

Don't Mess With the Russians!

Reagan's Insane War Provocations

Navy War Ships Invade Soviet Waters, Attack Libya

MARCH 25—Has Reagan gone bonkers? Is Bonzo out of his tree? For the past two weeks, the president of the United States has been ranting that Sandinista Nicaragua is plotting to take over North America. Then last week it was revealed that two U.S. warships had brazenly sailed into Soviet territorial waters in the Black Sea, passing within six miles of the Crimean coast near a key Soviet naval base, and that a huge Navy task force was going to dare Libyan strongman Qaddafi to a shoot-out in the Gulf of Sidra. Now the Sixth Fleet has opened fire on Libya, as it was clearly aiming to do. With Soviet ships in the area and presumably with Russian technicians at Libyan missile sites, Reagan is tugging on the trip wires of World War III. In this military confrontation the world's working class has a side: with Libya against the insane provocations of U.S. imperialism—sink Reagan!

Supposedly these provocations were to test the U.S.' "right" to sail its war fleet anywhere the Pentagon feels like. This is not a dispute about Qaddafi's 100-mile claim in the Gulf of Sidra—the



Reagan tugs trip wires for World War III. Coral Sea (right), part of U.S. Sixth Fleet attacking Libya.



Der Spiegel

U.S. Hands Off Libya!

Navy's Black Sea stunt showed the U.S. doesn't even give a damn about the Soviet 12-mile limit, which the U.S. claims to recognize. Reagan just wants to play Rambo by giving the finger to the Russkies on their own turf, even if it means blowing up the world. What do you think would happen if the Russians pulled a stunt like the U.S.' Black Sea

incursion around the Chesapeake Bay? The Soviets would be well within their rights if they hlew the intruders out of the water—and they have rightly denounced Reagan's action in the Mediterranean as "international banditry" and "aircraft-carrier diplomacy" (UPI, 25 March).

We have said repeatedly that Reagan

wants war with the Soviet Union, but this week many people were wondering if they'd get to finish their morning coffee. The anti-Soviet nut in the White House is literally fingering the red hutton.

On March 24, the U.S.' 30-ship Mediterranean task force with three aircraft carriers moved menacingly toward the Libyan coast. Their so-called "maneuvers" involved sending ships and carrier-based jet fighters across Qaddafi's "Line of Death," which delineates Libyan-claimed waters. The result was predictable: Libya reportedly fired several surface-to-air missiles at U.S. planes over a period of hours, and Reagan had his excuse for "retaliation": U.S. missiles struck a Libyan SAM-5 site, and as two Libyan patrol craft approached from their coastline without firing, the Americans destroyed one with Harpoon anti-ship missiles, apparently killing all aboard, and severely damaged another. The next day the U.S. reportedly destroyed another three patrol craft. The Libyans claim to have shot down three U.S. planes.

Meanwhile the U.S. issued a virtual declaration of war, as White House spokesman Larry Speakes declared "all approaching Libyan forces" to have "hostile intent." In Reaganite Newspeak, the presidential press secretary made a truly Orwellian war-is-peace pronouncement: "I can't characterize it as war...it is a peaceful navigational

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Contra Aid:

Reagan Wants Green Light To Invade Nicaragua

MARCH 25—We may be witnessing another "Gulf of Tonkin incident," as Ronald (I'm a Contra) Reagan whips up a war fever, lashing out wildly against what he calls the Soviet "evil empire" from the Mediterranean to the Caribbean. U.S. presidents have had a problem lately dragging the country into war against the so-called "Communist menace"—namely, the reluctance of the American people to die for the greater

glory of a Yankee empire. Back in 1964, Democrat Johnson wanted to send U.S. troops into Vietnam—so he invented a North Vietnamese attack on American warships in the Gulf of Tonkin, and Congress dutifully voted a resolution that served as the "legal" basis for the war, with its 50,000 American dead and two million Indochinese killed by the imperialists. Today, Reagan strikes against Libya. Is this a prelude to a full-

scale assault on Nicaragua?

On Thursday, March 19 the U.S. House of Representatives narrowly voted down President Reagan's request for \$100 million in weapons and logistical aid to the Nicaraguan contras. This CIA mercenary army is the spearhead of the U.S. attempt to "roll back" the Nicaraguan Revolution and overthrow the radical-nationalist Sandinistas, as

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Reinstate Bermúdez! No Retrial!

Berkeley Students Rally for Guillermo

The cop/administration vendetta against University of California/Berkeley student Guillermo Bermúdez, a member of the Spartacus Youth League, is being met by widening protest on the campus. At a March 12 rally in UC's Sproul Plaza, over 200 people heard activists from a wide range of organizations denounce the administration's suspension of Guillermo from school and the Alameda County D.A.'s decision to once again drag our comrade through the courts for leading a militant protest against Marine recruiters a year ago.

Arrested at the January 1985 protest, Guillermo was choke-holded and had his arm broken by the cops. In classic frame-up fashion, the victim was then charged with assaulting the police and resisting arrest. The attempt by Reagan and Meese's flunkies in the D.A.'s office to railroad SYLer Bermúdez to jail was temporarily derailed when his trial ended in a hung jury this February. Having failed in court, the administration overrode its own Student Conduct Committee and suspended Guillermo on these same lying charges. The next day, the D.A.'s office announced that it would retry Bermúdez. The vindictive retrial is scheduled to begin May 8.

The March 12 rally, initiated by the SYL, was an impressive display of

united opposition to administration/cop attacks on student protest. It was endorsed by members of the UC faculty, student senate, and a number of campus organizations and activists. As Guillermo told the rally, "The administration's plan is to intimidate everyone who justly protests the crimes of this government.... This is aimed directly at all of you, and that is why we must fight together." The administration and D.A. targeted Guillermo, cynically calculating that few would defend an outspoken revolutionary Marxist. But the wide political protest is proving them wrong. Speaking at the rally, Rodney Ward, representing the Campaign Against Apartheid, itself a target of administration attack, said:

"We can't let this happen. You've got to support Guillermo whether or not you like the Spartacus Youth League, because next they're going to come after you. They're going to come after me. They're going to come after all of us if they can get Guillermo."

Other speakers included members of the SL, Labor Black League, *Grassroots* newspaper, the "ROTC 5," and ILWU Local 10.

The protest against the cop/administration vendetta against Guillermo has come from every quarter on campus. Two student members of the Student Conduct Committee wrote a "letter of censure" to the administration for its



Young Spartacus

March 12: Over 200 people rally at UC Berkeley in united defense of Guillermo Bermúdez.

suspension of Guillermo, which was read at the rally by Chrystalla Haili, one of the two. The *Daily Californian* (6 March) published a powerful editorial condemning administration attack on the right of student protest and the suspension of Guillermo. The student senate, following an earlier protest of the suspension, passed two more motions demanding "No Retrial," "Rescind the Suspension," and "Drop All Charges Against Guillermo" at its March 19 meeting. In addition, dozens of students have helped circulate a petition defending Guillermo, which has already garnered more than 1,300 signatures on campus.

The administration's obsessive deter-

mination to "get" Guillermo has made him a symbol for all those determined not to be bound and gagged by the administration in the service of Reagan reaction. All those who defend the right to political protest must unite in action to demand: Drop the charges against Guillermo Bermúdez and other protesters! No retrial! Rescind the suspension of Guillermo Bermúdez! Down with administration/cop attacks on student protest!

Funds are urgently needed for Guillermo's defense. Make checks payable to Guillermo Bermúdez Defense Fund, and mail to Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 5555, San Francisco, California 94101. ■



TROTSKY

Defend the Unions, Defend the Soviet Union

Today, as the rulers of America seem hell-bent on provoking a world war with the Soviet Union, defense of the gains of the October Revolution is critical. James P. Cannon, veteran communist and a founder of American Trotskyism, said in a speech on 15 October 1939, shortly after the outbreak of World War II, that key to understanding the "Russian question" is to think in terms of struggle: what attitude do

class-conscious workers take toward a bureaucratically led union in the midst of a strike? He concluded, "We are the party of the Russian revolution."

The question of the Russian revolution—and the Soviet state which is its creation—has drawn a sharp dividing line through the labor movement of all countries for 22 years.... Our position on the Russian question is programmatic. In brief: The theoretical analysis—a degenerated Workers' State. The political conclusion—unconditional defense against external attack of imperialists or internal attempts at capitalist restoration....

The Soviet Union emerged from the October revolution as a workers' state. As a result of the backwardness and poverty of the country and the delay of the world revolution, a conservative bureaucracy emerged and triumphed, destroyed the party and bureaucratized the economy. However, this same bureaucracy still operates on the basis of the nationalized property established by the revolution. That is the decisive criterion for our evaluation of the question.

If we see the Soviet Union for what it really is, a gigantic labor organization which has conquered one-sixth of the earth's surface, we will not be so ready to abandon it because of our hatred of the crimes and abominations of the bureaucracy. Do we turn our backs on a trade union because it falls into the control of bureaucrats and traitors? Ultra-leftists have frequently made this error, but always with bad results, sometimes with reactionary consequences.

—James P. Cannon, *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party* (1943)



LENIN

Letter

Chicago Union Ranks Support Tribune Strikers

March 4, 1986
Chicago

Workers Vanguard

Dear Editor:

When 17,000 unionists come out to assist you on the picket lines, you might assume your strike's a winner. As reported in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 395, 17 January), the enormous January 4 turnout by Chicago labor at the struck *Tribune* production plant had all the potential for setting off a workers' "massive retaliation" against Reagan, local Democrats and not least of all the enormously wealthy *Chicago Tribune*.

But this outpouring didn't evoke feelings of class solidarity in everyone present. It scared the hell out of some of them! I'm talking about the union "leaders"—the ones who restrained thousands of IBEW members a mile away from the picket line, while *Tribune* trucks drove in and out unmolested; the ones at the loudspeaker who cop-baited the militants battling the strike-breaking cops! This labor bureaucracy has now led the *Tribune* strike to defeat.

Last week the leadership of International Typographical Union (ITU) Local 16 accepted the unconditional surrender demanded by the *Tribune*, directing printers to cross strike picket lines! Local 16 is to supply five printers per week to work alongside the "permanent replacements" hired by the *Tribune*, until a total of 63 ITUers are back at work. Meanwhile, members of the Web Pressmen's Union, Mailhandlers Local 2 and ITU Local 16 are still picketing the plant! One spokesman for the coalition of striking unions told me

that this union-sponsored scabbing is their "new approach to picket lines." It violates every axiom of trade-union solidarity. To top it off, the AFL-CIO tops down in Bal Harbour, Florida glibly added the *Tribune* to their "official list of unfair employers," an obituary column for sold-out strikes.

The Chicago Federation of Labor officials who called the January 4 mobilization had no intention of repeating it, but many unionists were left itching for the kind of fight we needed to shut down the scab paper. Some of us working in the Chicago Transit Authority knew our union locals could play a key role in shutting down the *Tribune*. At our initiative, Local 308 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) unanimously voted on January 14 to donate \$300 to the *Tribune* strikers and to "organize contingents from our Local on a daily basis to help build mass picket lines at the *Tribune* and [call] on all Chicago labor to mobilize its members to join the picket lines to stop the scabbing and shut down the *Tribune*." Unfortunately, Local 308 leaders have procrastinated while the strike withers on the vine.

Most of the Trib strikers are older, white workers who harken back to the days of "handshake" labor relations under Mayor Richard Daley. Instead of relying on its own strength, the labor movement looked to its so-called "friends" in the Democratic Party to broker the deals. In a January 30 letter Mayor Harold Washington offered his "good offices" to the unions and management, but he made clear that any

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Asylum for Refugees from Death Squad Terror!

Defend the Sanctuary Movement!

After four months of testimony from prosecution witnesses in the Tucson, Arizona trial of eleven church men and women accused of smuggling Central American war refugees into the United States, the defense rested March 14 without calling a single witness to the stand. "The prosecution has really proved our case for us," said Jim Corbett, one of the defendants. The two Roman Catholic priests, one nun, a Presbyterian minister and seven church lay workers are members of the sanctuary movement, which now embraces more than 270 congregations in 33 states. These admirable samaritans, acting on the strength of their religious convictions, have defied the government by coming to the aid of Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees escaping the reign of terror unleashed by U.S.-backed regimes in their homelands. This so infuriated the Reagan administration, directly challenging its crusade against "godless Communism," that Washington decided to clap nuns, priests and pastors in jail. Predictably, persecution has increased public sympathy for the refugees and spread the movement.

