

Amerika: A Reaganite Soap Opera Hitler Would Love



WV Photo

Spartacist League Protests ABC's Anti-Soviet Series

A storm of protest has greeted ABC's grotesquely anti-Soviet, anti-communist, anti-American maxi-series, *Amerika*. This repulsive better-dead-than-red horror show, however absurd and implausible, is aimed at whipping up popular war hysteria for a

thermonuclear holocaust against the Soviet workers state. It was supposed to be a more sophisticated version of Russian-bashing films like *Rambo* and *Red Dawn* (where Sandinista paratroops in Soviet uniforms seize a

continued on page 13



WV Photo

Labor: Sock It to Reagan! Avenge PATCO and Philly MOVE!

Reagan Gang Self-Destructs

The Reagan regime is not only losing its grip, it's literally falling apart day by day. As investigators look for a "smoking gun" in the Iran/Contragate affair and White House officials stonewall, they've sealed off the president from questioning by the press for almost three months. But now it turns out that the National Security Council hotshots left behind boxloads of NSC computer tapes, which could turn out to be a smoking howitzer that blows the administration out of the water. One of the president's men already attempted suicide, while others are quitting *en masse*. Wall Street's giving off quite an odor as well, as prominent beneficiaries of Reagan's Greed Inc. are busted for insider trading. More and more the evening TV news is sounding like *Dynasty*. What's the next episode—Oliver North sneaks into the White House gunning for Don Regan?

The day before former national security chief and ex-Marine "Bud" McFarlane was due to testify before the Tower Commission investigating the NSC, he OD'd on Valium, gobbling down 20 to 30 tablets. McFarlane was rushed to Bethesda Naval Hospital where he joins William Casey, the now-former CIA chief. A *New York Times* (8 February) article described the disarray

and *saue qui peut* (everyone for himself) atmosphere in the White House as top administration aides decamp "while their connections to the Administration still have market value." And at a February 17 confirmation hearing for Casey's successor at The Company, what the Senators wanted to know is how many lies he would tell Congress before "considering" resigning. Reagan's credibility has sunk so low that a Roper poll taken for Cable News Network and *U.S. News and World Report* shows that more people trust their auto repairman than the president.

For six years Reagan reaction has attacked virtually every sector of the American population. Blacks and other minorities never had any illusions about the Klandidate in the White House. Labor has been targeted with a massive union-busting drive launched by Reagan's firing of the PATCO air traffic controllers. Huge chunks of basic industry have been ripped up, hundreds of thousands of industrial workers thrown on the scrapheap while crooked Wall Street speculators and military contractors have made billions. Now this deeply racist, labor-hating government is vulnerable and can be defeated. But capitalist reaction won't be reversed by Watergate-style investigators or the



Gowing/Newsweek

All the president's men: Poindexter axed; McFarlane attempted suicide; Regan going down the tubes.

Democrats in Congress. The objective possibility exists to *bring down Reagan through sharp class struggle!*

Reagan on the Ropes

There's a deep-going regime crisis in Washington. In his State of the Union speech Reagan vowed to go to the limit for two items: Star Wars and aid to the counterrevolutionary Nicaraguan contras. Barely two weeks later this was publicly challenged by no less than the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Referring to the Reaganauts' plans for early deployment of anti-missile defenses, Admiral William Crowe asserted flatly that "a deployment decision is

premature." Forget about the super high-tech fantasies of laser guns and particle beams—even the stripped down SDI is full of holes. Crowe also virtually wrote off Reagan's contra losers, saying that they better come up with some "success" soon. If they failed to do so, "The Chiefs certainly would be opposed to direct U.S. involvement" (*Washington Post*, 13 February). White House spokesman Fitzwater shot back that "U.S. commitment to the Contras is fixed...."

Reagan's allies are angry at not being consulted over deployment of Star Wars, but that's only one of their

continued on page 12



WV Photo

Solidarity Day, 1981: Half a million workers march on Washington, protesting Reagan's drive to destroy PATCO air controllers union.

Black History Month

SEE PAGES 4-9

PDC Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Honor Toni Randell! Build the PDC! FREE ALL CLASS-WAR PRISONERS!

We print below a condensation of remarks by New York PDC representative Richard Dundy at a January 23 Spartacist League forum on fighting racist terror:

This is nearly the fifth anniversary of the death of our comrade Toni Randell. She died at the age of 38 of cancer. She was a founding member of the Partisan Defense Committee. Toni did the research on the early defense work of the International Labor Defense, the organization, led by James P. Cannon from 1925 to 1928, on which our work is modeled. It was her dedication, her scrupulousness, her attention to detail, but primarily her tireless efforts to launch a fighting organization in defense of victims of capitalist injustice, which are the base from which we have been able to carry out our work.

Toni was a hard communist, and she...fought until her death for a socialist future. And she understood the importance of a defense organization, one that could wield the powerful fist of a united workers movement, which could defend ourselves as well as those hard-won, bloodstained victories of our class. She taught us the critical impor-

tance of a political fight in defense of those who because they struggle were victimized by the rulers of this country. Toni researched, she learned and she passed on to us some of the lessons that have been lost since the ILD became nothing more than a pawn of the Stalinist Communist Party.

There are certain cases which shape and condition entire periods of history, not necessarily because they are unique or because of the enormity of the crimes involved, but in particular because they are understood by broad layers of the masses. Cases which focus the fight against state repression, which serve as lightning rods through which the consciousness of a generation can be changed. Sacco and Vanzetti—they were kept from the electric chair for six years because of a truly international movement of protest. The Scottsboro Boys case—black youth in the South framed up because they were found on a cattle train with young white women. Massive protest saved their lives and served to expose the conditions of the South in that period.

Certain events shape political periods. Sometimes they're victories—often they're not. Howard Beach is one.

The destruction of the Black Panther Party was another. The Philly MOVE massacre may be the most horrible in recent memory. Because she survived the 13 May 1985 bombing of the MOVE house in Philadelphia, Ramona Africa is in prison in Muncy, Pennsylvania with her sisters Janet and Consuewella Africa and MOVE members scattered all over the state of Pennsylvania in prisons. The Howard Beach lynching is blowback from that firebombing—the incineration of eleven people, including five infants and children. They were blacks who were organized, who dared to be different, and who had managed to understand something very fundamental about racist America.

That the rulers couldn't tolerate. They were incinerated by Reaganite terror in collaboration with the black Democrat Wilson Goode. It fueled racist reaction. The MOVE massacre was meant to cow and intimidate an entire population. I spoke this week with Ramona Africa and let me tell you that this woman is not cowed, and she is not intimidated. She is fiercely resolute. She is articulate. And she is fighting against that system that illegalized her entire organization and jailed those it could not murder.

We pledge to avenge the MOVE martyrs. We work for the freedom of their imprisoned survivors. Ramona was just denied parole on the basis of her refusal to accept conditions—conditions that she not associate, if released, with any member of MOVE or any household of MOVE. This she refuses to do. Only when the workers and the oppressed rise in protest against this apartheid-like denial of her right of association can Ramona expect justice.

Earlier last year when a section of Chicago labor protested her quarantine—her isolation from the general population—the jailers relented. A protest centered on the labor movement must again speak out: Freedom for Ramona, for Janet and Consuewella and all MOVE prisoners!

The FBI/COINTELPRO destruction of the Black Panther Party was for its generation the starkest example of state terrorism—the vicious naked fist of the rulers. The Panthers represented the very best of a generation of fighters—in opposition to Martin Luther King pacifism and for the right of armed self-defense against Klan and government terror. They were targeted for extermination.

Elmer Geronimo Pratt was a leader of the Black Panther Party. And when he escaped assassination in a murderous cop/FBI assault on the L.A. Panther headquarters he had to be framed up for the murder of a woman in Los Angeles—a murder that he could not and did not commit because he was in Oakland 400 miles away. Nevertheless 16 years later, Geronimo is in jail having spent nearly half that time in solitary because his will is not broken. We won't forget.... The Partisan Defense Committee and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense, in conjunction with dozens of unionists and the Spartacist League and others, have called for a mass demonstration at noon on the 21st of February in Oakland, as an expression of our determination to see this heroic man get justice.

Geronimo Pratt today is America's foremost class-war prisoner. He is in jail because he stood up to racist capitalist oppression. His freedom is of great importance to all who fight against that oppression, not merely for the justice of

this case, but for the memory of all his fallen comrades....

You see, democratic rights are not divisible. The fight for Geronimo's freedom, for Ramona's freedom, for the dismissal of charges against Guillermo [Bermúdez, Bay Area Spartacist campus activist], these are the fights against race-terror today. These are fights against the madman war drive against the Soviet Union. Concrete actions in defense of the whole of the working people. Michael Griffith is dead, many others are dead. Class-struggle defense, the policy of mobilization and protest, not whimpering before august authorities of the state, their judges, their cops, their lawyers—these are our policies. The fight for these cases and for others is the fight against the all-sided assault on our rights and on our lives.

A year ago the PDC revived an honorable tradition of the ILD. We began sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners—\$25 every month to those behind bars whose freedom is linked to ours, as an expression of our



Toni Randell

WV Photo

solidarity. We also asked our friends and supporters to contribute regularly—\$5, \$10, \$100—so that we could do this work, so that others could be active participants in the struggle to free these class-war prisoners. I'd like to ask you tonight to help us, to join us in this fight. It was our way of honoring Toni Randell and it's the best way we know of continuing her work.

In this brief one-year period the PDC has enlisted 500 sustaining contributors pledging about \$1,600 per month. We now provide monthly stipends to 13 imprisoned victims of capitalist injustice. The PDC-initiated demonstration to free Black Panther Geronimo Pratt is our first major demonstration. The labor endorsements of our cases and causes are small but important steps in forging the mass organization of class-struggle defense toward which Toni worked so hard.

We urge WV readers to continue to support and build the PDC. Become a sustaining contributor. Send your donation of \$5 and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy of issue number 3, send \$.75 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■



TROTSKY

Black Freedom and Socialist Revolution

American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon concluded a six-part lecture series, "America's Road to Socialism," with a vista of proletarian class rule inseparably linked with the struggle for black freedom:

I must also break the news to the Southern crackers and their Northern cousins, and other members of the Jim Crow fraternity, that under socialism

America will no longer be "a white man's country." It will belong to the colored people too. They will own as much of it as anyone else and share to the full, without let or hindrance, all its bountiful prosperity and abundance, all its freedoms, rights and privileges—without any exceptions whatever.

The socialist society based on human solidarity will have no use for such unscientific and degrading and inhuman notions as the idea that one man is superior to another because, many thousands of years ago, the ancestors of the first lived in an environment that produced in the course of time a lighter skin color than was produced by the environment of the ancestors of the second.

The Jim Crow gangsters who strut around in self-satisfied ignorance as representatives of the "superior" race may have to learn their mistake the hard way, but they will learn—or "be learned"—just the same. The Negroes will play a great and decisive role in the revolution, in alliance with the trade unions and the revolutionary party; and in that grand alliance they will demonstrate and conquer their right to full equality.

—James P. Cannon, "What Socialist America Will Look Like" (January 1953)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

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20 February 1987

Down with Meese/FBI COINTELPRO Frame-Up! Freedom Now for Geronimo Pratt!

Be there! Saturday, February 21, 12 noon, Oakland City Hall Plaza Park, 14th and San Pablo in downtown Oakland.

For more information, call the PDC at (415) 839-1652

Marxists Sue "Accuracy in Academia" Outfit

The Spartacist League is suing the notorious right-wing "Accuracy in Academia, Inc." (AIA), its executive director Laszlo Csorba III and Reed Irvine, founder and Chairman of the Board of AIA. The SL, a Marxist political organization, is seeking damages for defamation over AIA's publication of a false and deadly accusation against the Spartacist League.

An AIA pamphlet authored by Csorba, entitled "Appeasing the Censors, A Special Report on Campus Free Speech Abuses," received newspaper coverage as a supposedly "authoritative" report on leftist student activity. In it the following sentence concerning the SL appeared: "Their publications (*Workers' Vanguard*, *Young Spartacus*, and *The Spartacus* [sic]) urge 'military victory' for the communists in El Salvador, and the killing of police officers." The Spartacist League declares it is a blatant lie that we urge the killing of police, as any reading of our publications would quickly and clearly expose. AIA's attempt to equate our forthright Marxist politics with terrorism is a conscious, deadly smear.

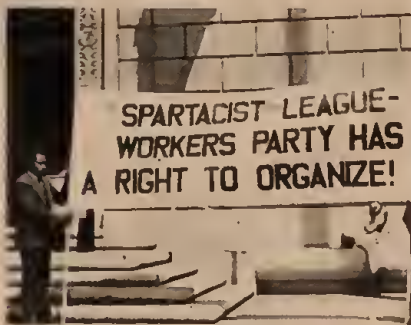
The SL complaint charges: "The false accusation made against the Spartacist League of 'urging... the killing of police officers' is a libel that kills. There are few greater or more deadly false accusations that can be made against Marxists, who are openly in political opposition to the government's policies, than to accuse them of such a criminal and terrorist act. It is an accusation which sets them up to be deemed outlaws of society, people for whom democratic rights have no meaning and no application."

Legal papers were served on Reed Irvine in New York City February 13 as he entered ABC studios to discuss his brainchild, the vile anti-Soviet, anti-communist, anti-American *Amerika* series. The SL complaint, demanding \$200,000 in damages, will be heard in the Supreme Court of the State of New York. Attorneys for the SL action are the noted libel attorney Jonathan W. Lubell and Rachel H. Wolkenstein, Spartacist League general counsel.

AIA's Vicious Libel That Kills

According to the SL complaint: "Accuracy in Academia is a virulently anti-Marxist ultra-conservative organization formed and dedicated to purging Marxist, radical and liberal ideas from the nation's campuses.... AIA is on a campaign for ideological conformity with current governmental policies and the social agenda of the Moral Majority/religious fundamentalists. AIA has targeted for exposure and censorship an

tion and the establishment of a black-centered workers republic in South Africa; for labor/black mobilizations to stop the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis; opposition to the Moral Majority/religious fundamentalist social agenda; and the necessity of a workers revolution in the United States. The Spartacist League's political impact is entirely dependent on the most open and wide dissemination of its views and aims."



Spartacists beat back California attorney general's "terrorist" smear, 1981 (above), FBI witchhunting, 1984.



alleged 10,000 Marxist and 35,000 radical/liberal instructors nationwide who espouse their views in the classroom.... The pamphlet is an extension of AIA's campaign for ideological conformity. The pamphlet contains half-truths, misquotes, misstatements and omissions as well as outright lies...."

