

Blood and Oil and Imperialist War Drive

U.S. Up the Persian Gulf?

Once again Ronald Reagan is trying to drape himself with the flags covering the coffins of U.S. military men killed as he was playing cop of the world. This time 37 hapless U.S. sailors died May 17 when two Exocet missiles fired by an Iraqi jet slammed into the frigate USS *Stark* on patrol in the Persian Gulf. But after 241 Marines were killed in Beirut on a supposed "peacekeeping" mission in the Lebanese hornet's nest, and now with Navy ships set up like sitting ducks in the middle of the Iran-Iraq war while "protecting" the flow of oil, even conservative Republicans like Robert Dole are wondering "just exactly what we

continued on page 14



U.S. Navy

Crippled frigate USS *Stark*: 37 dead seamen are latest victims of U.S. war moves in the Middle East.

Avenge the Victims of SS Butcher of Lyon!

Kill Nazi Barbie!

MAY 25—For the past two weeks the trial of Nazi SS butcher Klaus Barbie has gripped France. As head of the Gestapo in Lyon from 1942 to 1944, Barbie was responsible for the murder of more than 10,000 Jews, Communists, Gypsies and others, who were tortured and killed on the spot, or shipped off to Hitler's death camps. After the war, he was hired by the U.S. as a Cold War spy, then sent down the "Rat Line" to Bolivia, where he set up death squads and concentration camps. According to the Bolivian official responsible for Barbie's expulsion, he was a key adviser in the CIA's murder of Che Guevara. Although Barbie was brought to France in 1983, the "Socialist" Mitterrand government never brought him to trial.

When the proceedings finally got under way May 11, it was a grisly spectacle. The first days were dominated by Barbie's obscene smile, the smirk of a murderer who knows his prosecutors' hands are also covered with blood. He played on the hypocrisy of the French imperialist state, its personnel shot through with Nazi collaborators and those guilty of heinous crimes in colonial wars, from Vietnam to Algeria. Then Barbie made his grandstand play, walking out of the "trial." There ensued a ludicrous squabble among the prosecutors over whether the SS killer's "rights" would be violated by forcing him to face his surviving victims.

Kill Nazi Barbie! This beast is a certified war criminal who has twice been sentenced to death. When the Estonian collaborator and death camp commandant Karl Linna was finally handed over to the USSR, despite desperate attempts by the White House to "save" him, we said that however the Soviet courts disposed of this butcher would be



Serge Klarsfeld

fine by us. But we have no confidence in the French bourgeois state, itself riddled with collaborators and war criminals, to dispense justice for the victims of the torturer and sadistic killer Klaus Barbie. The grotesque proceedings in the Lyon "trial" prove this. And with Le Pen's fascist bands on the rise, if Barbie isn't executed, he could end up in the pantheon of the French New Order along with Marshal Pétain!

While the Lyon court is juridically "investigating" the loading of Jews into boxcars to be sent to Auschwitz, Ravensbrück and Buchenwald, rightist interior minister Charles Pasqua announced he was prepared to "put to-



Der Spiegel

SS Obersturmführer Klaus Barbie (left), chief of Lyon Gestapo, responsible for deaths of over 10,000 in Nazi genocide. Vichy police deport French Jews to the gas chambers of Auschwitz in 1941 (above).

gether a train" of immigrants for deportation! And the ultraright is mobilizing its shock troops. In Paris, a 10,000-strong mob headed by the fascist National Front (FN) leader Le Pen marched on "Joan of Arc Day," May 10. Armed FN bands have terrorized immigrant neighborhoods of Lyon and Marseille. This past weekend, a Jewish primary school in Paris was burned to the ground.

Barbie walked out of the Lyon trial precisely at the point the testimony of his victims was to begin. Lise Lesèvre, 86, arrested 13 March 1944, recounted how she endured 19 days of torture at Gestapo headquarters, tied face down

on a chair and flayed by Barbie with a whip with a spiked ball; she never talked. Simone LaGrange, deported at the age of 13 in June 1944, her mother gassed in August 1944, saw her father again in January 1945, when the Nazis hauled off their victims before the advancing Red Army. A guard noticed they had recognized each other, pushed her father to his knees and put a bullet in his head. These and countless other victims of the Nazi Holocaust demand vengeance!

Instead the "trial" was turned into a platform for fascism. On the second day of the trial, the judge actually asked

continued on page 13

Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Last month the U.S. Supreme Court again upheld the death penalty, opening the floodgate for hundreds of executions. In ordering this legal murder, Reagan's racists in black robes declared irrelevant the fact that it is overwhelmingly blacks—especially those accused of killing whites—who are slated for execution. Georgia wasted little time, executing Joseph Mulligan on May 15. In the Deep South legal executions supplement the extralegal terror of the KKK to keep black people "in their place." On May 20, 26-year-old Edward Earl Johnson was gassed for a murder he denied committing but which he was forced to confess to at a sheriff's gunpoint in a Mississippi backwoods. Black prison activist Johnny "Imani" Harris has been on Alabama's death row since 1974, framed up for the murder of a prison guard.

"Up South" in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, MOVE supporter Mumia Abu-

Jamal sits on death row, separated for the past five years from his wife Wadiya and children. Well known in Philadelphia as an outspoken supporter of MOVE and former Black Panther, Mumia was framed up for the murder of a Philadelphia cop in 1981. We print below two excerpted letters from Mumia, who wrote to the PDC of the state's efforts to silence by murder this fighter for black liberation.

April 15, 1987

Ona MOVE, Paul,

...Thanx for sharing your info w/ me, man—I found ya *Defense Notes* & otha publications to be damn well done—miles ahead of otha allegedly revolutionary media—ala *Guardian*, *In These Times*, et al.—the otha organs are consistently apologist in tone, and always portray the victimizer as the victim (ex., Goode)! Because his carcass

is black, and his party registration "Democratic," he is portrayed as a hapless victim of May 13th, 1985, instead of a rabid lapdog of this system, and a malevolent mass murderer to boot! The Spartacist literature has dared to go beyond the illusion of "party" and expose the deception of systemic politics, and further, has dared to speak in strong, public support of the Africans, specifically, our strong, revolutionary sister, Ramona—kudos for such refreshing candor! *Long Live John Africa!* It is long overdue!

As my Brotha Chuck [Charles Sims Africa] may have told you, I am now on Pennsylvania's Death Row—after a charade of a trial that saw a man removed from court for daring to fight for own defense; after I was ordered silenced as I sought to represent myself—after I was stopped from picking my own "jury of peers"—after a parade of street hustlers and whores strutted on the witness stand, one to say she saw a "short" man, of roughly 200 lbs., shoot the victim (I am 6 ft. 1; and was about 170 lbs. at the time); another ho said she was there, but never saw the first ho—after a white cab driver described the shooter as a man wearing an "afro" (and I've worn long locks for several years prior to 1981); a mostly white jury returned the state's verdict of death. As for "appeals," I am now before the State Supreme Ct., aided by Marilyn J. Gelb, Esq.... An *amicus* brief was filed in my appeal by Karl Baker, of the Nat'l. Conf. of Black Lawyers & ACLU.... The *amicus* concentrates on penalty phase argument, and the D.A.'s elicitation of my Black Panther days (I was Party Communications Sec'y in my teens); needless to say, altho' I harbor no shame of my Panther past, it was ripe w/ prejudice before a white (mostly) jury. That appeal is pending—

I remain a revolutionary journalist, and still write & contribute to selected projects.... I was also a widely-known, and among cops, widely-hated, MOVE supporter, who went into the jails to get the Africans' side of Aug. 8, '78 confrontation—where my "colleagues" were too chicken-shit, to interview MOVE, (but not too "uppity" to interview Rizzo!) I did human, warm pieces on some of the most beautiful folks I ever met—for that, I've been shunned by former "professionals," and persecuted by the state—long an unpopular target of cops for my widely-reported MOVE stories (and personal appearance, and political, militant background ala BPP), the "otha shoe dropped" on Dec. 9th, '81—the rest is history—

Incidentally, as a youth, I briefly worked in the editorial staff of the *Black Panther*, in N. California, and there met Elmer Geronimo Pratt, then Dep'ty Def. Minister, of LA—give him my warmest revolutionary regards....

Your articles on Ramona are *right on point*, and virtually the *only* organ/medium which exposes the blatantly unconstitutional nature of the religious, political, familial oppression of the nature of her parole denial—it's fitting that this happens in the year the bourgeois media blathers on about the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution—have the bastards in Harrisburg read the thing? Under their draconian ultimata, Ramona could be re-imprisoned for visiting her husband (in MOVE)! If her own *mom* were to accept the teachings of *John Africa*, she would be precluded from seeing her—family, spouse, religion, *be damned*, the gov't of Pa. sez; ironic that this gov't was itself the "cradle" of that lofty document, which life has consistently *ignored* for 2 centuries, as it related to Africans, Indians, Latinos, and whites without property, purses, or political power.

Ona MOVE!
Long Live John Africa's Revolution!
Mumia

May 4, 1987
Dear Paul: Ona MOVE!

...Our objective is *also* to garner support against this hypocritical and barbarous system, which bombs babies in the name of civic evictions, then whitewashes the mass murderers responsible for the premeditated carnage and human holocaust of May 13th. If I was "judged" guilty of murder, and sentenced to death, what of those judged guilty by the people of mass murder?



Revolutionary Worker
Framed-up MOVE supporter Mumia Abu-Jamal faces execution.

Can we expect Goode, Sambor, Brooks & Co., to take up lodging on Pennsylvania's Death Row? If not, Paul, the very notion of "justice" and "no respecter of persons or positions under the law" is a cruel sham indeed.

Sullivan, the cowardly cop who shot-guns old women to death, never truly faced a jail cell in that fixed farce of a trial up in N.Y.; but Eleanor Bumpurs faced a death most foul, because in this system, a black grandmother "armed" w/ a butterknife is expendable—her life, like the aggregate lives of Africans in America, is *dirt cheap*. Surely, in the recent U.S. Supreme Court case, *McCleskey v. Kemp* did little to dispel that bitter truth. *Kudos* to Rachel W. for her interests in the state censorship of reading materials to Ramona & otha Africans at Muncy. Similarly, I have instituted several civil suits against prison officials; 1) For punishing me for the practice of my "First Amendment Rights" of free exercise of religious beliefs, by placing me in the "hole"; 2) For effecting a *de facto* total ban of *Burning Spear* newspapers, *Revolutionary Worker's* many issues, and other material of a leftist nature—my *pro se* suits are now pending in the Middle District of Pennsylvania....

It's an honor to be adopted into your class-war stipend tradition—it's a greater honor to find a voice which dares to shed the sheep's clothing of "democratic socialism" to condemn the puppet-Democrat Goode in Philadelphia—so many so-called "revolutionaries" have rushed to protect Goode, as a political entrée into black potential support, that it's sickening—Goode is little more than America's version of Emperor Bokassa, of Central African Republic, the mad francophile who gunned down school-kids—their difference is only one of degree—his "supporters" among those who should know better are guilty of naked hypocrisy—*Long Live MOVE!* For exposing his true treacherous nature!

Ona MOVE!
Mumia

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all class-war prisoners! Down with the racist death penalty! We urge *WV* readers to continue to support and build the PDC. Become a sustaining contributor. Send a donation of \$5 or more and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send \$.75 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■



TROTSKY

Socialist Revolution or Fascist Barbarism

In the Communist Manifesto, written in the mid-19th century, Marx and Engels posed the alternatives facing humanity as "socialism or barbarism." In its epoch of decline, capitalism knows no other way out than imperialist war and fascist genocide. In a draft article dictated shortly before his assassination by Stalinist agents, Trotsky condemned the opportunists who paralyzed the proletariat and obstructed it

from taking power. It was this failure of proletarian revolution which allowed the coming to power of Hitler and his French collaborators of the bonapartist Vichy regime, headed by Marshal Pétain.

The regime of the senile Marshal Pétain represents a senile form of Bonapartism of the epoch of imperialist decline. But this regime too proved possible only after the prolonged radicalization of the French working class, which led to the explosion of June 1936, had failed to find a revolutionary way out. The Second and Third Internationals, the reactionary charlatanism of the "People's Fronts," deceived and demoralized the working class. After five years of propaganda in favor of an alliance of democracies and of collective security, after Stalin's sudden passage into Hitler's camp, the French working class proved caught unawares. The war provoked a terrible disorientation and the mood of passive defeatism, or to put it more correctly, the indifferentism of an impasse. From this web of circumstances arose first the unprecedented military catastrophe and then the despicable Pétain regime....

The successes of fascism easily make people lose all perspective, lead them to forget the actual conditions which made the strengthening and the victory of fascism possible. Yet a clear understanding of these conditions is of especial importance to the workers of the United States. We may set it down as a historical law: fascism was able to conquer only in those countries where the conservative labor parties prevented the proletariat from utilizing the revolutionary situation and seizing power. In Germany two revolutionary situations were involved: 1918-19 and 1923-24. Even in 1929 a direct struggle for power on the part of the proletariat was still possible. In all these three cases the Social Democracy and the Comintern criminally and viciously disrupted the conquest of power and thereby placed society in an impasse. Only under these conditions and in this situation did the stormy rise of fascism and its gaining of power prove possible.

—Leon Trotsky, "Bonapartism, Fascism, and War" (August 1940)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS Liz Gordon

EDITOR Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Noah Wilner

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jon Lawrence

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bonnie Brodie, Jon Brule, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Frank Hunter, Jan Norden, James Robertson, Reuben Samuels, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer, Marjorie Stenberg, Noah Wilner (Closing editor)

Workers Vanguard (USPS 098-770) published biweekly, except 2nd issue August and with 3-week interval December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 41 Warren Street, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: 732-7862 (Editorial), 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. Domestic subscriptions: \$5.00/24 issues. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint

No. 429

29 May 1987

At the Barbie Trial in Lyon

As the trial of Nazi SS butcher Klaus Barbie opened in Lyon, France, a reporter for *Le Bolchévique*, newspaper of the *Ligue Trotskyiste de France*, section of the international Spartacist tendency, was present. We print below her eyewitness account of the first week of the trial.

Monday, May 11: I joined the hundreds of journalists milling around outside the Palace of Justice in Lyon. The first person I recognized was the Soviet correspondent for *New Times*, Bezymensky. His picture was published with an interview he had recently given in Moscow to one of the Lyon papers. He is wearing many rows of military decorations as an anti-Nazi statement. Later I learned that he was at Stalingrad and served as translator there when Wehrmacht general Paulus surrendered to the Red Army in 1943. He also interrogated Göring in Nuremberg.