In his TV appeal for aid to the CIA's Nicaraguan contra mercenaries, Reagan raised the spectre of a "red plague" spreading through Central America,



Across the country, thousands of church people offer safe haven to refugees in defiance of Reagan's racist dragnet.

war on their people—to treat them as political refugees would expose the whole basis for the U.S. war in El Salvador. Thus only 328 Salvadorans received political asylum in 1984, out of 13,373 applications—less than three percent; and under one percent of the Guatemalans who have requested asylum have received it. But in line with U.S. anti-Soviet policy, 92 percent of all Afghans and half the Poles who have applied have been granted asylum, and any Russian dancer who wants to achieve stardom by defecting will get his name in lights and an invitation to the White House.

The dramatic plight of "illegal" refugees from the U.S.' dirty war in Central America produced the sanctuary movement. And the Reaganites are going after it with a vengeance as part of their effort to defeat opposition to that war before they send in the Marines. What particularly galls the government is the sight of tens of thousands of churchgoing Middle Americans supporting "a willful and casual violation of American law," as Assistant Secretary of State (for Human Rights) Elliott Abrams put it (*Wall Street Journal*, 21 June 1984). A U.S. Border Patrol official complained, "We think it's an underground railroad or pipeline motivated by strong political beliefs and trying to undermine U.S. foreign policy" (*Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, 15 October 1985). Indeed, it is their defiance of unjust laws, helping the victims escape the wrath of the imperialists and their henchmen just as the original "underground railway" gave escaped slaves sanctuary from the slavemasters, that leads us to express solidarity with this movement of religious resistance.

The New Underground Railroad

"Ana," a Salvadoran refugee, was visiting her uncle, the chairman of a farm cooperative, in 1984 when a death squad arrived. She was forced to watch as soldiers peeled his skin off with machetes and finally murdered him. They then raped her and three female cousins. Later, in the capital, she recognized one of the rapists and murderers, who threatened to kill her entire family. After a nervous breakdown she fled to the United States. Here, however, she was picked up by the INS, and hauled before an immigration judge. He denied her political asylum, saying that one can "read about this same thing happening in any urban area of the U.S."

In El Salvador, security forces and right-wing paramilitary squads have

killed 60,000 people in six years of civil war; one in five Salvadorans have been forced to abandon their homes. In Guatemala the military decided to "drain the sea" of peasant support for leftist guerrillas by unleashing an "ethnocide" campaign against the Mayan Indians that has destroyed whole villages while locking up the survivors in strategic hamlet-type concentration camps and turning the *altiplano* into a free-fire zone. Alone, or together with families and friends, these victims of imperialist reaction risk life and limb to make the long, rugged trip north, preyed upon by bandits and ruthless coyotes (professional smugglers), as graphically portrayed in the movie *El Norte*.

On reaching the U.S., those lucky enough to survive the grueling ordeal are subject to the exploitation of sweatshop bosses. Even this precarious existence is constantly threatened by the dreaded *migra*, the INS cops who may send them back, penniless and often without identification papers, to fall prey to the kill-crazed security forces. An American Civil Liberties Union inquiry checked a list of Salvadoran deportees against that of victims of death squad violence and found over 100 matches. One such victim was Santana Chirino Amaya who was stopped for making a wrong turn at a traffic light outside of Washington, D.C., turned over to the INS and deported. A month later his headless, mutilated body was found at a favorite right-wing hit squad dumping ground known locally as "Road of Death."

The sanctuary movement was born as

a response to the tragic deaths in July 1980 of 13 Salvadoran refugees who died of exposure in the Arizona desert, robbed and abandoned by the coyote who brought them across the border. After the government moved to deport the survivors, Rev. John Fife of Southside Presbyterian Church, Philip Willis-Conger of the Tucson Ecumenical Council Task Force on Central America and James Corbett, a Quaker rancher, began to assemble a network of refugees. In March 1982, on the second anniversary of the death squad murder of martyred Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, Southside Presbyterian and a handful of other churches declared themselves sanctuaries for refugees from Guatemala and El Salvador. The movement has since grown to involve thousands, as housewives and retirees man checkpoints, transport and shelter 3,000 refugees.

After the indictments were handed down last year, at least a dozen U.S. cities—from Los Angeles to Chicago, from Seattle to Santa Fe—have declared themselves sanctuaries for Central American refugees, instructing local officials, including police, not to cooperate with the INS in rounding up "illegal aliens." In part, this reflects the emergence of the Hispanic population as a significant political force in many of the major American cities. Revelations of government infiltration of congregations and taping of church services have also outraged the public. Last month, COUGAR (Churches Opposed to Undercover Government Actions in Religion) sued the U.S. for intrusion, charging that the INS violated its constitutional right to free exercise of religion and due process of law. The defense fund raised over \$580,000 even before the trial started.

The Sanctuary Trial

In March 1984, the INS launched "Operation Sojourner" to infiltrate the sanctuary movement. Phoenix office chief James Rayburn hired two unsavory coyotes, Jesús Cruz and Salomon Graham, paying them \$30,000 for their finking. Rayburn claimed the movement was involved in transporting "terrorists." Over the next ten months Cruz and Graham, wearing body bugs, made some 100 hours of tapes while attending church services, bible study classes and sanctuary meetings. Based on this evidence and the testimony of the paid finger-men, 16 members of the

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"La Migra" cop: terror at the border.

producing a tidal wave of "desperate Latin peoples by the millions...fleeing north into the cities of the southern United States" (*New York Times*, 17 March). Yet this wave of refugees has already occurred, and not because of a "Soviet-Cuban stranglehold" on the isthmus; they are seeking sanctuary from the indiscriminate bombardment, the "search and destroy" army sweeps and the murderous death squads of the "free world democracies." An estimated 500,000 Salvadorans have fled to the U.S. since 1979, one tenth of the entire population of that tiny country. Some tens of thousands have been caught by the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service), and before being shipped back to face death and torture they are rounded up in giant holding pens. One of these is located near that sleepy border town made famous by Reagan, Harlingen, Texas.

The situation of Central American refugees is full of ironies. Most have managed to slip into the huge Latin barrios from Los Angeles to New York, and some are now waiting on tables and washing dishes in the fancy Washington, D.C. restaurants frequented by Congressmen debating contra aid and immigration laws. But for Washington, it's more than ironic that they seek refuge in the country which is waging

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Sports Bosses Keep Your Noses Out of Players' Business!

Down with Meese's Drug Witchhunt!

Mr. Witchhunt himself, Joseph McCarthy, would have been proud. Ronald Reagan's top cop, U.S. attorney general Edwin Meese, and Judge Irving R. Kaufman early this month denounced a vast "conspiracy" supposedly threatening the "national security" of the United States. According to the President's Commission on Organized Crime, headed by Kaufman, the estimated one-quarter of Americans who use marijuana, cocaine and other drugs are complicit with "organized crime" and agents of "international terrorism." The Commission's deputy executive director, Rodney Smith, proclaimed, "All the bullets, all the bombs, all the murders are funded \$20, \$50, \$100 at a time out of the pockets of teachers, lawyers, doctors, journalists" (*Washington Post*, 4 March). Meese and Kaufman's solution: they want to impose universal drug tests on the American population.

Under the guise of fighting "organized crime," the Reagan administration is seeking to impose totalitarian state measures. Reagan's Commission, appropriately headed by Kaufman, the judge who aided the frame-up and ordered the execution of the Rosenbergs in 1953 in the infamous Cold War "espionage" show trial, called for compulsory urinalysis of government workers and employees of government contractors, and urged private companies to do the same. This is part of a pattern of police state infringement of fundamental liberties so gross that ultra-Reaganite columnist William Safire complained, "they want to do away with the little technicality known as the presumption of innocence" (*New York Times*, 14 March). If the Meesketeers get their way, you will have to undergo annual drug tests, monthly lie detector tests... and an AIDS test every time you go out on a date!

According to the *Washington Post* (2 February), drug testing is already practiced by an estimated 25 percent of top U.S. companies as a means of intimidating workers and regimenting



Yankee boss Steinbrenner sticks it to victimized pitcher Al Holland.

the workplace. A number of school districts have attempted to make this a condition of school enrollment. The Commission calls for mass prosecution and incarceration of individuals possessing small quantities of drugs and demands more cops, more wiretaps and more jails. To complete the Orwellian nightmare, government accumulation of personal biographic information—from criminal records to political affiliations, urinalysis results and job records, centralized through computer networks such as the National Crime Information Center—portends the South Africa-style police state institution of an internal pass system.



Downing/Newsweek

Reagan's witchhunter Ed Meese (left) and Judge Irving Kaufman, who ordered execution of the heroic Rosenbergs at height of Cold War.



Dept. of Justice

The anti-drug hysteria is part of the Reagan administration's effort to regiment American society, the domestic side of the anti-Soviet war drive. The Commission report urges increased use of the military and secret police, especially the National Security Agency, to combat "airborne, amphibious and overland invasion of this country by drug smugglers." According to Reagan, Castro's Cuba and Sandinista Nicaragua are the source. In actual fact, U.S. spy agencies have for decades been in cahoots with traffickers running drugs into this country: from the Cuban gusanos (and before them Batista pals Lucky Luciano and Meyer Lansky) to the Meo "secret army" in Laos to Afghan mujaheddin and Nicaraguan contras, the CIA's boys have always been into the "guns-for-drugs" business.

The Commission's 5 March "final report" on drug enforcement met with widespread indignation and repugnance. Many Commission members angrily protested the drug testing provision, which none had seen, as it was written in at the last minute by the Commission staff. Even the *Wall Street Journal* (6 March), in deference no doubt to its up-scale readership, for many of whom cocaine is "the real thing," called the proposal "an example of enforcement mentality run amok." And at a March 18 hearing, Congressman Gary Ackerman dramatically exposed this arbitrary invasion of privacy by directing the deputy director of the Crime Commission, Rodney Smith, to provide a urine sample before testifying, so that it could be tested for marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines and barbiturates! When Smith fulminated that he had been given no warning, Ackerman pointed out that neither would government employees forced to undergo such tests.

Sports and Hypocrisy

But virtually no one has spoken out in defense of professional and amateur athletes, who have been most prominently singled out to submit to this violation of their rights and privacy. Last month professional basketball star Micheal Ray Richardson became another sacrifice on the altar of supposedly sacred "athletic virtue." Richardson, an all-star guard for the New Jersey Nets, was banned from basketball for two years in the midst of his finest season after failing his third urine test in two years. In the name of "rehabilitation," Richardson's past two years were made a living hell of torment and harassment, before they finally destroyed his career and stole his livelihood from him.

The taste of Richardson's blood has aroused the rest of the sports world's ghouls. Football czar Pete Rozelle has

announced his plan to strengthen the current testing program. The National Collegiate Athletic Association already has instituted the use of such tests. Center spotlight, however, has been on slick baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth who recently suspended eleven prominent players for past use of cocaine. To avoid the suspensions players must agree to drug testing for the rest of their careers and donating up to 10 percent of their salaries and hundreds of hours of time to "community service" drug prevention programs.

Ueberroth, the glamour boy of the 1984 L.A. Olympics, is the perfect choice to mobilize professional baseball in this "national security" effort. He was *Time* magazine's Man of the Year for 1984, for turning a \$215 million profit on the "free world"/free enterprise Olympics. This "miracle" was based on recruiting a workforce of 50,000 unpaid volunteers. Ueberroth's Cold War Olympics were exploited for Reagan's terror-sear militarization of Los Angeles and anti-Soviet hysteria, and Moscow told him to shove it. He reportedly took the baseball commissioner job specifically to tackle the drug issue and take on the unions. The *Wall Street Journal* (18 October 1985) said Ueberroth's strikebreaking, drug-busting, flag-waving exploits lead some to view him as "presidential timber," although others portray him as a tyrannical Captain Queeg. Clearly he sees his drug purge as a rung on the ladder to the White House.