The complaint further states: "The Spartacist League is forthright in its exercise of its First Amendment rights. Its political stands, not least its defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism, are well known. In the exercise of its political expression the SL has taken positions such as defense of Cuba and Nicaragua against U.S. imperialism; for smashing apartheid, for workers revolu-

SL counsel Rachel Wolkenstein emphasized: "Spartacist publications speak for themselves; the AIA's statement is a deliberate, blatant falsehood, and I want to stress again, it's truly a 'libel that kills.' The Spartacist League has had considerable success in legal challenges against attempts to brand Marxists as 'terrorists.' In 1984 the SL successfully challenged the FBI's new 'Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines,' winning an agreement from the FBI to retract its long-standing sinister set-up 'definition' of the Spartacist League and substitute a statement defining the SL as what it is: a Marxist political organization. In 1983 it won a retraction from the Moonie *Washing-*

ton Times of their attempted smear of the SL as advocating violence against police. And in 1981 the SL forced then-California attorney general Deukmejian to remove it from a list of so-called 'terrorist' organizations. It is difficult to believe AIA is innocent of these well-publicized cases, especially given links between them and the Moon organization going back to the early '70s."

Spartacist League spokesman Marjorie Stamberg charged: "Those who resort to terror will be found first and foremost in the camp of this dying imperialist system. Brute force, laced with lies, is the only recourse for a system which imposes global wars, starvation and hideous oppression on the world's peoples in its search for profits. The bombing of the black MOVE commune in Philadelphia is hellish testimony to the bloodthirsty terrorism of this capitalist state. As Hitler's minister of Nazi propaganda understood, to create a climate of terror and knee-jerk conformity, unrestrained use of the Big Lie against perceived opponents is also necessary. AIA's task is to push those Big Lies."

AIA and its parent group Accuracy in Media's increasingly vicious and frantic efforts to whip up a witchhunt against the left and liberals reflects the fact that the Reaganites are in big trouble. The SL spokesman noted, "No representative of American foreign policy—from Jeane Kirkpatrick to Al Haig to Weinberger or Shultz—can step onto a major campus without evoking protest. Thus AIA is on the leading edge of an increasingly bonapartist and crazed regime which isn't cutting it with the folks back home." "In attacking us," Stamberg added, "AIA is attacking everybody's rights, and in defending ourselves, we are also defending democratic rights for every campus protester, every political opponent of this reactionary government. We know, though, that what Csorba and Irvine's murderous disinformation represents will not be finally defeated until the system which needs it and breeds it is replaced through a victorious socialist revolution." ■

Support Builds for Geronimo Pratt

OAKLAND—The Strikers Committee of the embattled cannery workers in Watsonville, California has joined the endorsers of the effort to free class-war prisoner Geronimo Pratt. At a weekly meeting of the elected Committee held on February 9, about 100 of the predominantly Hispanic workers, in their 18th month on strike, voted enthusiastically to endorse the February 21 Oakland demonstration demanding "Freedom Now for Geronimo Pratt!" At the conclusion of the vote, workers called out in Spanish, "Everything for the workers' cause!" and "Against this kind of oppression!" Gloria Betancourt, president of the Strikers Committee, also endorsed. Her husband Amador Betancourt was jailed for eight months for defending the picket lines in the bitter Watsonville strike.

The Watsonville Strikers Committee joins Communications Workers of America Local 9410 (San Francisco) and Oakland labor: United Teachers of Oakland, AFT Local 771, the Oakland Education Association, Service Employees Local 616 and the executive board of Machinists Local 739, in backing the Oakland demonstration. Others who have endorsed since the last issue of *Workers Vanguard*



Geronimo Pratt in San Quentin.

carried an initial list include entertainer Gil Scott-Heron, Rev. Benjamin Chavis, Jr., executive director of the Commission for Racial Justice, United Church of Christ; Nelson Johnson, executive committee, New Democratic Movement; Bobby L. Rush, second ward Democratic Party alderman (Chi-

cago); and Howard De Nike, president of the Bay Area chapter of the National Lawyers Guild. Organizers for the PDC and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense, which initiated the demonstration, report an enthusiastic response as word of the demonstration spreads.

On February 6, the Labor Black League sponsored a successful pot luck dinner to raise funds to help defray costs of the demonstration. Between advance ticket sales, donations and a raffle of pro basketball tickets, nearly \$1,700 was collected. Over 100 Pratt supporters attended, including LBL and Spartacist League supporters, PDC sustainers and family and friends new to our efforts who came to get involved in Pratt's defense. Former supporters of the Black Panther Party took leaflets to distribute in the West Oakland housing projects and Berkeley.

Students who weren't even in kindergarten when Pratt went to jail over 16 years ago are among those who have rallied to his cause, particularly at UC Berkeley and San Francisco State where Young Spartacus clubs have been building for the demonstration. Film showings of the moving documentary, *The Murder of Fred Hampton*,

attracted audiences from both campuses. At SF State, members of the Pan-African Students are posting demonstration flyers; after a presentation at an Afro-American studies class at Berkeley, 14 black students volunteered to help build the action. Students are donating funds, distributing flyers and announcing the demonstration in their classes.

Interest has also been generated among the news media. KITS radio aired a one-hour interview with Spartacist spokesman Don Andrews and several other radio shows are scheduled. The *Sun Reporter*, the Bay Area's chief black newspaper, ran a PDC press release with a letter from Pratt in its 21 January edition.

In Oakland, birthplace of the Black Panther Party, Pratt's case strikes a chord among the many who remember the Panthers' courage and determination in the struggle for black liberation. A younger generation is quick to grasp the meaning of Pratt's freedom fight as a symbol for all those who would resist the attacks of the racist rulers and their government. It is this sentiment, among the workers and all the oppressed, that we are seeking to tap in mass protest at the February 21 rally. ■



Chicago Historical Society

White racists stone defenseless black to death.

The Killing Floor— A Review

Chicago 1919:



William Loren Katz Collection

Government troops occupy the Black Belt.

Racism and Union-Busting

Black History Month

In July 1919 Chicago erupted in one of the most violent explosions of racist terror in the history of the United States. Organized and spurred on by white neighborhood gangs—so-called "athletic clubs"—racist mobs rampaged through the streets. Blacks were ambushed as they walked to work, dragged from streetcars, chased through the streets, cornered in alleys. They were shot and stabbed, beaten and clubbed to death. The cops joined in the carnage: black victims of white mobs were arrested and beaten while their attackers went free; seven blacks were gunned down by the racists in blue. Outraged blacks, many of them decorated veterans of World War I, struck back. In many cases this retaliation was against marauding white racists who rode through the South Side Black Belt shooting at random pedestrians. But often, innocent whites were the victims. After five days, 23 blacks and 15 whites were dead. Over 500 people were seriously injured, 342 of them black.

The Chicago race riot came in the midst of a massive postwar upsurge of labor militancy and radicalism. Historian William M. Tuttle, Jr.'s account of the events, *Race Riot* (New York, 1970) is appropriately subtitled, "Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919." The Russian Revolution, then in its second year, inspired proletarian fighters throughout the world. It was the year of the Seattle general strike and the Great Steel Strike. That fall, Seattle dockers refused to handle a shipment of guns destined for the White Guard counterrevolutionary

armies fighting to overthrow the fledgling Soviet workers state. Close to four million workers were on strike. In Tuttle's book the Chicago labor movement is described as "more closely organized, more self-conscious, more advanced in its views...than in any other American city." But however militant, Chicago unions at best ignored the hideous oppression and exploitation of newly industrialized black workers who were segregated into the most menial, backbreaking jobs and increasingly the target of lynch mobs.

Tuttle was a consultant for the powerful and moving public television film

South in 1877, blacks had been the victims of Jim Crow segregation and Ku Klux Klan terror. In the North there was little chance of escaping poverty and destitution. Blacks were barred from jobs in the growing industries—except when they were brought in as strikebreakers. But with the onset of WWI the cheap supply of immigrant labor from Europe was cut off and blacks were actively recruited to industry by labor agents sent to the South.

Between 1916 and 1918 close to half a million blacks moved to the North, over 50,000 of them to Chicago. *The Killing Floor* portrays the optimism of Custer

president Samuel Gompers who wrote in 1905: "If the colored man continues to lend himself to the work of tearing down what the white man has built up, a race hatred far worse than any ever known will result. Caucasian civilization will serve notice that its uplifting process is not to be interfered with in any way."

During World War I, the stockyards were literally the killing floor for labor which was driven at a murderous pace to meet the profiteering meat packers' contract of 1,000 train carloads of meat a day for the government. In 1917 the Stockyards Labor Council (SLC) was founded to unite the AFL unions in the



Jim Taylor

The Killing Floor shows militants Custer and Bremmer (left) in light to unionize black and white stockyard workers.



USOA

The Killing Floor, which is based on the actual participants and documented events of the drive to organize Chicago's then-enormous packinghouse industry. The 1919 race riot directly shattered this organizing drive. As Tuttle points out in *Race Riot*: "It is not coincidental that the summer of 1919 also marked the beginning of the xenophobic and hysterically antiradical 'Red Scare.' Both phenomena were the ugly offspring of some of the same unrest...." Across the country racist terror was the spearhead for reaction down the line: the robber barons were riding high and membership of the overwhelmingly white unions nationally fell to one-fifth the pre-1919 level. Karl Marx's dictum was written in blood and fire: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

The Killing Floor opens with footage of U.S. troops being sent off to join in the imperialist carnage of World War I. It then flashes to the central character, Frank Custer, a black sharecropper from Mississippi preparing to move to Chicago. Custer says to himself: "If it wasn't for the war I probably would have never left the South and come to the 'Promised Land,' that's what we called it." In the four decades since the last Union troops were pulled out of the

and his friend Thomas when they arrive in Chicago and get jobs in the stockyards paying \$2 a day, more than they ever dreamed possible in the South. Later, they are completely taken aback when two white soldiers reflexively step off the sidewalk to go around them. Says Custer, "I was a free man in Chicago. They could get off the streets for me now." But it is not long until Custer is introduced to the racist realities of Chicago's streets and the packinghouse industry. Segregated in the Black Belt ghetto he is surrounded on all sides by discrimination. Other black workers warn Custer of the racist gangs in the all-white neighborhoods he has to walk through to get to the stockyards. On the killing floor he is consigned to mopping up pools of blood.

The stockyard bosses had earlier fanned the flames of white racism by bringing in blacks to break a stockyard strike in 1904. The AFL labor leaders only added fuel to the fire. Lily-white job trusts, AFL craft unions in the stockyards not only did nothing to organize black workers but in most cases actively kept them from joining, either by racist union constitutions or by custom. The racism of the white labor aristocracy was captured by AFL

stockyards in an unprecedented mass organizing campaign. It was initiated by William Z. Foster and led by John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor. Foster, who would go on to join the Communist Party and later become its national chairman, had split from the IWW in favor of his strategy to "bore from within" the AFL. Fitzpatrick, who opposed U.S. entry into the war and called himself a friend of the Russian Revolution, was considered a maverick among AFL officialdom.

The black question confronted the SLC from day one. Blacks comprised over 25 percent of the workforce and in some of the smaller packinghouses were a majority. The union leaders appealed to Gompers for a "solution" to organizing blacks in the stockyards; Gompers "resolved" the problem by telling them to create separate all-black locals! The SLC leadership called for organizing on a "neighborhood" basis, but it amounted to Jim Crow unionism. Local 651, based in the Second Ward, was all black and represented 90 percent of all blacks organized in the yards. As Philip Foner notes in his book *Organized Labor and the Black Worker* (New York, 1974): "Secretary Johnstone of the Stockyards Labor Council apologized to the black



Chicago Historical Society

Blacks used by stockyard bosses to break 1904 strike.

packinghouse workers for the necessity of organizing blacks into separate unions. But the blacks were tired of such explanations, which only confirmed their belief that white unionists would permit racist prejudices to stand in the way even of their own interests."

Jack Johnstone would also go on to become a leader of the Communist Party. But the attitude of even the radical leadership of the SLC toward black oppression reflected the prevailing views of the early socialist movement. As Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs described it: "We have nothing special to offer the Negro...." As James P. Cannon, a former "Wobbly" and CP leader who went on to become the founder of American Trotskyism, pointed out: "the predominant AFL unions, with only a few exceptions, were lily-white job trusts. They also had nothing special to offer the Negroes; nothing at all, in fact" ("The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement," in *The First Ten Years of American Communism*, 1962). It was the impact of the 1917 Russian Revolution, Cannon wrote, thundering "its demand throughout the world for freedom and equality for all national minorities and all races," which brought the struggle for black freedom to the forefront.

Organizing the Killing Floor

The stockyards organizing drive met with rapid-fire success among the unskilled non-English-speaking immigrants—Lithuanians, Poles, Russian Jews. Undoubtedly many were members of the Socialist Party's foreign-language federations, radicalized by the 1917 Russian Revolution. Within six months 20,000 members had been signed up. In *The Killing Floor*, when initially confronted by union organizers, Custer says, "I come up here to make a living. I ain't getting in no white man's fight." Later, however, in one of the most powerful scenes in the movie, Custer's white coworker Bill Bremmer fights to teach him the butcher trade, which was the exclusive domain of white native-born Americans. When a foreman tries to stop Bremmer, the rest of the workers on the floor stand with their arms folded across their chests and refuse to work. The foreman backs down and Custer is won to the union.

Backed by the power of his class brothers on the shopfloor, Custer becomes a skilled worker. Later, in a touching incident, reflecting the power of integrated class struggle to break down racial and national antagonisms in the workforce, Custer's Polish friend Dan gives him a small gift for Christmas. However, while most Northern-born blacks joined the union, only 25 percent of the black workers signed up. And the power of labor united was never brought to bear in struggle against the Big Five meatpacking companies. In 1918 when the industry was running at full blast and unemployment was at its

lowest ebb, a strike of black and white workers could have brought the packers to their knees. But the union leadership shackled the workers to a no-strike arbitration agreement. The SLC did not even win union recognition.

At a union celebration party in *The Killing Floor* Fitzpatrick announces, "The government got this for us in recognition of our work for the boys overseas." Reflecting the labor shortage at the time, government arbitrator Judge Samuel Alschuler granted an eight-hour day and wage increase to all stockyard workers. But by tying the union to the war aims of U.S. imperialism the SLC had dug its own grave. Bremmer bitterly comments to Custer: "All we had to do was strike, then they would have to recognize us. But no, we opened the damn door to the government to come sneaking in.... There will be a showdown some day. It should come now when they need us."

The showdown came in the summer of 1919, and racism was the packers' most effective union-busting weapon. In the first half of the year some 2.6 million U.S. troops were demobilized, intensifying the effects of the postwar recession. Blacks were the first to lose their jobs; then the companies laid off white union men. *The Killing Floor* shows people



Black soldiers, decorated by France for their valor, return from World War I wearing the Croix de Guerre.

scrounging through garbage cans for food. Thousands stand in front of the packinghouses begging for work, among them Custer and other union organizers. The foreman yells "I ain't hiring no union troublemakers!" and Custer is incredulous that "new boys from the South" are the only ones being hired.