Barbie arrives in his bulletproof, windowless van. Inside the courtroom, 700 journalists are trying to find their seats. An American reporter happens to notice that Charles Hernu [Mitterrand's former war minister] is up in the mezzanine holding court, posturing for the photographers. Hernu, the French army's favorite "Socialist," has blood on his hands including ordering the bombing of Greenpeace. And now he expels North African families from the neighborhoods of "his" municipality, Villeurbanne, a working-class suburb of Lyon.

The court enters. Barbie is brought in; his handcuffs are removed; he chats amiably with his translators; he smiles graciously at his lawyer, Jacques Vergès. Vergès is cynically playing on his past reputation as an anti-colonialist fighter; today he is the lawyer for pro-Nazi anti-Semitism. Barbie/Vergès intend to dominate the proceedings. They do. All eyes are riveted on them. Then, slowly, for the first time since the presiding judge had him brought in, the Butcher of Lyon deliberately turns his gaze toward the public and stares back. There is a smiling grimace on his face and it does not go away: contempt, insolence, confidence. A sort of shudder sweeps the courtroom. The Nazi torturer is amused. It is unspeakable, bloodcurdling.

Asked to state his name, he replies, "*Ich bin Klaus Altmann*," citizen of Bolivia. This is the name given him by U.S. Army intelligence. He does not budge, and the court cedes. Then a court clerk reads the names of all the witnesses who have been subpoenaed. Grotesquely, he stumbles over and mispronounces every Jewish name he reads.

There is a last minute request to accept other plaintiffs. Robert Cohen would like to give evidence of Gestapo terror in occupied Lyon. As a child, he was the only one to escape an April 1944

SS roundup at L'Hôtel de France Saint-Claude. His lawyer explains that his mother had been able to obtain a false passport for him, a passport which had a name that was... and here the lawyer stops, choosing his words, but he knew he was going to blow it... a name which was French, of the French nationality. All the Cohens in France are thus



Barbie's empty chair in Lyon courtroom. This Nazi butcher should be turned over to a tribunal of his victims and executed.

declared non-French. The state prosecutor made an energetic polemic against the prospective lawyer for the prosecution, arguing that Robert Cohen could not be a victim of a crime against humanity because he had never been sent to a concentration camp.

Tuesday, May 12: They're reading the charges and the legal decisions that have already been invoked in preparation for the trial. It takes about six hours altogether. What stands out is the terrible repetition of the list of names, the names of the people tortured by the sadist Barbie, the names of the children he personally sent to the death camps.

This makes me think of other names also. Thimbault, the French CP militant executed by a Nazi firing squad who died proclaiming, "Long live the German Communist Party!" Our Trotskyist comrades in Brest who were hideously executed or deported for having successfully set up clandestine cells among the German submariners. The Resistance of the FTP-MOI, Polish Jews who had emigrated to Paris, Communist Party members who resisted their leadership's chauvinist policy of shooting individual German soldiers because "he might be a Communist worker from Hamburg," the people who wanted the defeat of capitalist France through internationalist workers revolution.

This morning's press expressed revulsion at Barbie's demeanor yesterday.

Some attributed it to personality traits of Barbie, others to Vergès' "tactics." Yet the insolence of the monster in the dock is based not only on the "revelations" that Vergès keeps promising us about French collaboration with the Nazis. Yes, Barbie knows just how complicit the French rulers were in the Holocaust. French capitalist

No one missed the evocation of "Judaïques" (Jews) and "crematoriums." The same week the trial begins, interior minister Charles Pasqua will say that if there are not enough charter planes to expel "illegal immigrants" he will be happy to load them onto trains.

Coming out of the trial, I cross paths with Bezymensky. I ask him about the Soviet trials against Nazi criminals, can he explain how they are different from this circus? He says, well, you know, all war criminals have the same psychology, they all say that they were just following orders. But what counts, is not what's happening today in this trial, but what happens at the end. "You mean in the Soviet Union they are shot at the end?" Yes, he answers.

Wednesday, May 13: Lyon is not Marseille. Even cab drivers hate Barbie. This morning, my cabbie said, "This guy should be gotten rid of. If I ever got my hands on him, I'd know how to take care of him." He added that this was especially true because support for Le Pen, that "little Hitler," was growing in France. Perhaps the so-called indifference of the Lyon population, deplored by the condescending liberals of *Libération*, is just that people think it's grotesque that a Nazi butcher, twice condemned to death, is permitted to stage this sinister show. Up to this point the trial has rivaled the Cannes Festival (going on at the same time) in fatuous hoopla. The Lyon mayor's office issued a "press kit" on the city, and there are restaurants which are featuring a special "Barbie menu" for the duration of the trial. Grisly.

Inside the courtroom, the presiding judge is continuing the interrogation on the accused's biography. Barbie flagrantly refuses to answer all significant questions. "I can't remember the oath that we took as SS officers." "I don't know why my superiors praised me so highly." This equivocation disappears when he is asked to explain how he had been recruited by the American CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) after the war. On this subject he waxed eloquent: "I've been a staunch anti-communist since my youth." He did not even try to hide the fact that he was working for the Gehlen Organization, the Nazis' anti-Soviet counterintelligence apparatus which had been taken over practically in its entirety by the Americans after the war.

At the end of this interrogation, Barbie dramatically announces that he refuses to be present for the rest of the trial. As a Bolivian citizen kidnapped by France, the trial was, he claimed, illegal. Huge consternation among the prosecution lawyers. A number of the lawyers argue he should be required to be present at the trial. The last major political case where the accused refused to be present and was brought by force to the trial was that of Laval, head of the bonapartist [Nazi-allied] Vichy government, who was executed after his trial. Barbie is excused.

Thursday, May 14: The first testimony was from ex-vice minister of the interior of Bolivia, Gustavo Sánchez, who turned Barbie over to the French government. He documented Barbie's involvement with the fascist networks in Latin America, and Barbie's connection with the cocaine traffic. He says that it was legal to expel Barbie from Bolivia because he had applied for his citizenship under a false identity.

Dahringhaus, one of Barbie's controllers for the U.S. Army CIC, testifies this afternoon. With Barbie he infiltrated the German Communist

continued on page 13



Jews of Marseille, surrounded by French and German police, being transferred to death camp trains. Above, the ovens of Auschwitz.

FREEDOM FOR MORDECHAI VANUNU!

Mordechai Vanunu is the 32-year-old Israeli nuclear technician whose spectacular revelations exposing the Zionist state's nuclear force of 100-200 bombs were published in the London *Sunday Times* last October. (We first publicized Vanunu's case in our article, "Zionist Madmen Target Russia," *Workers Vanguard* No. 416, 21 November 1986.) For his courageous act, the working people, indeed all of humanity, owe Vanunu a tremendous debt of gratitude. Instead this heroic man now languishes in solitary confinement in an Israeli prison, heavily guarded by the Shin Beth, the sinister Zionist secret police which are a cross between the FBI and the Gestapo. In the Zionist fortress, "security" and the brutal secret police enforcers are treated as sacrosanct. This underscores the unprecedented ruling of the Israeli Supreme Court on May 24 that Shin Beth had tortured and framed up a Circassian Muslim army officer on charges of espionage and treason, and that he must be immediately released. Vanunu is charged with disclosing state secrets, "aggravated espionage" and aiding the enemy in wartime, charges which carry the death sentence.

Kidnapped from Rome last September by the Mossad (the Israeli CIA) Vanunu was spirited to Israel where he was held *incommunicado*. Only a protest by his family and friends saved him from possibly being "disappeared" in the Shin Beth dungeons. Even after a 33-day hunger strike Vanunu is still deprived of even the modicum of rights ordinarily granted prisoners. The legal proceedings against him are conducted behind closed doors under Israel's draconian security regulations.

In the intensely chauvinist Zionist fortress, governed by the "Labor"-Likud alliance which includes the entire Zionist spectrum and is presently headed by notorious terrorist and murderer Yitzhak Shamir, the government has orchestrated a campaign to vilify Vanunu. But Israeli society is deeply polarized. The brutally oppressed Palestinian Arabs make up 20 percent of the population inside Israel and another 1.2 million live under the Zionist jackboot in the Occupied Territories. And even within the Hebrew-speaking majority there are deep divisions between the relatively privileged Ashkenazi (European) Jews and the Sephardic or "Oriental" Jews who, like the Moroccan-born Vanunu, come from

Faces Death Sentence for Exposing Israeli Nuclear Arsenal



Jerusalem, December 1986: Courageous Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu flashes message to reporters from police van, saying he was hijacked in Rome by Israeli agents.

North Africa and the Near East. While Sephardic Jews make up the mass base of the right-wing Zionist and religious parties, the discrimination they suffer can also produce a Vanunu. The polarization of Israeli society profoundly deepened after the Zionist blitzkrieg in Lebanon and hideous massacre of thousands of defenseless Palestinians at Shatila and Sabra, which engendered maniacal enthusiasm from some and deep revulsion from others.

In a foreword to a recent collection of materials translated from the Israeli press on Vanunu, the distinguished Israeli civil libertarian Israel Shahak notes that Vanunu not only revealed the extent of the Zionist nuclear arsenal but "the changed mentality among an important part of the younger Jewish

generation.... Not only in the better part of the press, but also among the wider public, including the *Oriental Jews*, one can hear a lot of sympathy and understanding to Vanunu, his motives, his courage and even his act" (emphasis in original).

Another example of this changing attitude was demonstrated in response to the Shamir government's announcement of a 50 percent tuition hike for Arab students to subsidize a cut for Jews. This attempt to extend the Zionists' vicious anti-Arab discrimination to the universities was met with the largest binational protests in Israel's history. In May, thousands of Arab and Hebrew-speaking students marched together demanding "Down with a racist society!" and "Stop the apartheid

policies!" Vanunu's courageous stand has no doubt inspired this small but nevertheless significant Hebrew-speaking minority to question the growing militarism and racism of the Zionist state.

As *Workers Vanguard* has pointed out in earlier articles on the importance of Vanunu's revelations, the extent of the Israeli nuclear strike force means the Zionist madmen have more than Arab capitals in their sights. They have a much bigger target in mind: the Soviet Union. As Dr. Ernesto Kahan, chairman of the Israeli Committee for the Prevention of Nuclear War, told the *Boston Globe* (4 February): "Nuclearization of the Middle East is of concern to the whole world because if nuclear war starts here, we will all blow up."

Vanunu acted in the cause of humanity. Now the international working class must champion his cause. Support for Vanunu has come from New Zealand, Australia, Canada and Britain. But here in the U.S., the quartermaster for Israel's nuclear death machine, the only organized effort for Vanunu has been the steadfast fight of his close American friend Judy Zimmet. With the aim of seeking to broaden that effort into an international campaign of protest centered on the power of the organized workers movement, we are pleased to publish here an interview with Zimmet conducted by Reuben Shiffman on behalf of *WV* and the Partisan Defense Committee. We call on our readership to raise this issue in their unions, civil rights and civil liberties organizations. Hail Mordechai Vanunu—Make his freedom your fight! Donations can be sent to: Mordechai Vanunu Legal Defense Fund, P.O. Box 45005, Somerville, MA 02145.



Photos of Israeli nuclear bomb factory beneath Negev desert from London *Sunday Times*, 5 October 1986.

Interview with Judy Zimmet:

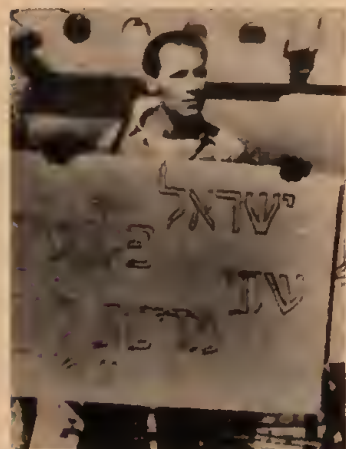
"Motti Did Something for Humanity in the Name of Peace"

WV: Judy, could you tell me a little bit about the background of Mordechai Vanunu, especially as it had a bearing on this particular courageous act of revealing to the world the scale of Israel's death machine?

Zimmet: Motti was born in Marrakesh, Morocco. He has five other brothers and sisters. In 1963 his parents and family moved from Marrakesh to Israel, and they were forced to settle in Beersheba. They had wanted to settle elsewhere, but according to articles and reports from the family, they were taken back physically to Beersheba.

WV: What's unique about Beersheba?

Zimmet: Beersheba is the fourth largest city in Israel, but in actuality it's a large settlement town. Immigrants from Morocco, Iraq, Iran, India, and more recently the Russians, have just been put there. The atmosphere is a lot different than if you go to Haifa, Jerusalem or Tel Aviv. I remember Motti telling me that his father came to Israel because there were hardships in Marrakesh, there was anti-Israeli feeling. He had promises of the land of milk and honey, but when he arrived there things were quite different. Motti had a very strong vivid image



Vanunu In 1985 demonstration at Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba for Palestinian rights. Sign reads: "Israel-Palestine. Two states for two peoples."

of his father breaking down and crying in front of the family.

I think his father has been sort of crushed by the Israeli society and what he's had to deal with being there. In Morocco, they had a store and I think were considered middle-class. But their standards were much lowered, and I remember seeing his father in a very small stand, selling religious articles. I know that not much income could be generated from these sales. I know he's a very deeply religious man, and was also considered to be like a rabbi and was responsible in one of the congregations near their household.

So they lived a very simple life. Three of the female children are extremely religious. All of the men are not. They are traditional and they keep in touch with the parents to different degrees. Motti

was educated in the yeshiva [Jewish religious academy]. I remember him saying that when he was younger something inside of him would question religion and his upbringing. I think there was something about what happened in yeshiva that made him turn away from the Jewish faith, from practicing religiously. But I think he was still searching spiritually for answers. And he then went to army service, and from what I understand he rose to the rank of first sergeant and was a trained sapper.

Afterwards he started his studies, and then started work at KMG (Kiryat Mahakar Garin, Negev Nuclear Research Center) which is the nuclear power plant at Dimona. There he received training as a technician. While he was working at Dimona, over the years, he then started studies at the University of Ben-Gurion in Beersheba. He received two bachelors, one in geography and one in philosophy. Shortly thereafter he started a masters in philosophy. He had many, many questions, was deeply concerned about the nature of the way the world was going. I think he was exposed to ideas other than the Jewish faith in those courses. And I think he'd been questioning many things about religion and spirituality.