Most of the players have already knuckled under to Ueberroth's terms. Given their performance at last summer's widely publicized narcotics trial of former Philadelphia Phillies black caterer Curtis Strong, convicted of providing cocaine to players, the rest will probably accede. Strong was made the fall guy while the players were pressured to denounce their prior cocaine use and repurchase their "respectability" by "naming names" of other players. The late Bill Veeck, former owner of the Chicago White Sox and Cleveland Indians, appropriately called the trial the "week of the rat fink" and contrasted the spineless players with the brave individuals who refused to cooperate with the 1950s McCarthy hearings.

The purported concern for the well-being of the athlete is laughable and hypocritical. Team physicians routinely provide amphetamines to help players get "up" for games. Like cattle being fattened for the slaughterhouse, high school and college as well as professional athletes are pumped up with steroids which cause intestinal bleeding, prostate blockage, sterility and possibly fatal liver damage. Injured players are forced to risk permanently crippling injuries by playing with the aid of painkillers. And

when not lurking behind lockers at the stadium, the sports press corps, which went through Prohibition without drawing a sober breath, can be found ringside grooving on the spectacle of black and Hispanic hoxers pounding one another to bloody pulps.

While decrying the general drug testing proposed by the President's Commission, the liberal *New York Times* (4 March) condemns Ueberroth's sanctions as too lenient, citing the Richardson case as proper precedent. We need "stern action," the *Times* editorialized, for those who "fail baseball." Fail baseball? The vicious hypocrisy of this current "clean team" campaign was exposed by *Times* sports writer Ira Berkow in his 8 March column. Denouncing the "mistaken belief" that players should be "role models outside of the baseball field," he noted: "If that is the case, then the greatest baseball player of all time, Babe Ruth, would have been the greatest role model, and all of us would grow up seeking to drink, wench, read no books, stuff ourselves sick on hot dogs, smoke big black cigars and grow plump." He's got a point about not reading.

In the Reagan years, public adulation of professional athletes—especially in



Trotman/Sports Illustrated

Micheal Ray Richardson, hounded out of pro ball.

baseball, that "American as apple pie" sport—requires that they be ideologically and morally "safe." Historically cultivated as blindly obedient to authority, conservative and intentionally undereducated, professional athletes provide perfect role models for American youth being groomed for boot camp. The drug "cleanup" of sports also seeks to restore the traditional domination over the players that the owners lost with the free agent system, to demonstrate by example that the bosses and their cops still have the whip hand. And just look who is doing the enforcing: Yankee owner George Steinbrenner, for one, is a convicted felon, who gave illegal campaign contributions to CREEP, Nixon's Committee to Re-Elect the President, and was banned from baseball for a year in the aftermath of Watergate.

The baseball establishment and their media mouthpieces yearn for the lost days of supposed "purity" under baseball's first commissioner Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, and drug-proof

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Feds Frame Up Mob

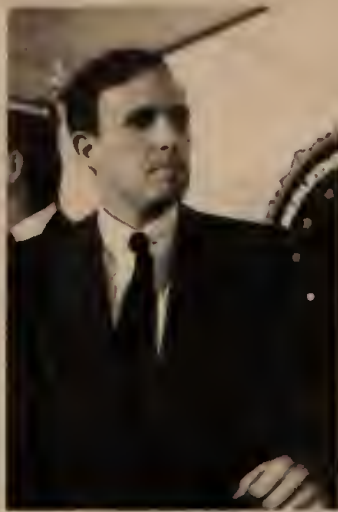
They're out to regiment America. Ed Meese's endless commissions are trying to get a witchhunt going over "drugs" (anyone who ever smoked a joint) and "pornography" (did you ever look at a *Playboy* centerfold?). To tie it all together and equate "organized labor" with "organized crime," the Reagan gang's launched a vendetta against "the Mob"; over 60 Mafia trials across the country, including three high-publicity show trials staged by the feds in New York City, and a mammoth affair scheduled for this spring known as the "Commission Case," which they brag will in one fell swoop bag the heads of the "five families" who supposedly control all organized crime in America.

But this crackdown doesn't have much to do with justice: they are actually trying to *frame* the Mob. The RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) "conspiracy" dragnet lets the G-men pick and choose who they feel like setting up and when; they don't need evidence of any actual crime. The Reaganites want to institutionalize the frame-up principle, and what easier target for a frame job than vicious parasites like gangsters?

Why are we Marxists commenting on these mobster trials? For one thing, we don't believe justice is only for the innocent. Even a murderer has the right to a fair trial, to be tried for some real crime and defended by counsel, as the U.S. Constitution supposedly guarantees. But the government has a different theory of law. They decide they want to go after somebody, invent the charges and convene star-chamber proceedings.

For months now the NYC media has revealed in the "pizza connection" ("Bonanno family") conspiracy case; the Paul Castellano affair ("Gambino family"), in which 20 people are charged with various criminal conspiracies (Castellano himself was gunned down in mid-trial in front of Sparks Steak House); and the "Colombo family" trial in which ten people, including Carmine Persico, have been indicted for extortion and bribery conspiracies. In New York, hotshot U.S. attorney Rudolph Giuliani announced new federal indictments on March 21 against Anthony Salerno ("Genovese family") and 14 other men for labor racketeering, construction bid-rigging, gambling and other conspiracies.

Giuliani is running the sinister prosecutions with a big dose of degradation of his targets: after Castellano was bumped off, reportedly because he might "sing" to the grand jury, his body was left out on the street by cops so the press could get a good "photo opportunity." Arch-reactionary New York City cardinal O'Connor then denied his family a church funeral mass. When actor James



Rudolph Giuliani, hotshot federal prosecutor.

Caan dropped in to observe one trial, greeting a friend among the defendants, he was promptly slapped with a subpoena, an outrageous and chilling attempt at intimidation.

Further, Persico (who objects vehemently to Giuliani's calling him "The Snake") has been in prison for decades already on another conviction. So the object here isn't just incarceration; there's a lot of sheer vindictiveness. Though Giuliani labeled others in official documents as "Frankie the Beast," "Andy Mush," etc., we bet he didn't include the prosecution's star informants' "street names" like "King Rat" Buscetta and "Jimmy the Weasel" Fratianno.

Giuliani's other big operation is the New York City corruption probe. Coming off an FBI "sting" operation in Chicago, they hooked into the NYC Parking Violations Bureau, portraying Donald Manes, the "King of Queens," as the heavy. Pointing to the utter hypocrisy of this prosecution, columnist Pete Hamill noted that "If Donny Manes is charged, convicted, and given a mere 30 days, we should never forget that these would be 30 days more than Nixon did" (*Village Voice*, 18 February). Manes was never charged, but with a little help from Mayor Koch, who called his former borough president pal a "crook," Giuliani got a "conviction" anyway when Manes or someone drove a kitchen knife through his heart.

The RICO Racket

Reagan and his attorney general Edwin Meese III are trying to achieve a full-scale judicial counterrevolution, but to get the ball rolling they've made use of a whole range of legal dirty tricks already on the books. Remember the ABSCAM (short for "Arab Scam") set-ups of Congressmen under Democrat Jimmy Carter? Even if FBI agents disguised as Arab sheiks couldn't bribe or corrupt elected officials, the mere hint that one was targeted was enough to permanently smear a reputation. The *Wall Street Journal* (24 January) editorialized about the abuses of dragnets like "The RICO Racket." Under this purposely vague "conspiracy" law, the government can seize the defendant's assets as "proceeds of crime" before any trial has taken place, thus wiping out the frame-up victim's chance of defending himself. So if they decide to get you, you can be sure that your widow is going to go on welfare.

The FBI recently tried to get maverick auto maker John DeLorean, entrapping him in a cocaine bust, simply because

some of the powers that be decided they didn't like his style, and they had a greedy professional informer next to him who wanted to make a buck. But the big corporate tax evaders reap millions. When E.F. Hutton talks, Meese obviously listens: the bright boys there who came up with a really creative money-switching scam got away with a slap-on-the-wrist fine and no indictments. Meanwhile they go after South Korean ultra-right-winger Rev. Sun Myung Moon on trumped-up income tax charges, and former Oregon guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, grabbed in North Carolina for alleged immigration violations.

It's not new—Al Capone, who died in Florida reputedly of syphilis after a lifetime of murdering hundreds of people, many personally, was got by the government on income tax evasion. This despite his services advising the state on how to get the "commies": as "Public Enemy No. 1" said during the protests over the Sacco and Vanzetti frame-up, "Bolshevism is knocking at our gates.... We must keep the worker away from red literature and red ruses" (Richard O. Boyer and Herbert M. Morais, *Labor's Untold Story* [1955]).

There isn't any real "justice" in this society, except what the rich can buy. Bribes line every city government's pockets. Frame-up is standard operating procedure in the crowded courts,

Gunned down in midst of grand jury probe of Mafia, Paul Castellano's body was left on street by cops for gruesome "photo opportunity."



even for those who are guilty of real crimes, in part because it's just easier for the cops that way. The Bill of Rights is just another one of those "technicalities" that stand in the way of the cops, who shoot down blacks, jail strikers and take bribes from the Mob as a matter of course. This state has created a whole class of laws and penalties that have nothing to do with crime—and are used selectively to boot, at the government's pleasure. It turns out you don't have to be a red or a homosexual to get willful, malicious invented charges thrown at you.

Frame-up and nebulous conspiracy charges come in particularly handy when the government is going after its perceived political opponents. They put away H. Rap Brown on a "crossing state lines to foment a riot" conspiracy charge when he looked like trouble—though they left Elijah Muhammad alone because he seemed to be a stabilizing factor among blacks and they needed him. And what they did to William Z. Foster, the American Communist Party leader, was really disgusting: his social security benefits stripped away, charged with "thought crimes" under the Smith Act, an old and ailing man, he was forced to appear in court on a stretcher.

Reagan's Deadly War on Labor

The Reagan administration has a broader purpose in its current multi-

million-dollar RICO extravaganza: gearing up the machinery that's intended to crush working-class and socialist organizations, while smearing them as "criminal enterprises." This capitalist state has been trying for a while to make an equation between "organized crime" and "organized labor"—and indeed potentially any sort of "organized" political opposition to its deadly policies. The Spartacist League's lawsuit against the FBI's "Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines" fought this sinister amalgam—and we won a gratifying victory when the FBI agreed to change its definition of our organization from its previous witchhunting language to exactly what the SL is, a Marxist political organization (see *WV* No. 385, 9 August 1985).

Targeted now for special investigation as creatures of "organized crime" are the trade unions, specifically the Teamsters, International Longshoremen's Association, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, and the Laborers Union. Reagan and Meese's Organized Crime Commission has recommended that the courts be given the power to *take over* unions "found" to be controlled by the Mob, thus giving the government yet another tool to smash workers' organizations. The arch-establishment *New York Times* (8 March) praised the Commission for having "redeemed itself" with this union-busting, after "embarrassing itself" by calling for mandatory drug tests for federal employees. The labor movement must clean its own house; the capitalist courts are the class enemy!

One of the first big government frame-ups, before RICO, was the vendetta against Teamster head Jimmy Hoffa. Using illegal wiretaps and a Teamster official facing heavy indict-

ments, they finally entrapped Hoffa on jury tampering after five years of harassment. The furious "get Hoffa" campaign wasn't purely Kennedy macho, of course: they outlawed the Teamsters' powerful weapon, the secondary boycott, in the 1959 Landrum-Griffin Act, and Hoffa was jailed shortly after winning the first national over-the-road master contract in 1964. And the FBI hounded ILA leader Tony Scotto for 20 years, spending millions of dollars as part of a vindictive effort to bust the longshore union. They destroyed the life of a decent man, convicting him in 1979 for the "crime" of recognizing it's impossible to live in New York City on less than \$100,000 a year.

The Reaganites get along much better with current Teamster president and FBI fink Jackie Presser, the only major union figure to endorse Reagan in both 1980 and 1984. Indeed, it's something of an embarrassment to Reagan's "war on crime" that while Meese is having cozy lunches with Presser, the federal commission on organized crime is criticizing the administration for stalling on investigating Presser.