In the bar Custer sees his friend Thomas who has come back from the war bearing medals he won for heroism in battle. (Many blacks from Chicago were part of the 8th Illinois, a highly decorated unit the Germans had learned to fear, and the only regiment commanded wholly by blacks for much of the war.) Blacks returning from service in the "great war for democracy" justly expected that they would finally get some "democracy" at home. Instead they were met with lynch mobs and racist riots across the U.S., North and South. Every day Custer and Thomas walk to the stockyard to look for work past graffiti in the white neighborhoods reading "Niggers go home!"

When Custer is finally rehired, racism is at a fever pitch. A black company union appears on the scene warning blacks not to join a "white man's union." In the movie the packers put out a bogus leaflet in the name of the SLC declaring, "we demand an all-white union." In early July 1919, in a last ditch effort to cut through this dangerous surge of racism, the Labor Council organized a mass integrated parade through the Black Belt. The cops intervened at the behest of the packinghouse bosses to force blacks and whites to march separately on the grounds that an integrated march would start a race riot!



B.W. Huebsch, Inc.

Organizers of 1919 packinghouse union drive: John Fitzpatrick (left), William Z. Foster (later a leader of Communist Party).



Chicago black ghetto sealed off by racist terror; troops hand out food provisions.

The two columns met in a playground for a united rally. Here Johnstone and other union organizers appealed for black and white workers to stand together against the stockyard bosses. But it was too little, and too late.

Racist Terror and Union-Busting

On July 27, the day after the Stockyards Labor Council had finally submitted its demands to the packers, a black teenager drowned after being stoned by a white racist in the waters off the segregated 29th Street beach. Chicago exploded in racist terror. For over a week black Chicago was trapped in the South Side ghetto. No one could get out to work, there was no food, garbage piled up on the streets threatening disease of epidemic proportions. Eventually the meatpacking companies set up food distribution centers in the black neighborhood for their employees. In *The Killing Floor*, when Custer gets to the YMCA he is confronted by a black pro-company provocateur distributing the meager food supplies, who taunts, "Where's the union?" The scene ends with black workers whom Custer had organized coming up and handing in their union pins.

When Custer's friend Bremmer comes to his home a week after the racist onslaught had begun, Custer also asks, "Why ain't no one from the union been here?" Good question, to which he receives a lame response. Nevertheless he responds to Bremmer's plea for help in stopping the packers' drive to bust the union by playing the race card, and goes to a union meeting. Homeless Lithuanians and Poles huddle in the stairwells, burned out of their tenements by arsonists the night before. When Custer

goes to shake his friend Dan's hand he is slapped away as Dan yells, "You burnt down our houses!" Custer is completely taken aback. Blacks couldn't even get out of the Black Belt, much less enter the all-white "Back of the Yards" neighborhood where most of the arson occurred. In the smoke and flames that destroyed the homes of these impoverished East Europeans, many of whom were the backbone of the union organizing drive, there was the smell of a company provocation.

Custer makes a powerful appeal: "Can the packers stop this riot? No! The union's got to do it.... I am a colored man but I am a union man!" The union should have been out there long before, ensuring safe passage for black workers through the all-white neighborhoods around the yards. It would have been a simple matter then for integrated union patrols to beat some respect into a few bigoted skulls. In the riots, union defense guards mobilizing the integrated power of the thousands of workers in the packinghouse industry not only could have protected black workers and their families, they would have changed the face of 1919 Chicago...and the country. But the SLC never made the slightest move to aid or defend the black stockyard workers who were trapped in the Black Belt by racist mobs.

Jeered and threatened on his way out of the meeting, a demoralized Custer decides to go back to work in the union-busting mobilization of black workers organized by the packinghouse bosses and led by the militia. In one of the last scenes of the movie, a near-bloodbath between black and white workers outside the stockyards is averted by

continued on page 6

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Black History and the Class Struggle No. 4

Black Soldiers in the Jim Crow Military



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Chicago 1919...

(continued from page 5)

union organizers, who lead the white workers away from the yards. Inside, expressing the degradation and humiliation of the black workers, Custer says: "Look at us. They herded us to the slaughterhouse like cattle. When we get on the killing floor we're going to be exactly what the company wants us to be." Putting on his union pin he says, "Those men and women who just walked away, we need them, and they need us."

It was the failure of the union leadership, among the most militant and radical in the country, to defend the



Athenaeum

A company provocation? Arsonists destroyed homes of East European workers.

rights of the black workers which allowed the packers to defeat the organizing drive with racist terror. After the standoff in front of the yards, SLC leaders called a strike that lasted for four days. David Brodie, who consulted on *The Killing Floor*, wrote that "the underlying issue" was the demand that only union blacks be allowed back to work, and quotes one leader saying the men "have a right to know whether the Negroes returning to work are members in good standing of the unions" (*The Butcher Workmen* [1964]). Yet at this point, black union membership was at its lowest ebb and blacks were least inclined to join. Fitzpatrick commented, "The breach is so broad that it is almost impossible now to cement or bridge it over." It would be two decades before black and white stockyard workers were organized by the Packing House Workers Organizing Committee as part of the CIO organizing drive.

For Revolutionary Integrationism!

The Killing Floor is a stark and bitter portrayal of race and class oppression in this country and the unbreakable link

between them. But it can suggest no alternative to the racism and union-busting that engulfed Chicago in the summer of 1919. Another significant omission in the film is any mention of the 1917 October Revolution which awakened the hopes and aspirations of the working and oppressed masses around the globe. Through the Communist International Lenin sought to impart to the young Communist parties in the West the need to rally the oppressed to the banner of the proletariat. This stood in stark contrast to the social democrats who did nothing to fight racial or colonial oppression, acting as the handmaidens for their "own" imperialist rulers.

At the Comintern's Second Congress in 1920, American Communist John Reed gave a report on the black question in which he spoke of the Chicago race riot. Reed stressed:

"The Communists must not stand aloof from the Negro movement which demands their social and political equality and at the moment, at a time of the rapid growth of racial consciousness, is spreading rapidly among Negroes. The Communists must use this movement to expose the lie of bourgeois equality and emphasize the necessity of the social revolution which will not only liberate all workers from servitude but is also the only way to free the enslaved Negro people."

It would take a decade before the Comintern's exhortation to lead the struggle for black emancipation would be translated into action, in the (by then Stalinized) Communist Party's fight for black rights during the early 1930s, particularly around the racist frame-up of the Scottsboro Boys. Thousands of blacks were recruited, above all in Chicago. But blacks were subsequently betrayed by the CP, the defense of their rights sacrificed on the altar of the popular front in support of Roosevelt's racist Democratic Party and the war aims of U.S. imperialism.

In the mid-'30s, the CIO organizing drive brought thousands of blacks into the new industrial unions, many of them built by CP union organizers. But simple trade unionism and "unite and fight" rhetoric did not overcome the realities of racial oppression. Blacks were still segregated in the lowest paid unskilled work and were still targets for racist terror. As the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party wrote in 1943 when lynch mobs rode against blacks in the streets of Detroit:

"The labor leaders must do more than deplore these attacks upon the Negro people. They must do more than order their members to stay off the streets and appeal for grand jury investigations. They must summon their membership to take determined and organized action against the instigators and organizers of these lynch mobs. The unions of Detroit could have repulsed this threat to their very existence as they repulsed General Motors in 1937 and Ford in 1941. Detroit would be far different today and the native fascists would be cowering in their holes, demoralized instead of triumphant, had the union leaders called out the veteran flying squadrons to defend the Negro people."

Only the Trotskyists of the Spartacist League can claim the Leninist banner of multiracial revolutionary struggle to

IF WE MUST DIE

By Claude McKay
(1919)

If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed lot.
If we must die, Oh let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!

Oh, kinsmen! we must meet the common foe!
Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one death-blow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

win emancipation for all the exploited and oppressed.

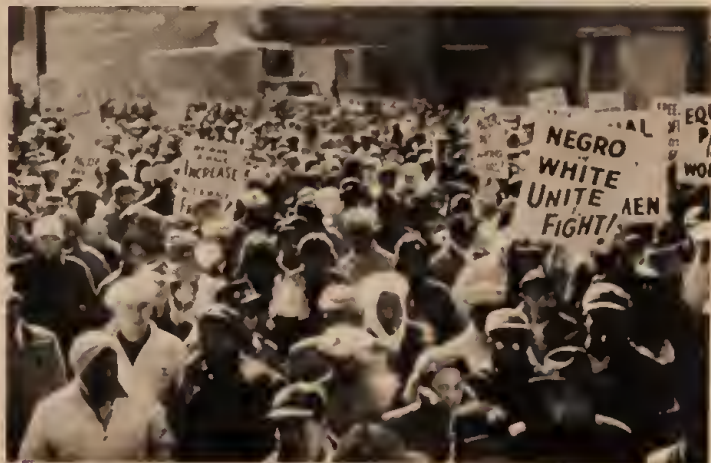
Chicago: Segregation City USA

Almost 70 years later, Chicago remains one of the most segregated cities in the United States and blacks on the South Side are still in danger if they cross Western Avenue. Smelling the opportunity for race war in the explosive situation of black mayor Harold Washington seeking to govern "Segregation City USA," the KKK has made Chicago the staging ground for lynch mob terror. Last summer, while black and Hispanic homes were firebombed, a Klan rally in Marquette Park egged on a crowd of 3,000 white racist punks. Although itself the target of the fascist mobilizations, the Harold Washington administration has no intention of lifting a finger against the marauding racist scum. Indeed it was Washington's cops and courts who protected the fascists while beating, arresting and trying to legally lynch protesters who

fascist threat and make the streets of Chicago safe for all working people. What is desperately needed is a communist vanguard party that can draw the lessons of 1919 and carry forward the revolutionary heritage of the Russian Bolsheviks, to lead labor and the ghetto masses in the struggle for socialist revolution.

Then and now, racism and anti-communism go hand in hand. In 1919, from Mississippi to Washington, D.C. to Chicago blacks were targeted by lynch mobs and race riots. In the early 1920s, thousands of leftists were rounded up, jailed or expelled from the country in the Palmer Raids aimed at smashing the postwar proletarian upsurge.

Today in the supercharged climate of Cold War II, war on blacks, reds and labor is being brought home once again and with a vengeance. The struggle for black freedom is integrally linked to the struggle for proletarian revolution against racist American capitalism. In the introduction to our *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (revised), "What Strategy for



CIO

It took two decades for black and white workers to again unite against packinghouse bosses in the CIO organizing drive of late 1930s.

courageously sought to stop the KKK killers.

The way to defeat the racist terrorists in white sheets and in blue uniforms is through mobilizing the integrated power of Chicago labor. Unlike in 1919, when blacks had just established their presence in industry, today they make up over 40 percent of Chicago's population and an even greater proportion of the organized working class. In August 1985 hundreds of Chicago transit workers gave a show of this power in an integrated mobilization outside police headquarters which stopped the racist frame-up of a black bus driver charged with manslaughter in an unavoidable traffic accident. A decade earlier, integrated union defense guards from UAW Local 6 (International Harvester) set up 24-hour integrated patrols to protect the home of a black union brother in a Chicago suburb after the house was repeatedly firebombed and stoned by nightriding racists.

Powerful and integrated working-class action, championing the rights of every oppressed and exploited section of the population, can crush the growing

Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism, the Spartacist League answers the bitter message of *The Killing Floor* with the program of revolutionary integrationism:

"...wage slavery has placed in the hands of black workers the objective conditions for successful revolt. But this revolt will be successful only if it takes as its target the system of class exploitation, the common enemy of black and white workers. The struggle to win black activists to a proletarian perspective is intimately linked to the fight for a new, multiracial class-struggle leadership of organized labor which can transform the trade unions into a key weapon in the battle against racial oppression. Such a leadership must break the grip of the Democratic Party upon both organized labor and the black masses through the fight for working-class political independence. As black workers, the most combative element within the U.S. working class, are won to the cause and party of proletarian revolution, they will be in the front ranks of this class-struggle leadership. And it will be these black proletarian fighters who will write the finest pages of 'black history'—the struggle to smash racist, imperialist America and open the road to real freedom for all mankind."

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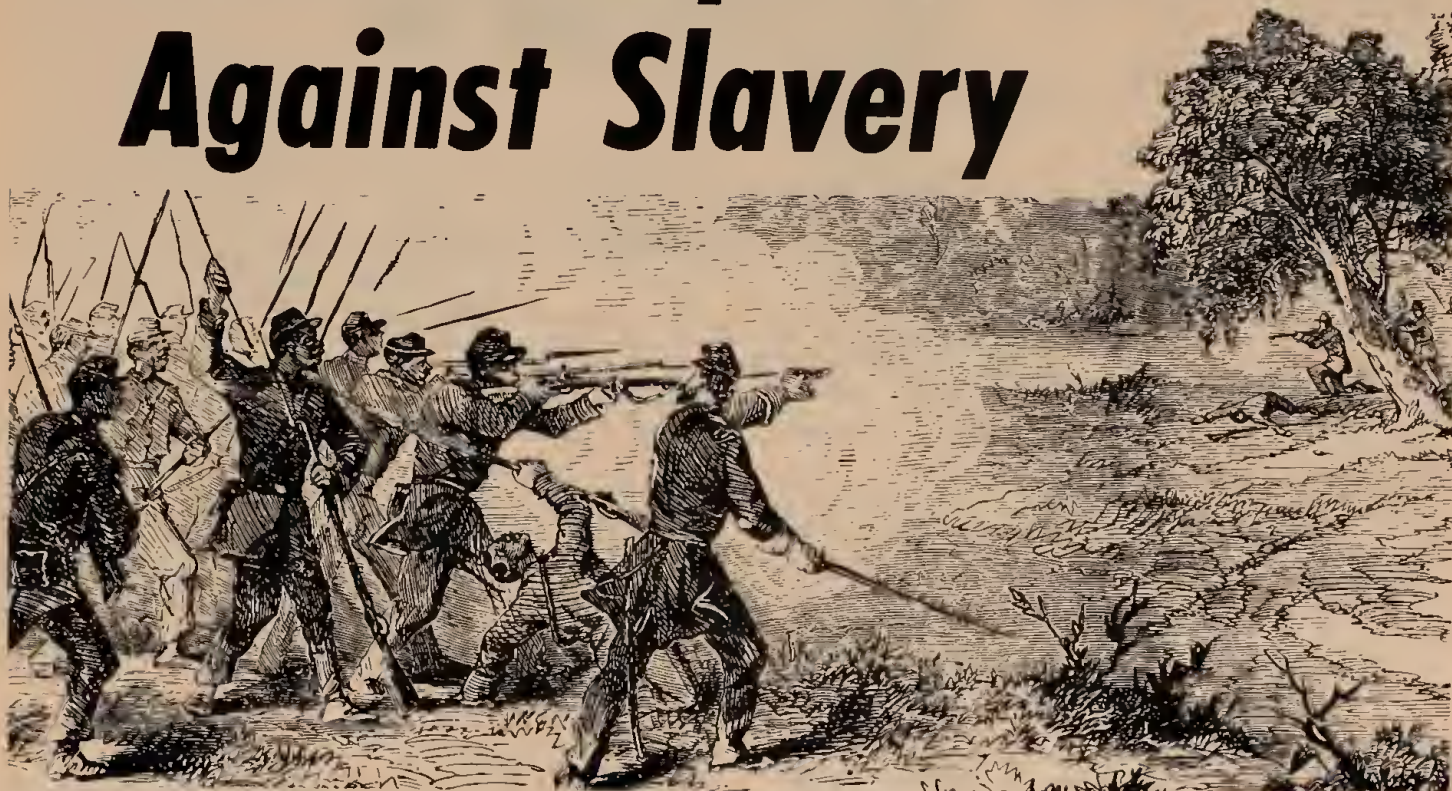
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Young Spartacus

Colonel Higginson and the First South Carolina Volunteers

Black Troops in Battle Against Slavery



Freed slaves in First South Carolina Volunteers fight Confederacy near Doboy River, Georgia.