In terms of his politics, he was active in helping the Palestinian students. He had many friends who were Bedouins and Palestinians from the north. He was a representative in the student government, and his platform was campaigning for their rights. I'm told that he was instrumental in helping these students gain equal access to housing at Ben-Gurion, as well as attending various protests against the Lebanon war and for equal Palestinian rights. He was a very good listener and many of the students did come to him with their problems, and he tried to help in whatever way he could. He believed very much in equality and equal rights.

He became progressively more left, more liberal. He might have been a member of [the left Zionist] Mapam, and then before he left, I know that he was attending meetings of Rakah, which is one of the Communist parties in Israel. And right before he left in November, he joined Rakah as a candidate member.

Then he left Israel January 19, 1986. And he said he did this out of support for the Palestinian and Bedouin students that he was trying to help. I know that he was looking for things. We corresponded, and he said that when he was in Southeast Asia, I believe in Thailand or Nepal, he went to a Buddhist monastery and stayed there for several days, and felt that that was not the direction that he wanted to take. Then he went to Australia, and shortly thereafter he went to an Anglican church and he became acquainted with the Rev. John McKnight. He felt very comfortable with the Reverend and also the community there, and felt that Christianity and the Anglican church was the path that he wanted to pursue. He converted to that faith and is now a

Judy Zimmet and Mordechai Vanunu, at ruins south of Beersheba, Israel In January 1986.



C. Zimmet

practicing Christian. He sees himself as a man of peace, as well as what he did as something for humanity and in the name of peace.

WV: Now, let me ask you for a brief sketch of yourself, and how you came to meet Mordechai. I'm sure readers would be interested.

Zimmet: Well, I'm originally from New York, and grew up in a Jewish neighborhood, Kew Gardens Hills, Flushing, and went to the local high school there. Many of my teachers were very liberal. One in particular had been openly a communist, and taught classes that were very socially minded. We didn't really discuss literature for literature's sake, but more for the issues that were involved; there were stories from Jack London and other writers, like the young black teenager who wrote his story.

I then was trained as a nurse, and I also have a degree in biology. Then I went on for further training as a nurse-midwife. I was a member of the National Health Service Corps in the United States. I worked in an inner-city hospital in Boston and then worked with Mexican migrant workers and Russian Old Believers in Oregon. I had also worked previously in other places, mostly in governmental institutions, working with underserved and indigent populations. I went to Israel at that point hoping to help my own people in a place that would be also underserved. Beersheba met those needs, they are desperately in need of midwives there.

WV: When is this?

Zimmet: I went to Israel in 1984. Then I started work in Soroka Hospital in 1985, and I stayed there for a little bit over a year. The population there is about 40 percent Bedouin, most of whom speak Arabic and don't have much education.

I had friends and they arranged a meeting with Motti, knowing both of our social situations, and I agreed and he agreed, and we ironically went to a going-away party for them. Motti talked about the activities that he was involved in at the university, and I spoke about my concerns working in the hospital and the things that I had seen in terms of the treatment of the Bedouins and the other patients where I didn't feel that their rights were upheld. Things progressed from there, and eventually he moved in, and we were together. Then he left Israel, January 19, to travel, and consider a life outside of Israel where he could live away from all the politics and live in peace. I had wanted to maintain the relationship, and we kept up a correspondence and were considering meeting at a point in the future.

WV: So when did you leave Israel?

Zimmet: I personally left Israel July 9, 1986. Motti called me Labor Day weekend and said that his plans in Australia were changing and he would be leaving sooner than he anticipated. Shortly thereafter his brother Meir who had been living in Somerville, near where I was then living, received an aerogram saying that Motti was going to go to London to tell what he knew about the

continued on page 12



Jerusalem, May 18: Chanting "Stop the apartheid policies!" Arab and Jewish students at Hebrew University jointly protest racist anti-Arab tuition policy.

Tidewater Labor Faces Layoffs, KKK Terror

Workers at the Newport News shipyard and in the surrounding Virginia Tidewater area—a beachhead of integrated labor power in the open-shop South—are facing a joint company/government assault. As the government pushes to build Reagan's "600-ship Navy" it has engineered givebacks, lockouts and layoffs at shipyards across the country. At Newport News shipyard, United Steelworkers (USWA) Local 8888 faces a contract expiration on May 31. In the past year the heavily black and unionized Tidewater proletariat has been subjected to an eruption of racist attacks, from Klan cross-burnings to the wiping out of school busing.

But the Tidewater area is not an isolated company town like Austin, Minnesota where the Hormel meat-packers strike of Local P-9 was broken by National Guard troops and knifed by their own union tops. The shipyards and docks of Newport News, Portsmouth and Norfolk have a powerful, integrated workforce capable of defeating the union-busting and racist terror. But it will take a conscious, class-struggle leadership which refuses to bow down before the anti-Soviet war drive, a leadership that fights to break the labor movement from the racist, capitalist Democratic Party.

The contract expiration at Newport News follows the announcement of massive layoffs at the yard: in November 1,250 workers were thrown onto the street after busting ass to complete the nuclear aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* 17 months early (earning the company a \$21 million bonus); another 4,000 workers are slated to be laid off when submarine and carrier overhauls are completed this spring and summer. Tenneco Inc., the giant conglomerate that owns the yard, has eliminated 1,500 other jobs since February 1986 through attrition and slashed benefits for salaried employees.

Government Whipsawing and Union-Busting

Nationally, Navy contracts account for over 80 percent of all shipyard revenues, as commercial shipbuilding has collapsed. Reagan and the Democratic-controlled Congress are using this economic muscle to break the shipyard unions. In March 1986 the Navy began "whipsawing" public and private yards against one another, putting "tremendous pressure on the shipyards to lower their bids by cutting the workers' wages," according to *The Unifier*, May 1987. "Nationwide, 30 shipyards have closed in the last six

years with a permanent loss of 65,000 jobs."

Waterfront workers from the Gulf to the Pacific Northwest are facing wage cuts, two-tier contracts and the massive erosion of union jurisdiction. The International Longshoremen's Association uniform contract has been broken

tops' support of capitalism's "national defense" is what kept the 8,000 Naval Shipyard workers without a contract from 1979 until last year, and exposed them to deadly asbestos hazards and dangerous nuclear work.

While the union tops wave the stars and stripes, the capitalists show their

youth: "I am not in town marching for desegregation. I am marching for the voter registration boost." And this is Jackson's refrain for '88, as he tours the country from New York, where a Howard Beach mob killed a black worker in December, to the Iowa farm belt, urging blacks to drop the fight for



Union beachhead in "open shop" South: Steelworkers Local 8888 on strike in 1979 (left) against Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co.

as the ILA tops sold out the strike of North Atlantic ports last fall. With its strategic position on the docks and heavily black membership, the ILA strike was a key opportunity to strike a blow for all of labor. On the West Coast, the maritime companies are preparing an attack on the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, whose contract expires June 30. Like giant Crowley Maritime, which is trying to break the ILWU Boatmen's strike, the bosses want to roll back the union gains of 50 years, particularly the union hiring hall.

At Newport News, the reliance of the USWA tops on the bosses' courts and labor boards, and their refusal to take on Tenneco and wage an aggressive organizing drive against the open-shop laws, has taken its toll. According to recent reports, union membership has fallen to less than one-half of the workers at the yard.

At the Norfolk Naval Station, the capitalists' "low bidder" rules led to a Yugoslav contractor getting a contract to supply steam to the Navy. This set off an orgy of flag-waving anti-Communism by the chairman of the Tidewater Metal Trades Council (MTC), Thomas Rinehart: "I don't understand why these communists need to build all these missiles and such. They can just low-bid us and come in and we'll just sell them our national defense." (*Virginian-Pilot*, 7 March). The union

true colors: 120 years after the smashing of the slavocracy, the Confederate flag flies again over the Norfolk Naval yard. The racist banner came down when the yard was recaptured from the slave states by Union forces on 10 May 1862. The fact that it flies again today is a sharp reminder that while the Civil War abolished chattel slavery, it will take a workers revolution to finish the Civil War and end black oppression and wage slavery.

For Labor/Black Defense Against Racist Terror!

Last November the U.S. Supreme Court let stand a federal appeals court ruling that upheld the Norfolk School Board's dismantling of busing. The plan returns "to virtually all-black status 10 of the city's 36 elementary schools; the same schools were all-black by force of law during the era of officially mandated segregation" (*New York Times*, 9 November 1986).

The racists' defeat of busing coincided with a series of KKK attacks last spring and summer, as crosses were burned in front of black families' homes, including Navy personnel, in Portsmouth and Virginia Beach. Foreign-born workers in Tidewater area shipyards have been thrown out of work, as the government excludes non-citizens from Navy work in the name of "national security." If the big guns of waterfront and maritime labor in Hampton Roads had been mobilized with integrated labor action in defense of busing, against KKK terror and for the rights of foreign-born workers, Tenneco wouldn't be so quick to take on Local 8888 at Newport News. The mobilization of labor in defense of black freedom is inseparable from the battle against givebacks and union-busting.

Tidewater labor and blacks face not only the Tenneco union-busters and their Klandinate in the White House, but backstabbing by a section of the local black "leadership"—organized in Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition. It was the 1986 "Hardy Compromise," sold by Jackson supporter Bishop L.E. Willis, Sr., which capitulated to the racist school board and helped knife 15 years of busing in Norfolk. Jackson himself came to Norfolk in 1983, not to defend busing, but to hustle votes for the Democrats, announcing before a march of 10,000 pro-busing black workers and

black rights and stay chained to the racist Democratic Party.

Defend the Unions, Defend the Soviet Union!

Even as Reagan, with the backing of the Democrats, pours trillions of dollars into Star Wars and the "600-ship Navy," war industry workers from shipyards to aerospace face givebacks and union-busting. The labor bureaucracy, firmly wedded to the "defense" of capitalism and terrified of class struggle, crawls before the bosses and their Bonzo in the White House. The latest gimmick emanating from the AFL-CIO International is called the "Inside Game." Instead of strikes defended with mass picket lines, now it's "staying on the job and working from the inside." "Taking a lockout" is in most cases, far preferable to a strike," the labor traitors counsel (AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department, *The Inside Game: Winning with Workplace Strategies*). Like the AFL-CIO's consumer boycott, this is a death sentence for labor struggle. At the huge McDonnell Douglas aerospace plants in Southern California, the "Inside Game" has kept Machinists and auto workers chained to the assembly line while the company arbitrarily imposes its givebacks.

But "defense" workers are well-placed to crack the years of Reagan reaction with some hard class struggle. Above all this means breaking with the labor traitors' defense of dying capitalism. When the Russian workers took power in October 1917, creating the Soviet workers state, they put a stop to the imperialist slaughter of World War I and placed the working class at the helm of society. Both capitalist parties, Democrat and Republican, have been united for 70 years in their hatred of this proletarian power. They seek to smash the Soviet Union, and they want to smash the workers' unions at home.

In November 1982, Tidewater unionists and blacks played a key role in building the 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization which stopped the Klan in the streets of Washington, D.C. They showed the kind of power that must be wielded today by shipyard workers, longshoremen, auto workers, in an offensive against the union-busting and racist terror, ousting the labor traitors and forging a workers party dedicated to the fight for a workers government. ■



Norfolk, 1983: Union contingent marches for busing. Labor movement must take the lead in a real fight against segregation and racist terror.

Workers Strikes, Runaway Inflation, National Fissures

Yugoslavia in Turmoil

With prices doubling every year and the highest unemployment rate in Europe, East or West, Yugoslav workers have had enough. In the past few months the country has been shaken by a massive strike wave involving 10,000 workers in almost 200 separate work stoppages. Although so far the strikes have been uncoordinated and confined to individual factories (or parts of factories), reportedly about 40 plants have been shut down in Croatia alone. In Slovenia the staff of a hotel where Prime Minister Branko Mikulic was staying walked out and refused to serve him. In late April Croatian coal miners struck for more than two weeks.

The immediate spark for the workers' protests was the announcement in late February of new "intervention laws," savage austerity measures dictated to the Belgrade regime by the world bankers' cartel, the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Wages were cut to end of 1986 levels, and some workers were even ordered to return "overpayments"! While the strikes have forced the government to announce a 90-day price freeze as a conciliatory gesture, the situation remains explosive. At one point, Mikulic threatened to bring in the army to maintain the "constitutional order."

Yugoslav workers are certainly justified in resisting the demands of the bloodsucking IMF carried out by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Since 1980 they have seen their real incomes cut by 40



Workers in Yugoslav motor factory. Recent strike wave protests savage austerity measures dictated by International Monetary Fund.

Croatia, Slovenia, etc. into neocolonies of the Frankfurt bourse and City of London. Thus the house organ of international financiers, the London *Economist* (21 February), writes that Yugoslavia "may be more susceptible to genuine change than any other communist country, because of the weakness of its ruling party and the strength of its centrifugal forces," only regretting that "nothing remotely so dramatic as Solidarity [in Poland] is happening in Yugoslavia." Solidarność, the company "union" for the CIA and Western bankers, was pressing for counter-revo-

lution on Western capitalism. Marshal Tito's death in 1980 removed a major point of Yugoslav unity and symbolized the passing of that generation of Communists who liberated the country from the Nazi occupation and from the genocidal nationalist bands (Croatian Ustashi, Serbian Chetniks).

Yugoslavia's rulers have made repeated concessions to world capitalism to sustain the clumsy and bureaucratically bloated system of "workers self-management." Although the bureaucracy bails out unprofitable ventures (with rampant inflation as one of the consequences), unemployment has run at 14 percent or more for years. In 1976, Yugoslavia's new constitution further balkanized the already piecemeal planning system by giving every unit of production within an enterprise an independent planning ability. In order to run production in the plant, the agreement of all these units must be gotten; each has veto power on any proposal from the elected managers.

During the 1950s and '60s Yugoslavia bolstered its economy by exporting its surplus labor to the European Common Market, especially West Germany. Since remittances by Yugoslav *Gastarbeiter* dried up in the early '70s, the Belgrade bureaucrats hocked the country to the banking houses of Frankfurt and Zurich and the City of London. Hard-currency foreign debt skyrocketed from \$2 billion in 1970 to \$20 billion today. "Heavy and irrational borrowing abroad," noted Dejan Jovic of the Yugoslav Federal Secretariat of Foreign Trade, "led Yugoslavia into a position of dependence on western bankers and on the International Monetary Fund... and included it into the inglorious group of the ten biggest debtors in the world" (*Review of International Affairs*, 5 October 1986). Now Western bankers and the IMF are demanding that "unprofitable" enterprises in Yugoslavia be allowed to go bankrupt, instantly throwing tens of thousands of workers into the streets.

