (May-June 1984). Much ado was made of the British announcement of a Total Exclusion Zone around the islands—a zone within which Argentine naval vessels  
*continued on page 4*



## For Agrarian Revolution in South Africa!

1/3/85  
Chicago

Editor, *WV*:

Brother Shiffman's excellent forum "Smash Apartheid Slavery" (reproduced in *WV* No. 368, 7 December 1984) raised in passing the slogan "land to the tiller" as being of particular relevance to the plight of the dispossessed black bantustan population in South Africa. While his general remarks concerning the pertinence of Permanent Revolution and the importance of the land question generally in South Africa are incontrovertible, the use of the above slogan seems more questionable. (I had earlier commented to several comrades that in fact this slogan was a cruel joke for the black "peasantry" imprisoned in the various bantustans.)

As I understand this slogan it represents the solution to land ownership evolved by the peasantry in revolutionary situations when, having

hurned the manors and chased off the landowners, the question arose as to how to apportion the feudal and semi-feudal holdings. The peasants' solution was elegantly simple from a petty-bourgeois perspective; the land went to those who had worked it whether because of feudal obligation or sharecropping/rack-renting types of arrangements. The Bolsheviks justly seized on this slogan (from the program of the populist Social Revolutionaries) to mobilize the peasant nation in support of the workers revolution then in process.

As Brother Shiffman makes clear apartheid is a distillation of the more hideous aspects of colonial and imperialist exploitation and oppression with the following unique "arrangement" for the black masses: the majority of the population has been prevented through terror from maintaining any historical relationship to the land that is South Africa. Instead they are virtually im-

Down with  
the bantustan  
hellholes—  
Land to the  
tillers!



prisoned in bantustans where the land has all the arability of acreage on the moon. "Giving" this land to the black population is like asking someone to raise crops on an asphalt driveway.

The land question is a critical ingredient of the South African revolu-

tion and land hunger must be a central preoccupation of most bantustan residents. White-owned estates and large farms will be expropriated and parceled out when the proletarian and toiling masses arise to assert their just claims.

*continued on page 9*

## Revenge of the P&FP

Los Angeles  
January 29, 1985

Jan Norden, editor  
*Workers Vanguard*

Socialist salutations;

Your 25 January 1985 article on the declining influence of the Internationalist Workers Party (IWP) made interesting reading, but contained several

inaccuracies. Most important is your characterization of the California Peace and Freedom Party (PFP) as a "Short-lived expression of middle-class politics" which you admit is based on the cursory notions of Spartacist comrades from SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO. No mention is made of the PFP Platform (which the IWP ignored to promote their liberal reformist candidates). It

addresses, in direct contradiction to *WV*'s mistaken assertions, the capitalist character of war, racism, sexism, and economic exploitation. The PFP Platform states: "Socialism can only be brought about if we working class people unite and act as a body in our own interests. This means that our goals cannot be achieved by electoral means alone. We favor mass organization and direct action in the community, the workplace, and the armed forces, and a fight for democracy at all levels of social organization everywhere in the world."

SCULPT (the Search Committee for a United Left Presidential Ticket) was initiated not by the IWP in April 1983 as you reported, but by independents within PFP in December 1982. Its conferences attracted participation by activists representing a dozen parties and numerous other organizations on the Left. You are correct in quoting the IWP regarding SCULPT's address as being the same PFP address which was formerly shared by the Socialist Party of Los Angeles; however this provides no justification for the IWP posturing as a self-styled "East Coast Committee for a Peace and Freedom Party National Slate in 1984" any more than if it had posed as a "Provisional Committee for an Authentic Spartacist League." You are incorrect in identifying Casey Peters as a member of the Socialist Party, which I am not.

Despite your steadfast denunciation of the IWP, you like to quote them as a reliable source when it suits your editorial whim, as you did when you labelled Sonia Johnson as "pro-capitalist" (their words, not hers). You also claim they are correct in saying that the Communist Party "works within PFP to make it an appendage of the Democratic Party's liberal wing." If that be the purpose of the CP's participation

within PFP, it is a futile one by the very nature of PFP's structure as well as by the adamant intentions of PFP activists. For example, although the CP including its PFP faction supported Tom Bradley for Governor of California in 1982, PFP candidate Elizabeth Martinez ran an active campaign against him and was blamed by the CP for Bradley's defeat.

Incidentally, you underestimated PFP's membership as 20,000 when it is actually about 50,000, and counted our sympathizers at 60,000, when we have garnered up to 500,000 votes in statewide elections. Any *Workers Vanguard* readers who wish further information including the complete PFP Platform, please write to: Peace and Freedom Party, 2404 West 7th Street #202, Los Angeles CA 90057.

In socialist solidarity,  
Casey Peters

*WV replies:* Thank you for your letter; we apologize for misidentifying you as an SP member, a misunderstanding arising from the overlapping SP and P&FP addresses. We're rather remote from your milieu, but we try to be scrupulously accurate. The numbers you mention were not our figures for Peace and Freedom members and sympathizers but the IWP's calculations of "the left's" electoral clout nationally. And the P&FP presidential candidate, Sonia Johnson, was the candidate of the Citizens Party, a liberal ecologist-feminist "third party," who praised the Democrats' nomination of Geraldine Ferraro for vice president. That qualifies as "pro-capitalist" for us. Incidentally, our readers would surely like to hear details about the recent split in the IWP, where the Morenoites reportedly expelled their Long Beach branch (the one most heavily involved in the P&FP campaign) and its leading P&FP candidate, Sonia Cruz. ■

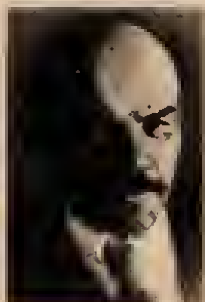


TROTSKY

### The Housing Question

In his 1872 polemic against petty-bourgeois Utopian socialists like the French anarchist Pierre Proudhon, who believed the housing question could be solved under capitalism, Frederick Engels wrote:

Whence then comes the housing shortage? How did it arise? ... it is a necessary product of the bourgeois social order; that it cannot fail to be present in a society in which the great masses of the workers are



LENIN

exclusively dependent upon wages, that is to say, on the sum of foodstuffs necessary for their existence and for the propagation of their kind; in which improvements of the existing machinery continually throw masses of workers out of employment; in which violent and regularly recurring industrial vacillations determine on the one hand the existence of a large reserve army of unemployed workers, and on the other hand drive large masses of the workers temporarily unemployed onto the streets; in which the workers are crowded together in masses in the big towns, at a quicker rate than dwellings come into existence for them under existing conditions; in which, therefore, there must always be tenants even for the most infamous pigsties; and in which finally the house owner in his capacity as capitalist has not only the right, but, in view of the competition, to a certain extent also the duty of ruthlessly making as much out of his property in house rent as he possibly can. In such a society the housing shortage is no accident; it is a necessary institution and it can be abolished together with all its effects on health, etc., only if the whole social order from which it springs is fundamentally refashioned.

—Frederick Engels, *The Housing Question* (1872)

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No. 373

22 February 1985

## Red Avengers Goes British

To *Workers Vanguard*

Dear Comrades:

It might not yet have come to your notice but the Red Avengers are becoming an international network. Just the other day at the head of a miners picket in Doncaster Yorkshire, I distinctly seen a red Red Avenger T-shirt in among the crush of cops and militants. I do believe this infectious network are now invading the space of the British police force. This latter though seem to

be the piggies rather than the hemasked insurgents seen in *W.V.*

Incidentally the *Ghostbusters* film and record currently sweeping Britain has been slightly altered in the pit villages. The kids all yell "Seab Busters!" to the chorus—"We ain't afraid of no seahs!"

Red Greetings,  
D. Douglass  
N.U.M. Branch Delegate  
Hatfield, Doncaster, Britain

WORKERS VANGUARD



# Launching Pad for U.S. Aggression in Central America

## Militarism and Repression in Puerto Rico

Escalating U.S. military activity, witchhunts against leftists, heavy repression against labor, economic collapse: factories closing, mass layoffs, more than 25 percent official unemployment. Some Latin American banana republic? No, this is Puerto Rico, the U.S.' island colony long considered a "showcase of democracy and development" in the Caribbean. Today it's an economic disaster area and political powder keg.

Puerto Rico has entered a period of intense crisis directly linked to the fiscal crisis of American imperialism, the anti-Soviet war drive and U.S. intervention against revolutionary struggles in Central America. The bankruptcy of the colonial parties couldn't be clearer: the phony "commonwealth" status has long since lost its attraction and statehood is manifestly unreal. Yet the parochial, nationalist left is going nowhere, and for obvious reasons. The Puerto Rican masses are hardly attracted by the prospect of independence under capitalism as they watch hunger riots next door in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. Genuine independence from colonial rule and liberation from neocolonial domination requires proletarian revolution throughout the region. What's needed is internationalist class struggle against Yankee imperialism in the Caribbean, Central America and North America itself.

Santo Domingo 1965, Grenada 1983, Nicaragua 1985? Puerto Rico has repeatedly served as a staging ground for U.S. aggression in the Caribbean. Now Reagan has turned the island into a giant military base for the counterrevolutionary war he is waging in Central America. Squadrons of attack and surveillance planes have been moved in; the Fifth Fleet now operates out of the giant Roosevelt Roads naval base. The Puerto Rican National Guard includes a battalion of rangers, an armored airborne division and an amphibious assault unit, all part of the Rapid Deployment Force which spearheaded the invasion of Grenada in October 1983. And since December hundreds of Puerto Rican Guardsmen have been in Panama for six-month-long "counter-insurgency" maneuvers, making them available for use against Salvadoran leftist rebels or Sandinista Nicaragua. Thus independence for Puerto Rico is intimately bound up with the struggle for revolution in Central America.

Meanwhile, mired in the worst economic crisis since the '30s, Puerto Rico today has 62 percent of the population living below the federal poverty level. More than half the families are dependent on food stamps; a third of all able-bodied adult men have no full-time jobs. Cutting social welfare programs to pay for the multi-trillion-dollar military buildup has devastated

the island's economy, which derives nearly a third of its gross product from U.S. government payments. In his first year alone, Reagan slashed nearly half a billion dollars in federal funds from the Puerto Rican government budget. And now the Reaganite free marketeers are eliminating tens of thousands of jobs with their plans for a Caribbean "co-prosperity sphere" by eliminating tariffs

the PPD. And all the nationalist left has to offer the masses is talk of (nonexistent) *independentista* unity.

### Murderous Colonial Repression

To secure its island bastion, the colonial authorities, both local and federal, have resorted to repression surpassing that in the U.S. at the height of the FBI's COINTELPRO and the CIA's Opera-



Police terrorize squatters at Villa Sin Miedo, burning houses to the ground, May 1982.

for their neocolonies—the one advantage Puerto Rico had as a low-wage haven for runaway shops. Whatever the island's colonial "status," its economic future under U.S. rule is one of increasing misery.