Culver Pictures

"The question of slavery is a stern and practical one. Give us the power and we can make a new Constitution... how is that power to be obtained? By politics? Never. By revolution, and that alone." Those words were spoken by Thomas Wentworth Higginson in 1857, and by 1862 Higginson took a commanding role in that revolution as the colonel of the first black regiment to fight in the Civil War. For Black History Month, *Young Spartacus* is proud to reprint (with our commentary in italics) excerpts from Higginson's account of his service with the First South Carolina Volunteers, *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1984).

Higginson was an abolitionist, an agitator for women's rights and school desegregation, and in the last years of his life an anti-imperialist opponent of U.S. occupation of the Philippines. He was an ardent supporter of John Brown through both the fight for "Bleeding Kansas" and the raid on Harpers Ferry. When others of Brown's supporters were diving for cover during the hysterical witchhunt following the raid, Higginson endeavored to break Brown out of the Charlestown, Virginia jail where he awaited hanging. When Brown refused to condone a rescue attempt, Higginson went to North Elba, New York to bring Brown's wife down to see him.

In 1862 Higginson was exactly where old John Brown had always wanted to be—at the head of a black regiment wiping the scourge of slavery from the face of the land. The vacillating and

hesitant Northern bourgeoisie had refused to use black troops. In fact, when Higginson was called to lead the First South Carolina Volunteers—all former slaves led by white officers—he wrote, "Had an invitation reached me to take command of a regiment of Kalmuck Tartars, it could hardly have been more unexpected." But the war was going badly for the North, and it was finally recognized that if the Civil War was going to be won, slavery would have to be abolished and, as Frederick Douglass said, the "Black Phalanx" unleashed.

The slave system had created its own gravediggers, with four million slaves in the South. The First South Carolina

was the Black Spartacus, and their mighty battle cries for liberation sent shock waves throughout "The Secesh" (the Confederacy). They were the first black regiment, but 200,000 of their black comrades followed in their footsteps before the slaveholders' rebellion was smashed in 1865. In Higginson's words, "We had touched the pivot of the war... Till the blacks were armed, there was no guaranty of their freedom. It was their demeanor under arms that shamed the nation into recognizing them as men."

* * *

After two months of drill and training on the South Carolina Sea Islands, the

First South Carolina Volunteers were ready and eager for battle. In January 1863, the regiment proved its mettle under fire as they traveled up the St. Mary's river in search of lumber and recruits. These black soldiers, bearing arms and Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, had a magnetic pull on their brothers in bondage. They had an equal if inverse impact on the slaveowners who recoiled in shock and horror when confronted with their escaped "property" in Union Army uniforms.

It was after midnight when we set off upon our excursion. I had about a hundred men, marching by the flank.

continued on page 8



Culver Pictures

Troops drilling in Beaufort, S.C., headquarters of Department of the South (left); Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, 1862 (right).



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Black Troops...

(continued from page 7)

with a small advanced guard, and also a few flankers, where the ground permitted.... Corporal Sutton marched near me, with his captured negro guide, whose first fear and sullenness had yielded to the magic news of the President's Proclamation, then just issued, of which [Massachusetts] Governor Andrew had sent me a large printed supply;—we seldom found men who could read it, but they all seemed to feel more secure when they held it in their hands. We marched on through the woods, with no sound but the peeping of the frogs in a neighboring marsh, and the occasional yelping of a dog, as we passed the hut of some "cracker." This yelping always made Corporal Sutton uneasy; dogs are the detective officers of Slavery's police....

I feared no attack during our ascent,—that danger was for our return; but I feared the intricate navigation of the river, though I did not fully know, till the actual experience, how dangerous it was.... No piloting less skillful than that of Corporal Sutton and his mate, James Bezzard, could have carried us through...at last we dropped anchor before the little town of Woodstock, after moonset and an hour before daybreak, just as I had planned, and so quietly that scarcely a dog barked, and not a soul in the town, as we afterwards found, knew of our arrival.... I took a survey of the premises. The chief house, a pretty one with picturesque outbuildings, was that of Mrs. A., who owned the mills and lumber-wharves adjoining. The wealth of these wharves had not been exaggerated....

When the morning was a little advanced, I called on Mrs. A., who received me in quite a stately way at her own door with "To what am I indebted for the honor of this visit, Sir?"... I wished to present my credentials; so,



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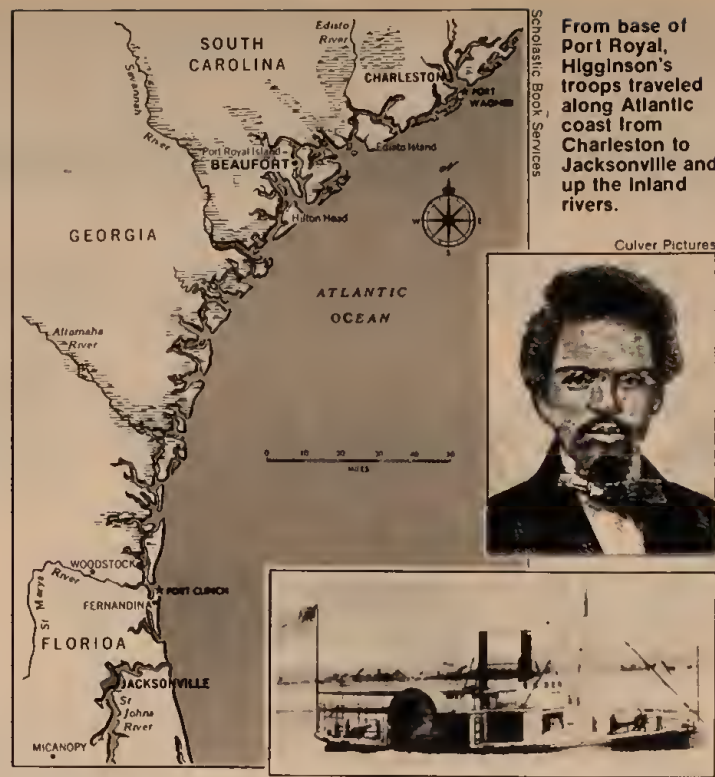
John Brown, Frederick Douglass: heroes of anti-slavery struggle.

calling up my companion, I said that I believed she had been previously acquainted with Corporal Robert Sutton? I never saw a finer bit of unutterable indignation than came over the face of my hostess, as she slowly recognized him. She drew herself up, and dropped out the monosyllables of her answer as if they were so many drops of nitric acid. "Ah," quoth my lady, "we called him Bob!"

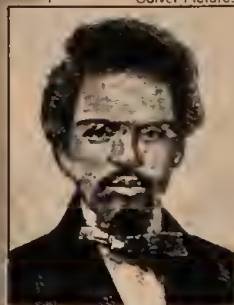
It was a group for a painter. The whole drama of the war seemed to

words where substantial realities in question, he simply turned from the lady, touched his hat to me, and asked if I would wish to see the slave-jail, as he had the keys in his possession.

In the spring of 1863, the First South Carolina Volunteers took Jacksonville, Florida, establishing the only mainland Union post in the Department of the South. But the posting of Higginson's regiment still hung in the balance of shifting national policy, which swung from daring offensives against the slavocracy to attempts at reconciliation. Nothing disappointed the First South Carolina more than the orders to evacuate Jacksonville. Here for the first time, black and white union troops fought side by side, black NCOs led white soldiers, and ex-slaves were the victorious occupation force in the town of their former masters. Recalled to picket duty at Port Royal Ferry, and later at Camp Shaw (named in honor of the colonel of the Massachusetts Fifty-Fourth regiment who had been recently killed in battle and buried along with his fallen black troops at Fort Wagner), Higginson recounts two stories showing the determination of black troops to win this war.



From base of Port Royal, Higginson's troops traveled along Atlantic coast from Charleston to Jacksonville and up the inland rivers.



Culver Pictures



Dorothy Sterling

Robert Smalls pirated the Confederate gunboat *Planter* in daring escape from slavery, bringing the ship laden with guns and cannon to the Union fleet. The *Planter* was used to transport Higginson's men to their first mission, a foray up the St. Mary's River in January 1863. Smalls was later promoted to captain of the ship. After the war he served as a South Carolina lawmaker, and was elected to Congress in 1875. He was denied his seat in 1886, along with other black Congressmen, as part of the betrayal and defeat of Reconstruction.

reverse itself in an instant, and my tall, well-dressed, imposing philosophic Corporal dropped down the immeasurable depth into a mere plantation "Bob" again. So at least in my imagination; not to that person himself. Too essentially dignified in his nature to be moved by

The one military performance at the picket station of which my men were utterly intolerant was an occasional flag of truce, for which this was the appointed locality. These farces, for which it was our duty to furnish the stock actors, always struck them as being utterly despicable, and unworthy the serious business of war.... It goaded their souls to see the young officers from the two opposing armies salute each other courteously, and interchange cigars. They despised the object of such negotiations, which was usually to send over to the enemy some family of Rebel women who had made themselves quite intolerable on our side, but were not above collecting a subscription among the Union officers, before departure, to replenish their wardrobes. The men never showed disrespect to these women by word or deed, but they hated them from the bottom of their souls. Besides, there was a grievance behind all this. The Rebel order remained unrevoked which consigned the new colored troops and their officers to a felon's death, if captured; and we all felt that we fought with ropes round our necks. "Dere's no flags ob truce for us," the men would contemptuously say, "When de Secesh fight de *Fus' Souf*" (First South Carolina), "he fight in earnest."

At Camp Shaw:

The men had that year a Christmas present which they enjoyed to the utmost,—furnishing the detail, every

other day, for provost-guard duty in Beaufort. It was the only military service which they had ever shared within the town, and it moreover gave a sense of self-respect to be keeping the peace of their own streets....

Then, when once posted, they glorified their office, you may be sure. Discipline had grown rather free-and-easy in the town about that time, and it is said that the guard-house never was so full within human memory as after their first tour of duty. I remember hearing that one young reprobate, son of a leading Northern philanthropist in those parts, was much aggrieved at being taken to the lock-up merely because he was found drunk in the streets. "Why," said he, "the white corporals always showed me the way home."...

One of the sergeants of the guard, on one of these occasions, made to one who questioned his authority an answer that could hardly have been improved. The questioner had just been arrested for some offence.

"Know what dat mean?" said the indignant sergeant, pointing to the chevrons on his own sleeve. "Dat mean *Guv'ment*." Volumes could not have said more, and the victim collapsed. The thing soon settled itself, and nobody remembered to notice whether the face beside the musket of a sentinel were white or black. It meant Government, all the same.

Higginson not only led his troops in battle against the slave system, he also fought the War Department and Congress to wrest equal pay from the government for black soldiers. Finally in April 1864, the War Department ruled that black soldiers would receive equal pay—provided they were free men by 19 April 1861. Higginson was outraged by this decision which denied the hundreds of black soldiers who escaped slavery after April 19 their due. Higginson petitioned Congress to redress this inequality and fired off dozens of letters to Northern newspapers, excerpts from which we reprint below.

To the Editor of the New York Tribune, 22 January 1864:

I have not seen even a proposition in Congress to pay the colored soldiers, from date of enlistment, the same pay with white soldiers; and yet anything short of that is an unequivocal breach of contract, so far as this regiment is concerned.

Meanwhile the land sales are beginning, and there is danger of every foot of land being sold from beneath my soldiers' feet, because they have not the petty sum which Government first promised, and then refused to pay.

To the Editors of the Evening Post, 10 July 1864:

On the 2d of July, at James Island, S. C., a battery was taken by three regiments, under the following circumstances:

The regiments were the One Hundred and Third New York (white), the Thirty-Third United States (formerly First South Carolina Volunteers), and the Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts, the two last



Milton Melizer

Corporal Robert Sutton navigated the *John Adams* along treacherous waterways, facing Confederate sharpshooters. He brought the regiment to Woodstock, Georgia, where he had formerly been enslaved.

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being colored. They marched at one A. M., by the flank, in the above order, hoping to surprise the battery. As usual the rebels were prepared for them, and opened upon them as they were deep in one of those almost impassable Southern marshes. The One Hundred and Third New York, which had previously been in twenty battles, was thrown into confusion; the Thirty-Third United States did better, being behind; the Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts being in the rear, did better still. All three formed in line, when Colonel Hartwell, commanding the brigade, gave the order to retreat. The officer commanding the Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts, either misunderstanding the order, or hearing it countermanded, ordered his regiment to charge. This order was at once repeated by Major Trowbridge, commanding the Thirty-Third United States, and by the commander of the One Hundred and Third New York, so that the three regiments reached the fort in reversed order. The color-bearers of the Thirty-Third United States and of the Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts had a race to be

first in, the latter winning. The One Hundred and Third New York entered the battery immediately after.

These colored regiments are two of the five which were enlisted in South Carolina and Massachusetts, under the written pledge of the War Department that they should have the same pay and allowances as white soldiers. That pledge has been deliberately broken by the War Department, or by Congress, or by both, except as to the short period, since last New-Year's Day. Every one of those killed in this action from these two colored regiments—under a fire before which the veterans of twenty battles recoiled—died defrauded by the Government of nearly one half his petty pay.

To the Editor of the New York Tribune, 12 August 1864:

In other words, a freedman (since April 19, 1861) has no rights which a white man is bound to respect. He is incapable of making a contract.... Any employer, following the example of the United States Government, may make with him a written agreement, receive



Black regiment battles Confederate dogs of war, the bloodhounds sent to search and attack escaped slaves.



Radical members of the South Carolina legislature during Reconstruction. First South Carolina sergeants Prince Rivers and Henry Hayne became legislators, along with Planter captain Robert Smalls.

All honor to the First South Carolina Volunteers!