The consequences of "market socialism" are coming home to roost, and not just in the economic arena. The atomized nature of the system breeds enterprise and regional particularism. Whenever a train crosses the border from one of the six constituent republics into another, the engine has to be changed! The whole system aggravates national tensions as relatively wealthier areas fight to hold on to their surplus:

"Decentralization, along with economic stagnation, has rekindled age-old

national jealousies. Serbs are prone to blame the 'selfishness' of the wealthier Croats for the country's ills, and the Croats lay them at the door of alleged Serb 'hegemonism.' Affluent Slovenes complain that poverty-stricken Kosovo and Macedonia are a 'bottomless pit' for their foreign aid, and Macedonians rail at the Serbs and Hungarians of Vojvodina for selling their grains abroad. 'People in every republic now feel that each decline in their standard of living is the result of their exploitation by the other republics,' explained Branko Puharic, a hardline official of the Croatian government."

—New York Times Magazine, 13 April 1986

The most advanced republics enjoy a living standard similar to Western Europe's; poverty-stricken areas (for example, the heavily Albanian autonomous region of Kosovo) more closely resemble Turkey. In Kosovo, unemployment stands at 35 percent; the standard of living is less than one-third that of the country as a whole.

A truly socialist economic system would feature democratically administered, egalitarian and centralized planning—on both a national and international basis—by elected workers and peasants delegates. The lack of socialist central planning, combined with the anti-socialist Stalinist doctrine of "socialism in one country," is obstructing economic development in general and fans the flames of nationalist-inspired conflict in the former "Tinderbox of Europe," laying the basis for dangerous capitalist-restorationist forces.

For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

The centrifugal forces in Yugoslav society have strengthened since the death in 1980 of Josip Broz Tito, the leader of the Yugoslav federation from the time his partisans came to power. Now, they threaten to tear the country apart. The reasons for both Tito's success and the current failure of the federative system lie in Yugoslavia's history. Yugoslavia was an artificial creation of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference following World War I, as both a buffer against defeated Germany and part of the *cordon sanitaire* to seal off the victorious Russian Revolution. There are no fewer than 15 separate nationalities and ethnic groups in Yugoslavia; capitalism, which had just led to bloody inter-imperialist war, could provide no solution to the national question after the war. Continuing national conflict within Yugoslavia led to all-sided nationalist bloodletting under Nazi German occupation and quisling rule during the Second World War—genocide so horrible that even some Nazis objected.

The strength of Tito's partisans lay in the fact that they called for and fought for a resolution of the Balkan question on an anti-nationalist basis. Tito himself was a Croat while the ranks of the Communist movement were predominantly Serbian and Montenegrin. With myriads of nationalist groups—the monarchist Serbian Chetniks, the fascist Croatian Ustashi and quislings of every South Slav nationality—participating in genocidal slaughter, workers and peasants came to know they were safe when the partisans with the red star on their caps arrived in town. The partisans of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia managed the incredible feat of uniting the nationalities against the German occupiers, driving the Nazis out and exterminating the royalist and fascist movements of Yugoslavia.

To defend its own position, the petty-bourgeois Stalinist formation in power had to throw representatives of the old state apparatus out of the government and nationalize the means of production, smashing the rule of capitalism. The formation of the Yugoslav federation on the basis of proletarian property forms was an enormous step forward: "The common endeavor of driving out

continued on page 15



National divisions in Yugoslavia are aggravated by "market socialism."

percent and half their wages already go just to buy food! The present economic situation cannot be sustained. Something in Yugoslavia has got to change... and radically. The working class must oust the criminally incompetent bureaucrats in Belgrade and Zagreb, tell the IMF and foreign bankers to shove it, and put the country's economic house in order. In the absence of such a perspective, strikes and work actions feed into a social turmoil which could rip Yugoslavia apart and open the door to capitalist counterrevolution. For the economic mess has not only sparked worker unrest but has further fueled national antagonisms.

The imperialists are beginning to smell the breakup of the Yugoslav workers state, undoing Tito's revolutionary work and turning Serbia,

lution (including calling for the IMF to run the Polish economy) until its power bid was spiked by the Polish army in 1981.

The deepening crisis in the Yugoslav bureaucratically deformed workers state sharply underlines the anti-socialist nature of "market socialism" and the need for workers political revolution to establish a genuine socialist federation of the Balkans.

Descent into Chaos

Yugoslavia has become the weak link of Stalinist rule in East Europe. Decades of "market socialism" and so-called "workers self-management" have created an economic disaster area. National tensions and conflicts are on the rise. The foreign policy of "nonalignment" has in practice meant increasing depend-



David Hernandez

May Day in Mexico City, 1987: 100,000 workers in independent union marches protest PRI regime's anti-labor austerity and union-busting.

Mexico Atop the Volcano

The earth is shaking under the feet of the Mexican ruling class. Workers, peasants, students and the middle class are fed up, and the ruling party is coming unstuck. Since the 1982 debt crisis, real wages have been slashed by a staggering 43 percent, something it took a bloodbath by military dictators in Chile and Argentina to impose. On top of this came the earthquake in Mexico City in September 1985, killing an estimated 20,000 people and leaving another 100,000 homeless. After these devastating events, everyone asked when the explosion of the Mexican masses would come, a question hotly debated at CIA headquarters in Langley, haunted by the spectre of revolution spreading north from Central America. Imperialist spokesmen like the *Wall Street Journal* (watchdog for the New York banks over Mexico's \$100 billion debt) make much about the "stoicism" of the Mexican masses in the face of disaster. But this was just bowing before a crackdown by the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and its semi-bonapartist regime. Now the stirrings of revolt are being felt among the millions-strong Mexican proletariat.

The middle classes were first to react: the economic crisis meant the affluent could no longer afford to shop at Niemann Marcus in Houston, families couldn't take their kids to Disneyland. This was reflected in the heavy vote in the north for the rightist PAN (National Action Party), mouthpiece for the most reactionary capitalist cliques, the church and New Rightists in Washington. Then last fall the students began



WV Photo

Electrical workers protest with supporters March 3. As 500,000 stomping workers demanded solidarity action, the ground literally shook.

protesting university "reform" plans that would exclude the poor from higher education. Twice they mobilized more than 100,000 to march on the presidential palace, and they had a 20-day strike at the national university, forcing the government to back off. The explosive student struggle awakened the Mexican masses from the "sleep of the dead" which has reigned since the bloody "Night of Tlatelolco," when the army massacred over 500 student protesters in October 1968.

And now the workers are on the move. At the end of February the powerful Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME) struck, disrupting power in the capital and presenting labor's greatest challenge to the PRI since the 1982 debt crisis. On March 3, a massive demonstration of electrical workers,

joined by subway, telephone, garment and nuclear workers, residents of poor *colonias*, teachers and students, marched on the Zócalo, supporting the strikers' demand for an emergency 23 percent wage increase. Over 500,000 unionists called for solidarity with workers' struggles and demanded Mexico stop paying the foreign debt. An observer wrote to *WV*:

"The most impressive thing was the spirit and the discipline of the Mexican workers. We were in the middle of a sea of almost half a million people, yet there was no pushing or shoving or even harsh words.... The chant "¡Huelga, Huelga, Huelga!" repeatedly erupted from the crowd, interrupting the speakers and prompting them to chant along. The Mexican workers have another interesting way of showing their enthusiasm: they jump up and down together while chanting. Mexico City is built on

an old drained lake bed and is sinking at an incredible rate. It was simply amazing to feel the Zócalo [Constitution Plaza] moving as half a million workers jumped up and down on it. The world literally shook!"

Three days later the government declared the electrical workers strike "nonexistent" and forced the SME back to work. (President Miguel de la Madrid had earlier imposed a *requisa*, "requisitioning" the power plants under military control in order to maintain service.) But the wave of labor action has continued unabated. Teachers in the southern states of Oaxaca and Chiapas have been on strike since mid-February. Beginning March 1, the new Hermosillo Ford assembly plant in northern Sonora struck for 40 days. Earning a miserable \$120-\$150 per month, the workers at this brand new, ultramodern factory finally settled for a 54 percent increase (one-third the annual inflation rate). In April, 32,000 telephone workers across the country staged an eight-day job action demanding a 110 percent wage increase. De la Madrid immediately requisitioned the phone company, forcing workers to stay on the job. And in May, 150,000 textile workers walked out in their first national strike in 25 years.

The regime has responded to this labor upsurge with a full-scale attack on labor's right to strike. In the bitter teachers strike, the government refused to recognize the dissident local union, several teachers have been arrested and one was killed by PRI gunmen. And the regime has gone all out to keep the labor movement divided. On May Day, more than a million workers in the PRI-controlled unions were herded past the presidential palace to pay their respects to De la Madrid. One group carried an ironic sign, echoing the Roman gladiators, "We who are dying of hunger salute you." But a wall of several thousand police, grenadiers with dogs, a cavalry squad and firemen with water cannon sealed off the plaza from "dissident" unionists. Meanwhile, two separate marches totaling 100,000, affiliated with independent unions, denounced the government's economic policies and U.S. intervention in Central America.

For more than half a century, the PRI has kept the lid on Mexico, to the great relief of the U.S. bourgeoisie, which learned to live with the "revolutionary" demagoguery and the nationalist posturing against Washington's foreign policy. But since the "oil bubble" burst in



Halsstead/Time

Mexican president De la Madrid meets with imperialist patron; Mexican workers jobless due to IMF starvation policies.



1981-82, causing Mexico's worst economic crisis of this century, the PRI has become brittle, lacking the grease to keep the state machinery running with its traditional combination of populism, patronage, bribery and repression. As a result, this semi-bonapartist regime has had to rely less on the carrot and more on the stick. As De la Madrid prepares to unveil his hand-picked successor, a "democratic tendency" was drummed out of the PRI by party bosses at a congress in April. Political assassinations of leftist dissidents continue, with more than 500 "disappeared" persons. And the more De la Madrid talks of "moral regeneration" of this terminally corrupt regime, the more it sticks in the craw.

Mexico is indeed ripe for socialist revolution, or bloody counterrevolution. Until recently, *right-wing* reaction has dominated the protests, because there is no communist vanguard to lead the workers' struggles. Key to the PRI's success in maintaining a virtual one-party regime has been its co-optation of the left, via various satellite "*palero*" (straw man) parties and the successive incarnations of the Communist Party which has capitulated to the nationalist rulers for more than six decades. Now, with the '88 elections approaching, five leftist parties have formed the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), a wretchedly reformist hodgepodge. Yet while still tailing after the PRI, under the classless watchword of "democracy" the new PMS and other "leftist" parties have fostered an "anti-fraud" bloc with the rightist PAN!

Today Mexico is an all-round disaster area—economically, politically, even ecologically as the capital suffocates in deadly pollution and the countryside starves on worn-out land. What's needed is a revolutionary *working-class* solution to the crisis ripping the country apart. This nation of 70 million has not only millions of desperate landless peasants but also a powerful industrial proletariat, and is increasingly integrated in the economy of the North American imperialist colossus, including by the several million Mexican-born workers in the U.S. An internationalist leadership can mobilize this power in class struggle extending south to Central America and north beyond the Rio Grande. Instead of the "unity" of the opportunists, an intransigent Trotskyist party is urgently needed to lead the fight for workers revolution, for a workers and peasants government, to liberate all the oppressed.

Circuses, No Bread

Last June the World Cup soccer games in Mexico City were supposed to give debt-and-disaster-ridden Mexico a shot in the arm—if not financially, at least to the image of the PRI regime. But the "Mundial" circus did not divert attention from the doubling of the price of tortillas. In the opening ceremony at Aztec Stadium, De la Madrid could not be heard as his speech was drowned out



Rightist PAN supporters in torchlight protests over election fraud in Chihuahua, July 1986.

by jeers from the crowd of 100,000 mostly middle-class spectators. Outside, the poor were protesting, "*No queremos goles, queremos frijoles*" (We don't want goals, we want beans). In July came elections in Chihuahua, where the rightist PAN hotly contested the governorship. In Mexico, the PRI does not lose big elections (it hasn't lost a governorship or senate seat, and the presidency has never been remotely challenged). So with an even heavier hand than usual, the army moved in on election day, and the PRI claimed victory.

The London *Economist* (12 July 1986) commented wryly: "The government's ham-handed fraud seems mystifying. Many people thought it could have won legitimately, or at the worst, by cheating fair and square." But the PRI routinely rigs *everything*, if only out of habit, including the subsequent election of Miss Chihuahua! PAN mobilized the disaffected petty bourgeoisie in a five-week protest campaign, including blocking the bridges linking Ciudad Juárez with El Paso, Texas. The bishop of Juárez joined the PAN protest and local priests read homilies against the government. This is explosive stuff in Mexico, where three civil wars (the 1856-67 Reforma led by Benito Juárez, the Revolution of 1910-20 and the Cristero Rebellion of 1926-29) have been fought to keep the church out of politics and the imperialists out of Mexico.

The bridge takeover symbolized PAN's orientation of mobilizing U.S. pressure on its behalf, regularly lobbying in Washington under the auspices of the Heritage Foundation and privately meeting with U.S. ambassador John Gavin. Prior to the Chihuahua vote, Senator Jesse Helms mobilized his pals in the Reagan administration for an orgy of Mexico-bashing, lambasting the PRI for links to drug trafficking, corruption and election fraud, virtually calling for impeachment of President

De la Madrid. And these New Right ideologies were operating in tandem with the gang in the White House basement. Last week the *Miami Herald* reported that Contragater "Spitz" Channell offered to throw U.S. support to the PAN in exchange for a \$210,000 donation for a TV ad campaign in support of the Nicaraguan contra mercenaries. PAN leaders deny making the donation, but the Mexican Congress is up in arms over this attempt to "destabilize" Mexico.

After almost two decades in the doldrums, Mexican students exploded this fall, culminating in a 200,000-plus demonstration in the Zócalo on January 21 and a three-week strike by students of

Bonaparlism in action: Mexican army on "Night of Tlatelolco," October 1968, massacred over 500.



the National Autonomous University (UNAM) in February. This strike was over the outcome of 1968, which won the right for hundreds of thousands of students to enter UNAM with free tuition. But with the economic crisis, the university administration proposed raising fees from less than 10 cents a year to over \$90, a month's salary for many workers. The Mexican student upsurge is strikingly similar to events in France and Spain, and as in Europe the Mexican government eventually "suspended" the "reforms." Yet the attitude of the Mexican left has been equivocal at best—many of the former '68ers, now ensconced in government jobs, identified with UNAM rector Carpizo.