As Puerto Rico becomes increasingly militarized, as it sinks deeper into economic depression, political repression has kept pace. And the repressive forces act just like what they are: mercenaries in the service of a foreign oppressor. The National Guard are not weekend warriors but a colonial constabulary, routinely used to smash striking workers and students. The police revel in violence and provocation such as the cold-blooded execution of two young *independentistas* at Cerro Maravilla in 1978. A federal trial of ten police charged with lying to grand juries investigating this notorious murder case opened February 5 in San Juan. On the mainland, authorities have thrown wide a dragnet arresting scores on charges of aiding FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation) terrorists. And the grand jury has been perfected as a witchhunt device against leftists: at present 18 Puerto Rican militants are in jail for refusing to cooperate with the feds' fishing expeditions.

But in the midst of these catastrophic conditions, the political result has been virtually nil. The "Macheteros" guerrilla group has accurately catalogued the "squabbles, ploys, frauds, insults and aggressions" of the colonial parties who alternate in La Fortaleza (the governor's palace). At every election the voters throw the incumbent crooks out: Popular Democrat Hernández Colón (PPD) is replaced by New Progressive Romero Barceló (PNP) who is replaced by Hernández Colón. Yet the cycle continues. In the last elections the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) of Rubén Berrios got a mere 3 percent of the vote. The Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) couldn't decide whether to sell its electoral clientele to the PIP or

tion CHAOS in the late 1960s. Today the streets of downtown San Juan and poor barrios are crawling with every variety of police. Corruption trials show the cops up to their necks in drug trafficking, diamond thefts, stolen truck rings and extortion. A death squad has been operating at the top levels of the Puerto Rico police. And now the FBI has chosen Puerto Rico as the testing ground for its "anti-terrorist" guidelines of infiltration, disruption and provocation.

One of the most dramatic examples was the police entrapment, murder and cover-up in the case of Cerro Maravilla. Two young pro-independence militants, supposedly attempting to blow up TV transmission towers on the highest mountain on the island, were set up and brutally executed by Puerto Rican cops on 25 July 1978. At the time the police were praised by Governor Romero Barceló as "heroic." Two investigations

of the incident by the Puerto Rican Justice Department, in 1978 and 1980, and two more by the U.S. Justice Department whitewashed the cops of any involvement. However, following Watergate-style hearings by the opposition-controlled Puerto Rican Senate, early last year federal indictments were handed down against ten cops, including the former chief of police intelligence, on 53 counts of perjury, destruction of evidence and obstruction of justice. And in November, Romero was defeated as governor in large part over the blowback from the case.

Cerro Maravilla was a classic case of police provocation, offering a chilling glimpse at the modus operandi of the brutal paramilitary Puerto Rican police. Already a month before the killings, Romero Barceló began to whip up a terrorist scare claiming that the police had discovered a subversive conspiracy. The FBI chipped in with reports of a terrorist attempt scheduled to take place July 25. It's only natural they should have known the time, date and place. Police agent provocateur Alejandro González Malavé, the prime instigator of the Cerro Maravilla incident, was in constant contact with the authorities all the way up to the governor's office. He recruited the two young *independentistas*, Arnaldo Darío Rosado and Carlos Soto Arrivi, and commandeered a taxi to take them to the site. Heavily armed cops were waiting for them: Rosado and Soto were brought down by a barrage of gunfire, then beaten and later executed while on their knees begging for mercy.

These cold-blooded murders were only the most blatant in a series of police and death squad attacks on oppositionists in Puerto Rico. In 1976, the son of independence leader Juan Mari Bras was kidnapped and assassinated under suspicious circumstances. That same year a leader of the Teamsters union, Juan Rafael Caballero, was seized and murdered by the police. Other unionists have been victims of frame-ups designed to put them out of commission: Arturo Grant of the Movimiento Obrero Unido, jailed on murder charges; Norberto Cintrón, framed for bank robbery; Radamés Acosta, head of the Unión Nacional de Trabajadores, jailed on trumped-up charges. More recently, the notorious police death squad, reputedly headed by former Colonel Alejo Maldonado (arrested in 1982 for kidnapping), has been fighting a gangland war to the death with organized crime—as well as beating and even murdering witnesses to police corruption.

When things get out of hand they bring in the troops and paramilitary police. In 1978 Romero used several acts of sabotage at the Puerto Rican electric company (committed by the same González Malavé) as an excuse for

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#### BAY AREA



## Auto Militant Fired at British Leyland

# British Miners Say: "Defend Patrick Sliney!"

On January 31 Patrick Sliney, a militant auto worker and member of the transport union (T&G) at the British Leyland (BL) Rover plant in Birmingham, England, was fired for advocating that his union take strike action alongside the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). This outrageous victimization is part and parcel of the Thatcher government's drive to smash the NUM and cripple every other union. From the first month of the miners' strike, Sliney has campaigned tirelessly to halt the scandalous flow of scab coal into his plant and BL's nearby Longbridge factory. It was largely due to the efforts of Patrick, a well-known supporter of the Spartacist League/Britain, that the lid was blown off this scabbing operation carried out with the complicity of the union tops. Patrick's activities sparked a picket line of miners and truck driver officials of the T&G organized in an attempt to stop the

scabbing at Longbridge.

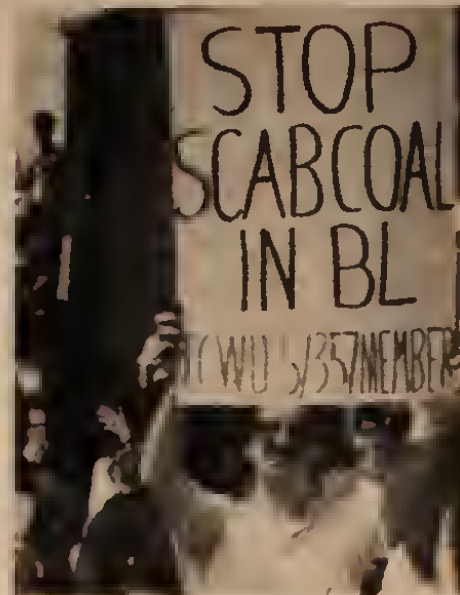
Thatcher's thought police at BL witchhunted Patrick for "unauthorized distribution" of a leaflet demanding that the union reject the bosses' pay offer and strike alongside the miners. In fact the British bosses want to make *all* trade-union activity unauthorized, and outlaw even the advocacy of trade-union solidarity. In his statement, Sliney had appealed to his fellow unionists at Rover:

"Thatcher wants to cripple the trade unions. She wants company unions and scab unions run by the likes of Silver Birch [notorious scab miner] and Leech Walesa. . . . She is going after the miners who are fighting for all of us and who have stood alone for too long while the TUC and the Labour Party leadership have kicked them in the teeth or stabbed them in the back. . . . We need to form a fighting Triple Alliance with the rail workers and the miners. We need to stop road, rail and the docks through all-out strike action in these unions.

to join the miners, blockade the power stations and freeze Thatcher this winter."

While the union tops have tolerated and in many instances urged their own members to seah on the miners, there are many thousands of militants like Patrick who have put their jobs on the line to heat the union-busters. Over 400 T&G truck drivers have been fired for refusing to cross NUM picket lines; thousands of railroad workers have refused to handle seah coal. Such acts of genuine solidarity have provided an inestimable boost to the fighting spirit of the embattled miners. In the forefront of those who have risen to defend Patrick Sliney are the striking miners themselves. On the day of his kangaroo-court "appeal" hearing at Rover, several miners from surrounding pits demonstrated at the plant gate. "Support Patrick Sliney today, lads!" they shouted. "His job today, your job tomorrow."

A number of NUM officials and strike activists have contacted the T&G officials at Rover, urging strike action to reinstate Sliney. A striking South Wales NUM member put it simply at a miners support conference in Birmingham: "He [Patrick] was sacked by his employers at BL for simply showing what should be the number one law of the trade union



Workers Hammer

Patrick Sliney (shown above at miners' rally) fought Leyland scab operation.

movement: solidarity. Solidarity, comrades, does not only extend to mineworkers. . . . I shall remain solid to this strike, and I shall remain solid as far as Patrick Sliney is concerned and every other trade unionist outside the mining industry is concerned who's been sacked." Victory to the miners! Reinstatement Patrick Sliney! ■

## Thatcher and Reagan...

(continued from page 1)

and aircraft would be subject to attack—as a sign that Britain was not bloodthirsty and did not intend an all-out war against the Argentine mainland.

So when the British attack submarine HMS *Conqueror* sank the *Belgrano* on 2 May 1982 well outside the "exclusion zone," questions began to be asked. The fact that the "civilized" British naval officers made no effort to rescue the survivors huddled together in lifeboats trying to avoid freezing to death also belied the government's propaganda. The initial government explanation presented by then defence secretary John Nott to the House of Commons two days after the sinking was that the *Belgrano* was "closing on" the British task force. Thatcher herself argued in 1983 that the *Belgrano* "was a danger to our ships." But a Scottish Labour Party Member of Parliament (MP), Tam Dalyell, knew Thatcher was lying and pursued the matter.

Finally in the summer of 1984 Clive Ponting, a high official in the Defence Ministry, could no longer stand the government cover-up and passed critical documents to Dalyell. An unclassified "confidential" memo, advising the defence secretary how to answer embar-



John Harris/ML

Kellingley, September 1984—Class war in Britain's coal fields as pickets battle cops.

assing questions about the changes in the Rules of Engagement in the critical period, reveals that: the rules were changed on April 30 so that Argentine aircraft carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo* could be engaged outside the Exclusion Zone (the carrier was never caught); and they were further broadened on May 2, a change that was "not restricted to BELGRANO but included all Argentine warships over a large area." (See "The *Belgrano* Papers," *New States-*

*man*, 24 August 1984.) No warning was issued to Argentina until five days after the *Belgrano* was sunk. So much for "fair play"! And since Thatcher ordered that old cruiser torpedoed while it was moving away from the Falklands, how can she complain that the IRA bombing her hotel in Brighton wasn't cricket?

Then chief of defence staff Lord Lewin says the critical May 2 change in the orders was made "in twenty minutes" at lunchtime at Thatcher's country retreat at Chequers (London *Guardian*, 30 August 1984)—hardly the time span of an agonizing, conscience-wracked decision. Speaking to Parliament on 5 May 1982, defence secretary Nott tried to blame the sub commander for the decision to sink the antiquated Argentine warship. But the *Conqueror*'s captain, Christopher Wreford-Brown, told the press that "the decision was taken by London," the orders were repeated twice and confirmed after he had reported the *Belgrano* was heading away from the Falklands (*Guardian*, 13 February). Since the *Belgrano* is specifically mentioned as one of the reasons for the expanded "Rules of Engagement," it's perfectly clear that Thatcher personally ordered the sinking. By 8 p.m. London time the deed was done—barely enough time for Thatcher to lick her fingers after a satisfying meal.

Like Nixon caught with his pants down, Thatcher began issuing lie after lie in an attempt to disappear the escalating exposures, but each one only put her deeper in it. Last fall she claimed

not to have known about the *Belgrano*'s changed course until November 1982. When it was pointed out that this conflicted with the government's December 1982 White Paper her story changed—she was "finally informed" only in March 1984. But, Thatcher added haughtily, so what: even if she had known the *Belgrano* was heading home, reported the [London] *Times* (21 November 1984), "she would still have ordered the sinking." Thatcher clearly suffers from a case of foot-in-mouth disease. Let's hope it's terminal.