Capitalists and Crooks

Reagan and Meese intend to get "the reds" too. Reagan made this perfectly clear in an "unprecedented" article (reporters noted he actually wrote part of it himself) titled "Declaring War on

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Teamster head Jimmy Hoffa (right) targeted by Robert Kennedy's union-busters.

Nicaragua...

(continued from page 1)

the first step in a war drive whose main target is the Soviet Union itself. The next day Reagan struck back, ordering American naval forces to begin an "exercise" in the Mediterranean explicitly aimed at provoking Libya, so they could "clohher" Qaddafi. And the same day the U.S. launched its missiles in the Gulf of Sidra, the White House claimed Nicaragua had invaded neighboring Honduras, and announced it was providing \$20 million in emergency aid and American planes to ferry Honduran troops to the border.

Only the blind could ignore the global interconnections, as Reagan hopscotches from Lebanon to Grenada, from Libya to Nicaragua, employing guns and lies to get a blank check for the anti-Soviet war drive. In Central America, the "news" of a Nicaraguan invasion of Honduras (by a measly 1,500 Sandinista troops!) came straight from the White House. Not only Nicaragua, but Honduras repeatedly denied there had been any Nicaraguan incursion. A Honduran government spokesman was quoted as saying, "It is part of the political and propaganda tactics of the Reagan administration to obtain the approval of all Americans for his proposals to help the (Nicaraguan) Contras" (UPI, 25 March). But it went down well in Washington, as Congressional Democrats and Republicans condemned the Sandinistas and supported Reagan. When contra aid comes up for a vote in the Senate next week, it is now expected to pass easily.

Sure, his "freedom fighters" are counterrevolutionaries trying to destroy the Sandinistas, Reagan said last week. "God bless them.... It makes me a contra, too." (Earlier he had described that band of sadists, rapists, torturers and murderers led by former members of dictator Anastasio Somoza's National Guard as the "moral equivalent of the founding fathers.") After five years of war preparations in "Fort Honduras," Reagan is gearing up for "go" against Nicaragua. He wants to erase the "Vietnam syndrome," the reluctance of the American people to get dragged into another losing military adventure, by committing the United States to the ouster of the Sandinistas "one way or another." The lunacy of Reagan's rantings was underlined by Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega, "The fact that he identified himself... as a contra gives the impression that he has lost his senses. It is dangerous if the head of a superpower, the head of a nuclear power, has lost his reason" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 17 March).

Big Lie and the Big Stick

On March 16, as part of a media blitz of red-baiting rhetoric orchestrated by the White House's own Goebbels, Pat Buchanan, Reagan appealed to the

public over the heads of Congress with a Big Lie TV speech that would have put Hitler to shame. According to Reagan's fantasy, the Sandinistas firebomb Jewish synagogues, traffic in drugs, provide a center for "international terrorism" which is feared throughout Latin America and "export revolution" from Brazil to Mexico. This barrage was too

"training" the killer commandos, as White House spokesman Larry Speakes admitted. And from there it's a straight line to U.S. air strikes or the deployment of American ground troops. Worried that such a scenario would bog down the U.S. in a "quagmire," liberal Democratic leader "Tip" O'Neill characterized the issue as "a Tonkin Gulf vote." They

resolution. But none will lift a finger to actively oppose a U.S. invasion. And the Contadora "peace" negotiations are merely a device to tie the Sandinistas' hands and weaken their defense against the Americans. At bottom, the struggle in Central America is a class question as the imperialists and local bourgeoisies seek to stem the tide of revolution, to



Gentile/Picture Group

Soviet-built MI-8 helicopters are crucial as crack Nicaraguan troops wipe up CIA-backed contras.



WV Photo

much for even the servile U.S. press to swallow at one gulp.

The 19 March *New York Times* ran a series of articles refuting these "mis-statements," noting that numerous investigations showed no anti-Semitic acts by the Sandinistas (the synagogue was destroyed under Somoza); Reagan's own Drug Enforcement Administration says it has no information to support charges that Nicaraguan officials are involved in drug trafficking (though the contras are up to their necks in it); and the Brazilian Foreign Ministry expressed "irritation" over Reagan's assertion that Nicaragua was training reds to take over Brazil. Still Reagan and his Cold Warriors proceed from the Nazis' policy that a lie big enough, and repeated often enough, can be made to stick.

In his prime time TV pitch for contra aid, the Great Prevaricator posed the Nicaragua question in a way guaranteed to make the Democrats squirm: "For our own security the United States must deny the Soviet Union a beachhead in North America." Since even the White House military advisers assess the contras' chances of overthrowing the Sandinistas as slim or nonexistent, it was clear that the debate was not over \$100 million to this ragtag "army" that's only good for killing civilians. As liberal Democrat Michael Barnes observed, "One would have expected a declaration of war at the end of the speech given the intensity of it."

But that is exactly what the contra aid bill is all about. As soon as Congress signs on, U.S. advisers will begin openly

have made a determination that this is where the showdown with the Soviet Union is going to be," said the House Speaker. "It's going to cost the lives of tens of thousands of Nicaraguans... and plenty of Americans as well.

Bipartisan Anti-Soviet War Drive

Round one of the Nicaragua/contra debate saw Reagan fall six votes short in a House vote, but no one expects it to end there. The administration's red-baiting barrage had its effect as Democrats left and right marched in step with the anti-Soviet war beat. The liberals went out of their way to agree with Reagan on all the fundamentals, merely asking if the contras can turn the trick. Senator Jim Sasser said in the Democrats' response to the Reagan speech: "We agree that the Sandinista government has betrayed the promise of its revolution, has suppressed the freedom of its own people and has supported subversion in El Salvador. We agree that Nicaragua must never become a base for Soviet military adventurism in this hemisphere.... Our disagreement is with the means the President has used to achieve these goals." Speaker O'Neill has scheduled a vote on a "compromise" package for April 15.

In Nicaragua the Sandinistas were low-key in their response to the Congressional vote. Still smarting from last June's sudden reversal by House Democrats who freaked out when Ortega went to Moscow, Ortega said, "The fact that a certain vote has been taken does not mean the war will end. The aggression is continuing." In a televised interview, one prominent Sandinista commander, Deputy Interior Minister Omar Cabezas, correctly read the Congressional debate as having reached a "consensus to destroy us." He went on to say:

"The Democrats and Republicans agree that they should give money to kill us. Some want to kill us one way, others want to kill us another way. They only differ on how or when to give the aid. It's like saying, Omar, how do you want to die? Do you want a Pepsi-Cola with arsenic, which is faster, or a Coca-Cola with strychnine, which is slow?"

—*New York Times*, 24 March

The petty-bourgeois nationalists of the Sandinista National Liberation (FSLN) may be slowly learning about U.S. politics, but they still harbor dangerous illusions about their bourgeois "friends" in neighboring Latin American and West European governments. These capitalist regimes may protest, even propose a United Nations

crush the workers and peasants and keep the American continent safe for Wall Street.

Defend Nicaragua—Smash U.S. Imperialism!

From the beginning of this administration, the Reaganites have sought an "easy win" over "Communism" in Central America. First they aimed to crush leftist insurgency in El Salvador, but the quick knockout punch eluded them as Salvadoran guerrillas have fought the U.S.-backed army to a standoff. When that failed, Washington turned on the Sandinistas. So far, their only "victory" was the invasion of tiny Grenada by a U.S. force one-fifth the size of the entire population of that black Caribbean island—and even then they had a hard time overcoming the resistance of a few hundred middle-aged Cuban construction workers. We have said repeatedly that Central America is on the front line of American imperialism's war drive against the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state. Today defense of Cuba and the USSR begins in Nicaragua!

Despite all the Reagan administration talk of "Nicaraguan communism," the petty-bourgeois Sandinista government tries desperately to maintain its precarious balancing act, proclaiming "political pluralism, mixed economy and nonalignment." Meanwhile the mythical "patriotic" bourgeoisie is acting as the internal contras. Genuine communists say that the Nicaraguan Revolution can be defended only by completing it—expropriating the capitalist fifth column—and spreading workers revolution throughout the region. In the U.S., the reformist left and rad-libs of the "solidarity" milieu concentrate on lobbying the Democrats and wailing as the latter cave in to Reagan. Trotskyists insist that it will take an independent class mobilization to defeat the bipartisan imperialist war drive.

American workers must prepare now for political strike action against a U.S. invasion in Central America. The American population is overwhelmingly hostile to Reagan's dirty war in Central America: they reject contra aid by more than two-to-one, and massively oppose the sending of U.S. troops. Yet that is precisely where Reagan is heading. All opponents of imperialist war must take a clear stand in defense of Nicaragua, and against the anti-Soviet war drive. The hour of danger is at hand! ■

Sevcec/Spanish International Network



Reagan's cutthroat "freedom fighters": specialists in torture and murder.

Wohl/Sygma



Reagan's War Provocations...

(continued from page 1)

exercise"! But when news of the U.S. "exercise" in the Med first came out last week, Pentagon spokesmen openly declared they wanted to provoke a fight with Qaddafi, who Washington considers a "Soviet surrogate." CBS News (18 March) reported it had been told "that the Reagan administration hopes Qaddafi does attack and, in the words of one official, 'if and when that happens, we'll clobber him'."

Predictably, Democratic "doves" in Congress practically stumpled over each other to line up with their president, turning a blind eye to the convenient political timing of Reagan's prefabricated military "crisis." As the *New York Times* (25 March) noted in passing, the Navy provocation comes "four days after President Reagan suffered a serious political setback in the House," which rejected his contra aid bill, and it "appeared to divert attention from Nicaragua in the same way that the United States invasion of Grenada... drew attention away from the explosion that killed more than 230 Americans in Lebanon." But of course the *Times* editors backed Reagan's Libyan action anyway, calling it "just reprisal." And Democratic Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill rubber-stamped it, waving the flag over "protecting America's armed forces." Firmly committed to Reagan's anti-Soviet line, the Democrats will soon be voting for the dirty contra war in Nicaragua as well. The imperialist drive toward war with the Soviet Union is a bipartisan effort.

A couple of months ago, using as a pretext a gruesome attack by Palestinian nationalists in the Rome and Vienna airports, the U.S. threatened to "retali-



Naked provocation: U.S. Navy spy ships were six miles inside Soviet waters, probing Sevastopol naval base (right). Gulf of Sidra (left), scene of U.S. acts of war against Libya.

ate" against Libya in the name of fighting "terrorism." When Reagan pulled back, limiting himself to empty economic sanctions, frustrated Reaganites vowed that next time they would go in with guns blazing. As we warned then: "If Reagan looks stupid and weak over this one, he is still commander in chief of U.S. imperialism with his finger on the nuclear button. A frustrated Reagan is dangerous, so watch out world!" (*WV* No. 395, 17 January). So now the Pentagon is "clobbering" Qaddafi as a trial run against Soviet weapons. And we all recall Reagan's "joke" about "declaring war on Russia... the bombing begins in five minutes." It's no joke.

U.S. Provocation in the Black Sea

Last week two U.S. spy ships deliberately sailed for two hours well inside Soviet territorial waters in the Black Sea. In an "exercise... ordered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the name of Defense Secretary Caspar W. Wein-

berger," the guided missile cruiser *Yorktown* and the destroyer *Caron* went "up to six nautical miles" inside the 12-mile coastal limit near Sevastopol in the southern Crimea (*New York Times*, 19 March). In the past, whenever the U.S. got caught out in such activities, it was standard operating procedure to issue a cover story protesting innocence—i.e., the ships were allegedly "lost" or otherwise had "accidentally" intruded. But this time the Pentagon dramatically upped the ante, openly admitting they were sent to "test Soviet defenses!"

We deeply respect and support just cause of Libyan independence and territorial integrity against assault by U.S. imperialist aggression.

Spartacist League/U.S.
international Spartacist tendency

Supposedly this naked provocation was to assert a "right of innocent passage" through Soviet territorial waters, since the U.S. ships weren't firing guns or launching warplanes. Some "innocent passage"! The *Yorktown* is equipped with the computerized Aegis fire control system, and the *Caron* carries special gear to "probe the shore surveillance and defense capabilities," including the ability to "induce a nation to switch on shore-to-sea, ship-to-ship, and air-to-sea radar" (Jeffrey Richel-

berger, "the guided missile cruiser *Yorktown* and the destroyer *Caron* went 'up to six nautical miles' inside the 12-mile coastal limit near Sevastopol in the southern Crimea (*New York Times*, 19 March). In the past, whenever the U.S. got caught out in such activities, it was standard operating procedure to issue a cover story protesting innocence—i.e., the ships were allegedly "lost" or otherwise had "accidentally" intruded. But this time the Pentagon dramatically upped the ante, openly admitting they were sent to "test Soviet defenses!"