Mexican Proletariat: The Giant Awakes

Leon Trotsky noted in elaborating the program of *permanent revolution* that "in the epoch of imperialism the massive export of capital produces in the backward capitalist countries a huge growth of the proletariat compared to the stunted native bourgeoisie. Even the tasks of the democratic revolution can only be accomplished by the proletariat's conquest of power, necessarily posing socialist tasks. Already at the time of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-20 the workers' Red Battalions played an important role in the fighting.

However, they were subordinated to the bourgeois Constitutionalists, who used them *against* the peasant armies of Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. Thus the *zapatista* agrarian revolution was *frustrated*. Having already experienced *three* bourgeois-democratic revolutions, it is clear that the future Mexican revolution must be socialist in character. Yet from 1915 on, the economically powerful Mexican proletariat has been politically impotent, a sleeping giant drugged by nationalism dressed in "revolutionary" colors.

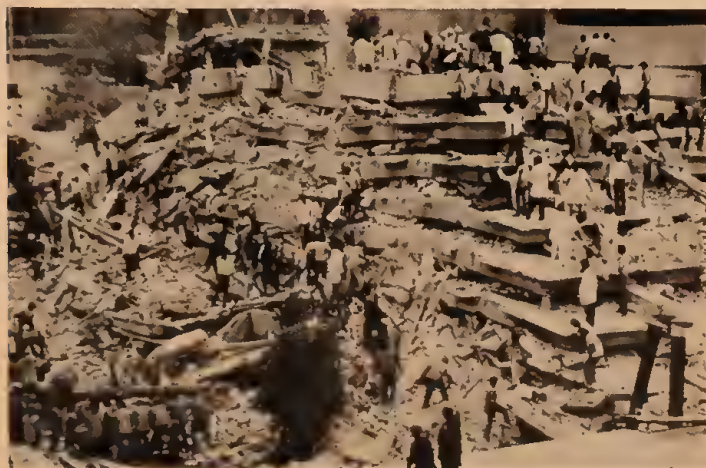
Successive post-Revolution rulers have looked to Mexican labor for its backing. When in the late '30s President Lázaro Cárdenas sought to develop national industry within the capitalist framework, he appealed for organized labor support. This led to the birth of the Confederation of Mexican Labor (CTM) which backed him against Britain and the U.S. over nationalization of imperialist-owned railroads and oil companies. "Worker administration" of the nationalized properties was instituted by the government, in order to discipline the proletariat through the bought-off labor bureaucracy. The champion of this subordination of labor to the capitalist state was Stalinist fellow traveler Lombardo Toledano, whose barrage of hate literature prepared the climate for the assassination of Trotsky in his Mexican exile by an agent of Stalin. But Lombardo was soon replaced by openly anti-Communist bureaucrats, and the new CTM was officially incorporated as a sector of the ruling party. Here General Cárdenas anticipated the rise of the corporatist Argentine unions under the "protec-

tion" of General Juan José Perón.

When Fidel Velásquez took the helm in 1941, the federation's slogan was changed from "For the emancipation of the working class" to "For the emancipation of Mexico." For half a century, "Don Fidel" has policed labor on behalf of Mexican (and American) capital. After World War II, the McCarthyite red purge of the American unions was extended south of the border by Velásquez, as always tightly linked to anti-Communist, pro-imperialist U.S. labor misleaders (he escorted Samuel Gompers during a 1924 Mexican trip). The government replaced the leadership of the militant railway workers with a flunkie nicknamed "*El charro*" (the cowboy). Ever since, *charrismo* has stood for sellout, corrupt, gangster-ridden PRI "union" leaders. But by the early '70s, the Mexican "economic miracle" had come to a dead end, industrialization based on import substitution unable to expand further and agrarian reform ground to a halt.

As worker and peasant discontent spread, there appeared a number of "democratic tendencies" in key unions such as the electrical workers. Auto unions split off in an "independent" federation. But while talking "independence," these groupings did *not* represent a fundamental break with the PRI.

continued on page 10



Earthquake damage in Mexico City, September 1985. More than a year later, 90,000 still lack permanent homes.

Mexico...

(continued from page 9)

Their politics were vintage *cardenismo*, somewhat more militant perhaps than Velásquez, but still bourgeois nationalism. The left tailed after these "democratic" up-and-coming bureaucrats, and after a period of the usual PRI treatment, today the "independent" rivals of the sellout CTM have been reabsorbed by the system. They may march separately on May Day, some may have their own federations—but they are all reformists working within the framework of the capitalist state. *None have mounted a serious challenge to the IMF austerity programs which have driven the Mexican masses to their present desperate condition.*

The only genuine opposition to the company "white unions" and the PRI's corporatist unions is a programmatic fight for *revolutionary*-led unions. Trotsky's unfinished notes on "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," found after his death, used the Mexican experience to demonstrate the tendency of trade unions in the capitalist world "growing together with the state power": "In Mexico the trade unions have been transformed by law into semistate institutions and have, in the nature of things, assumed a semitotalitarian character." Thus the struggle for trade-union democracy, he wrote, requires the complete freedom of the unions from the imperialist or colonial capitalist state:

"The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and



WV Photo

Leftist parties in election coalition (left), Oaxaca, August 1986. PRT presidential candidate Rosario Ibarra, head of Mothers Committee for the Disappeared.



Arturo Fuentes

argued in *What Is To Be Done?* and demonstrated in the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, is the communist vanguard party. Yet the Mexican proletariat has never had such a leadership, and certainly not from the Mexican Communist Party (PCM). The left has tailed in the wake of the self-proclaimed "governments of the revolution"—though the PRI and its predecessors are the heirs not of the peasant revolutionaries Zapata and Villa, but of the northern landowners who murdered them and crushed their movement. As a result, the Mexican working class continues to be dominated by the alien class ideology of bourgeois nationalism, as ex-CP intellectual José Revueltas noted in *Ensayo sobre un proletariado sin cabeza* (Essay on a Headless Proletariat) which was published in 1962 after he left the CP.

Revueltas pointed to the role of the PCM in particular in blocking the development of a proletarian vanguard in

Street and the Vatican called for the IMF imperialist bankers cartel to take control of the Polish planned economy, which would have brought the hunger and unemployment that Mexican workers know well. Now the PSUM has joined with the nationalist Mexican Workers Party (PMT) and three smaller groups in the Mexican Socialist Party, which demonstrably dropped the hammer and sickle in favor of the Mexican tricolor, long the emblem of the PRI.

The PMS loudly proclaims its independence of "any center of international political direction" and defines itself as "socialist, patriotic and anti-imperialist, democratic, defending the nation and its best traditions" (*La Jornada*, 30 March). One thing is certain: in a country where even the bourgeois ruling party calls itself revolutionary, this oh-so-Mexican "socialism" has nothing to do with socialist revolution. In announcing their fusion, PSUM and PMT leaders declared they were for "conserving the participation of private capital for an indefinite period" and invited "small" capitalists to join (*La Jornada*, 2 November 1986). During the UNAM strike, PMT leader Castillo denounced the struggle as "mistaken" and "reactionary," supposedly defending "privileges"; one sector of the PSUM joined the students while another backed the rector. Strikes just aren't the name of the PMS' game. They have their eyes on another prize: second place in the 1988 elections.

Forge a Mexican Trotskyist Party!

The ostensibly Trotskyist PRT (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores—Revolutionary Workers Party) has been playing the musical chairs "unity" game with the rest of the Mexican left for years. The PRT is the antithesis of Trotskyism in every respect, constituting the far right wing within Ernest Mandel's dis-United Secretariat (USec), of which it is the Mexican section. They are so imbued with parliamentary cretinism that in the 1984 U.S. presidential elections the PRT wrote that the Jesse Jackson campaign offered "an opportunity for the left to actively intervene" and dismissed the fact that Jackson is part and parcel of the bourgeois Democratic Party (*Bandera Socialista*, 27 February 1984). The USec had to call their Mexican comrades to order, reminding them that their "fraternal" party, the abysmally reformist American SWP, was running "independently."

The PRT went into great contortions to get into the electoral ball game: when the government decreed an electoral reform in 1977 to divert mounting opposition onto the parliamentary road by opening up a few seats for a kept "opposition" and legalizing tame left parties, the PRT swallowed the bait. For the next four years they liquidated into campaigning for electoral registration. In 1982, they ran Rosario Ibarra for president, a sympathizer who came to prominence as a militant leader of the Mothers Committee for the Disappeared (her son was kidnapped and murdered by the regime), and won several hundred thousand votes, claiming 2 percent of the total. The PRT now

has six Congressional deputies, plus state legislators and town councilors. As a result, it receives state subsidies and deputies' salaries which have reportedly made it possible for this small party to support 150 paid functionaries!

The PRT has been gyrating wildly over the drive for a united left party. Last year they undertook fusion discussions with the PMT, only to break them off upon "discovering" that caudillo Castillo didn't run a democratic organization. In February, the PRT voted that it "could join the [PSUM-PMT] fusion," but then pulled out (against objections from Pedro Peñaloza and other PRT deputies) saying it wasn't interested in "organic unity" but in a "federation of parties." All agree, however, that their main concern is the "possible loss of the PRT's electoral registration" (*Bandera Socialista*, 20 April). In May 1986, PRT parliamentary fraction leader Peñaloza scandalously marched arm in arm with PRI leaders "in defense of national sovereignty," defending the honor of government leaders against Jesse Helms. But a few months later the PRT joined in a political bloc with Helms' rightist buddies, all in the name of "democracy."

Following the Chihuahua elections, Mexican papers published an ad jointly signed by the PRT, PSUM, PMT and the PAN calling on Mexicans of "whatever ideology" to "join a movement for democratic plurality" (*La Jornada*, 12 August 1986). Calling for "a great national opposition front," the PRT's Peñaloza justified this rotten bloc of left and right, saying, "We aren't frightened about working together with PAN because we don't project anything more than the construction of a great national movement to stop the government's arbitrariness" (*La Jornada*, 16 August).

The craven reformists are blind to the terrible danger they are courting. The threat of fascism is no pipe dream in Mexico today, where the petty bourgeoisie is driven to a frenzy by the crisis, and fascist pistoleros are increasingly active. On September 6, the left-right bloc called a "Forum for Effective Suffrage," which included a host of sinister right-wingers. Among them were the murderous, anti-Semitic Tecos



Pedro Vallarta

Teachers' demonstration faces brutal police repression.

for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

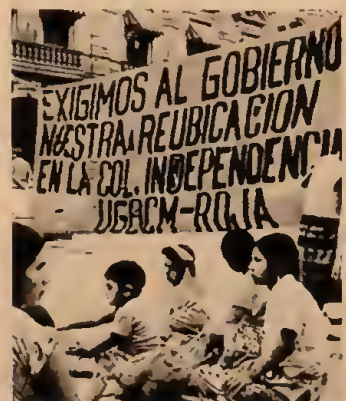
This was Trotsky's last work. In August 1940, 100,000-150,000 came out for the burial of the co-leader of the Russian Revolution. To this day Leon Trotsky is widely honored as a revolutionary hero among Mexican workers.

Stalinism and Nationalism vs. Proletarian Independence

The decisive element in forging the revolutionary consciousness of the working class and leading its struggles to the conquest of power, as Lenin

Mexico: "The essential root of the lack of independence of the working class in Mexico must be sought...in the role which the Mexican Communist Party has represented and represents as *deformed working-class consciousness*, as a party which has been unable to be the authentic *class party* of the proletariat, after more than 40 years of physical existence." But Revueltas ascribes this to Mexican CP leaders' "mechanical, unilateral and erroneous" application of the popular-front line of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern (1935), which spelled the "ideological and political dilution" of the working class into "the ideology of the Mexican revolution." He only later recognized that these policies reflected the defeat of Leninist internationalism in Soviet Russia, usurped by Stalin's nationalist dogma, "socialism in one country," which led to the demise of the Communist International.

The PCM was one of the most debased Stalinist parties, directly involved in the assassination of Trotsky on orders from Stalin. After decades of bureaucratically expelling groups and individuals seeking more militant policies, in 1981 the PCM reunited with several of its offshoots to form the United Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM). The PSUM was dominated by "Eurocommunists," omitting any mention of the Soviet Union from its declaration of principles, and supporting Polish Solidarność. That company "union" for the White House, Wall



WV Photo

Peasants demand return of lands, Puebla, August 1986.



Lasasola / archives

Emiliano Zapata, leader of frustrated Mexican agrarian revolution.

of Guadalajara, fascist bands linked to the drug mafia, Central American death squads and the World Anti-Communist League of General Singlaub. Fistfights and screaming matches broke out as hundreds of ultrarightists such as COLUDE and "Civilization in Liberty" took over the meeting. *La Jornada* (7 September 1986) reported in horror:

"There it was, in the Diego Rivera Hall of the Hotel de México, and for the first time we saw it in the flesh, giving battle and winning, taking over the stage; we listened to its message with a prolonged chill: it was fascism."

The reformists' bloc with the right and ultraright recalls the suicidal arguments of German Stalinist Thälmann for the 1931 "red referendum," when the KPD joined with Hitler's fascists against the Social Democrats, claiming this "united front" with the mortal enemies of the workers was only "utilizing the possibilities of legal, parliamentary mass action." As Trotsky noted, this treacherous maneuver only aided the Nazis' march to power.

The new Mexican Socialist Party took as its own the slogan "For effective suffrage, no re-election!"—the watchword of the 1910 revolution on behalf of the liberal bourgeois Francisco Madero. Today as the reformist left unites with PAN leader Pablo Madero against the populist semi-bonapartist PRI, this

constant maneuverism. *Their complaint is that they have been excluded from the pop-front potpourri.*

The Morenoites suffer from congenital "frontitis." Since the PRT obtained its ballot slot, the POS has published one appeal after another for "unity" fronts with the reformists: "For a front of the Trotskyists to obtain the proletarian united front," "For a socialist electoral front," "Unite to fight the PRT and hold back the PAN," "Form an electoral front of the entire left." What would such an electoral front of the left mean? The POS opposes Contadora, and even calls for military victory for the FMLN guerrillas in El Salvador. It denounces the PRT and PSUM for their political support to the PRI regime over the bank nationalization/austerity measures. But running on the same ticket and platform with these reformists, who praise the government's "progressive measures" in Central America and at home, makes the POS nothing but a "left" tail on the bevy of kept "opposition" parties.