While the government's tissue of lies was falling apart, Thatcher struck back with state repression. Ponting was put on trial on charges of violating the draconian 1911 Official Secrets Act—by revealing the truth to Parliament! Meanwhile, Ministry of Defence gents paid unannounced visits to anti-government publications like the *New Statesman*, warning journalists that they might be "in violation" of the Secrets Act. Mysteriously, the six-volume navigation log of the HMS *Conqueror* was discovered "missing" in November, along with the submarine's signals log.

And then there's the case of 78-year-old Hilda Murrell, found stabbed to death in an English woodland in March 1984, supposedly murdered by "burglars," even though they took none of her valuables. Murrell was the aunt of Commander Roh Green, a Royal Navy intelligence officer who had access to sensitive naval communications during the 1982 war. Labour MP Dalyell insisted in Parliament:

"I am informed the intruders were not after money. . . but were checking the house to see if there were any *Belgrano*-related documents of Commander Green in the home of his aunt. Things went disastrously wrong. They had no intention of murdering, let alone killing, a 78-year-old ex-rose-grower. Yet, being the lady she was and in her home, Hilda Murrell fought and was severely injured. She was then killed or left to die from hypothermia, and the cover-up had to begin because I am informed that the searchers were men of British Intelligence."

—*Newsday*, 31 January

The very proper British commander Green backs up Dalyell:

"I haven't gone off my rocker, flipped and become a raving leftie who wants to attack the police, but in [Dalyell's] is the most plausible explanation I have yet heard to explain the strange circumstances surrounding my aunt's death."

And in January another Royal Navy officer, Lt. Commander Peter Hurst, who also handled secret intelligence

## Aid to Striking British Miners' Families

### Accounting of Receipts Nos. 1-175

Contributors receive numbered receipts, and the financial records of the fund drive are open to inspection by any bona fide workers organization.

#### Collected in Last Two Weeks:

Trade Union Donations	.....	\$550.00
Union Membership Collections	.....	463.13
Individual Donations	.....	1,542.65
<b>Total</b>	.....	<b>2,555.78</b>
<b>Total Previously Reported</b>	.....	<b>\$14,349.85</b>
<b>Total Collected (as of 20 February 1985)</b>	.....	<b>\$16,905.63</b>
<b>Amount Sent to Miners' Solidarity Fund</b>	14,540.85	<b>\$16,905.63</b>
(as of 20 February 1985)		
<b>Amount on Deposit (as of 20 February 1985)</b>	2,364.78	

To mobilize for the fund drive in your area, write to: Partisan Defense Committee, Box 99, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013. Make checks payable to: Aid to Striking British Miners' Families.



during the 1982 war, found his flat mysteriously ransacked with no valuables stolen; he thinks "it could just have some connection with the Hilda Murrell affair" (*Daily Mirror*, 16 January).

## Sink Thatcher, Sink Reagan!

Reagan and Thatcher are kindred souls wed to a program of global ruling class war to drive the working class back a century or more. Each ruthlessly represses the trade unions: Reagan had the PATCO air traffic strikers carted off in chains and fired the whole union, while Thatcher sends her cossacks to smash the picket lines of Arthur Scargill's National Union of Mineworkers. And now she's trying to revive the so-called Falklands spirit against the miners, calling the miners "the enemy within." During an interview last week with *WV*, Mick McGinty, treasurer of the Nottinghamshire central strike committee, currently on tour in the U.S., noted:

"The National Union of Mineworkers has always been regarded as the vanguard of trade unionism in Britain, and [Thatcher] sees the mine workers as her *General Belgrano*, because if she sinks the miners she knows the rest of the trade union movement will be much easier."

Internationally the Reagan/Thatcher axis has its sights set on the destruction of the Soviet Union, the homeland of the October Revolution. Reagan invaded black Grenada on the excuse that the populist black government had the uppity gall to become friendly with the Soviets and Cubans, and now Reagan threatens to administer an even bloodier "lesson" to independent Nicaragua via his pathological killer "freedom fighters." There are no lengths to which these war criminals will not go in their reactionary crusades. While Thatcher has the blood of 368 crewmen of the *Belgrano* on her hands, the price for a "nice little war" that got her re-elected, Reagan is responsible for sending 269 passengers of Korean Air Lines Flight 007 to their deaths in an insane war provocation against the Soviet Union.

Thatcher's energy secretary, Peter Walker, last fall declared that "More than any other country, it is in Russia's interest that Scargill wins this strike" ([London] *Sunday Times*, 18 November 1984). Anti-Sovietism is the common language of the imperialists today, so much so that even the class-collaborationist Soviet bureaucracy felt compelled to give a million-dollar donation to the coal miners. What's needed even more is international working-class action. In the U.S., American workers could begin by hot-cargoing coal destined for Britain. A blow against Thatcher is a blow against Reagan! In Britain, there must be solidarity strikes on rail, road and docks—spread the strike to win! It is up to the working class, led by a Trotskyist party, to deal out revolutionary justice to the likes of Reagan and Thatcher. Victory to the coal miners' strike! Smash NATO—Defend the Soviet Union! Forward to workers governments in Britain and the U.S.! ■

## Puerto Rico...

(continued from page 3)

strong-arm measures against militant strikers of the independent UTIER union. In 1981 police SWAT teams rioted against striking students protesting tuition hikes at the University of Puerto Rico. A year later 1,000 anti-riot cops, some armed with M-16 automatic rifles, evicted squatters at Villa Sin Miedo, burning houses to the ground.

And for recalcitrant militants there is always the device of a federal grand jury: anyone who refuses to "cooperate" is jailed for contempt of court, on indefinite sentences which could go up to 15 years behind bars! Last April, *independentistas* Federico Cintrón and Carlos Noya were sentenced to two years for refusing to talk to a witchhunting federal grand jury in Brooklyn. As the newspaper of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, *Claridad* (28 October-3 November 1983), commented, a year earlier "North American authorities in Puerto Rico announced an offensive against organized crime, governmental corruption and 'terrorism.' They have already produced important criminal convictions against various figures of organized crime...and governmental corruption.... They are lacking the third ingredient, that is, to produce an important case related to 'terrorism'."

The federal trial of ten ex-cops implicated in the Cerro Maravilla assassinations is hardly justice. They are charged only with perjury—no date has yet been set for a murder trial—and anyone favoring independence is being excluded from the jury (along with those who do not have sufficient knowledge of the English language!). No attempt has been made to indict those that ordered the executions which, according to Senate testimony last December, include an adviser of ex-governor Romero Barceló. And no serious investigation has ever been made of the FBI's prior knowledge of the killings and its role in the cover-up.

PPD governor Hernández Colón owes his election in large part to outrage against Romero's involvement in Cerro Maravilla. But it was during Hernández Colón's last administration that the National Guard was used against the population (to break a 1973 UTIER strike) for the first time since the 1950 Nationalist uprising. Whether administered by pro-statehood or pro-"commonwealth" puppets, savage repression is a constant in the Yankee colony. Defenders of democratic rights must demand: FBI, CIA out of Puerto Rico! Free all fighters against Yankee imperialism! Release the victims of grand jury frame-ups!

### Military Bastion of Yankee Imperialism

Puerto Rico has always been seen by the United States as a military strong point to control the strategic region. (The Spaniards before them had the same idea, witness the powerful guns and fortifications overlooking San Juan harbor.) Today as the Reaganites proclaim the Caribbean *mare nostrum*, an "American lake" as Teddy Roosevelt called it, threatening "Star Wars" against the Russians over a mythical Soviet menace to vital sea lanes, Puerto Rico's strategic importance has grown. In 1982 UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick told a Fourth of July gathering of statehooders in San Juan that the island was a geopolitical, military-strategic asset for the U.S. and therefore "not negotiable." And recent news reports reveal Pentagon plans to stockpile nuclear weapons on the island in "emergencies"—directly violating international treaty obligations—as part of a secret global plan involving eight countries.

In the American intervention in Central America, Puerto Rico plays a

key role as training center, weapons warehouse and refueling base. While the military has long used the island of Vieques for bombing target practice, for the Reagan administration the U.S.' Caribbean colony is key because of its location. In just two years, 1980 to 1982, military expenditures in Puerto Rico almost doubled; fully 14 percent of the entire land surface of the island has been declared a military zone. Ramey Air Force Base was recently reopened to accommodate large numbers of C-130 Hercules troop-carrying transports and F-15 fighter bombers overflowing from Roosevelt Roads; and SR-71 and AWACS spy planes are also flying out of Puerto Rico. According to an article by Richard Parker in the Nicaraguan magazine *Soberanía* (January 1985) present U.S. military strength on the island is estimated at 20,000.

Another reason for the Reagan administration's militarization of Puerto Rico is its Spanish-speaking population. The Puerto Rican National Guard has been heeled up to serve as a *simpatico* expeditionary force for use in Latin America. (According to Commodore Diego Hernández, commander of

to remain in Central America through May. This would make them available for the Big Pine III maneuvers which began February 11, involving several thousand U.S. troops onshore and a major artillery/tank exercise in an area within 15 miles of the Nicaraguan border and equidistant from Salvadoran areas under the control of leftist guerrillas.

This massive militarization of Puerto Rico provoked a march of tens of thousands in San Juan last April 29. The demonstration, called by the PIP, protested the Ocean Venture '84 exercises. But it is not enough to denounce militarism, and calling for a "negotiated solution" (as do the PIP's cothinkers in the Second International) is a stab in the back against the Central American revolution. Any partisan of Puerto Rican independence should instinctively understand that freedom from the chains of colonial rule will only come about through the defeat of Yankee imperialism. They should call on Puerto Rican National Guard units to refuse to embark for Central America and once there to turn their guns against the Yankee aggressors. If the draft is



Nationalist guerrillas strike at Muñoz Air National Guard Base, a staging area for U.S. militarism in the Caribbean.

U.S. naval forces in the Caribbean. U.S. military recruiters get an additional bonus for every Hispanic signed up.) Last spring some 500 Puerto Rican National Guard troops participated in the U.S.' Big Pine II maneuvers in Honduras. And in April 1,000 Guardsmen participated in a mock assault on Vieques together with the 82nd Airborne Division, as part of the "Ocean Venture '84" exercises. Puerto Ricans have also been used as CIA operatives working with the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary mercenaries, as proved by the death of Guardsman Héctor Luis Jové Torres on a mission with Edén Pastora's "contras."

During Washington's Nicaraguan MIG hoax last November, there was an ominous mobilization of military forces in Puerto Rico. Then in December several units of the National Guard shipped out to Panama where they have been participating in the Minuteman II exercises, supposedly limited to "road maintenance." These are to be followed by the Kindle Liberty '85 counterinsurgency exercises in early February, and the Puerto Rican troops are scheduled

reinstated, communists would support a draft resistance movement of refusal to serve as cannon fodder in the colonial masters' imperialist war.

The Spartacist League calls for: Military victory to Salvadoran leftists—Defend Nicaragua, kill the invaders! The struggle of Puerto Rican revolutionaries must not be for "no more Vietnams" in Latin America, but for "two, three, many defeats for U.S. imperialism!" Given the direct connection of the island to the American economy, and the fact that more than 40 percent of the Puerto Rican population has emigrated to the mainland, Puerto Rican workers' struggles can have a powerful impact inside the United States. And given the Yankee imperialists' determination to hold on to their strategic bastion in the Caribbean, the struggle for Puerto Rican independence must be a struggle for proletarian revolution in the belly of the beast—or it will not be at all. ■

[A forthcoming issue of *Workers Vanguard* will feature "Puerto Rico at the Crossroads."]