New York Times

son, *The U.S. Intelligence Community* [1985]). The *Caron* has previously been used for provocative spying missions in the Gulf of Fonseca, off Nicaragua, and the *Times* quoted Pentagon officials saying the ship "had been loaded with additional sensors and listening devices" for this operation.

Moreover, Sevastopol is not just any port—it is a major naval base, headquarters of the Soviets' Black Sea Fleet, comparable to the U.S. Navy's complex at Norfolk, Virginia. In the Crimean War of 1854-55, rivers of Russian blood were shed in defending Sevastopol in an eleven-month siege against some 200,000 English, French and Turkish troops—the war was "distinguished by more hand to hand encounters than all the wars of Napoleon together," Engels wrote at the time ("Aspects of the War," October 1855). During World War II, the port was captured by the Nazis, but the Russian fleet escaped to continue harassing Hitler's forces. So the U.S. Navy's intrusion into the Crimea would understandably arouse the deepest fears

in the Russian people for the safety of their country.

The Soviets refused to rise to the bait. They issued a restrained protest note, pointing out that the U.S. action "was of a demonstrative, defiant nature and pursued clearly provocative aims" (*New York Times*, 19 March). That's putting it mildly. Perhaps Reagan and Weinberger were angling for a rerun of the USS *Pueblo* incident (the U.S. Navy ship caught spying off North Korea in 1969) as an excuse to "clobber" the Soviet Union. Reagan thinks like Teddy Roosevelt—remember "Remember the Maine!" that rallying cry for the Spanish-American War on Spain, the excuse for which was an explosion of unknown cause on a U.S. warship in Havana harbor. But the Russians could do some clobbering of their own.

And what the hell is this "right of innocent passage"? It's the imperial assertion by the Western powers, based on a 1958 convention among themselves, that they can intrude on anybody's territorial waters. According to the *San Diego Law Review* (1978), "the naval strength of these nations and political commitment to the suppression of communism contribute greatly to this outlook," and it was rejected by the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Poland and East Germany, among others. The Soviet bloc position "appears to be that warships should not enjoy an absolute authority to pass through a State's territorial waters any more than an army could cross the land territory." The article notes the U.S.' "visible hypocrisies," since the U.S. itself claims the right to carry out customs inspections up to 62 miles out to sea, and to ban fishing trawlers within a 200-mile limit.

Up to 1945, the U.S. had denied there was any such "right of innocent passage" for warships, and reversed itself only after emerging as imperialist victor in World War II. For centuries, the matter was settled by the so-called "cannon-shot rule," described in the minutes of English-Dutch negotiations of 1610 as follows: "no prince can Challenge further in the Sea then he can Command with a Cannon except Gulfes within their Land from one point to another" (*Stanford Law Review*, July 1959). In the 18th century, this was taken to mean three nautical miles, although in reality the effective range of cannon at the time was considerably short of that. Today, both the U.S. and the Soviet Union recognize a 12-mile limit. Given the range and accuracy of modern weapons, the U.S. Navy would be prudent to just stay the hell out of the Black Sea and the Gulf of Sidra.

"Forward Strategy" Insanity

But Reagan is the opposite of prudent. Even anti-Soviet liberals are now worried he's gone off the deep end. After the U.S. commander in chief's latest rantings about the "menace" of tiny Nicaragua, liberal columnist James Reston noted that "members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have to wonder what the old man's doing" (*New York Times*, 19 March). The same day,

Pentagon officials blithely told the *Times* that the two naval provocations, in the Black Sea and off Libya, were "intended to harrass President Reagan's appeal to Congress for approval of an increase in military spending":

"In previous incidents in which the United States flexed its military muscle, the officials said, the President's popularity jumped and his policies received new support in Congress."

They're risking setting off World War III...in order to raise the Pentagon budget! This cynical manipulation of public opinion rivals Goebbels, with the difference that the Nazis didn't brag about their provocations in public, and Hitler didn't have nuclear weapons.

This program of provocation is an integral part of a U.S. bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive, and it will lead to war unless it's stopped. Every aspect of Reagan's military program is infused with the "logic" of the "first strike," from Star Wars schemes to the "forward strategy" of Navy Secretary John Lehman. This involves not merely "bottling up" the Russian fleet at the traditional "choke points," which Reagan cited recently as vital to U.S. interests, but taking U.S. aircraft carriers headlong into the lair of the Russian bear, to attack the Soviet navy's home bases, from the Kola Peninsula to Vladivostok to the Black Sea. In a TV documentary in the *Frontline* (1 January 1985) series on "The Battle for the Norwegian Sea," former CIA director Stansfield Turner warned that such a strategy would be a suicidal "mistake of historic proportions." But that is what the mission of the *Caron* and the *Yorktown* was all about.

And that is what the people who run this country are fantasizing about. We can't help wondering, does Reagan think he's playing the role of the president in Tom Clancy's thriller, *The Hunt for Red October* (published by the Naval Institute Press), in which a Soviet submarine captain defects with his nuclear sub and heads for Norfolk? At one point in the book the U.S. president berates the Soviet ambassador because another Russian sub giving chase is found 300 miles off Norfolk; the ambassador notes this is well within international waters, to which the president responds threateningly, "So is the Gulf of Finland...and, I believe, the Black Sea." The Navy's hottest "novel" was described by *USA Today* as a "White House bestseller"; Ronald Reagan called it "the perfect yarn."

But why now? There may be at least a psychological relationship to the Challenger disaster. When the space shuttle blew up in Reagan's face on January 28, it was a severe setback for American prestige, and for the president. The U.S. managed to score an "own goal," as they

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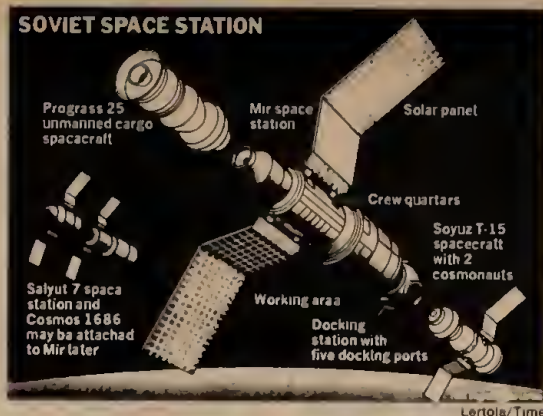
Reagan's War Provocations...

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say in soccer, kicking the ball into their own net and chalking one up for the Russians. We almost expected NASA to "discover" a Russkie plot to shoot down Challenger with a beam of elusive neutrino particles. Instead they discovered a Sandinista plot to take over America. Reagan has a track record of responding to such disasters by manufacturing a military crisis—e.g., the rape of Grenada right after 200-plus Marines were blown away in Beirut, or the anti-Soviet hysteria campaign after his KAL 007 spy plane was shot down.

Meanwhile, the Soviets successfully launched an elaborate space station a few weeks after the American shuttle exploded. The station, named *Mir*—a Russian word meaning world, peace or commune—has six docking ports for spacecraft. The feat was proof positive that the Soviet Union is light years ahead in space exploration. *Aviation Week & Space Technology* (10 March), unofficial mouthpiece of the U.S. Air Force and the aerospace industry, was dripping with jealousy, quoting analysts who said the Soviets are "poised for a technological quantum jump" in space. In 1985, the magazine noted, the Soviets conducted "98 space mission launches" while the U.S. "launched only 17 missions." The Pentagon brass must be kicking themselves for putting all their eggs in the space shuttle basket as part of Reagan's "Star Wars" fantasies.

To top it off, when Halley's comet made its historic return this year,



Soviets are light years ahead in space. Russian permanently manned space station, the world's first, is already in orbit. Reagan's Star Wars "Challenger" is at the bottom of the Atlantic.

international scientists did not gather in the U.S. for observations—NASA had dropped its plan for a comet fly-by for budgetary reasons—they gathered instead in Moscow, where Soviet officials opened the doors of their Space Research Institute so the world could witness the pictures from the two Russian spacecraft, Vega I and Vega II, as they flew by the comet to provide man's first close-up view of that age-old space traveler. U.S. scientists even had an experiment on board the Sovietcraft, which they kept very "low profile" for fear the White House would nix it on some bogus charge like providing the Russians with sensitive technology.

And despite the best efforts of the presidential cover-up commission on Challenger, talk of a "Shuttlegate" hasn't been suppressed. There was a noticeable frenzy in White House spokesman Larry Speakes' denial of any connection between the rush to launch the shuttle in cold weather and the

president's State of the Union speech that very day lauding the accomplishments of high technology. The persistent rumor is that "White House chief of staff Donald Regan had called the space agency, allegedly saying 'Get that thing up'" (Cable News Network, 26 February). And Democratic Senator Ernest Hollings has demanded White House "logs of calls between NASA and nine presidential assistants," including chief of staff Regan (*New York Post*, 21 March).

A lot of people, including many self-proclaimed socialists, don't think Reagan is serious about his war talk. They think he talks loudly, but carries a small stick. Yet in the last five years, the U.S. has staged one provocation after another against the Soviet Union. Russian submarines were struck by American ships in November 1983 and March 1984; a Soviet carrier was sideswiped by a U.S. Navy vessel in April 1984; in November of that year, the USS *Nimitz*

and *Arkansas* went to within five miles of Cuba to tow out a disabled U.S. spy ship; and in December 1984, two Navy carrier battle groups staged maneuvers only 50 miles off Vladivostok, hub of the USSR's Pacific defenses, causing the Soviets to launch a full-scale defensive alert. There is a method in this madness. As we wrote in *WV* No. 385 (9 August 1985):

"When the American cabinet is sitting around trying to see if Reagan's awake, they don't think they can just push the button and somehow the Russian missiles have a no-go for while middle-class American persons. They're not that psychotic. But they do think if they continue the escalation—politically, economically, militarily—they can win. They think: keep pressing, keep squeezing, grind, grind, and when the pressure gets high enough the Russians will chicken out and the U.S. will prevail. This is arguably a mistake. Try it out on Marshal Ogarkov."

We added: "Hitler already tried it, and lost."

Reagan's antics are not the insanity of a single individual but the desperation of a dying class. American rulers dream of destroying the Soviet Union, and "rolling back" the first successful workers revolution. Especially in light of the present lunacy in the White House, the fate of mankind is intimately linked to the defense of the Soviet Union, in spite of its bureaucratic, dangerously conciliatory misleaders. When Reagan proclaims himself a global counterrevolutionary, the working class must respond with revolutionary class struggle around the world. And the Pentagon must be made to understand: if you try a first strike, watch out for the Soviet second strike. Not détente, but international workers revolution will smash the imperialist war drive. ■

Tribune Strike...

(continued from page 2)

deal he helped negotiate would include "concessions" and "worker dislocation," in other words, capitulation by the strikers. At the same time the Democratic administration's cops have been at the *Tribune* plant every day to prevent the pickets from shutting it down. Toeing the line for the Democrats will only mean more working-class defeats, and more poverty and racial oppression for blacks. We need to build a workers party to bust the political shackles on labor and blacks.

Finally, the photo of me with Jim Guyette, the president of UFCW Local P-9, in *WV* No. 398 (28 February) has an incorrect caption. The check I presented to the Hormel strikers came from ATU Local 308, not Local 241. However, last night Local 241 did vote to donate \$300 to P-9.

Fraternally,
Mark Vesecky,
member, ATU Local 308

Feds...

(continued from page 5)

Organized Crime" (*New York Times Magazine*, 12 January). "I watched with deep concern as organized crime moved in on the motion picture industry... a few years later it was the Communists who tried to take over S.A.G. [Screen Actors Guild]," recalled FBI informer Reagan of his Hollywood years. "Since then, I've understood those who argue that the tactics used by mobsters and totalitarian ideologues have a lot in common." Actually we thought Woody Allen captured it better when he noted humorously in his essay "A Look at Organized Crime" that "The Cosa Nostra is structured like any government or large corporation—or gang of criminals for that matter."