Last year, the Morenoites carried their "unity" mania a step further, by fusing with an organization of slum dwellers in the giant working-class shantytown of Naucalpan. The product was the "Zapatista Workers Party" (PTZ), a strange electoral formation

petty-bourgeois rad-lib "Peace and Freedom Party," ultimately to no avail. The Spartacist tendency has told the story of the Argentine quick-change artist Nahuel Moreno, "the Cantinflas of pseudo-Trotskyism," in our *Moreno Truth Kit*.

"So Far From God, So Close to the United States"

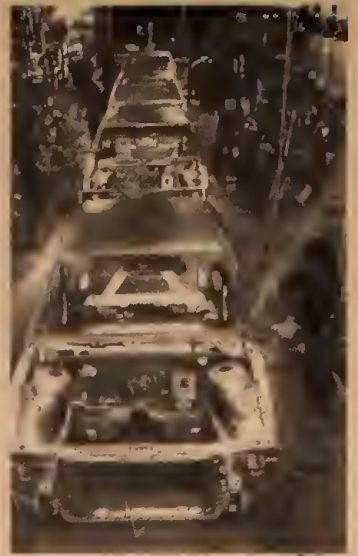
"I think that people in the long run are less concerned about reports of [our] mining Nicaraguan harbors than they are about the danger of creating a wave of immigration into this country.... If we have another Cuba in Central America, Mexico will have a big problem and we're going to have a massive wave of immigration."

—CIA director William J. Casey, *U.S. News & World Report*, 15 April 1984

General Paul Gorman, head of the U.S. Southern Command, recently declared Mexico is "a center of subversion" that could become the U.S.' "Number One security problem" within ten years (*Baltimore Sun*, 8 March). And President Reagan regularly laces his Central America speeches with references to the "red tide" of communism spreading north through Mexico to threaten Harlingen, Texas. Today IMF austerity policies are stirring massive discontent. The Simpson-Rodino immigration control act is shutting off the traditional escape valve of emigration to the north, and mass deportations could cause the Mexican volcano of social unrest to erupt. With \$100 billion of international debt at stake and a 2,000-mile common border, U.S. rulers in Washington and Wall Street are plenty worried about a collapse of Mexico.

In his latest contra aid appeal, Reagan rants about "another base for Soviet subversion, another Cuba established on American shores" in Nicaragua. And he adds that the Soviets' supposed "ultimate objective" is in "a line attributed to Nikolai Lenin—The road to America leads through Mexico" (*New York Times*, 4 May). This bogus quotation, like others banded about by administration spokesmen, should be attributed not to Vladimir Lenin but rather to John Birch Society founder Robert Welch and his forebears of the paranoid ultraright, who can only conceive of revolution in the U.S. as something imported by foreign agents. Today, contrary to Washington's claims, the nationalist Sandinistas and Salvadoran leftist rebels are unfortunately *not* calling for international socialist revolution. Yet this is vital not only for the liberation of the region from the domination of Yankee imperialism, but in defending Cuba and the USSR against the bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive. As we wrote four years ago:

"The key to workers revolution in the Central American isthmus lies not in any of the five tiny countries that comprise it, which are primarily agricultural, but in Mexico with its many-millioned proletariat. The land of the Aztecs is where the heavy battalions of the working class are to be found.... And now with the combination of the oil crisis, the international financial crisis, a general economic and political



Hermosillo Ford plant: high-tech, low wages.

crisis in Mexico, talk of workers revolution in Mexico is more than a Reaganite nightmare. Yet virtually the entire Mexican left, including ostensible Trotskyists, seeks not to bring down the 'institutional revolutionary' capitalist regime but to push it to the left. The governments of López Portillo and De la Madrid are for a 'political solution' in Central America out of bourgeois self-interest: they wish to take the heat off Mexico by damping the fires of social revolution on its southern border. And Mexican pseudo-socialists aid them in this counterrevolutionary enterprise."

—"Defend Nicaragua, Complete the Revolution!" *WV* No. 329, 6 May 1983

An internationalist perspective also poses clear tasks for a revolutionary Trotskyist party and class-struggle leadership of labor in the U.S., which must fight for full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers and organizing the unorganized on both sides of the border. With Mexico turning into a giant *maquiladora*, or free trade zone, U.S. companies are opening high-tech, low-wage plants in the northern border region. The strike at the just-opened Hermosillo Ford plant symbolizes the increasing integration of Mexico's economy with the U.S. With GM opening 12 more plants in Mexico (while it closes 11 in the Midwest), it is urgent that U.S. auto workers unite in struggle with their class brothers and sisters south of the border. Instead, the American labor bureaucracy divides them with its protectionist poison.

The fight for workers revolution in Mexico and the U.S. is directly linked, including by the human bridge of millions of Mexican and Central American workers who have "gone north." Mexico's proximity to the U.S., which has cost it half its territory and subjected it to repeated Yankee aggression, can be a powerful lever for international socialist revolution. The Spartacist tendency seeks to construct an authentically communist vanguard to lead it, forged in the fight for the rebirth of Trotsky's Fourth International. ■



Nationalist president Lázaro Cárdenas (left) appealed for labor support for nationalization of oil (below), 1938.

same slogan could become the rallying cry for "democratic" counterrevolution.

Trotsky pointed to the corrupting influence of parliamentarism on the workers movement in France. The predominance of electoral cretinism in Mexico, where Congress is a total fiction to mask the semi-bonapartist "strong state," is positively grotesque. While the PRT wallows in the parliamentarist swamp, the Partido Obrero Socialista (POS—Socialist Workers Party) has posed as a left critic, identifying itself with the tradition of Trotskyism. The POS notes that the new PMS was born as "a party for reconciliation, parliamentarism and electoralism" (*El Socialista*, May 1987). What does the POS propose? As the Mexican section of the International Workers League (IWL), founded by the late Nahuel Moreno, the POS has been educated in the Morenoite "method" of

which "raises the banner of Zapata" and "retakes" his program. To take as their symbol the leader of a *peasant* revolutionary movement sums up a petty-bourgeois and nationalist perspective. The PTZ today caricatures Zapata's program of "land and liberty"—a clarification call for sweeping agrarian revolution—into pressuring for land titles for urban squatters; instead of strike struggles, it calls for refusal to pay gas and electric bills. And to top it off, the PTZ joined with the reformist PRT, PSUM and the nationalist PMT in a "Mexican Popular Unity" alliance for the state elections! What's needed in Mexico today is not bogus "popular unity"—such as in Allende's Chile, where the popular front led to the bloody Pinochet coup—but unity around the revolutionary program of a *Leninist-Trotskyist* proletarian party.

The Mexican Morenoites' maneuverings are a true reproduction of their (now defunct) master's voice. Nahuel Moreno tried to turn political banditry into a patented program. For a tendency which in the early '60s presented itself as "revolutionary workers Peronism" and in the late '70s as the "Simón Bolívar Brigade" draped in Sandinista colors, which tried to pass itself off as Guevarist and then Maoist only to find its true vocation on its native soil as Argentine social democrats, a "Zapatista Workers Party" is par for the course. They adapt to whatever political current is in vogue, including tailing after Portuguese colonels and Iranian ayatollahs, instead of standing for the historic program of Trotskyism. In the United States the Morenoites pulled the same underhanded maneuvers in the



Trotsky holding banner for the Fourth International in Diego Rivera mural, "Man in Control of the Universe."

Spartacist League Public Offices

—MARXIST LITERATURE—

Bay Area

Fri 5:00-8:00 p.m., Sat 3:00-6:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor (near 17th Street)
Oakland, California Phone (415) 839-0851

Chicago

Tues 5:00-9:00 p.m. Sat 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
161 W Harrison St., 10th Floor
Chicago, Illinois Phone (312) 663-0715

New York City

Tues 6:00-9:00 p.m., Sat 1:00-5:00 p.m.
41 Warren St. (one block below
Chambers St. near Church St.)
New York, N.Y. Phone (212) 267-1025

Mordechai Vanunu...

(continued from page 5)

work that he had been doing. He felt that he had to do it for political reasons; he knew that members of his family might be hurt. The next thing I knew was that I had been told that on the news there was an Israeli man in London who gave information about Israel's nuclear capabilities. A friend had told me this, and I ran to the library to corroborate the facts, and it pointed to Motti.

That day I flew to London in order to look for him, thinking and knowing that he would be in some kind of danger. So I met with the reporters from the *Sunday Times* and later found out about Motti's conversion, and also that the Rev. John McKnight was coming. At that point I found out that the reporters truly did not know where Motti was. He had checked out of his hotel on September 30. They had had some contact with him in order to tell him that his story was coming out on October 5, then they had no further contact. He had said that he wanted to leave London and just travel around England in order to find himself, and they were not sure if he had left the country or had still been in England, or if someone had kidnapped him, or if he was alive or dead.

A week after arriving, I returned to the States and then I received a phone call saying that over the wires, Reuters, reports came that Motti had been picked up by the Mossad [the Israeli CIA], that a female agent lured him out of England into the Mediterranean where he was taken aboard a yacht and then arrested in international seas. Rev. McKnight was still in London trying to corroborate this and decide whether or not it was worth it to go to Israel and try and find him. I guess he found enough evidence that he did go to Israel. Then there were reports that he was giving press conferences, saying that he had strong evidence that Motti was in Israel and he had been given information by reporters and shown court documents that Motti was being brought up on charges.

Then Meir and myself spoke to the *Boston Globe*. At that point there had been a news blackout in Israel. They were not allowing any publication of anything connected with Motti. But if certain news items had been generated from outside, they would be able to translate them and then report them in the Israeli press. So when the *Boston Globe* article came out, I think that was widely publicized in Israel. Then the censorship was lifted, and a few days later Israel did acknowledge that they had Motti and he was in prison and that he did have access to a lawyer.

When the censorship was lifted, Israeli reporters were calling it "Vanunu-



Israelis target Russia: new Lavi fighter-bombers could nuke Soviet Black Sea fleet headquarters at Sevastopol. With retueling, they could reach Moscow. Vanunu's revelations of 100-200 Israeli nuclear bombs expose Zionist Apocalypse plans.

mania." All these friends came forth, and portrayed Motti in terms which I think are slanderously libel. He was labeled homosexual, impotent, greedy, a loser. I think most people agree that this has been a media smear campaign generated by the Israeli government, the Mossad, to try and create an emotional atmosphere in Israel so that people would be against him. And I think to some extent this has been effective. Of course this was carried by the news wires and the *New York Times*, they labeled him as a traitor and a spy. This was all done before his trial. So the Israeli government has been at work, to try and tip the scales of justice. To some extent I feel Motti has already had his trial, been condemned by the Israeli press and the Israeli public.

WV: Have you ever gone back to Israel and actually met with him?

Zimmet: I did go back to Israel. I had been told around Christmastime that I had permission to visit him. Then he wrote on his hand how he was kidnapped back to Israel. Then I was told that his rights were taken away; they took away his books, his Walkman, his visiting rights. I very much wanted to see him. At that point he had also gone on a hunger strike. He communicated through his brother Asher who had returned from Holland. Then Asher spoke to Meir who was in Somerville, that he very much wanted to see me, that he had something important to tell me.

So the end of December, I went over to Israel, and I met with his lawyer, then Amnon Zichroni. I was told that the Shin Beth [Israel's highly secretive FBI] would not allow a meeting. And Amnon was trying to negotiate with them, he supposedly has a very special relation-

ship with them. I was told that I could not meet with the Shin Beth, that they did not exist. So I had to negotiate through Amnon Zichroni.

So he came up with a plan, where if there was a meeting he would be present along with Romi Lisschitz, the head of the prison, and Motti had given his word that he would not try and pass anything off, and I promised not to divulge any information they did not want me to divulge. However, when it



Israeli leftists and liberals meet with PLO delegation in Romania. Four of the Israelis were subsequently arrested under "anti-terrorism" law, including Yael Lotan, head of the Committee for the Open Trial for Mordechai Vanunu.

came to the issue of security and the Shin Beth, they refused. So Amnon decided to file a court appeal, and that was being processed. Then I was told that the prison was being readied for security reasons. Then I was told that a meeting had been arranged. So one day Amnon and I did go down to the prison. I was thinking that the meeting would be a normal meeting, however there were hints that it would not. When I got to the prison with Amnon, we met with Romi Lisschitz, and I was told that security only allowed us to meet through a screen, a window, that would be soundproofed, and we could only write letters. I was told that a few minutes before I came, Motti had refused to the conditions of this meeting. And I also refused the conditions of this meeting.

I left the prison with Amnon hoping that the court would be able to understand the situation and come to a humane decision. Then the court meeting was held, and I was told that the court delayed decision for another week. Amnon at that point suggested that it was not worth it to stay. I was told, when I was in America, that the courts had decided against us meeting and speaking.

WV: These things are so outrageous. This man should never be in prison, he's a hero. Even Winnie Mandela gets in to see Nelson Mandela, even in South Africa!

Zimmet: Motti's imprisonment is illegal and unlawful and he should be released. Motti was kidnapped and taken back to Israel against his will. This violates international law.

WV: What is he being charged with exactly?

Zimmet: The lay terms are treason, espionage and the passing of secrets to an enemy at a time of war. His present defense attorney is Avigdor Feldman.

WV: Has the trial begun?

Zimmet: I think there have been technical proceedings. I spoke to Avigdor and they have appealed for an extension. The official word has not come out, but they think that the trial will begin September 15.

WV: In the meantime, he's going to be held at this prison?

Zimmet: That's right. And he's also being held in isolation. He only has two hours a day in which he can only walk with a warden, and he cannot speak to anyone at all. So he's being maintained in his present inhumane conditions. He's allowed family visits, a half an hour a week, and only a maximum of three members can visit him. They also have to meet with him between a screen, but they are able to speak with him. But it's very difficult because he's in isolation outside of that.

WV: Let me move on to the question of broader support. Let's start with Israel itself, are there defense organizations or individuals which have in some way or another attempted to protest this situation? I'd like you to speak also about the role of Michel Warshawsky, because I

think that he has subsequently been victimized for his support.