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# Down with U.S./China Anti-Soviet Axis!

## Whither China?

Reading the Western press of late, one would think that the People's Republic of China has practically overnight become capitalist. Right-wing columnist William Safire declares: "When it comes to world history, however, the big event of 1984 was surely the rejection of Marxism and embrace of capitalism by the Government of a billion Chinese." *Business Week* runs a cover story on "Capitalism in China" along with a picture of a chic Chinese lady in an elegant fur coat. And the snotty London *Economist* subtitles its survey on China for 1984: "Mr Deng's counter-revolution (but please don't use the word) moves into top gear."

The Chinese Revolution which triumphed in 1949 was, despite profound bureaucratic deformations, a world-historic event. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their forebears had been cruelly exploited since time immemorial. The rule of the murderous warlords and bloodsucking moneylenders, the rapacious landlords and wretched bourgeoisie was destroyed. Barbaric practices rooted in the old Confucian order, such as the binding of women's feet, were abolished. A nation which had been ravished and divided by foreign powers for a century was unified and freed from imperialist subjugation.

It will take a lot more than *People's Daily* editorializing that Marx is outdated, rich peasants selling their produce in the open market and factory managers setting their own prices to undo the Chinese Revolution. Certainly, the economic "reforms" under the Deng Xiaoping regime are real, they are important and they *do* strengthen the social basis for capitalist restoration, especially in the countryside. This is *not* the kind of minor tinkering with the economic mechanism common in the Soviet Union or East Europe.

But having said that, it is necessary to emphasize the *limits* of bureaucratic change in China (or, for that matter, in the Soviet Union or East Europe). Land remains collectivized property. Peasants, however much money they have, cannot acquire more land or live off the exploitation of others. There are no landless peasants or agricultural proletarians in the Chinese countryside. The means of production are state property. Basic industry remains centrally planned. And enterprise managers, although they operate more autonomously than before, are government functionaries not capitalist entrepreneurs pocketing their profits.



Chinese leader Deng welcomes Reagan. Peking Stalinists' alliance with U.S. imperialism is an "open door" to war and counterrevolution.

Whenever a "Communist" (i.e., Stalinist) regime embarks on market-oriented "reforms," the Western bourgeois press is quick to proclaim the triumph of capitalist methods over socialism. Back in 1965 *Time* magazine ran on its front cover a picture of controversial Soviet economist E.G. Liberman with a story entitled "Borrowing from the Capitalists." As it turned out, the so-called "Liberman reforms" in the Soviet Union (unlike those in Deng's China) never amounted to much. At bottom, the notion of a peaceful, orderly restoration of capitalism in China or Russia through changes in government policy is bourgeois wishful thinking. It confuses tendencies to strengthen bourgeois-restorationist forces with their decisive triumph. Capitalist counterrevolution in China or Russia or East Europe would be a big, bloody, convulsive struggle, polarizing society and unleashing civil war. A new Central Committee directive on the economy won't do it.

The Chinese workers state has been bureaucratically deformed from birth, in the aftermath of the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union. It was Stalin's treacherous nationalist policy which beheaded the 1927 Chinese proletarian revolution. So when Mao Tse-tung marched into Peking 22 years later it was not as a result of workers insurrection but at the head of a peasant-based army. Viscerally hostile to the Leninist program of world socialist revolution, the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies from Moscow to Peking seek a modus vivendi with the imperialists. Deng's policies are a response to the economic pressures of the capitalist world market, pressures which weigh heavier the more backward the country.

The notion that Western-style capitalism is reconquering People's China is not simply an impressionistic overreaction to the recent economic measures. Ever since Mao embraced Nixon in 1972, while American B-52s were carpetbombing North Vietnam, China has been a strategic ally of U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union. Indeed, during much of this period Peking was more bellicosely anti-Soviet than Washington. The Washington/Peking axis has been sealed by acts of war, from Angola (where China armed CIA-backed black mercenaries during the 1975 South African invasion) to Deng's (unsuccessful) attacks on Soviet-

allied Vietnam in 1979 and since. Amid all the glowing accounts of "capitalism in China" in the Western press, the Pentagon has just announced a deal to supply Peking with antisubmarine weaponry and a proposed visit of U.S. naval warships to China this spring, the first since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949.

For his part, Deng recently declared that an "open door" policy to the West is necessary to overcome the legacy of "poverty, backwardness and ignorance." *In reality, the Chinese bureaucracy's alliance with Wall Street and Washington is not an open door to prosperity and modernization but to war and counterrevolution.* The heavily armed Sino-Soviet horder is one of the trip wires on this planet for World War III. And if U.S. imperialism succeeds in its ultimate goal of destroying the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China will not long survive. This truth was nicely captured by the writers of the *Post New York Post* parody, "KA-BOOM! It's World War III." Reagan's day-after "message of hope" begins: "I have good news: I just signed legislation outlawing China. They think I don't know they're communist—but they're next!"

### From Mao's Great Leap Forward...

What is actually happening to the Chinese economy and why? Let's set this question in historical context. For thousands of years imperial China (the Middle Kingdom) was a great and isolated center of civilization. The Chinese word for foreigner was barbarian. When the Western "barbarians" humbled China in the mid-19th century, the effect on the educated classes was traumatic. These educated classes, burdened by a sense of national humiliation, gave rise to the radical intelligentsia who led the Chinese Revolution.

The bureaucratic elite ruling the People's Republic, both under Mao and Deng, are deeply nationalist and dream of restoring a new Middle Kingdom to its rightful place in the world. But these dreams are frustrated by the reality of extreme poverty and technological backwardness. Hence the sharp economic zigzags of Chinese Stalinism, from Mao's utopian voluntarism to Deng's "building socialism with capitalist methods." A quarter century ago Mao promised that China would catch up with the West in 15 years through a Great Leap Forward based on self-sufficient rural communes complete with backyard steel furnaces. Today

Deng proposes to *quadruple* national output by the year 2000—that is, in just 16 years—through rural free markets and an "open door" to the imperialist West. When this is achieved, declares Deng, "China's international influence will also be quite different, and our country's power will become truly strong." Deng's promised economic miracle is no less illusory than Mao's.

The People's Republic of China as it emerged from the civil war and revolution of the 1940s was extremely poor and backward compared even to the early Soviet Union. Russia in the 1920s produced roughly twice as much food per capita as did China in the early 1950s. Stalin was able to push through a massive industrialization program in the 1930s, but at the cost of savagely cutting the consumption levels of both the workers and peasants. Mao's China was simply too poor, too close to the margin of starvation to emulate Stalin's Russia in this regard. The attempt to do so in the early 1950s immediately ran up against severe food shortages.

Mao's response was the insane economic adventurism of the Great Leap Forward. "Communism" was to be built practically overnight through the brute labor of millions of peasants unaided by mechanization. The peasantry was totally militarized in mammoth rural communes. The result was an economic collapse unprecedented in the history of the Sino-Soviet states. An estimated 12 to 24 million people starved to death in the "three bad years" (1959-61).

As a result of the Great Leap catastrophe Mao lost much of his authority within the ruling group and was pushed aside by his long-time number two, Liu Shao-chi, and Deng Xiaoping. During the great limping backward in the early 1960s the Liu/Deng regime made the same kind of concessions to peasant petty capitalism which are now in full bloom. Mao struck back at his factional opponents with the Cultural Revolution. This attempted mass purge, based on frenzied student-youth backed by the army, disrupted and retarded the country's economic development for a decade. The universities were shut down for years. Many of China's all-too-small cadre of Soviet- and Western-trained scientists, engineers and technicians were stripped of their posts, humiliated by the Maoist Red Guards and sent to the countryside to "learn from the peasantry."

The authority of the Communist regime, already severely damaged by the Great Leap, especially in the countryside, was further weakened by the madness of the Cultural Revolution. China's peasantry could no longer be motivated by promises of a socialist future but only by cold, hard cash. The Deng regime, which consolidated its power a few years after Mao died in 1976, would provide plenty of cash.

### ... to Deng's "Building Socialism with Capitalist Methods"

American Cold War academic Donald Zagoria observed recently that "the Chinese system today more closely resembles the Soviet system in the 1920s under the New Economic Policy [NEP] than it resembles the Soviet system today" ("China's Quiet Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1984). Here it is important to differentiate between the



Western big business press falsely claims China has become capitalist.



original New Economic Policy put forward by Lenin in 1921 as a necessary but temporary retreat, and what it became under the Stalin/Bukharin bloc in the mid-late 1920s when Russia's peasants were told to "enrich yourselves." Interestingly, Zagoria notes that the Chinese have recently translated Stephen Cohen's sympathetic biography of Nikolai Bukharin. Like Bukharin, the Deng regime is telling China's peasants to "enrich yourselves."

Although the communes with their three-tier structure still formally exist in China, the basic unit of production, accounting and distribution is today the individual peasant household. An official of the state procurement agency indicated that it no longer deals with 5.5 million production teams as before but with 170 million separate peasant households. Chinese Stalinism has turned the calendar back 30 years to the very beginnings of agricultural collectivization.

Under the "responsibility system" peasant households lease a plot of land for 15 years. In return they are obliged to supply the state with an annual quota of produce at a fixed price. Anything over and above that amount can be sold to the state at a higher price or on the open market. In addition, the size of private plots has been doubled, and peasants are encouraged to engage in all kinds of sideline occupations (handicraft production, freelance construction work, trucking, etc.). The Chinese countryside has experienced an explosion of petty capitalism. Small-scale entrepreneurs are also flourishing in the cities.

When Reagan visited China last spring, he praised the "free-market spirit," which, he claimed, "has already enlivened the Chinese economy." Propagandists for the Deng regime and its friends on Wall Street and in Washington argue that China's NEP works. According to official statistics, the growth rate of agricultural output has roughly doubled (from 3.5 to 7 percent a year) since the new policies were introduced in late 1978.

To begin with, much of this increase is due to substantial agricultural investment before Deng's NEP. Despite the disruption of the Cultural Revolution, between 1965 and 1977 production of farm machinery increased eightfold, the supply of chemical fertilizer more than doubled. In part Deng is reaping the crop sown by the now-vilified Mao regime.

More fundamentally, it is impossible to judge the benefits of the agricultural "boom" because the distribution of income has become so grossly inequalitarian. The Chinese press regularly reports peasants earning 10,000 yuan a year, 20 to 30 times the average national per capita income! The *Wall Street*



Museum of Revolutionary History, Peking  
**A deformed social revolution: Mao's peasant army enters the great metropolis of Shanghai, 1949.**

*Journal* (4 May 1984) gives us a capsule portrait of one of China's new "10,000-yuanaires," a chicken farmer named Wu Xianglin. Wu has purchased a new house, a new chicken coop and a TV set. He plans to diversify into raising rabbits, ducks and geese because it's more lucrative. Wu's neighbor, Li Xiaochuan, the *Journal* describes as "a disheveled man who lives in a cramped and dirty house. Mr. Li has only four pigs, six chickens and a family income about one-tenth of Mr. Wu's."