The American state has had its uses for the Mafia, most notoriously in the CIA plots to assassinate Fidel Castro, in which Chicago don Sam Giancana was prominent. At the same time the Kennedy administration was running its own phony "war on crime" commissions, JFK was running Mafia "contracts" on Castro, while playing with mobsters' girlfriends on the side. But he

didn't need Judith Exner for an entrée into the Mob. His millionaire dad made his fortune—and undoubtedly plenty of connections—during his Prohibition days as a bootlegger. Here is the perfect interpenetration of capitalism, the state and big-time crime.

In the early 1950s, during an earlier round of "the crime-busting racket... as old and familiar as the calliope and the shell game when the carnival comes to town," veteran American Trotskyist James P. Cannon wrote:

"The American underworld is a vicious and ugly social manifestation; but it did not fall from the skies. Graft and crime and extortions and rackets are the symptomatic products of a diseased social system and its false values. These dark and evil symptoms can't be eliminated, or even seriously curbed, until they are tackled at the source."

—"Crime and Politics,"
Notebook of an Agitator
(1958)

This society is based on the fundamental injustice of capitalism's parasitical expropriation of working people's labor. And violent crime is the necessary, permanent underside of this society, which maintains desperate poverty and a permanent layer of unemployed.

Certainly Mob shakedowns and extortion have taken a few bites out of working people's incomes. But compared to what New York real estate barons like Donald Trump rip off, or the sweet deals Pentagon contractors get down in Washington, it's strictly small-time stuff. Certainly the Mob murders revealed in some of the trials are gruesome and horrifying. But this state has its own terror squads—lots of times they don't even bother with frame-up indictments, they just blow you away. While Reagan complains about Mob violence, it was *his* gang of thugs which set up and cheered the massacre of MOVE in Philadelphia, a wantonly vicious bombing in which eleven people, including young children, died hideous, fiery deaths. They terrorized black America and they did it simply because they wanted to. The biggest gang of criminal terrorists in this country is in the White House. ■

TWA Strike...

(continued from page 12)

grounded in 24 hours.

When PATCO went on strike in 1981, the U.S. trade-union tops, particularly "Wimpy" Winpisinger and the Teamsters, could have shut down the airports overnight. The half-million unionists who marched in Washington could have celebrated a stunning victory over the union-busting offensive; five years of defeats for labor and blacks at the hands of Reagan reaction could have been prevented. Instead the pro-capitalist union tops stabbed the air traffic controllers in the back and Reagan was "walking tall" as a union killer. In the airline industry alone, union misleaders have forked over more than a billion dollars in givebacks. Two-tier wage schemes are now commonplace. Thanks to the bureaucrats' policy of crossing each other's picket lines, there is a long string of defeated airline strikes. And Reagan's anti-union skies are deadly: 1985 was the worst year in civil aviation history with nearly 2,000 deaths.

Many IFFA strikers sport buttons which say, "United we stand, divided we're Continental," referring to the annihilation of organized labor at that airline. True enough. But "united" doesn't just mean "best wishes." Winpisinger and Kirkland sang "Solidarity Forever" over the dead body of PATCO. Under the blows of Reagan's all-out war on labor and minorities, if "unity" means anything, it better mean class struggle. That's why Spartacist salesmen have been on IFFA's picket lines every day, selling hundreds of copies of *Workers Vanguard*, the paper that fights for the working people and tells the truth: this strike can be won but it won't be by playing by the bosses' rules. The IFFA strikers need leaders who will fight for what was denied to PATCO—mass, militant picket lines to stop the scabbing, and joint strike action by all the airline unions. Victory to the TWA strike! ■

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Drug Witchhunt...

(continued from page 4)

stars such as Ku Klux Klan members Rogers Hornsby and Tris Speaker. Landis is a fitting icon for the Reagan era. As a federal court judge he meted out stiff sentences in the World War I trials of the early IWW ("Wobblies") labor organizers. Commissioner Landis ordered lifetime banishment of players acquitted in court of gambling charges. But his most heinous legacy as baseball commissioner was the maintenance of baseball's then rigid race segregation and his sabotage of Veeck's effort to buy the Philadelphia Phillies and field black players six years before Jackie Robinson finally broke the color bar.

Behind the hypocritical double standard of the *New York Times* editorial page is racism. For Sulzburger the privacy of white stockbrokers, lawyers and corporate execs is sacrosanct. But sports is the one profession where talented blacks can earn (for a few short, brutal years) six- and seven-figure incomes. And in Reagan's anti-drug hysteria black means junkie. The vicious drug tests and penalties are a reminder that in racist America even million-dollar salaries do not break the chains of racist oppression, and for black youth facing desperate poverty and no future other than cannon fodder for



Borgman/Cincinnati Enquirer

imperialist war, that they better not step out of line. It's no accident that the first contracts including obligatory drug testing and draconian penalties were imposed in professional basketball, an inner-city ghetto sport dominated by blacks.

Government Off Our Backs!

It's not surprising that hallplayers, along with the rest of society in their income bracket, cope with the pressures of their profession with the aid of drugs. Before turning fink, Keith Hernandez was a National League Most Valuable Player, and led his team to a World

Series championship during his "love affair" with cocaine. Dave Parker was the League's leading hitter for two seasons and considered by many its best player until suffering a knee injury. Now, while Hernandez and Parker collect their million-dollar salaries, Curtis Strong, whose only crime was apparently a desire to do favors for the stars, will be doing 12 years in the state pen. Other major league players have already served time—in 1983 four Kansas City Royals players, including Willie Wilson and Vida Blue, were sent to jail for cocaine use.

Drug testing represents an especially

pernicious invasion of individual privacy. The urinalysis test proposed can reveal medical information such as the presence of Dilantin, a medication for epileptic seizures. Some blood tests already being instituted by private companies reveal the presence of antibodies to the AIDS virus, and can be used to victimize workers. Moreover the urine test being proposed is widely recognized as unreliable. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported last year that labs with government contracts reached incorrect conclusions up to 100 percent of the time (reported in *Civil Liberties*, Winter 1986). But a dirty test serves the boss as well as a clean one, providing a means to terrorize the workforce, control worker discontent, isolate and victimize militants.

The prohibition of alcohol in the reactionary social climate of the 1920s created the rampant growth of "organized crime." The illegalization of drugs likewise ensures big bucks for the Mob (and cops on the take) and violent crime by desperate addicts. Laws against so-called "crimes without victims"—drugs, gambling, prostitution, sodomy and homosexuality—threaten the privacy and rights of everyone and should be abolished. The real monkey on Americans' backs is repressive capitalist society and its insane drive toward nuclear war. Labor must mobilize to smash Meese's sinister drug test regimentation. Owners, cops, hoes—keep your noses out of the players' business! ■

Sanctuary Movement...

(continued from page 3)

sanctuary movement were indicted in January 1985 on 71 counts of conspiracy and smuggling illegal aliens. (Charges against two were later dropped, and three others pleaded guilty in plea bargains.) Defense challenges have since pared the charges to 33 counts, but the sanctuary leaders still face up to 30 years in jail or more.

The trial, which opened last November 15, has been a hideous travesty of justice, with church workers in the dock on evidence supplied by proven liars and criminals, while refugees are coerced into testifying against those who aided their escape. In his opening argument Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Donald Reno smeared the sanctuary movement as a "three-tiered criminal enterprise" made up of "generals," "transporter/smugglers" and the "Nogales connection." Presiding over this kangaroo court is racist U.S. District Judge Earl Carroll, who from the outset tried to assure a guilty verdict by ruling that defense lawyers could not present their clients' religious or humanitarian motivations, nor testimony about conditions in Central America.

In court, Judge Carroll complained that "people from Latin America perhaps have a difficulty in just answering the question yes or no" (*New York Times*, 19 January). And when defense lawyers argued Central American refugees were discriminated against in violation of the 1980 Refugee Act, he dismissed the law as "wetback legislation." But it's not just racial prejudice. For 25 years Carroll was a partner in a Phoenix law firm which had the union-busting Phelps Dodge Corp. as its primary client. He also owns stock in the company. One of the undicted co-conspirators in the case, Lucio Chávez, was sheltered by the sanctuary movement after being arrested and tortured in El Salvador for his activities as a union organizer at a Phelps Dodge subsidiary.

In spite of this elaborate set-up, the trial has not gone well for the feds. Before it began the government was forced to pull fink Graham when defense lawyers learned that he had acted as a pimp while spying on the

churches. Then, in a last-minute decision, prosecutor Reno withdrew the tapes as evidence for fear of revealing the informers' attempts at entrapment and opening up discussion of the defendants' motivation. This put the burden of the government case on star witness Cruz. During six weeks of cross-examination by defense lawyers Cruz's credibility was completely destroyed. On the stand Cruz was forced to admit that while working for the government on a previous smuggling case, he was paid \$1,500 which INS investigator Rayburn allowed him to keep; that he had lied under oath in a 1982 alien

disclosed to Salvadoran officials. Judge Carroll put her under house arrest until the end of the trial.

From Sanctuary to Social Revolution

Sanctuary, a movement of white, middle-class religious people, is hardly the bunch of flaming radicals the government makes them out to be. Many want to stress they are within the law, it's the Reagan administration that's violating the 1980 Refugee Act and the UN charter. Susceptible to INS charges that they are engaging in political acts, they hesitate even to oppose U.S. intervention in Central America. "Ain't nobody here but us religious folks, boss!" was how a sanctuary pastor from Iowa characterized this capitulation to red-baiting. Yet a movement founded on the belief that "in this case collaboration with the government is a betrayal of our faith" (as Quaker Jim Corbett said to the Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson when they voted on becoming a sanctuary) and that actively defies the government's laws is going to have a hard time being apolitical. And in the face of the government's crackdown, some of the most committed may become radicalized by their experiences.

Largely Protestant in character, the sanctuary movement is often associated with "Liberation Theology" in the Catholic church. And liberal Catholic groups such as the Maryknoll Order have declared their support for sanctuary. Often these groups have shown more steadfastness and gumption than various left groups who seek not to defy the government but to pressure it. Thus in the aftermath of the murder of four American church women in El Salvador in December 1980, while the rad-libs and "solidarity" groups were chanting "American guns kill American nuns," the superior general of the Maryknolls went on TV to say that it was accidental that the victims held U.S. passports; they were internationalists, and their deaths would be no less a crime had they been Salvadorans.

Nevertheless, providing sanctuary is essentially a symbolic act, a religious "witness." As the *National Catholic Reporter* (1 February 1985) noted, "The sanctuary movement...can do nothing to help the vast majority of Salvadoran refugees, other than announce that they exist. Every week, the U.S. government deports or repatriates more Salva-

rans than are housed nationwide in sanctuary churches." Those who seriously seek social justice for the poor and oppressed will have to look beyond the confines of their theology, however much they may talk of liberation. They might look, for instance, to the original "underground railroad," which spirited escaped slaves across the Mason-Dixon line. Soon they had to continue on to Canada, for there was no refuge in the "free" North under the Fugitive Slave Law. Ultimately it took the Civil War, the Second American Revolution, to abolish slavery—and even then blacks were deprived of basic democratic rights after the demise of Reconstruction.

What's required is an international struggle for workers revolution, from Central America to the United States. To liberate those oppressed by death squad terror, you have to get rid of the system that spawns the death squads. And whatever their tactical differences over contra aid, the partner parties of capitalism will unite to maintain this system of exploitation, racism and imperialist war. Democrats and Republicans alike have enforced racist, anti-communist immigration laws which were designed to keep out "reds" and blacks, and Latins. Labor has the power to successfully defend Central American refugees, not through "conscientizing" the rulers (like the reactionary agribusiness bosses now in power in Washington, grown wealthy off illegal "wetback" labor), but by class struggle. The Spartacist League calls on labor to mobilize for: Asylum for refugees from death squad terror! Full citizenship rights for all undocumented workers! Defend the sanctuary movement! ■



WV Photo

Spartacists demand asylum for refugees from death squad terror.

smuggling trial; that he had thrown out his notes on the sanctuary case after earlier denying he had taken any; and finally, that Cruz had lied several times during the current trial.