No doubt there were reasons why this particular war was an especially favorable test of the colored soldiers. They had more to fight for than the whites. Besides the flag and the Union, they had home and wife and child. They fought with ropes round their necks, and when orders were issued that the officers of colored troops should be put to death on capture, they took a grim satisfaction. It helped their *esprit de corps* immensely. With us, at least, there was to be no play-soldier. Though they had begun with a slight feeling of inferiority to the white troops, this compliment substituted a peculiar sense of self-respect. And even when the new colored regiments began to arrive from the North my men still pointed out this difference,—that in case of ultimate defeat, the Northern troops, black or white, would go home,

while the First South Carolina must fight it out or be re-enslaved. This was one thing that made the St. John's River so attractive to them and even to me;—it was so much nearer the everglades. I used seriously to ponder, during the darker periods of the war, whether I might not end my days as an outlaw,—a leader of Maroons.... ["Maroons" were bands of runaway slaves who set up "liberated zones" in the rugged areas of the Caribbean islands, jungles of Brazil, and prior to the Seminole War of 1818, the Everglades of Florida.]

The operations on the South Atlantic coast, which long seemed a merely subordinate and incidental part of the great contest, proved to be one of the final pivots on which it turned. All now admit that the fate of the Confederacy was decided by Sherman's march to the sea. Port Royal was the objective point to which he marched, and he found the Department of the South, when he reached it, held almost exclusively by colored troops. Next to the merit of those who made the march was that of those who held open the door. That service will always remain among the laurels of the black regiments. ■

Finish the Civil War!

Letter

Ann Arbor
24 October 1986

Dear Workers Vanguard,

In the *Young Spartacus* article in *WV* #413 [10 October 1986], "We're Looking for a Few Good Communists!", there were two things that I wasn't sure about. About half way through the article, in talking about the outcome of the Civil War, the article states, "But its promise of black equality was not fulfilled...and the hopes of black Americans were crushed in the terror and moral cowardice of the political counterrevolution which gutted...Radical Reconstruction. Out of this the racist Ku Klux Klan was reborn."

Whose moral cowardice? If it was in the interests of the Northern capitalists to make a deal with their Southern brethren, then it was not moral cowardice they were following, but their material interests. It seems to me that moral cowardice describes capitulating around something you believe in. Did the moral cowardice refer to the Radical Republicans? But didn't they go down fighting (my history is weak here)? If the Northern capitalists had wanted to they could have crushed the terror, as they had crushed the Confederacy. But it was not moral cowardice that made them

quail before it—rather their material interests that allowed them to tolerate it. And allowed the terror to flourish. Also, wasn't the Ku Klux Klan born at this time rather than reborn at this time?

Yours,
Gordy W.

Young Spartacus replies: Gordy's point on the "moral cowardice" of Northern capital is well taken. Although they may have been opposed to property in human flesh, the robber barons of the late 19th century allied

themselves with Southern landholders in defense of private property in the means of production. The capitalist reaction flowed from the inherent inability of a system based on private ownership of the factories, mines and mills to eliminate scarcity, the economic source of social inequality. The Northern capitalists turned their backs on the blacks after it had used them to fight for the Union.

Students today are rarely taught about the pivotal role played by armed ex-slaves in the Civil War, and are instructed that John Brown, the

martyr of Harpers Ferry, was an "insane mass murderer" or at best a "religious nut." He was in fact among the first to see that to end slavery it would be necessary "to purge this land with blood," as the Civil War showed. The success of the counterrevolution following Reconstruction produced wide acceptance of the white supremacist view of the revolutionary wing of the abolitionist movement. These omissions and distortions of the past serve a purpose for today's rulers—to make the injustices of the present seem more acceptable.

The Ku Klux Klan was a fraternal order of ex-Confederate officers and racist thugs at its founding in 1866. These race-terrorists had their origins in the slave patrols of the antebellum South. They existed throughout Reconstruction, lynching, robbing, raping and murdering blacks and their white Republican allies. The subject of Radical Republican resistance to the reimposition of overt racist terror would be a very valuable subject for future *YSp* pages.

It was the fact that the Northern ruling class could not truly "finish the Civil War" by fulfilling the promise of equality for the ex-slaves that led to both the rise of the Klan and the defeat of Reconstruction. The removal of Union troops in the Compromise of 1877 represented a surrender to Klan terror and permitted the malignant proliferation of the lynchers and cross-burners not only throughout the South but nationwide. Only a third American revolution, a proletarian revolution which abolishes private property, will remove the social roots of racial oppression.

Thomas Nast cartoon depicts blacks' lot as capitalists sell out radical Reconstruction: KKK terror, lynchings, Jim Crow segregation.



Divestment Liberals Protest Black South African Music

To the Editor:

8 February 1987

About a year ago, an American musician, Paul Simon, put together a collection of songs he recorded with direct assistance of some of the popular artists in South Africa. And early in January 1987, the *Washington Post* reported that during his tour on campuses for opinions on his album, *Graceland*, Simon met with open criticism from Howard University students for defying the UN ban on performing in South Africa by recording the album "using" South African musicians and singers.

Simon may be guilty of not making a strong political statement against the system of apartheid ("apart-hate") that exists in his colleagues' country in any of his recordings. But he certainly is not at fault in exposing America and the rest of the world to a part of South Africa that many have not seen or heard of. As a black South African, I surely hope that in the midst of this, Paul Simon will continue his work with artists all over the world, especially South Africans.

The making of *Graceland* made possible the remarkable reunion of world-renowned South African musicians Miriam Makeba and Hugh Masekela. These two exiled South Africans have teamed up with Simon and the co-creators of his album. During their final preparations to embark on what is to be one of the most memorable tours of Europe and the U.S. which was scheduled to start on February 1, Simon, Makeba, Masekela, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Stimela and others faced threats of "boycott action against the tour" from the Anti-Apartheid Movement (European version), and the same can be expected from their counterparts in this country.

It is absolutely thoughtless of this "anti-apartheid" movement to target as an object for criticism the coming together of these talented individuals and groups. I find it greatly ironic for these people to have ill feelings especially toward Makeba and Masekela, who for greater parts of their lives have worked for the cause of liberation in their country. Who are these people to tell us what is worthy of boycott?

Since the imposition of the UN

Howard University

cultural boycott of South Africa, the oppressed South African masses have not moved an inch toward their liberation. Instead they are locked out of the world (or is it that they are locked in their own isolated, tiny world?). The UN is not determined to assist the downtrodden to gain their liberation. This is proved by their policies toward South Africa which are contrary to their stated intention. Cultural boycotts are not a

ing this most absurd action of the liberal- and nationalist-led anti-apartheid "movement." Pushing the no-win divestment "strategy" to new heights of ridiculousness, these fake-leftists echo and reinforce the segregation imposed on black South Africans by the apartheid butchers.

Paul Simon finally got the United Nations (a gang of imperialist robbers and their victims) off his back by



Above: Paul Simon with South African musicians of Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Left: Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba.

The Guardian (London)

strategy to bring down apartheid. The government must be faced and toppled.

At present, South Africa is in the grip of a massive political upheaval. To break free from the exploitive forces, we need a socialist revolution led by our potentially powerful workers.

Power to all workers of the world! There's a battle to be won!

Basebetsi Tsohang, Matla ke a Rona!
(Workers Rise, All Power Is Ours!)

Danny

Young Spartacus thanks Danny for his letter and joins him in condemn-

incomparable with the South African rate of about \$12.

On February 5, Spartacist spokesman Marjorie Stamberg took the "bull" by the horns at a Spartacist forum at Howard University when she castigated "cultural boycotts":

"Last night somebody brought to my attention an article in the London *Guardian*. It says that Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba, two black South African musicians who have spent their entire lives in exile working for the cause of black freedom in South Africa—this article says that their concert with Paul Simon may now be picketed by the anti-apartheid groups in London. Hugh Masekela is really enraged about this also. He said Nelson Mandela used to go to his concerts in Johannesburg when he was raising money for the ANC, and now he has the spectre of being picketed for the 'crime' of generating and supporting the South African black cause throughout Europe and throughout America. His song, by the way, which may likely be picketed, is an anthem to Nelson Mandela. This just shows the insane, and at the same time logical, conclusion of the politics of nationalism, as opposed to internationalism, and of the liberal divestment and sanctions movement. We say: not divestment, but expropriation by a revolutionary workers government. To the toilers belong the fruits of their labor.

"To take it from the other side, why is it not okay for Paul Simon to make an album in South Africa, but it is okay to play and make albums in the United States? The American imperialists are the ones who are responsible for the My Lai massacre. The American imperialists are the ones who turned South Vietnam into a moonscape; that dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The American ruling class exterminated the people who were here before they came. It was the American imperialists who killed millions of people during the period of slavery and the slave trade. And yet these are the people—Reagan and Koch—that the divestment movement calls on to pressure the South African apartheid rulers into cleaning up their act. So when we say, 'the main enemy is at home,' that is the bitter truth." ■

Spartacist Events

Spartacus Youth Club
Black History Month Forum

From Howard Beach to Marquette Park—
Racist Terror in Reagan's America

For Labor/Black Defense to Stop Racist Attacks!

Speaker: Bernard Vance
SL Central Committee

Saturday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.
Hyde Park Hilton
4900 South Lake Shore Drive
Michigan Room

For more information: (312) 663-0715

CHICAGO

Spartacus Youth Club
Class Series

Trotskyism: Revolutionary Marxism Today

(Exco Course)

Tuesday, February 24, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 12, 7:30 p.m.

Wilder Hall, Room 112
Oberlin College

For more information: (216) 775-5858

OBERLIN

Spartacist Class Series

Revolutionary Marxism and the Fight for Black Liberation

Alternate Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.

Next classes: February 25, March 11

Lamont Library, Room 605
Harvard University

For more information: (617) 492-3928

BOSTON

Spartacus Youth Club
Class Series

The Fight for Socialism

Alternate Saturdays, 2:00 p.m.

Next classes: Feb. 28, Mar. 7, 28

See "Today in the Union" for room
University of Wisconsin

For more information: (608) 257-8625

MADISON

Spartacist Class Series

The Fight for Socialism

Alternate Saturdays, 5:00 p.m.

Next classes: Feb. 21, Mar. 7, 21

Spartacist Public Office
41 Warren Street

For more information: (212) 267-1025

NEW YORK

Spartacist Class Series

Black History and the Class Struggle

Alternate Saturdays, 1:00 p.m.

Next classes: February 28, March 14

Blackburn Center, Room 142

Howard University

For more information: (202) 636-3537

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thatcher's Gestapo Raid on BBC

LONDON—To each imperialist bourgeoisie its own crisis. Reagan's Contragate has the U.S. ruling class worried that he's lost his grip altogether. Meanwhile in Britain, Reagan's ally Margaret Thatcher has gone berserk over the revelations made by liberal journalist Duncan Campbell of a super-secret government "spy-in-the-sky" satellite, dubbed the Zircon project, which had been kept hidden even from the all-too-pliable MPs (members of Parliament). Enraged by the exposure, the Tory prime minister has unleashed the British version of the FBI, the Special Branch, to launch Gestapo-like raids on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), that august voice of the British ruling class, and the Labourite *New Statesman* magazine. A spokesman for the National Council for Civil Liberties described the raid on *New Statesman* offices as "the first of its kind on a national paper since the first world war" (*Guardian*, 9 February), while police occupation of BBC offices and seizure of tapes was virtually without precedent.

Thatcher's tantrum was precipitated by a scheduled BBC series on the "Secret Society," in one segment of which Campbell was to reveal the existence of the Zircon spy satellite, which is being built at a cost of £500 million (about \$700 million). Research was begun on the BBC series last June; in July Campbell even interviewed former Defence Permanent Under-Secretary Frank Cooper about the Zircon project. The government must have known all about the filming but made no attempt to stop it until the last minute. On January 15 BBC Director-General Alasdair Milne (since forced out) banned the broadcast after meeting with the head of Britain's communications spy agency, the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ). But Campbell had also planned to publish an article on the affair in the *New Statesman* (23 January) and as the government fumbled through legal thickets to issue the necessary injunctions the magazine managed to publish the article.

Thatcher took revenge by unleashing the Special Branch to spend over three days ransacking the *New Statesman* offices and raiding the home of Duncan Campbell (and his co-authors Patrick Forbes and Jolyon Jenkins). During the raid, Campbell's phone was cut. Thatcher even went so far as to ban MPs from viewing the film in the House of Commons. Then on January 31, Special Branch officers bolted into BBC offices in Glasgow, Scotland, armed with a warrant giving them the power "if necessary to use force for making such entry whether by breaking open doors or otherwise, and to search the said premises, and if necessary every person found therein." In the end, they carted off three vanloads of material relating to the BBC "Secret Society" series—including the banned segment.

The Secret That Never Was

From the beginning, it was ludicrous to believe there was any secret here. As Campbell noted in his *Statesman* exposé, what little cover the Zircon project had—the satellite was to be disguised as another one of those Skynet NATO "communications" satellites—was blown by one of the manufacturers, British Aerospace, who bragged in a 1985 press release that "The new satellite is due to be launched in 1988 and be positioned 53°E." Campbell noted with emphasis: "But 53 degrees east is the longitude of the central Soviet Union, not Britain, the other European NATO member coun-

tries or the United States." The Ministry of Defence tried to recover from the flub by applying whiteout to the "53°E" part in a subsequent release, but even the most thickheaded KGB agent would have figured it out by then: the Brits were planning to launch a spy satellite over the Soviet Union, to listen in on all kinds of electronic communications.

Pirated videos of the banned BBC program on Zircon have been playing to

their information. This was particularly so after the 1982 discovery of a spy within GCHQ who had been leaking secrets to Moscow for more than a decade. So British intelligence decided that they needed their very own spy satellite, to be one of the big boys.

As for keeping secrets, nobody has taken the British seriously on this score ever since the top British counter-espionage elite led by Kim Philby turned

"Security" scare: Special Branch seizes BBC papers and tapes.



packed audiences throughout Scotland, Wales and England. Perhaps the only people who haven't been able to see it are the MPs, barred by a goon squad from the Sergeant at Arms' staff at Westminster on January 22. (Even some of those MPs went off to a private viewing at nearby Transport House.) By now everybody interested has read Duncan Campbell's article, so the cat's well out of the bag. Besides, you've got to be pretty gullible as well to think that once the satellite was launched and positioned over Soviet territory there'd be any "secret" to hide from Moscow. But then, maybe that's not who they were trying to hide it from.

The American Connection

The idea that this decrepit ruling class which has sent Britain spiraling downward toward Third World poverty could develop any serious high-tech "secrets," let alone keep them, is cause for rolling on the floor in laughter. They just gave up trying to develop a workable AWACS surveillance plane (the Nimrod) and decided to purchase the already deployed American plane. Indeed the whole Zircon project is a product of nationalist pique at having become a junior partner of U.S. imperialism. The dependency rankled British imperial pride during the Falklands/Malvinas war, when Thatcher's armed forces needed U.S. satellite intelligence data and the Reagan administration was trying not to come down completely on Britain's side against Argentina. With the Zircon satellite, London would have a certain independence. A former British defence chief told Campbell it was "a matter of 'macho politics'—of keeping up with the Americans."