The likes of chicken farmer Wu may be heroes of entrepreneurial capitalism to the *Wall Street Journal*, but they are something very different to their poor neighbors like Li. China's newly rich peasants complain constantly that people are stealing their livestock, construction materials, even crops in the field. One poor peasant woman poisoned the ducks of her too conspicuously prosperous neighbor. The Ministry of Public Security has issued a nationwide directive instructing police to protect the property of the newly rich against communism from below. *Business Week* (14 January) reports in a worried tone:

"Some poor peasants have attacked or sabotaged their better-off neighbors. By creating pockets of wealth, Deng may be setting the stage for a new outbreak of class struggle."

He may indeed.

### The Old Plagues Return

The "free-market spirit," so praised by Reagan and the *Wall Street Journal*, has not only produced gross inequality but has had other reactionary, even barbaric, effects. It has, for example, contributed to the reappearance of female infanticide in the Chinese countryside. With the breakdown of collectivized agriculture and de facto restora-

tion of family farming, peasant couples are more determined than ever to have at least one male heir to provide for them in old age. There are no state pensions for China's peasantry, and daughters traditionally move into their husband's household. Since the regime applies strong economic incentives and penalties to encourage one-child families to keep down the population, some peasants kill their girl babies to insure themselves of a son and provider.

Between 1979 and 1983 agricultural procurement prices were increased almost 50 percent, while labor productivity on the farms rose only about 10 percent. How come China has not then experienced an explosion in food prices? In fact, consumer goods prices have been rising since 1980 but at nothing like the runaway pace of peasant money income. Inflation is potential social dynamite in China where memories of the civil war in the 1940s, when currency became completely worthless, are still very much alive. About a year ago the *Wall Street Journal* (27 December 1983) noted: "Many of the old guard in China's leadership remember that the rival Kuomintang's loss of power in the late 1940s was accelerated by a wave of hyperinflation. They don't want that to happen to them."

To prevent the money being showered on the countryside from spilling over into rapidly rising food prices, the Deng regime has resorted to ever-greater subsidies from the state budget. Last year agricultural subsidies ate up, so to speak, one quarter of all government revenues! Referring to China's agricultural "boom," the Far Eastern Economic Review's 1984 *Asia Yearbook* pointed out "the price of these achievements has been costly subsidies for agricultural products which have strained govern-

ment revenues that are needed for major investments in energy and transportation infrastructures and for government services." But Deng & Co. cannot forever, or even for very long, borrow from Peter to pay Paul. Last summer premier Zhao Ziyang reportedly exclaimed: "The government can't go on like this indefinitely."

The much hallyhooed economic "reform" announced in October was basically a decision to hite the bullet of inflation. The day after the "reform" was announced, the residents of Peking stripped the shops of everything they could buy and store. The commercially minded citizenry of Canton, across from that island of entrepreneurial capitalism, Hong Kong, preferred to invest their yuan in jewelry. They knew what was coming.

Deng's "building socialism with capitalist methods" has brought the return not only of the old plague of inflation but another one, unemployment. To increase labor productivity in industry, the regime is seeking to break the "iron rice bowl," the policy of a guaranteed job. Taking the lead are the foreign-owned concessions and joint enterprises, the fruit of Deng's "open door" policy. For example, just before the Chinese New Year last February the president of Fujian Hitachi Television Ltd. wished his 600 workers a happy new year and then told 100 of them that they were being laid off. An estimated 10 percent of the urban population are today unemployed and reduced to surviving as best they can. Beggars and prostitutes—two more plagues of the old China—have returned to the streets of Peking, Shanghai and other cities.

Trotsky once said one of Stalin's greatest crimes was turning countless young revolutionary idealists into political cynics. This is also one of the great crimes of Chinese Stalinism, played out on the scale of an entire nation. The millions of workers and peasants who believed they were building communism in the Great Leap Forward, the student-youth who flocked to the Maoist Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution, have become disillusioned with politics and absorbed in narrowly personal concerns. One Peking university student summed up the moral climate of Deng's China:

"They no longer care about ideology but are only preoccupied with personal well-being. The young worry about love and marriage, the workers about bonuses, the peasants about getting rich, and the intellectuals about going abroad. We've all become slick and sly."  
—*Time*, 30 April 1984

However, the effects of "building socialism with capitalist methods"—inflation and mounting unemployment, rampant income inequality and serious economic disproportions—will surely shake Deng's China out of its "slick and sly" mood.

### Where Is Deng's China Going?

China's much publicized agricultural boom is superficial and transient. On the one hand, it is based on massive government subsidies at the cost of investment needed for other sectors and, in any case, cannot continue on the present scale. On the other hand, China's newly rich peasants are *not* reinvesting their wealth to improve agricultural productivity: "Peasants have so far tended to use most of their windfalls to build houses; relatively little has gone into buying farm equipment or improving fields" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, *Asia Yearbook*, 1984). Why is this?

For one thing, the rich peasants do not trust the Peking bureaucrats, whatever promises they make. It is not their government. They know that tomorrow or the day after there may be new policies which take away their wealth or a good part of it. Like the Russian kulaks (rich peasants) under

*continued on page 8*



**Mao's communes (left) based on shared poverty. Deng's "rich peasant" policy (right) has produced gross inequality.**





# China...

(continued from page 7)

NEP, their Chinese counterparts are getting and spending while they can and the devil take tomorrow.

Secondly, the tiny size of the typical household plot is itself a barrier to applying modern technology. "Agricultural yields rise, but the hoom cannot last" is the title of a perceptive article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (13 December 1984). The article points out that "the labour-intensity and small scale of family farming in China are major obstacles to mobilising and deploying investment funds in the countryside and to specialisation." There can be no modernization and mechanization of China's agriculture on the base of small-scale family farming.

To get the rich peasants to invest productively, 15-year leases and the right to sell their surplus on the open market are not enough. They want to acquire more land and be able to hire and exploit labor. Under Deng's NEP there is an immanent tendency to transform rich peasants into agrarian capitalists in the full sense. This would pose a direct attack on one of the fundamental gains of the Chinese Revolution: "land to the tiller." The "10,000-yuanaires" farmers, with their new houses and TV sets, are already

rotation of crops, without artificial fertilizers, etc.—no successful and broad work in the direction of a real collectivization of agriculture is possible."

—"The Platform of the Opposition" (1927) in Leon Trotsky, *The Challenge of the Left Opposition* (1926-27)

Politically, the program of socialist construction, both in cities and the countryside, demands a regime of *soviet democracy*, that is, proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Further, socialist construction is integrally linked to *extending* the revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. This is especially obvious in the case of China, where the idea of "socialism in one country" is even more obviously a reactionary utopia than in Russia.

In its own way the Peking bureaucracy recognizes that China does not have the industrial base for rapid modernization. Hence the critical importance attached to an "open door" with the capitalist West and Japan. Without such a policy, Deng told a leading party hody, "it would be difficult to quadruple the gross annual value of industrial and agricultural production." To say the least! "The imports of foreign capital and foreign technology are now major policies for China's economic construction," the deputy chairman of the State Economic Commission told a gathering of European industrialists and bankers



Armed workers seize Shanghai in 1927. Stalin told revolutionary workers to give up their guns to Chiang Kai-shek, leading to bloody counterrevolution.

despised by the mass of the peasantry. To give them the right to exploit their poorer neighbors could well provoke full-scale class war in the Chinese countryside.

What then is the socialist answer to Deng's "rich peasant" line? The same program put forward by the Trotskyist Left Opposition under Russia's NEP:

"The task of socialist construction in the countryside is to transform agriculture along the lines of large-scale, mechanized collective production. For the bulk of the peasants the simplest road to this end is cooperation, as Lenin described it in his work 'On Cooperation.' This is the enormous advantage which the proletarian dictatorship and the Soviet system as a whole give to the peasant. Only a process of growing industrialization of agriculture can create the broad basis for such socialist cooperation (or collectivization). Without a technical revolution in production methods—that is to say, without agricultural machinery, without the

in Switzerland last year (*New York Times*, 29 January 1984). But how can China afford to import capital on anything approaching the scale necessary to quadruple national output in 15 years? The answer is, it can't.

China's export earnings are and will remain small relative to the size of the economy. The idea that a few years down the road China can become a giant Taiwan or South Korea, flooding Western markets with cheap consumer goods, is utterly fantastical. In fact, the rising tide of protectionism in West Europe and North America make it more difficult for China to export manufactures than it was a decade ago. U.S. quotas on textiles and apparel have been a serious point of friction with its Peking ally.

Possibly Deng believes that membership in the global anti-Soviet alliance entitles China to Western and Japanese economic largesse. Sure, the Pentagon will supply the Chinese army and navy with weapons to fight the Russians and Vietnamese, but Western and Japanese industrialists and financiers are not going to subsidize the "four modernizations." No way. Apart from oil drilling in the South China Sea, Peking's efforts to attract foreign capital have had relatively meager results. The few billion dollars in investment have helped China's balance of payments in the short run, but will have just the opposite effect when the multinationals repatriate their profits.

Potentially more important and more dangerous than the Peking Stalinists' "open door" to foreign multinationals are their efforts to reintegrate China's

own capitalist class into the economy. Whereas the Bolshevik Revolution destroyed the Russian bourgeoisie *in toto*, in China in 1949 the capitalists were driven offshore, to Taiwan and Hong Kong, where they have since thrived under the aegis of American and British imperialism. Hong Kong's money men, traders and gangsters already play a certain role in the economic life of the mainland, especially in the neighboring province of Guangdong. And they are slated to play a greater role. In December the Deng regime agreed to preserve capitalism in Hong Kong for 50 years after the British relinquish sovereignty in 1997.

Iron Lady Thatcher, taking a break from her civil war against the striking British coal miners, journeyed to Peking to "pay a tribute to the leaders of China for the vision and farsightedness of their approach to the negotiations. The concept of one country, two systems—preserving two different political, social and economic systems within one nation—has no precedent" (*New York Times*, 20 December 1984). It has no precedent for the simple reason that one state power cannot defend the interests of two fundamentally hostile social classes. Even more than the present "rich peasant" policy, the incorporation of Hong Kong's wealthy and self-confident bourgeoisie into the People's Republic would enormously strengthen the forces for counterrevolution.

Deng's "building socialism with capitalist methods" encourages class forces hostile to socialism. The recent example of Poland demonstrates how conciliation of petty-bourgeois layers, particularly property-owning peasants, fuels appetites for counterrevolution, such as crystallized in Solidarność, the unique favorite "union" of Ronald

Reagan and the CIA. The Polish Stalinist bureaucracy's policies facilitated the growth of clericalist and reactionary nationalist forces to such a point that only naked repression by the army at the very last moment prevented an anti-socialist coup by Solidarność. Such repression can do no more than freeze the situation; it cannot break down the social bases for the threat of bloody capitalist restoration.

Just as NEP in Soviet Russia soon produced the famous "scissors crisis," as industry was starved by kulak enrichment in agriculture, so Deng's policies are producing an economic crunch reflecting counterposed class forces. The alternative to "opening" China to capitalism is not national autarky, but genuine international socialist planning. And that requires socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries and proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies not only in Peking but also in Moscow.