Zimmet: In terms of Israel, there have been a lot of left-wing supporters initially that came out on behalf of Motti. The Alternative Center for Information and Michel Warshawsky were instrumental in circulating a very well-phrased petition calling for the restoration of Motti's rights, and also calling for an open debate on the nuclear issue in Israel. There were initially I think 75 supporters, Jewish and Arab, and later 100 people signed on. These people openly protested Motti's condition, and there was a breakup of this demonstration. Shortly thereafter, ironically, the Center for Alternative Information was shut down on trumped-up charges, claiming that they were affiliated with terrorist organizations, participating in terrorist activities, and many people feel that was because of their open support for Motti.

There seems to be a wave in Israel right now, a crackdown on left-wing, liberal, civil libertarian issues and people who support these. So out of this there has been a creation of an organization called the Committee for the Open Trial for Mordechai Vanunu. And on March 5, Meir, Asher and other left-wing supporters came out announcing the creation of this committee. And Yael Lotan, who ironically is one of the people being prosecuted for having talked to the PLO in Romania, is the

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 • (212) 732-7860

Allania

Box 4012
Atlanta, GA 30302

Boston

Box 840, Central Sta
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 492-3928

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 663-0715

Cleveland

Box 91037
Cleveland, OH 44101
(216) 881-3700

Detroit

Box 441794
Detroit, MI 48244

Los Angeles

Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239

Madison

c/o SYL, Box 2074
Madison, WI 53701
(608) 257-8625

New York

Box 444, Canal St. Sta
New York, NY 10013
(212) 267-1025

Norfolk

Box 1972, Main PO
Norfolk, VA 23501

Oakland

Box 32552
Oakland, CA 94604
(415) 839-0851

San Francisco

Box 5712
San Francisco, CA 94101
(415) 863-6963

Washington, D.C.

Box 75073
Washington, D.C. 20013
(202) 636-3537

Toronto

Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA

head of this committee.

WV: What was startling and new and very important and very sinister about Vanunu's revelation is the scale of Israel's nuclear arsenal, of this death machine which Israel had created, which is much more formidable than would be necessary to nuke the capital of every Arab country in the region. The only explanation for such a large nuclear arsenal would be if it would be used against another enemy, particularly the Soviet Union.

This is particularly relevant to the so-called question of Soviet Jewry. Shamir said quite recently that the United States should close its borders, as it did during the Holocaust, to Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. That the only Soviet Jews that Israel was really interested in were the Soviet Jews who were going to go to Israel. This question has an added urgency, given the developments in the Occupied Territories and the "need" for additional Jewish settlers. And given the development of this nuclear arsenal—really, if you think about it, the only realistic target in the area is the Soviet Union.

Leon Trotsky once said that Israel would be a deathtrap for Jews. I think there's increasing awareness amongst not an insignificant minority in Israel now, however they feel about Trotsky, that that prognosis is ringing more true every day.

Zimmet: In terms of Motti's revelations, in the United States, it has been published in books by Leonard Specter that Israel had nuclear capabilities. I think to the general public, the amounts were different than what had been published, and were significantly larger. In terms of other things that Motti revealed, I obtained documentation by Frank Barnaby that the plutonium process which Motti described, which is very critical in determining the amount of bombs that can be processed, was not new. Perhaps the lithium process, which is not as significant. However, I think in terms of the intelligence community, people know exactly what's going on.

What I found by talking to people, when it comes to certain countries, here in the United States anti-nuclear groups are afraid to say anything about Israel. They look the other way. Which also is the way the United States is behaving, especially when Israel has committed acts that violate international law, or when it comes to them not having signed the nuclear treaty. America, I believe, is considering Israel's arsenal as part of their own. I feel that if there's a surplus that these bombs will be aimed at other places other than in the immediate area. And Israel is helping the United States in turning against the United States' enemies, and Israel's enemies as well.

Also, there's been question as to the nature of the bombs. People no longer think that it's first-generation, or simple bombs, but maybe thermonuclear, possibly even neutron bombs. So Israel is not just taking care of her own immediate needs, but helping the United States. Also I would agree that it would be pointed against Russia, because if people look deep enough they will find that the war, or war anywhere, is really a war between the United States and the Soviet Union, and not really necessarily a war in the particular place where it's being waged.

In terms of the impact in Israel, there has been press questioning of Israel's role, Israel's capabilities, calling for open forum and debate. Since I don't read Hebrew, I don't know that content. But there are articles coming out, and this is quite revolutionary because there has been censorship in the past on this. People don't discuss it, it's not a fully open debate in universities, but published here in the United States. It's considered secret in Israel. Unfortunately these are some of the trumped-up charges that Motti is being brought up on. Information he gave to the "free world" has been considered classified in Israel. ■

Cafeteria Picket Protests Exclusion of Immigrants

French Trotskyists Lead Anti-Racist Action in Rouen

In response to the wave of provocations against immigrants, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France have organized a notable anti-racist action in the city of Rouen. When a downtown cafeteria began

refusing admittance to blacks and Arabs, the LTF called for picketing the restaurant every evening until the racist exclusion policy is rescinded. Some 100 people showed up the first night, May 25, as a local TV station and an

immigrant radio station broadcast the call. The mobilizations are continuing to draw immigrant youth and auto workers from the nearby Cléon plant. In Rouen in December 1981, the LTF initiated a united-front labor-centered mobilization of more than 400 to stop a series of fascist provocations. The French Trotskyists called for workers defense to crush the fascist vermin, warning that the Mitterrand popular front was disarming the working class. Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrants! Down with Racist Segregation!

Kill Nazi Barbie...

(continued from page 1)

Barbie to "explain" his genocidal dogma. Barbie described himself as a lifelong anti-Communist, and a soldier who was only following orders. This is, of course, the same argument Reagan and Kohl used to rehabilitate the Waffen SS at Bitburg in 1985. In the preface to a book by her husband Isaac Deutscher, the Marxist writer and Polish Jew whose family perished in Auschwitz, Tamara Deutscher writes of

ence breathed a sigh of relief; the nightmare was over."

—Preface to *Reportagen aus Nachkriegsdeutschland* (Reports from Postwar Germany) (1979)

For the Allied imperialist victors to really confront the Nazi terror, they would have had to explain their own hideous war crimes, from firebombing Dresden to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The French imperialist state cannot bring Barbie to justice, for to do so would expose the reality that the bonapartist Vichy regime, backed by the vast majority of the French bourgeoisie, actively and eagerly participated in anti-



Le Bolchévick

Rouen, 1981: French Trotskyists mobilize labor united front to stop fascist terror. Banner reads: "Popular Front Disarms Working Class! Smash Fascist Vermin! For Workers Self-Defense!"

the similar spectacle at the Nuremberg Trials:

"When Göring got up from the dock to explain 'his cause' with great eloquence, he dominated the court for a long time. His passionate declaration of devotion for the ideology—this perverted ideology—of the defeated overwhelmed the auditorium of the victors. Did it make any sense at all to use even the most experienced and the most trained advocates and their lifeless legal argumentation against this apology for National Socialism? Only when the Russian prosecutor went on the offensive and smashed this whole pseudo-ideological construction, did Göring's show collapse and crumble into ashes. The audi-

Semitic, anti-Communist terror. What of the French administrators of the "Final Solution," like Maurice Papon, who loaded the boxcars for Auschwitz and later became de Gaulle's police commissioner in Paris and a minister in the Giscard regime? Or those responsible for the "dirty war" in Algeria, from torturers like Le Pen to those who issued the orders, like François Mitterrand, who was a minister in the governments of 1954 and 1956, under which the "regroupment camps" were set up and "reprisals" ordered that devastated whole villages.

In contrast to the grotesque spectacle in Lyon, on March 8 a court in Soviet Byelorussia condemned to death two Nazi henchmen responsible for massive executions in the Jewish ghetto of Minsk. The Soviet Union mopped up the whole filthy network of Nazi collaborators as the Red Army drove out Hitler's Wehrmacht because there had been a socialist revolution, which in 1917 cleaned out the Black Hundreds and other scum from whom the fascist bands are drawn. It would take a socialist revolution in France to bring the Nazi butchers and Vichy scum to justice. But the Stalinist-led Resistance sabotaged the revolutionary struggle on the altar of the popular front, replacing the bonapartist bourgeois dictatorship of Marshal Pétain with the semi-bonapartist regime of General de Gaulle.

We Trotskyists demand vengeance for all the victims of Nazi terror; for our comrade Sylvain Itkine, Jewish director and Trotskyist militant, arrested on 1 August 1944 in Lyon and assassinated by the Gestapo; for Henri Kunstlinger, leader of the Parti Ouvrier Internationaliste, arrested in Lyon in July 1944, who went to his death at Auschwitz. Forty years later, a daughter of a death camp victim was arrested for trying to bring the Butcher of Lyon to justice—we are sorry she did not succeed. As Leon Trotsky declared at the time of the execution of Nazi Von Rath in Paris in 1938 by the young Jew Grynspan:

"The unprecedented crimes of fascism create a yearning for vengeance that is wholly justifiable. But so monstrous is the scope of their crimes, that this yearning cannot be satisfied by the assassination of isolated fascist bureaucrats. For that it is necessary to set in motion millions, tens and hundreds of millions of the oppressed throughout the whole world and lead them in the assault upon the strongholds of the old society. Only the overthrow of all forms of slavery, only the complete destruction of fascism, only the people sitting in merciless judgment over the contemporary bandits and gangsters can provide real satisfaction to the indignation of the people. This is precisely the task that the Fourth International has set itself."

—"For Grynspan" (February 1939) ■

At the Barbie Trial...

(continued from page 3)

Party in Augsburg. Barbie also spied in the Soviet zone of Germany, and Dabringhaus testifies that he did it in the French zone, then considered highly "unreliable" by the Americans since there were Communist Party members in the Paris government. Dabringhaus claims he once complained to a superior that he didn't like working with an SS officer and was basically told to shut up. He says that if he had known what Barbie had done in France, he would have shot him on the spot. So what did young American officers think the SS existed for? Dabringhaus did say one thing that rang true. He said that when you get right down to it, Barbie was his boss, and he was Barbie's chauffeur.

Friday, May 15: A lot of journalists have left now that Barbie is no longer

present. The defense is contesting one of the most important documents of the prosecution, a telegram signed by Barbie reporting on the deportation of the dozens of children from the Jewish center in tzieu. The document is obviously authentic. One thing has to be understood about Barbie: while Wehrmacht generals all over France were preparing their files to show the invading Allies after D-Day that they really hadn't done anything so bad, Barbie sent off the last boxcar to the death camps on 11 August 1944, after executing a couple dozen of his French collaborators so that they couldn't testify against him.

In the last terrible moment of this afternoon's session, one of the prosecution lawyers intervenes to announce that he has just received the information that the recently constructed memorial to Jewish victims of the SS in Lyon has been profaned, covered with swastikas. He says: while Barbie may choose to be absent from this courtroom, the friends of Barbie are active in the streets. ■



Roger Viollet

German firing squad executes anti-Nazi French resistance fighter.

Persian Gulf...

(continued from page 1)

are doing in the Persian Gulf." A nervous Senate passed a bipartisan resolution asking assurances from the administration for the Navy ships scheduled to escort Kuwaiti oil tankers. Reagan, meanwhile, ordered captains to shoot any "hostiles" on sight, and the White House is no doubt looking for another Grenada to stage a cheap show of force.

U.S. policy is in disarray as chaos engulfs Washington. Reagan's envoys deliver cakes, Bibles and TOW missiles to the Iranians one day, and phony intelligence reports to the Iraqis the next. Now Iraq is supposed to be a "friendly," only they blast a Navy gunboat. The Iranian prime minister calls it a "divine blessing," gleefully chortling that "the Great Satan has fallen into a trap" (*Le Monde*, 20 May). Now Pentagon chief Weinberger is putting the arm on Washington's clients for bases to "project U.S. power" in the Gulf, to throttle the supposed ancestral Russian thirst for warm waters. The Zionists, the ayatollahs and the sheiks are at each other's throats in the Near East, but over support to the Afghan feudalists and the Nicaraguan contras they all pull out their check-books for U.S. imperialism. But sailing around the Near East rattling America's sabers has brought Reagan nothing but trouble. This latest imperialist debacle puts the U.S. up the Persian Gulf without a paddle, once again. Sink Reagan!

Since the U.S. emerged victorious in World War II, the oil-rich Gulf region has been treated as a virtual American lake, to be guarded by client states like the feudal Saudi Arabian monarchy and the brutal regime of the shah of Iran.

"friendly" Iraqi plane. But now the Navy brass is worried that they look like "paper tigers," as Teheran taunted. Behind Washington's obsession with the "flow of oil" (the U.S. gets only 7 percent of its imports from the region, compared to 70 percent for Japan) is paranoia about the Soviets moving into the Gulf. When Iraq leased three Soviet oil tankers in March, and the Kuwaiti sheikdom asked for Soviet protection for their tankers, the Reagan administration countered with a plan to put eleven Kuwaiti tankers under U.S. flag to be escorted by Navy gunships. So "to head off further involvement in the Gulf by the Soviet Union" (*New York Times*, 18 May), Washington may trigger WWII.

Now Democrats and Republicans are griping about Reagan failing to invoke the War Powers Act, which requires notification and approval by Congress when sending U.S. forces into war danger. But Reagan arrogantly refuses, overriding objections from his prime minister Howard Baker (who's worried about good relations with Capitol Hill) and Attorney General Meese (who's worried about keeping his ass out of jail). And Congress eats it, just as the spineless Democrats are refusing to go after Reagan in the Iran/Contragate hearings, for fear of damaging the holy office of the imperial presidency. They all agree on the goal of sustaining the American empire. Unfortunately for them, Reagan still thinks this is 1945, when the victorious U.S. forces could bully the world by waving their Big Stick. But times have changed, and these days not everybody salutes when they "show the flag."

Exocet Meets "Star Wars"

The Pentagon announced early on that the Iraqi attack was evidently "inadvertent," since changed to "indis-



U.S. Navy
USS Liberty after 1967 Israeli rocket, cannon, napalm and torpedo attack which killed 34. Deliberate attack was hushed up as an "accident."

terized radar system on the *Stark*, programmed to sound an alarm when Exocets are launched, according to the captain "failed to detect" the missiles (*New York Times*, 21 May). And they didn't launch a canister of metallic chaff, to draw the missiles off course, because there wasn't sufficient warning.