The *New Statesman* exposé centered on the fact that Zircon violated the so-called Chevaline agreement of 1982 in which Parliament was to be informed of major defence projects—currently those costing £250 million or more. But, from NATO commitments of troops and weapons to Zircon, the British rulers jealously guard their monopoly of secrecy on military matters, and the American connection strikes a raw nerve. While under the 1947 UK-USA agreement the vast majority of information gathered by U.S. spy satellites is shared with Britain, the Americans have reportedly become more selective with

out to be Soviet moles going back to before World War II. In 1979, long after Philby and his colleagues had taken up residence in Moscow, a "fourth man" in the Philby network was discovered, and even today British intelligence circles are arguing over the possibility of a "fifth man." Thatcher's arrogant edict banning unions at GCHQ was a feeble attempt, probably at the behest of her American masters, to restore long-lost imperial discipline. There's more than a whiff of bonapartism in this game. Thatcher & Co. aren't concerned about who knows of Zircon, but about enforcing their "right" to secrecy...and to spend millions spying on Russia while social misery is on the increase according to every leaked statistic.

Labour Traitors

The bourgeois press has re-raised the hoary debate about the Official Secrets Act and "responsible" politicians of all sorts call for more effective secrecy, for limited and necessary secrecy. The inevitable hunt for "moles" and dark hints about the "enemy within" come from Thatcher. But the most putrid, backstabbing response came from Neil Kinnock, leader of the "opposition" Labour Party. When Thatcher sought an emergency motion in Parliament to ban the showing of the BBC tape to MPs, she needed approval from Labour, and Kinnock gave it! His office issued a disgusting statement which read in part: "if the government says that this

is a serious matter of national security I must take their word for it until such time as that claim is substantiated or otherwise" (*New Statesman*, 30 January). In the House of Commons Kinnock attacked Thatcher for failing to stop the leaks!

Taken together with Kinnock's sabotage of the valiant British miners strike in 1985, this latest episode once again shows that the Labour misleader is no less an enemy of the working class than the hated Iron Lady. Thatcher and her "opposition" are united that Britain will play a role in the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive, and that this means more official secrecy, more censorship and more naked use of force. The BBC raids came on the heels of a massive police riot against a 20,000-strong protest on the anniversary of the defeated printworkers strike at Wapping where nearly 200, including press and onlookers, were injured. And racist "justice" declared that the cop who paralysed Mrs. Cherry Groce, a black woman, for life, gets off while the youth who were rounded up at the London housing estate during a racist cop invasion there get the full brunt of prosecution.

If Thatcher has her way, enterprising journalists like Duncan Campbell will be made to pay for the sorry state of British imperialism in its decline. Ironically, the *New Statesman* itself is Labourite to the core, but as the revelations of M15 operations against Wilson's Labour government show, that's no guarantee of anything. (Indeed, Campbell was prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act in 1977, under Labour prime minister Callaghan.) One columnist lectured the loathsome Kinnock to never forget that in Thatcher he is dealing with the party of the Zinoviev letter (a Tory fabrication in the 1920s designed to smear the Labour Party as Soviet agents). Ask the GCHQ employees whose unions were smashed what happens when you get in the way of the government's self-serving definitions of "national security."

All the talk of "reform" of this decrepit system—with its vast intelligence operations laid on top of its monarchy, House of Lords, established church, hideous state terror in Northern Ireland, Labour traitors waiting in the wings to shove it to the people more "effectively"—is so much hogwash. The Official Secrets Act is used to cover up Thatcher's order to sink the *Belgrano*, the cold-blooded mass murder of hundreds of Argentine troops, and the SAS "anti-terrorist" assassination squads who gun down "IRA suspects" in Northern Ireland. It will take a workers revolution to open the files of the spy and secret police agencies. An authentic Bolshevik vanguard party must fight the imperialist war drive, taking as its starting point the unconditional defence of the Soviet workers state against imperialism. It will win the proletariat to the need for socialist revolution by breaking the stranglehold of the Labour fakers—both of the right and "left." Hands off the *New Statesman*, the BBC and Duncan Campbell! Down with the Official Secrets Act! ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

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West Coast Tug Strike Shut Down the Ports!

SAN FRANCISCO—Six hundred tugboat workers, members of the Inland Boatmen's Union (IBU), are on strike in Seattle, the Columbia River Basin and San Francisco against Crowley Maritime, one of the biggest tug operators in the country. Crowley is demanding massive givebacks in wages and benefits and the elimination of the union hiring hall. The union

tops offered concessions of up to 27 percent but the bosses want more: Crowley is out to bust the IBU.

The striking tugboat workers can't win alone. Scab tugs are already operating here with members of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association (MEBA) crossing IBU lines. But every ship that's docked, regardless of who's manning the tugs—IBU mem-

bers working for other companies, MEBA scabs, non-union workers, whatever—is undermining the strike. The ranks of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), to which the IBU is affiliated, have the power to stop Crowley's union-busting offensive cold. This is part of an offensive by the maritime bosses aimed at every union member on the waterfront and every gain won since the bloody SF general strike of 1934. East Coast longshoremen in the ILA showed what could be done when they briefly shut down Atlantic ports last October with mass picket lines. *Shut down the harbors—nothing in, nothing out!*

In April 1980, 700 IBU ferry boat workers went on strike in Puget Sound against the state of Washington. Strike leaders were jailed and huge fines were imposed against the union. In response, ILWU workers in Seattle struck the port for 24 hours. The state immediately freed the union leaders, dropped the fines and signed a contract. A member of the strikers' negotiating committee said, "if we'd been out there on our own, they might have broken us. But when the ILWU shut down, it was like night and day" (*Dispatcher*, 2 May 1980).

ILWU members: Labor's gotta play hardball to win! Shut down the ports! Victory to the IBU strike!

Reagan Gang...

(continued from page 1)

grievances. Last week the U.S. was forced to cancel a conference on "terrorism" with the major Western powers. Even Reagan's closest supporters like Britain's Margaret Thatcher protested they didn't want the Americans to go off half-cocked in Lebanon. The U.S. had to make an embarrassing climb-down, withdrawing an aircraft carrier, four warships and a 2,000-member marine amphibious group from the Lebanese coast. Meanwhile, scores of influential Americans, including Jeane Kirkpatrick and the Machiavellian Henry Kissinger, are trooping off to the USSR to take a look at "Camelot on the Moskva." One of Kissinger's entourage said they were all impressed by Gorbachev's "intelligence, vitality and obvious leadership qualities"—which is more than anyone will say for Reagan these days.

But at the same time, the entire ruling class, including the Democratic Party opposition, is worrying about weakening the "imperial presidency"—and this one's got two years to go. Whether it was the rape of Grenada, voting aid to the contras, terror bombings of Libya abroad or the MOVE family in Philly, the Democrats fell into line for Reagan. From Kennedy's Bay of Pigs invasion to the imperialist Vietnam War, the Democrats have had as much recourse to state terror as the Republicans. They are not about to dismantle the secret police apparatus, the CIA's covert operations, the FBI's bloody dirty tricks at home. As the *New York Times* editorialized, what the ruling class wants is some limited "damage control": "It will take ingenuity to contain this imperial Presidency without hobbling others" (*New York Times*, 9 February).

It was bad enough when Nixon used to appeal for sympathy by talking about his dog Checkers. Now Reagan says his dog Rex sees ghosts in the White House. Maybe it's Reagan who is seeing ghosts



Saigon 1975, White House 1987: Rats abandon sinking ship.

of Watergate past. And it's going to take more than a Rosemary Woods to erase the Reagangate tapes. The White House "Situation Room" contained an elaborate computerized message system, PROFS, that taped telephone recordings and preserved messages written on NSC computer terminals, which were used extensively by the top Reagan-gaters. (A year after he left the White House, McFarlane still had a terminal in his house.) But apparently North & Co. weren't aware that a copy of everything they erased was preserved in the system. The tapes show the NSC was engaged in scads of covert operations, and Regan, Casey and former NSC chief Poindexter knew all: "North reported everything," said one source (*Newsweek*, 23 February). So the question now is when did they access and who did they network with. And to find out, just play the tapes!

Labor: Sock it to Reagan!

The Reaganites' disarray has not registered with the far right which continues to act as if nothing has changed. Thus, despite virtual declaration of martial law to ensure a "peaceful, respectable" march in Forsyth County, Georgia, the Ku Klux Klan prominently spearheaded the rioting racists. Then the Klan marched unimpeded in the College Park suburb of Atlanta. And when Atlanta city council member Hosea Williams tried to protest KKKers broadcasting their appeal for racist murder on a nationally televised talk show, he and seven other protesters were summarily arrested. At the same time in recent weeks there have been some substantial countermobilizations against the KKK from Louisville, Kentucky to Maryland's eastern shore. And in Mobile, Alabama an all-white jury awarded \$7 million in damages against Klan lynchers to the family of black teenager Michael Donald, whose battered body was found hanging from a tree in 1981. One KKKer was sentenced to death for this grisly murder.

However, the bosses and their racist killers have not recently been dealt any sharp blows. Black misleaders preach reliance on the racist courts and cops. Even the heavily policed, liberal march in Forsyth was subsequently criticized as "too confrontationist"! Ex-SNCC leader, now U.S. Congressman John Lewis called for "build[ing] a sense of community in Forsyth," and Jesse Jackson similarly appealed to the Howard Beach racists. The purpose of

transit workers and teachers have repeatedly struck against anti-union city administrations. But when black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode ordered the bombing of the black MOVE commune, carried out with the aid and approval of Meese's "Justice" Department, the unions did nothing. Labor must be mobilized to smash the racist terrorists before they strike again!

Despite the defeatism of the labor tops, the Spartacist League's labor supplements such as "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball" and our strike special issued during the East Coast longshore battle last fall have been warmly received, with several hundred thousand copies distributed. Our papers strike a chord because they address the burning questions facing unionists and minorities: a program to smash the Klan and bust the union-busters. We fight for militant class struggle, mass picket lines, teaching the scabs a lesson they won't forget, for labor "hot-cargo" actions to achieve genuine union solidarity. The union bureaucrats may whine that such tactics "violate the law," but appeals to Reaganite "law and order" don't really cut it—not when the American population at large correctly perceives the men who run this country, from the White House to Wall Street, as liars and crooks. The next time there's a big strike and the bosses get a court injunction or appeal to "national security" interests, the unions ought to throw it back in their face.

The U.S., and the world, faces a dangerous contradiction today with a



Integrated rally in Louisville outraged over Klan's racist provocations, January 31.

A Spartacist Pamphlet 50c

KAL 007: U.S. War Provocation

WORKERS VANGUARD

Reagan's Story Stinks

Young Spartacus

Reagan's 007 War Fever

50c (24 pages)

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the black Democrats' obscene calls to ignore racist terror is to re-cement their alliance with the Dixiecrats. The selection of Atlanta as the Democratic convention site was an open appeal for Dixiecrat support. Forsyth County, after all, is Jimmy Carter "ethnic purity" country.

Today, fully one-third of unionized workers are black, making the labor movement the most integrated sector of society. And it is the unions that have the social power to smash capitalist reaction. During the PATCO strike, the AFL-CIO misleaders organized a mass rally of more than half a million workers. If only a fraction of that strength had been mobilized to shut down the airports, the union-busting offensive could have been smashed early on. But the union tops ordered their members to scab on the air traffic controllers, and it was PATCO that was smashed. In Philadelphia, combative

wounded regime in Washington looking desperately for an opportunity to strike out at anyone on its long enemies list. At the same time, the American labor movement, led by imperialist agents up to their ears in Contragate machinations, is playing dead. Hard class struggle today could quickly galvanize the sympathy of broad layers of the populace, from the ghetto poor and unemployed, to farmers driven to desperation, to the intended victims of Ed Meese's thought police and sex police. *It's time to strike back*, while Wall Street and its servants in Washington are rattled and in crisis. Bringing down Reagan must not mean replacing Republicans with Democrats. A class-struggle, multiracial workers party must be forged to lead the fight to smash racist American capitalism and carry out a socialist revolution that will emancipate labor and all the oppressed. ■

Amerika...

(continued from page 1)

McDonalds in Colorado). But Rambo-mania just isn't selling like it was after Reagan's one military "success," the racist rape of tiny black Grenada. And now with Reaganite, as the Star Warriors in the White House spin wildly out of control, they're increasingly recognized as crazed, bumbling, dangerous liars. It looks like *Amerika* could blow up in the Reaganauts' face.

Amerika is Cold War propaganda in the tradition of the Hitlerite Big Lie. Nazi propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels could have written the script about a Soviet "occupation" of the U.S., where white middle Americans are terrorized, brainwashed, starved and sent to gulags. *Amerika* is Goebbels gone Hollywood. It's 1984 writ large. But the truly Orwellian quality of *Amerika* is its uncanny resemblance to Reagan's America today. This \$40 million, 14-1/2 hour orgy of anti-Sovietism reflects the mentality of a U.S. president who salutes Nazi SS graves at Bitburg, a government that bombs black babies in Philadelphia and a sinister New Right that thinks Vietnam was "lost" because of a "stab in the back" at home.

Carrying the red flags of Bolshevism, Spartacist League protesters picketed ABC studios in New York City, February 15. Comrades and supporters in Washington, D.C. and Chicago demonstrated at the same time, coinciding with the opening of the *Amerika* series. Spartacist protesters carried signs proclaiming, "Reagan's AmeriKKKa: Howard Beach, Forsyth County, MOVE Massacre," "For Soviet Aid to the South Bronx!" and "The Klan Doesn't Ride in Moscow!" Demonstrators chanted: "Finish the Civil War! Forward to a Workers State!" "Lincoln Freed the Chattel Slaves, Lenin Freed the Wage Slaves!" and "World War III, Brought to You by ABC!" Other SL slogans included, "Who Stopped Hitler? The Red Army Did! Defend the Soviet Union!" "Labor: Sock it to Reagan! Avenge PATCO and Philly MOVE!" and "Communist Revolution is America's Last Best Hope!"