A revolutionary workers government in China, based on soviet democracy, would promote balanced economic growth, insuring a steadily rising standard of living for the population. But there can be no great leaps forward, no catching up with the West in a generation or so solely on the basis of the resources available in China. In a sense Deng is right, that for China to overcome its legacy of poverty, backwardness and ignorance does require an open door to the economically advanced countries. But not as long as they are ruled by the likes of Reagan, Thatcher and the Mitsubishi empire. The modernization of China, the world's largest nation with its rich and ancient culture, is a great task for the international proletarian revolution and global socialist order. ■

## NYC Cops...

(continued from page 12)

Nazi stormtroopers. This was a naked show of force to threaten unbridled, murderous police terror.

A *New York Times* (6 February) editorial warned that to give in to the cops' threats was to "invite insurrection." The haughty organ of the bourgeois establishment is worried that Mayor Koch is running the city like San Salvador and the death squads could get out of hand. But Koch is once again campaigning for mayor on a "Fear City" program. (In 1977 his calling card was support for the death penalty.) He certainly knows that he needs his uniformed killers to enforce capitalist "law and order." The *Times* itself noted about the ESU, "the equivalent of the special forces in the Army," that it would be "difficult to replace them quickly." At the same time, like the *News* and the *Post*, the *Times* writes sympathetic "human interest" stories about Koch's stormtroopers.

When "subway vigilante" Bernhard Goetz shot four black youth who were trying to rip him off, Koch used the incident to fan the flames of racism. Last week he praised Manhattan DA Robert Morgenthau's grand jury for dropping the charges against Goetz—except for the "crime" of carrying a gun—then he denounced Merola's grand jury for charging Sullivan, who is guilty of murder, with *anything* at all! Koch answered the *Times* with a letter defending Sullivan and the cops' mob action at the Bronx courthouse, while denouncing the "unlawful" transit workers strike in 1980 which, both he and the *Times* editors agree, had to be broken.

According to police "union" head Caruso, Sullivan "only did his job." For once, Caruso's not lying. As Eleanor Bumpurs' daughter Mary put it, "they all have blood on their hands." What we need is to bring down the whole racist, capitalist system where it is the job of the cops to hush strikers' heads and police the ghetto through naked terror. Put killer cop Sullivan behind bars! Abolish the ESU! Smash police bonapartism! ■

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# Mandela...

(continued from page 1)

maneuvering to place on Mandela the responsibility for his continued imprisonment. This move comes amid what are, for South Africa's ruling Afrikaner Nationalists, unprecedented overtures to the ANC: foreign minister Pik Botha said last November that the ANC might one day be legalized (if it "renounced violence," of course); a journalist for a *verligte* ("enlightened") Afrikaans newspaper met with ANC officials in exile; and P.W. Botha had to deny rumors that Nationalist members of parliament had done likewise. In a parallel move, business associations representing 80 percent of South Africa's commerce and industry came out with a memorandum calling for an end to racial restrictions on jobs and business opportunities and for "free" trade unions, common South African citizenship (instead of relegation to citizenship in the poverty-stricken bantustans) and "meaningful political participation" for the African majority.

Ten years ago one could talk about the ANC only in deep secrecy and all this "reform" talk would have been heard only from the most far-sighted English-speaking capitalists such as Harry Oppenheimer of the giant Anglo-American conglomerate. So why the change? In part because the once-booming apartheid economy is now stagnant, dogged by rising unemployment, low productivity and a chronic shortage of skilled workers, which requires the formation of a stable layer of skilled black workers. But much more decisive, apartheid capitalism has been rocked by many-sided struggles over the last decade: the awakening of South Africa's black proletariat with the 1973 Durban strike wave, followed by many others; the 1976 township revolts centered on the youth of Soweto; and ANC guerrilla attacks.

Last August Botha's "reform" constitution (heavily supported by big business) was utterly discredited when the "coloured" (mixed race) and Indian minorities heavily boycotted elections to separate coloured and Indian puppet

parliaments. Then followed bloody township upheavals sparked by rent hikes and a short strike by the strategically placed black gold miners. The culmination, so far, came in early November when hundreds of thousands of workers paralyzed the industrial heartland of Transvaal province with a two-day general strike. Called by black union leaders and the United Democratic Front (UDF)—a sprawling popular-frontist coalition supported by the ANC and the Stalinist Communist Party (SACP)—the strike shattered any illusions that black industrial workers could be bought off from the struggle against racial oppression by Botha's "legalization" of highly state-controlled trade unionism. A South African company director remarked: "More than any other single event, that convinced almost everyone that we were in a crisis, that we had to act" (*Los Angeles Times*, 14 January).

Apartheid is indeed in crisis, and at the heart of that crisis is the prospect of a massive uprising by the six-million-strong black proletariat. The spectre of workers revolution frightens the racist rulers not only in Pretoria but also their big brothers in Washington, London and the other imperialist capitals. Social revolution in South Africa would shake the world. It would shatter a key link in the global anti-Soviet alliance. It would inflame all of neocolonial black Africa. And, not least, it would inspire and radicalize the strategic black proletariat in the very heartland of world imperialism, the United States.

So important sections of the South African ruling class and its foreign protectors are finally starting to see the liberal-nationalist ANC, with its great moral authority among the masses gained from decades of anti-apartheid struggle, as perhaps the last hope of reconstituting South African society on a less rigidly racist capitalist basis. Thus, even an arch reactionary like Britain's Iron Lady Thatcher has called for Mandela's release. And Teddy Kennedy in his recent grandstanding tour of South Africa asked to meet with Nelson Mandela in Pollsmoor Prison (the regime denied this request). Instead he visited Winnie Mandela, wife of the

## South Africa: Defend the Crossroads Resisters!

As we go to press, thousands of black Africans in the packed squatter camp of Crossroads outside Cape Town are fighting a running battle with police trying to remove them to a black township in sand dunes miles away. The official death toll is five, but one reporter states that he saw "police swinging bodies like carcasses" into an armored vehicle. The doctor at a local clinic says he has

treated 60 people for birdshot and rubber bullet wounds. In the past two decades 3.5 million blacks have been forcibly removed from their homes, most of them dumped into the desolate bantustan bellholes. But now they are fighting back, against a background of mass revolt centered in the powerful black working class. Defend the Crossroads resisters—Smash apartheid terror!

ANC leader and herself hanned. The ANC leadership welcomed Kennedy's efforts. It was left to the radical petty-bourgeois nationalists of the Black Consciousness group AZAPO to protest Kennedy as "the epitome of U.S. imperialism" making a cynical play to refurbish his "liberal" credentials back home.

The ANC has always insisted, and Mandela repeated this in his recent statements, that the ANC would negotiate with the apartheid regime if it would legalize the organization and free its leaders. The chief organizer of the ANC's military actions and prominent SACP leader Joe Slovo recently stated: "For the first time it is recognized by most of the more realistic members of the South African ruling establishment and many of its friends outside that there can be no real solution without the ANC" (*Washington Post*, 1 February).

And what is the "solution" these "more realistic members of the South African ruling establishment" would like to negotiate with the ANC? No section of the white ruling class, even the most "liberal," contemplates the elementary democratic right of one man, one vote, which means black majority rule. Instead they put forward "consociational" and "federal" schemes which are only a warmed-over version of the apartheid system—that is, white political and economic domination over the mass of superexploited black toilers.

Given the strength of white racist reaction and the explosive militancy of the black masses, a "power-sharing" deal between the Afrikaner Nationalist regime and the ANC would be near impossible to arrange in the foreseeable future. However, this represents a strategy of betrayal of the struggle against apartheid.

Nelson Mandela has spoken movingly of the support he finds in popular hatred of racism around the world. But instead of appealing to liberal "world opinion" (i.e., Western imperialism) with divestment schemes, we Trotskyists call for international labor action in solidarity with South Africa's embattled workers. A motive force for the Washington/Pretoria axis is the imperialists' war drive to reconquer Soviet Russia for capitalist exploitation. Thus unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism is inextricably linked to social revolution in South Africa.

It will take a Trotskyist party, armed with the program of permanent revolution based on the Russian October, to lead the workers revolution which can avenge all of South Africa's martyred anti-apartheid fighters and unlock the socialist development of all black Africa. Free Nelson Mandela and all imprisoned anti-apartheid fighters! Smash apartheid and open the road to a black-centered workers and peasants government! ■

## South Africa...

(continued from page 2)

In terms of the rural black immiserated population these claims will be to land they (or their fathers or grandfathers) have possibly never seen, let alone worked. I have tried to come up with adequate slogans to express this but have not as yet hit on anything that seems to do the job. Perhaps something like the Homestead Act carried out in the context of a rural uprising in the period of dual power in South Africa (or afterwards) would best fit the bill.

Comradely,  
Ed C.

*WV replies:* The land worked by South Africa's black peasantry is not at all, as comrade Ed C. implies, limited to the desolate bantustan hellholes. Agriculture is important in the economy of the apartheid state, accounting for roughly 10 percent of its exports. The producers of this agricultural wealth, that is, the tillers of South Africa's rich, *white-owned* soil, are overwhelmingly black Africans. And that is their continuing as well as historical relationship to the land that is South Africa.

Well over 80 percent of the agricultural labor force in the "white homeland" is black. The rest are mainly "coloureds" (mixed race). In 1980 there were over a million black farm workers out of a total black labor force of 5.6 million (*South African Statistics*, 1982). Thus the agrarian question is not at all marginal in South Africa nor can it be reduced to the issue of the bantustans.

Far from being a "cruel joke," the

slogan of "land to the tiller" speaks powerfully to the impoverished rural masses. True, it does not directly address smashing the bantustans and resettling their populations under livable conditions. Therefore this general slogan of agrarian revolution must be supplemented by other demands specific to the smashing of South African apartheid. But it is not wrong nor inapplicable.

A significant section of South Africa's black peasantry lives and toils more or less permanently on white-owned farms far from their "tribal homelands." In 1980 (the latest available figures) 60 percent of the black agricultural labor force were classified as regular farm workers, the other 40 percent as casual. Furthermore, many of the bantustans are located adjacent to white plantations. The bantustans do not and cannot support their swollen populations, even at the level of bare subsistence. Seventy-five percent of the bantustans' income derives from migrant labor. Additionally, taxation is deliberately used to force bantustan dwellers to toil as superexploited labor in the factories, mines and also farms of the "white homeland" that is 87 percent of South Africa.

The desperate conditions in the bantustans exploded in the Pondoland in 1960, when thousands rose up against the despised tribal chieftains. Among other things these black African peasants protested the killing taxation. The scale of the Pondoland uprising can be gauged from the ensuing repression: over 5,000 people were imprisoned, more than 2,000 actually brought to trial. An account of this uprising is given in Govan Mbeki's *South Africa: The Peasant's Revolt* (1973). The conditions

in South Africa can certainly generate a mass peasant uprising which could powerfully reinforce proletarian insurrection in the cities and mining camps.