The government tried to buttress Cruz's flimsy testimony by calling some of the Central Americans helped by the sanctuary movement as prosecution witnesses. This, too, blew up in their faces. The first witness, a former labor leader in El Salvador using the name Alejandro Rodríguez, testified with the threat of deportation hanging over his head. Although Reno and Carroll tried to exclude testimony about conditions in El Salvador because it might "prejudice and confuse the jury," Rodríguez was able to get out that he had been jailed and tortured for his union activities. Another prospective prosecution witness flatly refused to testify for fear that her testimony would be

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GE-Lynn Settles, Rail Pickets Snarl Hub

Boston Strikers Hit Back

BOSTON—At General Electric's huge Lynn, Massachusetts jet engine and turbine plant, 9,000 International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) members struck for four weeks in defense of their union against GE's reign of terror on the shopfloor. On March 20, some 4,000 Local 201 members approved a settlement engineered by the IUE international and the local leadership, despite the vocal opposition of some Lynn workers who knew they had GE over a barrel in this strike.

The Lynn GE strike, like the fight waged by the Hormel strikers in the Midwest, also inspired railroad workers fighting concessions demanded by the Maine Central Railroad, who tied up critical Boston commuter rail lines with roving pickets. At one point during the GE strike, over 1,000 management scabs who had been crossing the Lynn workers' picket lines were stranded high and dry when the railroad workers shut down the lines to the plant.

The month-long strike by Local 201, which was sparked by the suspension of a steward, could have been a powerful blow against the bosses' war on labor. Lynn GE is a key industrial union local, and during the strike a billion dollars in military projects for Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive were sitting idle in the plant. And the Lynn workers, who voted against the IUE tops' givebacks last July, could have led GE workers across the country who have been under assault.

But the settlement, coming after "IUE International President William Bywater conferred with top GE officials and gained a clearer understanding of what solutions GE would accept" (*Boston Globe*, 20 March), consists of the same old arbitration schemes, and "training courses" for stewards and foremen designed to promote class peace on the shopfloor. This after GE bosses beat up and suspended stewards and workers left and right for months!

The ranks at Lynn struck back hard and solid—from Aircraft to Turbine to Everett and Medford—and GE knows it. But the company-loyal IUE bureaucrats, by keeping the strike isolated to Lynn and settling for a bunch of lousy promises based on the same giveback contract, sabotaged the chance Local 201 had to smash GE's union-busting schemes and take the offensive in a national strike to rip it up.

Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!

The strike against Maine Central Railroad by members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance and Way Employees (BMWE) has received solid backing from rail workers throughout New England, who have honored BMWE's picket lines and shut down the entire northern tier of Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) commuter lines into Boston.

After working without a contract for two years, and watching their ranks

decimated by layoffs, the 115 track laborers in BMWE struck Main Central on March 3. The railroad is owned by Timothy Mellon, whose Guilford Transportation Industries has been gobbling up railroads around the country. Mellon is demanding a 20 percent pay cut, the slashing of health and welfare benefits and new contract language to scuttle the seniority system.

What this scion of the 19th-century robber baron didn't count on was rail unions from Maine to Boston to upstate New York honoring the roving pickets sent out by BMWE. Picketing in ones and twos for periods as long as 36 hours, the strikers' lines have been honored by thousands of rail workers who know that if BMWE is busted, they are next. But the union's illusions in the bosses' "legality" (a clause in the anti-union federal Railway Labor Act allows pickets at rail companies under the same ownership) has begun to backfire. BMWE lawyers have caved in to the MBTA's threat of an injunction, and allowed the resumption of maintenance work at the Boston Engine Terminal and partial service on two of the commuter lines.

To hell with the bosses' injunctions and "cooling off" laws, which were written to smash transportation strikes! What's needed is mass pickets and a joint strike of all rail unions to shut down all Mellon's rolling stock, freight and passenger. The powerful MBTA unions must stop the scab bus replacements for the struck commuter lines, turning the tide in the BMWE strike and launching a fight against the use of part-timers in the MBTA.

Boston could use a healthy dose of old-fashioned class struggle. While populist demagogue mayor Ray Flynn brags of a "new spirit" in Boston, racist



GE strikers rally in Lynn, March 5.

attacks continue unabated. The glittering new office buildings and hotels in downtown Boston mask the deterioration of life for workers and blacks. The labor misleaders preach reliance on the liberal Democratic Party politicians, but arch-liberal Ted Kennedy joined Reagan in smashing the national railroad engineers strike in 1982, and it was the Boston Democratic Party machine which led the racist reaction against busing here ten years ago.

The solid strike at Lynn GE and the gutsy fight of the Main Central workers can point the way for New England labor to smash the years of givebacks and union-busting. Picket lines mean don't cross! Victory to the BMWE strikers! ■

Hormel...

(continued from page 12)

of calling on labor to "hot-cargo" Hormel products; and *suing the UFCW International in the bosses' courts*, which will only increase government control of the unions.

Power Not Pressure

In the Hormel strike, the top labor misleaders acted openly as agents of the companies within the union movement. The urgent desire of the AFL-CIO tops to liquidate the P-9 strike came from a strategy that sees the welfare of American working people directly tied to the health of the capitalist system. In the World According to Wynn, if capitalism's in trouble the workers should be willing to starve. The UFCW International has over the last few years helped the meatpacking bosses cut workers' paychecks to ribbons. Some packing-house workers saw their pay plummet to \$6 per hour! Kirkland, Wynn & Co. were worried that any big labor victory would have unleashed a wave of strikes against the givebacks, threatening their own positions. The AFL-CIO bureaucrats' strikebreaking against P-9 makes it clear that any serious strike must be a rebellion against the union tops. And the Hormel strike was just that, a challenge to the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy.

The question was: what *program* could beat this lineup against P-9. The reformist strategy relied on public opinion and the supposed "good will" of the capitalist state. Like Wynn and Kirkland, the local leadership, their "labor advisers" and assorted supporters all were tied to the Democratic Party, seeing DFL governor Perpich as a "friend of labor." And they all accepted the "logic" of the capitalist system: UFCW and AFL-CIO tops enforced givebacks in order to "restore profits"; P-9 leaders refused to seize the plant or mobilize labor to drive out the National Guard because they accept



Levison/Minneapolis Star and Tribune
National Guard versus workers in Austin, Minnesota.

capitalist "legality." This strategy ultimately allowed the strike to be smashed, liquidating it into another endless, losing boycott.

Rather than a strategy based on mobilizing union *power*, they sought to *pressure* the bosses by building a public outcry based on moral indignation. P-9 adviser Ray Rogers, of Corporate Campaign, Inc., focused on PR gimmicks, like picketing banks. Lately Rogers has been pushing "civil disobedience," like sitting down outside Hormel corporate headquarters or in the street but not in the plant. Outside Austin, a conglomeration of lower-level union officials and reformist pseudo-socialists, NRRAC (National Rank and File Against Concessions), talked of solidarity but refused to bring out their ranks to stop the scabs and drive out the Guard. And they refused to organize political strike action against Perpich's strikebreaking. The various strike support rallies, such as those recently held around the country and the April 12 rally planned in Austin, push consumer boycotts instead of *union action*.

This strike could have been won: the key Austin plant was shut down for months, workers at the large Ottumwa, Iowa plant (Local 431) overwhelmingly honored P-9's pickets, and Hormel workers responded favorably to P-9 pickets at Fremont, Nebraska and Dubuque, Iowa, as well as other plants around the country. Beleaguered workers everywhere had their eyes glued to the anti-concessions fight centered in Austin. A victory would have lit up the labor movement like a flare in the dead of night. That's why Wynn, backed up by the entire AFL-CIO apparatus, went all out to kill the strike. All American workers will pay for this treachery. But as the wife of one P-9 striker told *WV*, whether the strike won or lost, "a new labor movement has started." She added, "We were the guinea pigs, the ones who made the sacrifices."

A Test of Leadership

There was one aspect of P-9's strike that set this struggle head and shoulders above the vast majority of labor strikes and gave it a significant chance of success: the roving pickets. Coal miners during their bitter 1978 strike made effective use of this class-struggle tactic: by fighting to extend the strike to the non-union mines of Kentucky and elsewhere, the coal strikers transformed their strike in part into a UMW organizing drive, faced down the Carter/Mondale administration's Taft-Hartley injunction and frustrated for several months the efforts of the UMW leadership to sell out the struggle.

But it was only in January, five months into the Hormel strike, that P-9 pickets hit the road. The pickets had been prepared in October, but Guyette held them back after Wynn promised to sanction the tactic if Hormel failed to "bargain in good faith." Of course, Hormel didn't "bargain"—they were out to smash P-9—and Wynn didn't sanction the roving pickets. A critical two months were lost in extending the strike to other plants.

The real test of the strike leadership's

program came in mid-January, when Hormel reopened the Austin plant and began to hire permanent replacements for the strikers. This was a dagger pointed at P-9's heart. On January 20 a mobilization of P-9ers and their allies shut down the plant. That night Perpich brought in the National Guard, and then the leadership and their NRRAC "supporters" were put to the test. As we wrote:

"Labor organizations from all over the Upper Midwest must mobilize to flood Austin with thousands of unionists who can send the scabs scurrying! There must be political strike action to beat back the National Guard strikebreaking!"

—*WV* No. 396, 31 January

But the response of Rogers and his Corporate Campaign, Inc. was to discourage militant mass picketing, push the consumer boycott and start a campaign of civil disobedience. And the only "solidarity" P-9 got from the NRRAC officials was hot air.

A week later, P-9's roving pickets shut down the Ottumwa plant, but the Guard kept the critical Austin plant open. We wrote:

"Having sampled the power of labor solidarity, P-9 members can see victory almost within reach. Yet it is clear to all that the situation in their home plant increasingly threatens to undermine and defeat the strike.... The hard truth is that the Austin plant must be shut down, and soon, or the strike will lose."

—*WV* No. 397, 14 February

Under the circumstances the only way to shut down the plant was to take it out of the company's hands, the very same way the Hormel strikers did it in 1933. A plant seizure would have thwarted Hormel's strikebreaking plans: the forces of capitalist "law and order" treat strikes much more respectfully when the workers are holding millions of dollars worth of equipment—equipment financed with the givebacks robbed from the workers! But Guyette and Rogers were hardly ever in town. They had substituted coast-to-coast "Boycott Spam" speeches for class-struggle action in Austin. The vacuum left by their absence from Austin simply invited a

Report from Austin

AUSTIN, Minnesota—Sunday's meeting was a Rubicon for the Hormel strike, qualitatively signaling its defeat. On Thursday, after months of backstabbing and downright *scabbing* on courageous Local P-9, the UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers) International drove the knife in, declaring the strike "unauthorized" and cutting off all benefits. The local leadership found itself in a situation that left no retreat: unlike the British miners, they couldn't form ranks and march back to work, defeated but defiant. Their jobs had been taken, and only an audacious and well-planned plant seizure could get them back. But Jim Guyette and the local leadership had consolidated around a reformist program of playing by the bosses' rules. And when that led to a dead end, on Sunday they turned decisively away from labor struggle to a consumer boycott and calling on strike-breaking judges to run the union.

Unfortunately, there was no opposition to this strategy from the membership. In the weeks after the February 15 NRFAC (National Rank and File Against Concessions) rally, we had a vestige of hope that an element of P-9 would rebel against the leadership's diversionary strategy. On the weekend of March 1, a *WV* team from Chicago showed the video of "Labor's Turning Point" (about the victorious Trotskyist-led 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strike) to a number of strikers and strikers' wives. They were inspired by the battle of '34, and agreed that militant action in Austin was long overdue. A few days later, we got a call saying that a group of strikers was considering seizing the plant. During these weeks, reports kept coming in from contacts in and around P-9 that on such-and-such a day they were going to "shut it down." None of this panned out, but it indicated an appetite for class struggle within the local.