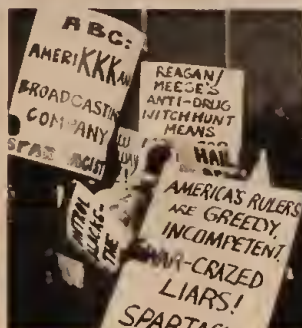
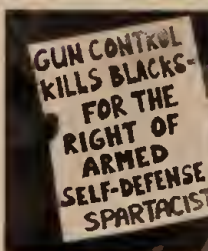
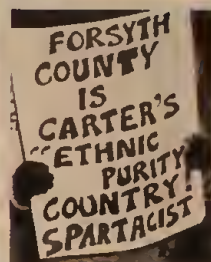
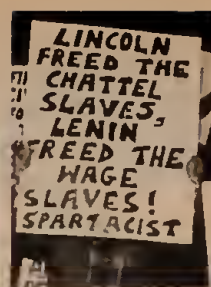
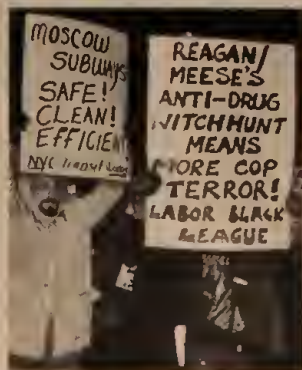
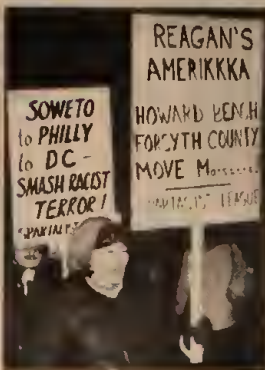
The demonstrations received wide media attention, with AP and UPI wire stories and TV coverage by ABC and local affiliates of NBC and CBS. The Cable News Network contrasted the red rally of 75 Spartacist supporters outside New York's WABC to the dozen pacifists holding candles outside the U.S. mission to the UN. Cameras focused on signs including, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" "Reagan/Meece Anti-Drug Witchhunt Means More Cop Terror!" and an NYC transit worker's sign, "Moscow Subways: Safe! Clean! Efficient!" In Chicago, WBBM highlighted an SL placard calling for "Freedom Now for Geronimo Pratt!" The Spartacist protesters indicted the rulers of this country—Democrats as well as Republicans—who have made



Reagan honors Nazi war dead at Bitburg.

20 FEBRUARY 1987

February 15—Spartacist supporters protest ABC's anti-Soviet Big Lie, *Amerika*, in New York City, Washington, D.C.



witchhunting, racist terror and the desperation of hundreds of thousands of homeless the reality of "their" America.

On February 16, Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour spoke from the audience on WABC's "Morning Show" featuring a panel discussion of *Amerika*, which included Soviet diplomats, an ex-CIA man and notorious right-wing Republican Congressman Robert Dornan. The SL spokesman denounced *Amerika* as "an attempt to whip up anti-Soviet hysteria in mobilizing the American people for World War III, or a prelude to imperialist adventures such as an invasion of revolutionary Nicaragua." The "former" CIA agent interrupted, demanding "do you receive your funding from the Soviets?" Unfortunately, the Kremlin lacks sufficient revolutionary fervor to finance the work of a Trotskyist organization like the SL. Professional Russia-hater Dornan repeatedly insulted and heckled the invited SL speaker. (In an earlier ABC program racist pig Dornan had baited Soviet spokesman Vladimir Posner as a "disloyal, betraying little Jew.") Comrade Seymour concluded: "We aspire to create a Soviet America. Not through this fictitious notion of a coup, but through an uprising of the American working class and the black and minority poor in this country."

Won't Play in Peoria

Amerika may end up scaring a lot of people into realizing that the "Evil Empire" Reagan gang that inspired this demented war propaganda is just crazy enough to push the nuclear button. After all, it was conceived as their response to *The Day After*, a widely viewed anti-nuclear-war movie about Kansas City after The Bomb was dropped, aired on ABC in 1983. Former Nixon speech writer, columnist Ben Stein called on ABC to make a movie showing that Soviet occupation of the U.S. would be far worse than being reduced to irradiated rubble. The idea was pushed by Reed Irvine, sinister, ultraright founder of the witchhunting outfit Accuracy in Media and its offshoot, Accuracy in Academia (see page 3). At a 1984 ABC stockholders meeting Irvine called for an investigation into whether the station's facilities had been used to disseminate Soviet propaganda.

Conceived when Reagan was "standing tall," *Amerika* was intended as old-

time Russkie-bashing. The Soviet prime minister who presides over the occupation of the U.S. was originally called "Gropichev." But today Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev probably has more credibility with the American people than Reagan. Everybody knows Reagan's "We begin bombing in five minutes" line was no joke. In the 14 February issue of the *Nation*, Andrew Kopkind tells how the audience at a 90-minute preview screening last December howled at this line from *Amerika*: "we know a lot more about disinformation campaigns now than we did then."

Far from rallying the patriotic anti-Soviet war spirit of white middle America, *Amerika* has everyone from the Quakers to Nebraskans for Peace to the Grey Panthers up in arms, picketing, holding teach-ins and demanding equal time from ABC. TV talk-show host David Letterman quipped that *Amerika* shows how boring and oppressive this country would be if it was run by ABC. Right-wing "born again" détentenik Ted Turner compares it to films made by the Nazis "to turn the German people against the Jews." Turner's WTBS super-station is showing a full week of anti-*Amerika* programs hosted by Christie Brinkley and featuring the Soviet-made film *Letters from a Dead Man*, about the nightmare aftermath of nuclear holocaust. Phil Donahue hosted a week-long series of broadcasts from the Soviet Union. The cable network Discovery Channel has scheduled 66 hours of Soviet-produced programs to air at the same time as *Amerika*.

Even certified war criminals like Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Alexander Haig and none other than Bob McFarlane protested *Amerika*'s portrayal of United Nations "peacekeeping" troops as the Russians' occupying army. Despite the frequent UN-bashing from Democrats and Republicans alike, they need these gendarmes for preserving the imperialist status quo, from "UN" troops in Korea to the UNIFIL border guards for Israel. Meantime the UN is considering suing ABC for using its insignia on the flag of Soviet-occupied "Amerika." The Spartacist protesters carried signs proclaiming: "Lenin Called the League of Nations a Den of Thieves" and "We Call the UN a Gang of Imperialist Robbers and Their Victims!"

Amerika attacks everyone who does not subscribe to the white Christian bible-thumping bigotry of the Moral Majority disciples of anti-Soviet nuclear

Armageddon. Practically the only blacks and Latins in the movie are part of the Soviet occupying troops. In scenes reminiscent of Margaret Mitchell's racist, pro-slavery *Gone With the Wind*, black, Hispanic and Vietnamese troops terrorize the population, pillaging and raping white women. In the original script, one woman says she was raped by "an Angolan, two South Americans...and a Vietnamese. I always thought he was Vietnamese—but it's hard to tell them apart, you know." Women who are not sufficiently imbued with the *Kinder, Kirche, Küche* mentality of Phyllis Schlafly are also among the main "traitors" in *Amerika*; most of them make a career for themselves by screwing Soviet and East German generals and turning in their children to be brainwashed.

We doubt that *Amerika* will play in Peoria. Farmers, traditionally upheld as the backbone of middle America, might find collectivization an appealing alternative to the bankers and Reagan tax

continued on page 14



Young Spartacist

Melanie Yun, above, led ultrarightist attempt to break up Harvard Spartacist forum, "Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution," in November 1981. "How much did Poland's fat bosses pay you?" demanded this officer of government-funded Kennedy School. Today, imperialist operative defending Reaganite soap opera *Amerika* hurls accusation that SL receives "Moscow gold."

Amerika...

(continued from page 13)

men who are driving them off their land. An ABC promo describes life in *Amerika*: "America is a land depressed and in mounting disarray. Against a background of aging autos, propaganda posters and people increasingly dressed as refugees...many of the country's youth engage in vandalism, drunkenness and drugs." This is a *benign* description of what life is *really* like in Reagan's America. Standing in line for tomatoes? Today thousands stand in line for rotting Velveeta cheese. Food-stuffs in short supply? Just look at any inner city where the poor are rooting through garbage bins. And the *hundreds of thousands* of homeless huddling over subway gratings for heat in the frigid winter. Nothing in fictional *Amerika* can compare to this.

The "Who Lost Vietnam?" Witchhunt

In *Amerika* the U.S. goes down to the Soviets not with a bang but a whimper. One of the main characters, Devin Milford (played by Kris Kristofferson), says: "It has happened subtly. We did not lose it on the field of battle—we lost it in our hearts. We lost it with our loss of purpose, our loss of vision. We lost it with our lack of courage and faith in our democratic system." Like the "Who Lost China?" purges of 1950s-vintage McCarthyism, the Reaganites came to office pushing "Who Lost Vietnam, Iran and Nicaragua?" This right-wing litany of the "enemy within" was intended to be the basis for a new witchhunt that would steel the national will for anti-Soviet war. The message of *Amerika* is that everyone from weak-kneed liberal pacifists to blacks to feminists to secular humanists sapped the moral strength of the nation and "lost America."

America's imperialist rulers can't accept that they were *defeated* on the battlefield by the heroic Vietnamese peasants and workers. Kennedy thought he could overthrow Castro with a rag-tag bunch of gusanos and CIA hitmen. Reagan thinks that his Nicaraguan contra mercenaries, a bunch of losers



Scene from ABC's *Amerika*. Spartacists say: Lincoln freed the chattel slaves, Lenin freed the wage slaves!

Kristofferson who was recently arrested at a no-nuke protest, proclaims his opposition to U.S. support to the contras and traveled to Moscow for Gorbachev's peace meet. Actor Sam Neill says he would be "distraught" if the show turns out to be "another piece of anti-Soviet propaganda." All say they first turned it down. So why did they sign up? Because the liberals and social democrats share the anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism which has been at the heart of U.S. imperialism's Cold War policy ever since WWII. In the 1940s they opened the door for McCarthyism by purging reds from the unions. They only started to protest in the '50s when the witchhunters started lining liberals up in their sights. Now they're getting a taste of the new Reagan/Meece McCarthyism and they're scared. But Cold War II didn't start with Reagan. Much of *Amerika*'s "moral rearmament" message harks back to Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade.

For a Communist America!

Unlike the liberals who worry about being tarred with the brush of "Communism" we proudly defend the Soviet workers state. As we said in announcing our protests against *Amerika*: "The

invade the Soviet Union. Indeed, the plot cooked up by ABC screenwriters for *Amerika* could have been taken straight from the Pentagon's 1948 "Bushwacker" plan which detailed war plans for American occupation of the USSR. According to CUNY physics professor Dr. Michio Kaku, who obtained a copy under the Freedom of Information Act, "Bushwacker" begins with the nuking of 20 Soviet cities. Then comes "de-communisation" of the USSR, hunting down Soviet officials and throwing them in concentration camps.

"Phase Three would be the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, just like *Amerika* talks about the dismemberment of America. Then Phase Four is working with collaborators.... The difference here is that Operation Bushwacker was drafted by professional soldiers with the permission of President Truman and with the wishes of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff." —WNYC, 16 February

Bushwacker was also known as "NSC 20/1," since it was drawn up by the National Security Council. Today under Reagan the NSC is still at it.

Gorbachev and the Soviet leadership are understandably upset over the hysterical war propaganda being aired over American TV. First they tried to pressure ABC into dropping *Amerika*; then they sought broadcast rights, to show the Russian population the lies the American people are being fed (ABC refused). In order to whip up war fever in the U.S., the Reaganites portray the conservative Moscow bureaucracy as bent on world conquest. But the Kremlin Stalinists are perennially looking for "peaceful coexistence" with the crazed Cold Warriors in the White House. To defend the gains of the 1917 October Revolution requires that these conquests be *extended*, not only to the peoples of Afghanistan beset by Islamic feudalists armed and paid by the CIA, but to the working people and oppressed internationally. The Spartacist demonstrators protesting ABC's *Amerika* carried signs proclaiming, "Defense of Cuba/USSR Begins in Central America!" and "Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky!"

Amerika is an attempt by the rulers of this country to project their own totalitarian fantasies onto Communism. Concentration camps? They're ready and waiting to be filled under NSDD 52, as part of a Reagan/Meece plan to round up and imprison 400,000 "illegal aliens" upon a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua, just like thousands of Japanese Americans were incarcerated behind barbed wire during World War II. The present rulers of America would like to impose a new McCarthyism, only this time with lie detectors in addition to loyalty oaths. Big Brother is already at work, as the Meece police invade the bedrooms of America, make workers pee into Dixie cups and terrorize the ghettos in their drug witchhunt. As for brainwashing, how about *fourteen-and-one-half hours* of this truly Orwellian anti-Sovietism?

The Reaganites' moronic anti-Communist soap opera isn't exactly capturing the hearts and minds of the population. After six years of Reaganism, a lot of people are fed up with their arrogant and increasingly isolated rulers. Reagan hates everybody, and these days the feeling's mutual. *Amerika* to the contrary, there exists within this country a powerful will to resist tyranny and oppression... of the present cynical and deeply corrupt rulers. The anger, the economic desperation, the sense of injustice could spark big class struggles. What's needed to weld together the potential militancy of the multiracial working class with the ghetto and all the oppressed is a party of the kind the Bolsheviks created in tsarist Russia. We Spartacists are dedicated to building the party to lead the third American revolution that will emancipate all the world from the chains of poverty, immiseration and war. ■

Chicago Elections...

(continued from page 16)

announced mass evictions of the poor from public housing and done nothing to stop racist terror in Segregation City. And for this his re-election bid has been endorsed by both mouthpieces of big business, the *Sun-Times* and the union-busting *Chicago Tribune*.

All of Boss Daley's Children

But Washington's racist opponents are not pacified. As the election nears, the tattered remnants of the white Democratic Machine are once again engaged in a desperate scramble to defeat the black mayor. The bigots' City Council leader, "Fast Eddie" Vrdolyak, has laid down their rallying cry in '87: "anyone [white] but Harold." But they have a problem deciding who the great white anyone will be.

Ex-mayor Jane Byrne's been running for two years, especially courting the Hispanic vote, which could be crucial in a racially polarized election. Vrdolyak has jumped in and out of the Democratic primary, and then filed as a mayoral candidate for the "Solidarity Party." One John Bilski is running against Vrdolyak because "the term Solidarity belongs to the Polish people, and you don't have anyone Polish running." Meanwhile, other remnants of the old Daley Machine are fielding Cook County assessor Thomas Hynes on the "Chicago First Party."

Despite the apparent fracturing and complex maneuvering, all wings of Chicago's Democratic organization agree to their party's main task: to administer the city on behalf of the La Salle Street bankers and industrial capitalists who *really* run this city. From Washington to Vrdolyak, they are carrying on the work of Boss Daley's Democratic Machine, which is where they *all* got their start. And they all, including Washington, honor the memory of Boss Daley, a racist pig who ordered his police to "shoot to kill" during the ghetto unrest following the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968.

Fifty years of Democratic Party ethnic/patronage rule made Chicago the nasty segregated hellhole it is today. For 30 years, Harold Washington served the Machine, faithfully delivering the black vote for the determined enemies of black liberation. But in '83 Washington rode into office on a wave of massive revulsion against the racist stunts of "Crazy Jane" Byrne's administration. Washington's "it's our turn" demagoguery struck a wellspring of hope in the black population, as expectations here and nationwide soared.

We told the truth about Washington's election. In an article entitled "Harold Washington Will Betray Black Chicago," we wrote:

"As a Democratic Party mayor of Chicago he has to maintain capitalist law and order. That means, just like Coleman Young in Detroit, he's going to break strikes. He's going to slash social services. He's going to lay off city workers. And he's going to have the racist cops break up protests by trade unionists, blacks and others who can't take it any longer. That's Harold Washington's job."

—WV No 328, 22 April 1983

And he did it.