Comrade Ed C. projects and proposes that a victorious workers revolution in South Africa would "parcel out" the white-owned estates and large farms. Why should we want to create a new class of peasant smallholders? "Land to the tiller" does *not* necessarily mean as individual proprietors. Unlike in India

today or prerevolutionary China, the black peasantry in South Africa are not tenants working their own small plots. There is no reason to assume they would opt for individual smallholding over the advantages of large-scale, mechanized, collectivized agriculture. A black-centered workers and peasants government would nationalize the land and expropriate the white-owned agricultural land to be used for state farms and cooperatives. ■

## Black History Month 1985

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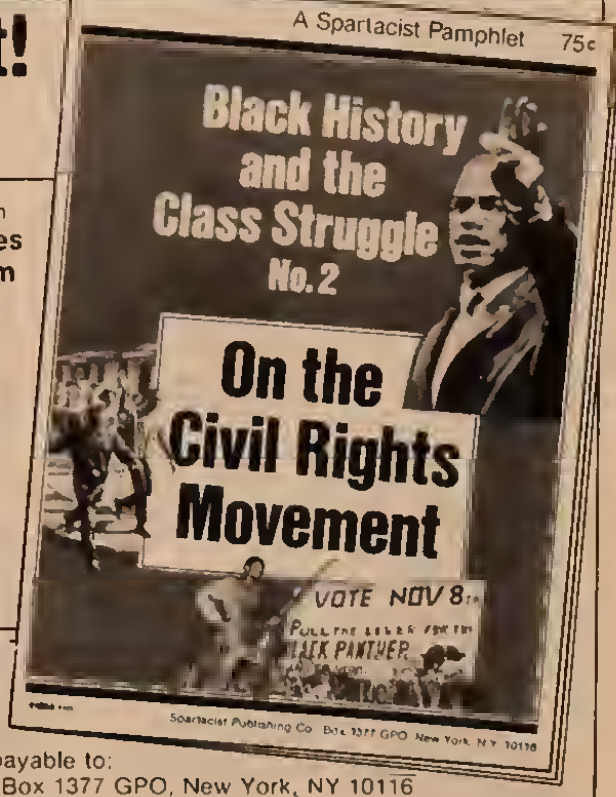
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# NYC Housing...

(continued from page 12)

Of course, not everybody's got this problem. The *Times* (21 January) "Home" section recently featured the lifestyle of sculptor Donald Judd in "SoHo's Wide-Open Spaces." Judd bought a small five-story office building in southern Manhattan, a former garment factory, and converted it into his home. On the ground floor he exhibits his sculpture, the second floor is his living room, the third his studio. On the fourth floor he has... a dining room table, on the fifth... a bed. In the basement he has bedrooms for his two teen-age kids, and he's remodeling the subbasement as a dance and performance area. Judd said he hates "clutter": "I don't know why people live in SoHo lofts if they want to divide these spaces into apartments." The *Times* wisely didn't publish the address of this conspicuous housing consumer—he might have some unwanted space invaders subdividing his wide-open spread!

The other side of the coin of unaffordable luxury condos is absolute misery. The day after its housing survey, the *Times* ran a letter to the editor quoting a police spokesman saying that crime usually goes down in freezing weather. The writer noted that what you get is a different kind of crime—landlords freezing people to death. "Hypothermia," a fancy word invented in England, has now become a common statistic in New York. And a picture story, "They Have Each Other," in the *Daily News* (2 February), showed a "family" of about 60 homeless men and women who have been living in an open shed on the Lower East Side for the last two years. Squatters in lean-tos, gathered around an oil-drum fire for warmth, homeless huddled in Grand Central Station like shell-shocked war refugees; is this New York or the shantytowns of Santiago or Lagos?

As every statistic shows, New York is becoming a city of the very rich and the very poor. And as the streets get meaner, Koch's racist cossacks ride roughshod over everyone. If you live in a city housing project and fall behind \$386 in rent, a police SWAT team may break in and blow you away, as they did to infirm black grandmother Eleanor Bumpurs in the Bronx. Then Koch's coroner, Dr. Gross the ghoul, will cover up the crime. On the subway Queens meets Harlem, and the middle class finds itself in head-on confrontation with the black ghetto, the vast concentration camps for increasingly desperate oppressed minority



Finkelstein/Daily News



Solomayor/NY Times

"Family" of 60 squatters prefers abandoned shed (above) to life in terror-ridden city shelters (below), receiving inspection tour from Governor Cuomo and Mayor Koch.

populations. This intensification of the social contradictions is what produces a Bernhard Goetz, the subway shooter.

## Their Trump

In this age of high interest rates that drive small farmers and whole countries to ruin, knocking the props out from under the franc and the pound, attracting speculative capital to New York from Argentina and Saudi Arabia, today's robber baron is the real estate mogul. And the one who's made it in New York is Donald Trump. The glossy mags feature the glitzy wunderkind billionaire "developer" staring up at his \$200 million Trump Tower complex on Fifth Avenue—that "Xanadu of conspicuous consumption" a *New York Times Magazine* (8 April 1984) piece called it. All it takes is bucks, lots of 'em. And of course, "it's good to know people," as dad Fred Trump says, referring to former NYC mayor Abe Beame, former governor Hugh Carey and cronies in the old Brooklyn Democratic club whose tax write-offs, abatements, city contracts and special zoning arrangements made the Trump family King of the Hill in New York today.

What's good for Donald Trump is good for New York, says Mayor Koch, whose campaigns have been financed by every real estate interest in the city. Trump's first big real estate deal was the conversion of the nearly defunct Commodore Hotel into the chrome and glass luxury Grand Hyatt, made possible by a 40-year tax abatement from the city, the first ever granted to a commercial property. This little sweetheart deal was worked out during the mid-1970s bank-engineered NYC "fiscal crunch." When the economy picked up, Trump was sitting atop a gold mine. Now that he's the undisputed Condo King, plus some prestige properties like the St. Moritz and Trump Plaza in Atlantic City, Donald is looking for bigger things. Boasting of his bargaining powers, Trump offered to take over arms control negotiations with the Soviets. No doubt if there was a SALT III agreement he would condo the MX silos and turn

them into luxury fallout shelters!

But Trump has competition. His archrival, Harry Macklowe, is the roadrunning coyote reputed to be behind the dead-of-night wrecking ball job on two single room occupancy hotels just off Times Square in January, hours before a city ordinance banning such demolition went into effect. For this illegal operation naturally they had no permits to disconnect water and gas lines—a stray spark as they began ripping out the innards of the buildings could have blown up half the block and the people on it. Meanwhile, Macklowe is busy selling co-ops to the 78th floor of a highrise he's building on 57th Street... for which his permit only allows 65 stories. This construction is going on next to Faith Stewart Gordon's Russian Tea Room, the elegant theater-district gathering spot. Since he was unsuccessful in buying it, Macklowe has resorted to other tactics. Just the other week,

diners at the Tea Room were informed that there would be no soufflés today, and if they heard a big bang, not to worry, they're just tearing down the buildings on both sides. You could almost see Macklowe gleefully pushing down the plunger on the dynamite.

Harry Macklowe is to real estate what Ed Koch is to politics—a real wrecker. Everybody hates Harry. From the poor crammed into SRO hotels to the cultural elite of the bourgeoisie. We had some personal experience with this "reclusive real estate operator" when he bought the old American Thread Company building at 260 West Broadway a few years ago, where we had our party offices before this warehouse district below Canal Street became "Tribeca." Macklowe wanted to convert the building into top of the line condos, and he is an expert in the art of "tenant removal": in the dead of winter the heat "failed," water was turned off in the toilets, the elevators stopped, locks were removed on building doors so that women were assaulted in the bathrooms. Now the building houses superstars like Harry Belafonte's daughter and rock singer Cyndi Lauper. Like Cyndi's hit song says, "Money Changes Everything."

## "Gentrification"—Then and Now

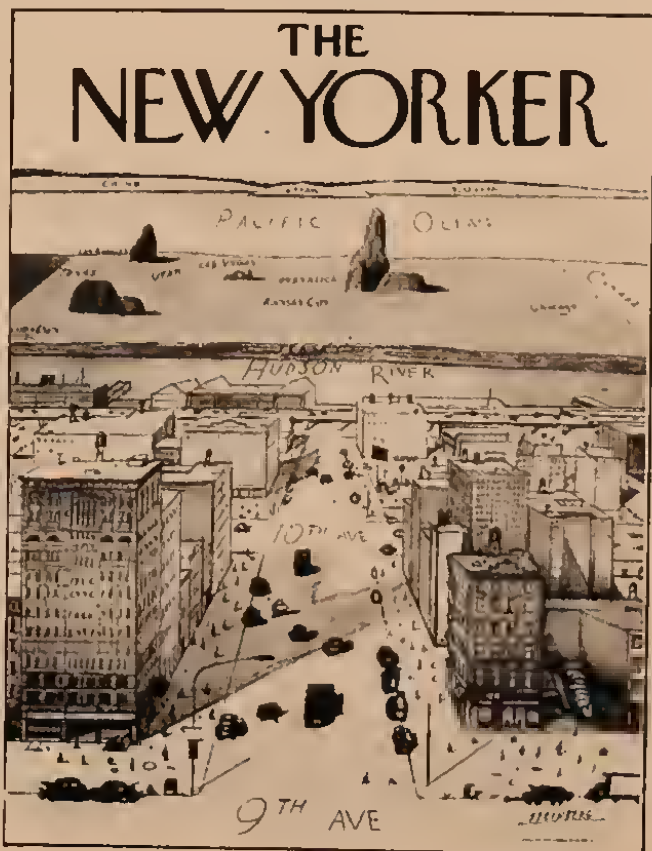
Besides the giant condominiums going up in Midtown, there has also been wholesale co-oping of the southern tip of Manhattan. The basis for transformation of the Soho/Tribeca area was laid about 15 years ago when they moved the old produce district up to Hunt's Point in the Bronx. This produced a deep depression in property values below Canal Street, but now the stock of buildings has appreciated enormously. Pre-existing landlords are reaping enormous profits, the Macklowes of Manhattan real estate are making a killing and big money from Hong Kong and Taiwan is moving into Chinatown. And from Rockefeller Center to Lincoln Center, if there's one sinister force behind it all historically, it's the Rockefeller family. The whole development is related to a fundamental restructuring of the American city called "gentrification."

For decades the bourgeoisie has moved further and further out of town, so that commuting now frequently takes two hours each way. But the people who run this country finally figured out that urban areas have enormous advantages. Why should we have to commute, they figure, let the damned masses make the long haul. Because life could be good in New York City. Here you have the center of culture, politics, finance, science, medicine, etc. If you really want to feed deer, you can go up to Westchester and Putnam counties and get Lyme



WV Photo

"Decal City," the Bronx. Koch tries to disguise burnt-out buildings with fake windows (complete with potted plants).



A New Yorker's map of the world. Ruling class has rediscovers the city. They want in...and everybody else out.



ticks, or even more horrible blights like Rocky Mountain spotted fever. But if you want amenities, the cities are where it's at. So now billions of dollars are flowing into New York City as the bourgeoisie takes the urban centers which can be what suburbia and exurbia never could be.