We had time before the Sunday membership meeting to stop by the

union hall. The change in atmosphere struck you in the face. There were only 20 somber people there. The P-9 exec board was having a meeting, but the membership wasn't exactly clustered nearby waiting. A couple of friendly retirees manned the reception desk. The bulletin board near the entrance was dominated by lists of P-9 members who had resigned and members who had crossed the picket lines without bothering to resign. There were no signs that the union hall continued to serve as a social center for the local, which was not surprising since it also didn't serve as an

right. P-9ers were serious, unenthusiastic. We sold about two-thirds of the papers on the basis of interest in the fight in the ILWU (West Coast longshore/warehouse) over "hot-cargoing" Hormel goods. Two hours later the strikers came out. They seemed desperately optimistic. There were elated shouts of "fuck the International!" The cause of all this celebration was *not* a commitment by P-9 to shut down the plant, but a decision to take the UFCW International to court. In other words, the local is inviting the government to dictate internal union affairs—



Local P-9 pickets and supporters stopping scabs at Austin Hormel plant, February 1. Strikers were stabbed in back by AFL-CIO tops.

organizing center to the extent it had in January. (We couldn't help but notice that most of the beans provided by the support committee were still neatly stacked downstairs; the strikers are obviously "beaned-out.") A suggested resolution on the National Guard being distributed from the lit stand near the entrance said that "the Guard should only be used if..."

The meeting was held at a church community center, and we got there early to sell *WV*. The press says there were 800 at the meeting, which sounds

the same government that issued strike-breaking injunctions and placed Austin under virtual martial law!

There was a press conference in the community center gymnasium where the meeting had been held. Guyette sat down at a table surrounded by the P-9 negotiating committee. He announced essentially a three-pronged strategy: consumer boycott, Martin Luther King-type civil disobedience and a lawsuit against the UFCW International for "irreparable harm to Local 9, maliciously hurting the strike and undermining

our bargaining position with Hormel." Halfway through the press conference, *Workers Vanguard* asked Guyette if it wasn't true that the strike would be won or lost on the picket lines, and that suing the International—no matter how bad their betrayals—was a violation of the trade-union principle that you've got to keep labor independent of the government. He began defensively, saying this was a special situation, there was no way out, etc. As he warmed up, he changed themes, saying P-9 wouldn't let anyone stand in its way, and so on. He didn't bother to indicate how they were going to win this strike.

It's notable that the bulk of the left considered it more important to stay in the Twin Cities preparing for that night's benefit concert for P-9 than to come to Austin to influence the course of the strike. The Workers League showed up with a leaflet which had no address, no phone number, no date, no "labor donated" and of course no union bug. Significantly, any hint of class struggle was buried between the letter-writing, contribution-sending and WL's predictable calls for "congresses of labor" organized by the backstabbers like UFCW chief Wynn or the AFL-CIO's Kirkland. At the press conference *WL/Bulletin* reporter Cory Johnson jumped in to cover Guyette's ass by asking if P-9 had exhausted every possibility of appeal, as if that would excuse crossing the class line by suing the UFCW.

At the benefit in St. Paul later that night we talked to one of the strikers who had seen "Labor's Turning Point." He was initially impressed with P-9's legal strategy, but began to come around when we explained that suing a union in the bosses' courts is a *class* question, which inevitably leads to greater capitalist control over labor. He also conceded that the Hormel consumer boycott probably would never have much effect, since a very large portion of the company's meat products are bought up by the military. But if labor had been mobilized to shut down the plant and hot-cargo scab Hormel products, even the military never would have gotten its Spam. ■

strikebreaking intervention by the backstabbing UFCW tops.

Face Reality Squarely

When the local voted for reconciliation with the International, and Wynn gave his "screw you" reply, Guyette came back to Austin and the P-9 leadership consolidated a program of defeat. A non-struggle policy of boycotts and civil disobedience was capped off with taking the union to court. P-9 is asking the same court system of "Hormel Judge" Stone, whose injunctions made real picketing illegal, to rule against the International for causing "irreparable harm" to the strike! This lawsuit is not just a diversion—it is a *betrayal*. The courts, the cops, the National Guard, are all agencies of the capitalist state. Labor must clean its own house!

The key lesson of the Hormel strike is that for the workers to beat back the bosses' attacks on the economic front, they must be organized to fight the bosses all down the line, that is, *politically*. To have independent, intransigent unions, workers need a party that serves as a general staff of the class struggle. They need a *workers party* which can lead the working people to political power, to the establishment of a *workers government* that expropriates the corporations and banks and organizes a planned economy to place the wealth of this country at the service of labor and the oppressed. A militant trade-union tactic like the sit-in anticipates the revolutionary expropriation of the capitalists under a workers government. The successful strikes of the early

1930s, like the Wobbly-led Austin meatpackers sit-in and the Trotskyist-led Minneapolis Teamster strikes, were led by leftists. As Leon Trotsky wrote in "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay":

"The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

"The fight's going on," said P-9 president Jim Guyette on March 16. But the job of revolutionaries is to "face reality squarely...to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be," as Trotsky wrote in 1938 ("Transition Program"). Speaking the truth about American labor today means recognizing the defeat at Hormel for what it is, and drawing the proper lessons. The critical task posed by the Hormel strike is the need to forge a consistent class-struggle opposition to oust the pro-capitalist bureaucrats who are strangling the labor movement.

This means a fight to keep the bosses' government out of the unions; to build picket lines that no one *dares* cross; to fight for jobs for the unemployed (from whom Hormel recruited its scabs), for 30 hours work at 40 hours pay. It means fighting racial oppression, used by the bosses to divide the working class; black workers are often the most militant sector of the industrial proletariat, and integrated picket lines can be the starting point for mass labor/black defense squads against racist attacks and police terror. It means opposing the anti-

Soviet war drive, which is intimately linked to the war on labor and minorities at home; and breaking with the Democrats, who are no "lesser evil" and certainly no "friends of labor" but a capitalist party that sends in the National Guard to break strikes.

In the fight to oust the pro-capitalist misleaders of labor a revolutionary workers party must be built, a multi-racial party that will link up and lead the struggles of the oppressed into a powerful assault on the whole system of capitalist exploitation. ■

ILWU Militants:

"We Bitterly Condemn and Protest Defeat of Hormel Strike!"

At the March 20 membership meeting of Local 10 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) in San Francisco, Stan Gow, a member of the Militant Caucus, put forward a motion nailing the labor bureaucracy for its betrayal of the P-9 meatpackers strike.

Earlier, Gow had fought for Local 10 to defend the strike, through refusing to handle any Hormel scab goods on the docks (see our last issue). But the Local 10 bureaucrats, with a little help from their fake-socialist friends, scuttled any real defense of P-9 by postponing action for three crucial weeks.

The ILWU International, meanwhile, adopted a grotesque "statement of policy" on the Hormel strike, knifing P-9 in the back by declaring "the International Executive Board

of the ILWU feels that it is inappropriate for the International to take a position either for or against the Hormel strike" (*Dispatcher*, 10 March). The labor fakers' treachery will not be forgotten by the working class.

We reprint below the Militant Caucus motion.

We bitterly condemn and protest the defeat of the Hormel meatpackers strike.

In a sequel to the PATCO strike, it was deliberately isolated and stabbed in the back by the labor traitors that currently make up the top leadership of the American labor movement.

All American workers are going to pay for this treacherous defeat. Next time there had better be a massive show of force by the labor movement to smash the union-busters.

Stan Gow, 4498

WORKERS VANGUARD

All Labor Will Pay for This Treacherous Defeat!

Hormel Strike Knifed

MARCH 24—For seven months the striking meatpackers at Geo. A. Hormel & Co. in Austin, Minnesota waged a tough and defiant battle that inspired American labor from coast to coast. TWA stewardesses, GE workers in Lynn, Massachusetts, cannery workers in Watsonville, California looked to the gutsy Local P-9. But P-9 was up against not just a union-busting company; they also faced the labor traitors of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and Lane Kirkland's AFL-CIO, the capitalist Democratic Party and the armed fist of the bosses' government, particularly the National Guard. Despite their determination and militancy, P-9 didn't have the class-struggle program necessary to win against this unholy alliance. And so after a hard, bitter fight the heroic Hormel strike has been smashed.

The members of Local P-9 said, "Hell no!" when UFCW leaders told them to eat Hormel's takeaways. When the company moved to bust the union and replace the strikers with scabs, P-9 countered by dispatching roving pickets to other Hormel plants in an attempt to shut the entire chain down. The UFCW hureaucracy tried every trick in the book to end this strike on the company's terms—from withholding money sent for the P-9ers to publicly denouncing the strike as "mass suicide" to actively herding workers across P-9's picket



Austin, Minnesota, March 20: cops drag away Hormel strikers blocking plant gate.

lines. The AFL-CIO fat cats meeting in Florida denounced the "rogue local" and wouldn't let Hormel strikers speak. So P-9 sent rank-and-file delegations directly to local unions around the country to appeal for solidarity. Minne-

sota's liberal Democratic governor Rudy Perpich enlisted in the war against P-9 by sending the National Guard to Austin to protect Hormel scabs. Still the strikers stood their ground.

But "hanging tough" was not

sufficient to win this fight. Ever since Hormel reopened the plant January 13, some 500 ex-members of P-9 (derisively called "P-10ers" by the strikers)—more than one-third of the local—have crawled through the picket lines as scabs. P-9's failure to shut down the Austin plant—and keep it shut—fueled a defeatist opposition in the local that argued for capitulation to Hormel. On March 13, this opposition narrowly won a vote within P-9 calling for reconciliation with the backstabbing UFCW tops. The very next day, as Hormel executives maintained there were no jobs for strikers, International president William Wynn gave a scab order to end the strike and take down the picket lines, cutting off the strikers' \$40 per week strike benefits and threatening to place P-9 in receivership. Indignant strikers in Austin tore the UFCW initials from their picket signs.

In the face of the International's move to smash the strike, only a program for all-out class struggle—to spread the strike, seize the plant and bust through the UFCW/AFL-CIO traitors' stranglehold—could lead the way to victory over Hormel. But at a mass membership meeting on March 16, P-9 president James Guyette decisively rejected labor struggle, turning to civil disobedience instead of a militant fight to shut down Hormel; to a consumer boycott instead

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Screw the Injunction—Airlines Unions Must Stand Together!

TWA Strike: Honor the Picket Lines!

Machinists and Teamsters Scab

The strike by 6,000 flight attendants against Trans World Airlines is in trouble. When the walkout began March 7, thousands of airport mechanics, members of the powerful International Association of Machinists (IAM), spontaneously honored the picket lines and TWA was crippled. But when TWA predictably got an injunction against the Machinists' action, the IAM tops instantly ordered their ranks back to work and the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants (IFFA) was left standing alone. TWA's union-busting chairman, Wall Street raider Carl Icahn, now has 2,000 scab flight attendants on his payroll and hundreds of flights are taking off every day. The IFFA ranks don't lack for spirit and determination *but they can't win alone!* IFFA militants must call on the IAM and Teamsters *now* to shut down TWA. Scabbing pilots ought to be grounded

by union flying squads. Picket lines mean don't cross!

Before the strike, IFFA bargainers offered the company givebacks amounting to 15 percent of the union members' wages and benefits—some \$50 million. Such concessions, however, only emboldened the bosses and so Icahn demanded more: \$100 million in concessions. On the MacNeil-Lehrer Report (March 11), Icahn stated his intention to squeeze additional hundreds of millions out of TWA's pilots and Machinists on top of what they've already "given" back. There's no end to it! The flight attendants finally had enough and their strike could spark a counteroffensive by airline unions against all givebacks and concessions. The question is: will the ranks of American labor defeat the treachery of the wretched AFL-CIO tops and come to the aid of the TWA strikers in time?

Many Machinists are angry with the IAM misleaders' scabherding, but so far the bureaucrats have kept this anger from being translated into action. As one Machinist at TWA's Kennedy airport terminal in New York put it to *WV*: "They should say 'fuck you and



Striking TWA flight attendants at rally for Hormel strikers in New York, March 14.

your injunction, we ain't going back,' but I know they won't." Right, *so it's up to you!* For the AFL-CIO's "Lame" Kirkland and the IAM's "socialist" president William Winpisinger, "solidarity" amounts to hot air and a

consumer boycott. Real solidarity means respecting picket lines. And everybody knows that if the Machinists and Teamsters refused to cross the flight attendants' picket lines, *TWA would be*

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