Harold Washington Did Betray Black Chicago

Under Washington, Segregation City has experienced an *increase* in black oppression and racist terror, and a *decrease* in living standards for poor and working people. Washington has laid off some 8,000 black and white city workers at a time when black unemployment runs well over 25 percent. Anywhere from a quarter to a third of the city lives below the government's miser-



American troops invade Russia in 1919 seeking to crush workers revolution.

capable only of raping, killing and torturing women and children, are going to overthrow the Sandinistas. The people who run their dirty "covert" wars out of the White House basement can't conceive of a *popular* war—that entire peoples are prepared to fight to the finish to free themselves from U.S. imperialism and its puppets. And the New Right ideologues go into paroxysms of paranoia over the fact that a "peace movement" led by what they consider traitors and Soviet agents and dupes can win mass support at home. Their conclusion, mirrored in *Amerika*, is that this is a nation of sheep. So they try to create a climate of fear, intimidation and crazed anti-Sovietism in order to regiment the American population for war.

While the liberals are up in arms over *Amerika*, curiously the script was written by Donald Wrye, a self-described Kennedy liberal and anti-Vietnam War protester. It stars Kris

Trotskyists of the Spartacist League stand in the revolutionary internationalist tradition of Lenin's Bolsheviks. While *Amerika* invents a Russian invasion of the U.S., the U.S. *did* invade Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution. We honor Trotsky's Red Army which defeated the invading imperialist armies from 14 countries." And in his remarks on WABC's "Morning Show," SL spokesman Seymour pointed out: "The Soviet spokesman noted that unlike this fictional account, the United States did invade Russia in 1918, and again in 1922. Why? [commotion] To crush the greatest working-class revolution in history, a working-class revolution which inspired the world, and [was] the greatest defeat for world capitalism."

A Russian invasion of the United States, the perennial bugaboo of the far right, is patently absurd. Even *Amerika* producer/director/writer Wrye says he doesn't believe the basic premise of his film. But the U.S. has concrete plans to

able "poverty line." In a city with 25-30,000 homeless and 20,000 families waiting for public housing, the Chicago Housing Authority announces a "get tough" policy and openly plans mass evictions! The bourgeoisie has its eyes on the prime real estate occupied by the CHA's sordid and dangerous Cabrini Green high-rises: even dangerous and dilapidated public housing is "too good" for the black and poor residents when there are enormous profits to be made out of Cabrini's ashes.

The bourgeoisie relies on Washington to put organized labor in its place, and the mayor has shown himself eager to comply. When the Chicago Teachers Union—which is half black—struck in 1983 shortly after Washington was elected, their strike was branded as "racist" by the school board and Washington's supporters like the Chicago *Defender* newspaper. Operation PUSH, run by Washington backer Jesse Jackson, engaged in open strikebreaking by trying to set up scab schools.

Having supported Washington in the 1983 election hasn't helped the mainly black Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) locals in the Chicago Transit Authority: in late '83 Washington personally muscled through the state legislature a piece of legislation (House Bill 1805) which stole ATU members' pension money, wiped out COLA, introduced part-timers and dictated the terms of the contract. Currently, transit workers are working without a contract, as Washington seeks even more concessions and the pro-capitalist union tops are crawling to avoid a strike on the eve of the election.

Yet even after four years of administering Segregation City, Washington is still being hailed by an army of reformist fake-lefts eager to portray his administration as "the mass movement toward democracy" (Manning Marable in *Black Scholar*, November-December 1986). Only now that Washington has proven his worth to the enemies of labor and blacks, it's gotten tougher to sell him as the "people's mayor." Unable to point to any real advances for black and proletarian Chicago, rad-lib papers like the *Guardian* and *In These Times*

have found themselves echoing capitalist praise for Washington's "budget-balancing" layoffs!

Even the slavishly reformist *Workers World* (15 January) has been forced to admit that "the Washington administration has not fundamentally altered the quality of life in Chicago." But that didn't stop these cretins from claiming in the next breath that "a vote for Washington is a vote for a united struggle for jobs, housing, medical care, education and equality." According to *Workers World*, then, the *Sun-Times* and union-busting *Tribune* have joined the "united struggle" against racism.

The Communist Party's *People's Daily World*, meanwhile, has practically become an election daily for Washington. Arguing that he deserved the endorsement of the Chicago Federation of Labor (which he eventually received), the paper's columnist Herb Kaye asked rhetorically: "can the officials of the multi-racial and multi-national labor movement bypass an endorsement without going against its own best interests?" (*People's Daily World*, 29 January). Needless to say, the CP press ignores the Washington administration's anti-labor moves against transit workers, teachers, *Tribune* strikers and USX pickets.

The real interests of the multiracial labor movement demand a break with the Democratic Party, which provides the black front men (like Washington, Detroit's Coleman Young, Philadelphia's Wilson Goode) for Reagan's attack on the working people and ghetto poor. The potential for labor/black struggle was dramatically demonstrated by Chicago transit workers in August 1985. Over 700 black and white ATU members marched on police headquarters to demand that charges be dropped against David Johnson, a black bus driver framed up on manslaughter charges after an unavoidable accident. They faced down the notoriously racist Chicago police and freed their union brother. That kind of labor/black power must be unleashed against Klan/Nazi terror, against union-busting and against the bosses of Segregation City, in the forging of a revolutionary workers party. ■



We will not forget Michael Griffith, Eleanor Bumpurs, Michael Stewart, black victims of racist terror.

New York...

(continued from page 16)

performed by Dr. Gross, the ghoully NYC coroner—erily recalled the 1983 choke-hold/bludgeon murder of young black artist Michael Stewart by a mob of transit police.

The day after the Howard Beach indictments, all three NYC tabloids headlined "An American Tragedy," echoing the words of the Queens judge at the bail hearing. Murdoch's rabid *Post* raved about the "Court Shock-er"—not the racist murder but the "17-yr.-old informer" Robert Riley, the "teen who turned in his pals." The *Times* gushed grotesque sympathy for the racist killers and their families, variously described as "role model" employees, "nice boy from a good family," etc. But for the black victims, including the dead Michael Griffith, it was obscene character assassination, digging up decade-old arrests and asking "why three of them ended up in Howard Beach?"! Racist mayor Koch's black police commissioner Benjamin Ward chimed in that he thought "the black-white issue here is played up more by the press than it should be"!! From the beginning, the Howard Beach lynching has been an American travesty, a bloody outrage in a history of racist injustice.

On January 21, the Transit Authority released the report of its "special counsel," retired federal judge Harold Tyler, which for the first time officially admitted that Michael Stewart died in police custody. For three and a half years there was a solid "blue wall of silence" denying any official wrongdoing in Stewart's death. An all-white jury let the cops off, all remain on the force and one was promoted. But as the city heated up over the Howard Beach lynching, they felt they had to go through the motions of "investigating." The Tyler report concludes that "Mr. Stewart had stopped breathing, at the latest, during the ride to Bellevue," and a cop's contrary claim was "willfully false." So he was DOA, yet for 13 days they had a dead man hooked up to a respirator in order to cover up the killer cops' crime. But for all the chilling details, the report made no recommendations. At most one of these perpetrators in uniform will now face a departmental reprimand for not following "TA procedure."

In the Bronx, the "trial" of cop Sullivan, triggerman in the 1984 "eviction by murder" of black grandmother Eleanor Bumpurs, is almost over. Day after day, the dead victim is portrayed as a "knife-wielding psychotic" who "endangered" the Emergency Services Unit cops who kicked in her apartment door. The defense and "prosecution" engage in a macabre debate over whether the old woman could still hold a knife after Sullivan's first shot left her hand a "bloody stump," according to the emergency room doctor. Mary Bumpurs, the victim's daughter, is a daily witness to this obscene racist spectacle and a target for Sullivan's attorney who has tried to blame her for her mother's death. Mary told a *WV* reporter she had

to disconnect her phone after repeated racist harassment. The entire proceeding is a sham designed to ensure that the killer cop goes free. Prisoners in Attica have petitioned the Bronx D.A.'s office to "vigorously prosecute" Sullivan. Lock Sullivan up in Attica and throw away the key!

In the wake of the indictments of the Howard Beach lynchers, the Eleanor Bumpurs Justice Committee is demanding U.S. attorney Giuliani enter the case. These calls for state and federal prosecutors are the '80s version of the 1960s liberal civil rights movement call on the Democratic Kennedy administration to send U.S. marshals into the South. But the intervention of one or another wing of the bourgeois state will not defend black people: as freedom marchers experienced, troops were brought into Little Rock and Birmingham only when blacks began to arm themselves in self-defense against racist terror. The absurdity of illusions in the Democratic Party was seen recently in Forsyth County, Georgia where Democratic Atlanta city councilman Hosea Williams led the black marchers, Democratic governor Joe Frank Harris called in the National Guard, and Democratic ex-governor Lester Maddox stood with the racists!

Koch's killer cops are on the loose, stealing quarters from homeless panhandlers at pistol point, shooting motorists over a parking space, beating up Hispanic women on the subways. There is widespread anger in this city over the arrogant police and a burning desire in the ghettos and working-class neighborhoods for justice, to avenge the countless victims of racist terror. If ever there was a case of premeditated murder, the Howard Beach lynching is it: a pack of racist hoods screaming, "There's some niggers in the pizza parlor. Let's go kill them!" But of the three accused killers of Michael Griffith, Riley is angling for reduced charges in exchange for talking and ringleader Lester is in "protective custody" in a Dutchess County jail. Even they are only charged with second-degree murder, and already Cuomo's special prosecutor Hynes is making noises like he's prepared to settle for manslaughter. There is no justice for black people in the racist courts.

Following the Howard Beach lynching, the Spartacist League issued an urgent call to "Mobilize Labor and Minorities to Stop Racist Attacks!" (reprinted in *WV* No. 419, 9 January). Militant subway workers of the Committee for a Fighting TWU demanded that the transit union take the lead in hringing out NYC labor against racist terror, to form a "caravan of flat-bed trucks filled with integrated union defense squads," to ensure that the streets of New York City are safe for all working people. The martyred dead will not be avenged by "special prosecutors" like Hynes, who turned a deaf ear to those who tried to expose the cover-up of the cop murder of Michael Stewart. It will take a political fight leading to a victorious proletarian revolution to rid this country of the race-terrorists in and out of uniform. ■



August 1985—The power of labor/black action: mobilization of Chicago transit workers stopped frame-up of black union brother David Johnson.

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TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA

WORKERS VANGUARD

For Labor/Minority Struggle to Smash Racist Backlash

Chicago: Segregation City Elections



Mayor Harold Washington and Jane Byrne (left).

CHICAGO—The upcoming February 24 Democratic mayoral primary here comes in the midst of a wave of racist terror across Reagan's America, from New York's Howard Beach to Chicago's Marquette Park. Last summer the Ku Klux Klan mobilized 3,000 rabid race-haters in a violent racist rally to keep Marquette Park lily-white. Black mayor Harold Washington told blacks, Hispanics, Jews, gays and all targets of the fascists to ignore the Klan rally even

though his white racist opponents on the City Council inspired it. Washington's cops enforced his "advice" by beating up and arresting blacks and leftists who sought to counter the KKK mobilization. The deadly attacks of the following weekend—racist murder in the suburb of Zion, midnight firebombing of a black-owned house in white Gage Park—showed that ignoring race-terror is a program of suicide.

A nationwide fascist resurgence has

targeted Chicago for race war. Three years of "council wars"—challenging every mayoral appointment, contesting control of every important city board—have fueled the race-terrorists' drive in the streets. The KKK/Nazi fascists suffered a body blow on 27 June 1982, when 3,000 people spiked a planned Nazi provocation against the annual gay pride march. Initiated by the Spartacist League, that mass labor/black united front drove the Nazis out of Lincoln Park and kept them off the streets of Chicago for three years. Now, however, the KKK/Nazis have the wind in their sails with the Marquette Park victory of last June. A massive mobilization by Chicago's huge proletarian and black population could have swept these scum off the streets. The 1987 mayoral election has all the potential for sparking the kind of racist mobilization that flared up in 1983—hut worse.

Washington narrowly won the 1983 Democratic primary and mayoral election amidst a vicious racist backlash instigated by white Machine politicians. Howling racist mobs greeted Washington when he attempted to campaign in white neighborhoods. Cops conspired to arrest black voters *en masse* on election day. When Washington won the February primary—the real mayor-

al election in this Democratic city—the white Democratic ward heelers threw their support to the Republican candidate. The attempt to deny Washington the prerogatives of his office was carried into the City Council, where a racist majority challenged and obstructed every mayoral appointment or proposal. The Spartacist League denounced the dangerous and racist "stop Washington" drive, asserting, "Washington has the right to take office with all the normal prerogatives. Blacks have a right to elect whoever they want to office" (see "Jane Byrne, You Lost!" *WV* No. 326, 25 March 1983).

At the same time we refused to give one ounce of political support to this long-time Machine Democrat. In contrast, Washington's backers range from national Democratic Party leaders Mondale and Jesse Jackson and the AFL-CIO hureaucracy to the local black establishment and a slew of fake-left outfits. Typically, the left-liberal *New Alliance* (6 February) claims: "Washington's stunning grassroots victory in 1983 ignited an unprecedented wave of reform in a city more famous for machine politics and patronage than fairness." Reform?! The Washington administration has broken strikes,

continued on page 14



When Chicago Teachers Union struck in 1983, Washington supporters denounced strike as "racist."

Racist Murder in "Up South" New York

On February 10, three of the dozen-plus mob of racist lynchers from the Howard Beach section of Queens were charged with the murder of black, 23-year-old construction worker Michael Griffith. Nine more of the whitepunks face charges ranging from manslaughter to inciting to riot. The racist gang had surrounded the three blacks as they emerged from a pizza shop in the lily-white enclave last December 20, hounded them through the streets savagely beating them with baseball bats, and then, as underlined by new evidence, chased Griffith directly into the path of an oncoming car on the

Shore Parkway where he was killed. When only three of the killers were charged with nothing more than "reckless endangerment" in this hideous lynching, public outrage escalated. New York City was at the flashpoint, and to take the heat off, NY governor Cuomo appointed a special prosecutor, Charles Hynes, who got a grand jury to bring in the murder indictments.

The liberal black weekly *City Sun* (11 February) proclaimed that this "vindicated" the appeals of the black victims' lawyers Alton Maddox and C. Vernon Mason to Cuomo. But the

Spartacist League and NY Labor Black League protest racist terror, January 12.



WV Photo

system of New York-style racist capitalist "justice" is still at work. The very next day another black man died in the custody of the NYPD. At about 4 a.m. on February 12, black transit worker Wajid Abdul-Salaam was arrested after pounding on the door of a home in Forest Hills, Queens shouting for help. Eight cops dragged

Abdul-Salaam off, hands and feet manacled and bound together with tape behind his back, and threw him in jail. It is not known how long he lay unconscious in his cell because the 112th Precinct isn't talking. But the cops' M.O.—from hog-tying the "struggling" black man to the autopsy

continued on page 15