In the great cities of Europe this is very old news, centuries old. Paris was the model. With the onset of political reaction under Napoleon III, they ripped down the poor quarters which were the botheds of revolution. The narrow alleys whose cobblestones were used to build barricades were replaced by broad paved avenues—perfect for mounted troops to parade up and down. And the poor were pushed out. Frederick Engels, Karl Marx's closest collaborator, wrote in his 1872 pamphlet, *The Housing Question*:

"And it is just the same with the housing shortage. The growth of the big modern cities gives the land in certain areas, particularly in those which are centrally situated, an artificial and often colossal increasing value; the buildings erected on these areas depress this value, instead of increasing it, because they no longer correspond to the changed circumstances. They are pulled down and replaced by others. This takes place above all with workers' houses which are situated centrally and whose rents, even with the greatest overcrowding, can never, or only very slowly, increase above a certain maximum. They are pulled down and in their stead shops, warehouses and public buildings are erected. Through its Haussmann in Paris, Bonapartism exploited this tendency tremendously for swindling and private enrichment. But the spirit of Haussmann has also been abroad in London, Manchester and Liverpool, and seems to feel itself just as much at home in Berlin and Vienna. The result is that the workers are forced out of the centre of the towns towards the outskirts; that workers' dwellings, and small dwellings in general, become rare and expensive and often altogether unobtainable, for under these circumstances the building industry, which is offered a much better field for speculation by more expensive houses, builds workers' dwellings only by way of exception."

The inner city was for the grand bourgeoisie. The next belt was for the middle classes, the petty bourgeoisie. Then way out were the masses, likely not to speak the same language or have the same color, ranging from rather solidly working class to the lumpen *bidonvilles* or shantytowns. This pattern has come to the United States too—they began in Pittsburgh, and now New York, San Francisco, Boston. For your would-be Bonapartes you have a Mayor Koch, and your Haussmanns are the Donald Trumps.

### "Urban Renewal" = Negro Removal

To "retake" the cities, the bourgeoisie has to move out the poor, and that means overwhelmingly blacks and Hispanics. (Occasionally you hit a few blocks of Irish in the middle of a ghetto, but that's rare these days.) This is why this whole process of gentrification is accompanied by the furor of racist backlash, from Koch's killer cops going after black kids on the streets to his current "anti-crime" rampage, calling for more prisons instead of schools. Meanwhile his opponent, City Council president Carol Bellamy, is the very epitome of the thousands of "young urban professionals" who during the 1980 transit strike put on sneakers and jogged over the Brooklyn Bridge each morning to work in Wall Street, giving rise to the phenomenon of the "yuppies." And of course a yuppie is never so happy as when he is gentrifying.

All that raises an interesting question. If Manhattan is so groovy—and it is, or else people wouldn't shell out that kind of money—what's going to happen to Harlem? For 200 years there have been successive waves of "Negro removal." Years ago the Murray Hill section on the East Side used to be a black ghetto. Then blacks were shoved up into Harlem, which was built for German, Irish, Jewish working-class



Higgins/NY Times

families at the time the subways were run up. These rather strongly built tenements are still structurally sound. So how long is it going to be before 110th Street becomes Central Park North? Already Yorkville is expanding north into El Barrio (Spanish Harlem) as entire sections are being renovated in what is becoming known as the "Yupper East Side."

The American ruling class wants in, so everybody else has got to go. Democrat Big MAC financier Felix Rohatyn at least was frank about it when he called for blaxtopping the South Bronx. Usually hypocrisy is the norm. A few years back, every bourgeois politician from Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan and the pope made the trek up to burned-out Charlotte Street in the South Bronx to promise sweeping changes in housing for the poor. Mayor Koch added his usual grotesque touch by announcing with much fanfare plans to build ranch houses (!) on the site with federally subsidized mortgages. Today there are two (count 'em) model ranch houses on Charlotte Street: the houses constructed by the few black middle-class families who paid down payments on them have not been and never will be built, and now the government says the time for the federal mortgage loans has run out. Meanwhile, the arson-for-profit industry continues to devastate whole sections of the city. City councilman Gerona-Valentin had a better idea when he called for Soviet aid to the South Bronx.



New York City homeless try to survive: living out of bags and seeking "shelter" in Grand Central Station (left). Dwellers of Mexico City shantytown (right) at least have a home to go to.

So here we are in the financial capital of world capitalism, and we find an entire underground city—estimates vary from 20,000 to 60,000—of homeless thrown out of mental hospitals and bulldozed SRO hotels, now surviving in doorways, dangerous city "shelters" and shantytowns. The cruelty of their treatment is so grotesque it makes you think of a Dickens novel at the worst of the industrial revolution in England 150 years ago. During the bitter cold snap earlier this month, with the wind chill factor plunging way below zero, Grand Central Station was kept open all night so that hundreds of crazed, mumbling souls could find refuge. However, when the influx of "bag people" started to annoy the grey-flannel-suited junior execs rushing to their suburban trains, the powers that be suddenly switched

oughfares. At least the Russian tsar built "Potemkin Villages" to hide the hideous rural poverty—the decaying American bourgeoisie can only afford shelf paper!

### A Modest Proposal

We have seen how the bourgeoisie "solves" the housing crisis. So we've got a modest proposal. There's not much land in Manhattan, but there is some around. Donald Trump has just bought a big chunk of land on Manhattan's West Side—76 acres of the old Penn Central railyards extending along the Hudson from 59th to 72nd Street. (With all the oil dripping down over the years, there's speculation he even wants to drill a well.) He says he's going to build "Trump City," "the finest [and most expensive] urban development any-

### Art and Unconventional Design In SoHo's Wide-Open Spaces



**Donald Trump's** new \$100 million project in SoHo is a landmark in the city's history. The project, which will be a 15-story building, is a landmark in the city's history. The project, which will be a 15-story building, is a landmark in the city's history. The project, which will be a 15-story building, is a landmark in the city's history.

gears and ordered cold air pumped through the heating system to drive the destitute out! Outside St. Vincent's Hospital in Greenwich Village, they strung barbed wire over the sidewalk gratings so people couldn't lie on them to get the warmth.

But don't say the Yuppies don't have a social conscience. An item in the *New York Post* the other day reported that the homeless at two city shelters will now be offered free jogging lessons from the New York Road Runners Club: "If we can... help them feel positive twice a week... it might give them some impetus to get up and look for a job," a spokesman said. And don't forget "Decal City"—the federally funded program to paste up large decals over the shattered windows of abandoned city-owned tenements in the Bronx, particularly those facing major thor-

where in the world." Not so fast. Let's take a cue from the Lower East Side squatters.

Why don't the people in the shelters go over to "Trump City" and set up some lean-tos? You know, get some refrigerator boxes and corrugated steel and set up home like they've done in the cities of North Africa and all over Latin America. Hell, they'd be better off than hanging around in Grand Central. The idea could catch on—some transit workers we know suggest that you could get some old abandoned R10 subway cars (and what about those lemons, the Grumman buses?) Why sleep in the sooty streets, when you could have a shoreline view of the Hudson? As for the "wide-open spaces" in SoHo lofts, why don't the inmates of Creedmore shelter just move into some of those basements and subbasements? And then there's the



WV Photos

roughly 10,000 abandoned apartment buildings owned by the city due to tax default.

What is the solution to the housing crisis? As Engels concluded in his pamphlet:

"The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished, they are merely shifted elsewhere." The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place also. As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist, it is folly to hope for an isolated solution of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the fate of the workers. The solution lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of life and labour by the working class itself."



# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Homeless Should Seize Trump City!

# New York City: You Can't Live Here

"New York, New York, it's a helluva town. You can buy yourself a condo for \$100,000 down...." But if you haven't got it, forget it. You better start thinking about Hoboken... if you can afford that.

For years there's been a housing crisis in Manhattan, but now with multi-billions being made in real estate conversions and speculation, there's another kind of squeeze. It's called strangulation. A recent article in the real estate section of the Sunday *New York Times* (3 February) on the high cost of housing in New York City puts it all together, and the picture is mind-boggling:

"There are young people who cannot afford to leave home, others who double or triple up in tiny apartments and commuters who must travel farther and farther to reach pockets of less expensive housing...."

"People have been known to consult architects before they consult obstetricians, postpone marriage for lack of a separate bedroom and abandon the city entirely when they lose their Manhattan apartment. Middle-income people are moving into glorified tenements in seedy Manhattan neighborhoods and renovated rowhouses in the outer boroughs...."

"The displaced poor, meanwhile, move to worse housing in worse areas—or onto the streets."

This is the kind of scene that happens when urban existence is shot bloody to hell, like Moscow in the 1930s or in Israel during the waves of massive immigration. Communal kitchens, sharing the toilets, and so forth. It's a living horror, and it's a big part of what has put New York on the razor's edge.

Rents are astronomical. You can easily spend \$600 a month for a loft bed

over somebody's refrigerator. The *Times* article calculated the cost of an ordinary 1,400-square-foot apartment, with two bedrooms and one and a half baths. They discovered that on the average it would rent for \$2,555 a month in Manhattan (the next closest was \$1,005 in San Francisco)! And that's providing you can find such an apartment—the vacancy rate for rented apartments in all of New York City is only 2 percent, according to the latest statistics. It's grisly but true: if you want a place in Manhattan, it's a good idea to study the death notices. The survey concluded that a middle-class family income in the Big Apple is now \$80,000 and still you would have to pay 40 percent of your income for housing!

Even doctors and lawyers can't afford to live in Manhattan anymore—or (area code) "212" as we now call it. A doctor we know who has been in practice for ten years, now the chief of a department, can just barely make it into New York... as a result of a prior equity, a gift from his parents and considerable scrimping. Russell Baker hurled this outlandish situation in a column last year: after mentioning a whopping sum of money to a real estate agent he was shown a manhole; the next step up was an arrangement of cells suitable for solitary confinement. The rock bottom price for a condo, he was told, was 400 grand, and for something pleasant to come home to, you're talking 650. These prices were so ludicrous, wrote our favorite pundit, "I hadn't realized real money was involved" (*New York Times*, 4 March 1984).

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Plenty of room in Trump Tower, where Condo King Donald Trump surveys his pink marble atrium. Meanwhile, poor driven out of devastated railroad flats on the Lower East Side (below).



O'Neill/NY Times  
WV Photo



# 10,000 NYC Cops Rally for Racist Murder



Schwartz/NY Post

In an ominous display of racist "cop power," 10,000 armed New York City police surrounded the Bronx Supreme Court building on February 7 demanding an unrestricted license to murder blacks. Waving clenched fists and chanting in unison, the uniformed killers were protesting the second-degree manslaughter indictment of Emergency Service Unit cop Stephen Sullivan. On October 29, Sullivan gunned down Eleanor Bumpurs, a black 67-year-old grandmother, with two close-range blasts from a 12-gauge shotgun. The racist police mobilization was the highest in NYC history. It was an armed, political demonstration against any civilian control over the

cops' guns.

The Bronx rally was the latest provocation in a hoiling cop revolt that has brought New York to the brink of a racial explosion. After Sullivan was indicted, all 252 of his buddies on the ESU, a SWAT team masquerading as a rescue unit, put in for transfers. When black police commissioner Benjamin Ward said Mrs. Bumpurs' slaying was "within departmental guidelines," Bronx DA Mario Merola snapped back that "Hitler's people were also following his guidelines." Merola soon expressed regret about the remark, but the cops proved him right. The courthouse siege resembled nothing so much as a mob of

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