As the Exocets came in for the kill, the *Phalanx* 20 mm Gatling gun, which fires heavy uranium projectiles at 3,000 rounds a minute, might have stopped the missiles. But it was not engaged on automatic, because it would shoot anything that moves. Compounding the damage, the *Stark*, like many other U.S. ships, has large amounts of aluminum in its superstructure to cut down on weight, and this caused it to burn furiously at over 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit when the missiles struck. (The British destroyer HMS *Sheffield*, hit by an unexploded Exocet missile during the Falklands/Malvinas war in 1982, was also devastated by fire fed by aluminum.) On top of all this, an AWACS surveillance plane, manned jointly by Saudi and American personnel, tracked the Iraqi plane throughout the attack, and two Saudi F-15 fighters were in a position to intercept but didn't because they couldn't get authorization. (This has fed anti-Arab sentiment in Congress, stoked by the Israel lobby, since the Saudis have received considerable American military equipment supposedly to protect the "free world," and now are implicated in funneling millions of dollars to the Nicaraguan contras at Reagan's behest in order to get around congressional bans which existed at the time.)

In short, every layer of defense failed for a combination of technical and political reasons which would be prevalent in any "peacetime" situation. And it was just a small taste of what would happen to the vastly more complex "Star Wars" scheme, which has to work perfectly the first time it is switched on, without testing. But of course Reagan doesn't care about this because the "Strategic Defense Initiative" is not meant to be a "defensive" system but rather part of a U.S. plan for a nuclear first strike against the Soviet Union. The smoldering devastation on the *Stark* should serve to dispel illusions that the U.S. could escape the consequences of World War III. It is also symbolic of the future awaiting the Reaganites' much-ballyhooed 600-ship Navy if it ever tries to implement the so-called "forward strategy" against the well-defended Soviet coastlines.

Forgelling the Liberty

Normally, whenever such incidents occur the *New York Times* routinely brings up from its computer bank

previous examples. But the pro-Zionist editors omitted mention of the previous incident which springs readily to mind—the June 1967 destruction of the USS *Liberty* by Israel. That attack, which killed 34 sailors and wounded 171, was no "accident." Sailing alone in broad daylight in the Mediterranean off the Sinai Peninsula, the virtually unarmed and well-marked intelligence ship was first attacked by Israeli jets using rockets, cannon fire and napalm, knocking out all communications gear. Then Israeli torpedo boats fired three torpedoes at the ship, nearly sinking her when one exploded on the starboard side. As the crew desperately fought to save their ship and their lives, the Israelis shot up the life rafts and the fire hoses (see the eyewitness account by James Ennes, *Assault on the Liberty* [1979]).

The incident occurred in the midst of the 1967 Israel-Arab war, when Israel had already beaten Jordan and Egypt. Admiral Thomas Moorer, then U.S. chief of naval operations, became convinced that "the Israelis attacked because they were afraid the *Liberty* might intercept Israeli military communications showing that Israel planned to attack Syria" (*Washington Post*, 19 May). But the subsequent Navy investigation covered up the unmistakable signs of premeditated murder; the evidence was buried in a classified report in order to protect the U.S.-Israel alliance. The incident remains a cause célèbre among the anti-Israel wing of the Pentagon and the American ruling class. It is also a small sample of the bloodthirsty ruthlessness of the Israeli state, which in its endless savaging of Palestinians and search for *Lebensraum* for an ever-expanding "Greater Israel" is perfectly prepared to set off a global thermonuclear holocaust.

Another trip wire for World War III is the Iran/Iraq war, now in its seventh year with perhaps a million dead on both sides. In that senseless slaughter, the reactionary ayatollahs continue to hurl tens of thousands of youth against Iraq in a fanatical "holy war," while Ba'athist colonel Saddam Hussein of Iraq, who started the war in an attempt to grab oil-rich regions of Iran, holds on desperately to besieged Basra in the south. For different geostrategic reasons, both the U.S. and the Soviet Union find themselves momentarily on the Iraqi side, in order to prevent a destabilizing victory by the religious nuts running Iran. (The Soviet Union shares a 1,600-mile border with Iran.) Even after the Iraqi attack, Reagan denounced Iran as "the villain in the piece," apparently trying to compensate for his unpopular arms shipments to Iran—exposed in the Iran/Contragate scandal. For both Iraqi and Iranian workers in this reactionary war the main enemy is at home. The world proletariat must have no illusions in a "peace" brokered or imposed by the bloody U.S. imperialists.

The Soviets, whose tanker *Marshal Chuikov* hit a mine in the Persian Gulf only hours before the attack on the *Stark*, have proposed "cooperation" with the U.S. in "protecting shipping" (*Washington Post*, 20 May). But Washington is hardly interested in cooperation. In the last week, the guided missile cruiser USS *Arkansas* more than once provocatively penetrated Soviet coastal waters off militarily sensitive Kamchatka Peninsula (the same area overflown by the KAL 007 U.S. spy flight). Around the globe, the Reagan gang has tried to throw the Russians up against the wall, brazenly bombing the Soviet military client Libya, violating Soviet territorial waters near the Soviet Black Sea fleet headquarters, ramming Soviet submarines, etc. Defense of the Soviet bureaucracy degenerates workers state can only be assured through world proletarian revolution, to sweep out the war-crazed nuts in the Pentagon and White House whose Persian Gulf antics threaten to blow up all humanity. ■



Der Spiegel

Reagan's saber rattling in Persian Gulf is continuation of 1980 "Carter Doctrine," proclaiming U.S. is prepared to use nuclear weapons to control region.

Eisenhower tried to "secure" the Near East with the short-lived anti-Communist CENTO alliance. Democratic president Carter even had pipe dreams of an anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" including Israel and the Arabs. But in 1979 the imperialist regional structure came unglued with the fall of the shah, who was replaced by the reactionary and fanatically anti-U.S. regime of Ayatollah Khomeini. As the new Cold War heated up over Soviet intervention to fend off CIA-sponsored Islamic feudalists in Afghanistan, Carter declared in his 1980 State of the Union address that the Persian Gulf region was a "vital interest" of the U.S., and vowed to hold onto the region by "any means necessary," including "tactical" nuclear weapons. Now Reagan is reasserting the Carter doctrine, a linchpin of the bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive.

In doing so the Pentagon has put its forces near the front lines of the raging seven-year-old Gulf war, in which the U.S. is now tilting heavily toward Iraq in order to prevent a victory by Iran. Indeed, if it had been an Iranian jet, said Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy, the U.S. would have gone to war. A former Navy official remarked that the captain of the *Stark* would have been seen as "the Bernhard Goetz of the Persian Gulf" if he had shot down the

criminate" (Weinberger). Iraq would gain nothing by attacking a U.S. warship, and could lose a lot. As Iraqi jets prowled the Gulf looking for tankers carrying Iranian oil, this Mirage F-1 jet reportedly fired two French-made Exocet missiles after spotting a target on its radar screen at night. Fired at a range of 10 to 12 miles, the sea-skimming missiles homed in on the ship in perhaps 90 seconds at 500 miles an hour. Thus two missiles priced at \$200,000 each devastated and nearly sank a high-tech frigate worth \$180 million. In the process, they also blew up Reagan's "Star Wars" propaganda.

The *Stark*, commissioned in 1982, was loaded with the latest gear for defense against just such an attack—a "layered" defense much like that envisioned in Reagan's space war scheme, which is supposedly designed to stop thousands of Soviet warheads. In this case, the state-of-the-art system failed to stop two missiles of a type for which it was specifically designed! There was no fighter jet cover—too expensive, and not enough carriers to cover the whole globe. The SM2 surface-to-air missile system, which could have shot down the jet before it launched the Exocet, wasn't activated because the Iraqi plane was considered "friendly" (even though the attacking jet was twice warned off by the ship's operators). Moreover, a compu-

Contragate...

(continued from page 16)

Elizabeth Linder. She is the bereaved mother of Benjamin Linder, the American volunteer murdered by the contras in Nicaragua. This Jewish woman who fled the terror of the Nazis in Europe, many of whom are now in Singlaub's WACL, was subjected to an inquisition worthy of Joseph McCarthy by House Republican Connie Mack:

"Mack: I don't want to be tough on you, but I really feel that you've asked for it. Linder: Asked for it? Asked for it?"

Mack: It's been less than three weeks since your son died. And to come here...

Linder: That was about the most cruel thing you could have said.

Mack: I don't consider it cruel. I consider it to be to the point. I would say to you, you came here today to blame this government.

Linder: Yes.

Mack: To blame the president...

Linder: Yes.

Mack: ...blame those who supported those fighting for freedom.

Linder: I don't think they're fighting for freedom."

The courage of Ben Linder's family stood out against the background of sordid testimony to thievery and backstabbing between the contra mercenaries and their U.S. imperialist backers that so enthralled the committee. Thus while Reagan was praising the contras



David and Elizabeth Linder, courageous parents of U.S. volunteer killed by contras, confront Congress: "This is murder...it is the essence of U.S. policy."

as the "moral equivalent of the Founding Fathers," Owen was writing memos saying that contra capo Calero was "a creation of the USG [U.S. government]" and the other contra leaders were "liars" motivated only by "greed and power." Now it appears they're going to get North not on conspiracy charges but for having his hand in the contra cookie jar.

Congress votes \$100 million that finances assassination plots, gun running, drug trafficking, an international network for counterrevolutionary terror and the fall guy is going to get it because he spent \$2,500 in travelers

checks buying groceries, a set of snow tires and pantyhose (for Fawn?)! "When was the last time it snowed in Nicaragua?" asked one Congressional "investigator." Cover-up is the name of the game, especially covering for the trail of blood that leads straight to the greedy, power-mad, lying terrorists in the White House.

In the midst of the hearings on Capitol Hill the Sandinista army launched its largest offensive in the five-year war, forcing some 800 mercenaries to flee like rats back to their holes in Honduras. The class struggle is heating up throughout Central America. On May Day in

Honduras a mass demonstration demanded that the contras be thrown out. In El Salvador more than 50,000 workers marched in the capital and three other major cities despite army roadblocks and patrols. And an extended strike in April in Guatemala shut down the post office, hospitals and schools.

While Washington's "democratic" puppets watch in fear at mounting rebellion by the working masses, the Sandinistas have agreed to meet these blood-drenched rulers in late June at a conference to discuss the "Arias plan." Named after the Costa Rican president, this plan is designed to isolate the Nicaraguan Revolution, strangle leftist rebels in El Salvador and head off revolutionary struggle throughout Central America. But even this is not enough for the Reaganists who long to drown the Sandinistas in blood as part of their drive to war against the Soviet "evil empire."

The Reagan administration has to use privateers and mercenaries to fight its dirty "covert" wars because they can't sell their war plans to the American population. The Contragaters' crimes are covered up by the Democrats who themselves are up to their eyeballs in support for anti-Soviet counterrevolution around the globe. It is the American working class, under the leadership of a Bolshevik party, which has the power to settle accounts with these imperialist war criminals once and for all. ■

Killer KKK...

(continued from page 16)

funeral of black basketball star Len Bias. As he opened his campaign office in Iowa last month, Jackson said: "Let's not confront each other at Howard Beach or Forsyth County. The real fight is at the farm foreclosures, the plant closings, the missile sites and the shipyards where foreign goods that put our workers out of jobs enter the country" (*Washington Post*, 20 April).

The real fight must be a socialist fight against the racist terror, unemployment and imperialist war fostered by the partner parties of American capitalism. The "new populism" from J.J. and the "BEOs" is part of their bid to become

power brokers in the '88 Democratic convention in Atlanta. This means rampant social-patriotism, such as Jackson's saber-rattling speech at West Point demanding a "strong, vibrant and effective military," his poisonous protectionism and his suicidal preaching to blacks not to defend themselves against the lynchers and cross-burners. In '84 Jackson said "the South will rise again" as he munched pecan rolls with Alabama governor George ("Segregation Forever") Wallace; now he's gladhanding Louisiana supersleaze governor Edwards. Jesse and the Dixiecrats is what "uniting" blacks in the party of their oppressors means.

Young and Jackson are not just "turning the other cheek" to racist terror—they're part of the all-sided assault on black people. As the Reagan-re-

gime goes down, the racists are lashing out in a wave of vicious attacks, from frat-rat packs on the college campuses to lynch mobs in Howard Beach, Queens and Forsyth County, Georgia. And the job of the black overseers on Reagan's plantation is to keep the black masses in chains. When Philly black mayor Wilson Goode ordered a bomb dropped on the MOVE commune, incinerating eleven black people and destroying an entire black neighborhood, this hideous crime was an extreme expression of the role of the black Democrats. Young acted as black front man for U.S. imperialism at the UN, then came to Atlanta where he breaks strikes of black sanitation workers on behalf of the Coca-Cola capitalists of the "New South."

Defending black people against KKK

terror requires a revolutionary struggle against racist American capitalism. In the wake of the Greensboro massacre, the Spartacist League initiated labor/black mobilizations in major urban centers across the North and in Washington, D.C. that stopped the Klan and Nazi scum from staging their race-hate provocations. In every case, our successful anti-fascist mobilizations were forged in struggle against the Democrats and the reformists who tried every ploy, from calling on the capitalist state to "ban" the Klan to "debating" these killers, in order to head off the independent mobilization of blacks and labor. The Greensboro martyrs and all victims of racist terror must be avenged through socialist revolution, which will finish the Civil War and put an end to the KKK race-haters forever! ■

Yugoslavia...

(continued from page 7)

the fascists and the experience of reconstructing the economy on a collectivist basis went a long way toward defusing the murderous nationalism which had plagued bourgeois Yugoslavia ("The National Question in Yugoslavia," Part 1, *WV* No. 106, 23 April 1976).

However, the essentially nationalist nature of Stalinism meant that the gains could only go so far. Plans for a Balkan federation founded on the Stalinist doctrine of "socialism in one country," which set postwar Yugoslavia, Bulgaria

and capitalist Greece, for instance, at each other's throats over the question of the Macedonian people. After his break from Stalin's Russia in 1948, Tito, a national-liberal Stalinist, came up with the basic plan for "market socialism" and "workers self-management" that exists in Yugoslavia to this day. His "devolutionist" policies led to more and more autonomy at the regional level, eliminating central planning and even central direction of the economy, thus directly contributing to the national particularisms that have blossomed since Tito's death.

Titoist Stalinism has not and cannot achieve a lasting and progressive solution to the national problems of Yugoslavia. For example, the restive Albanian population of Kosovo should have the right to unite with their national brethren across the border in Albania. The Macedonians should have the right to become part of Bulgaria. Such policies would go a long way toward defusing the current national antagonisms within Yugoslavia, laying the basis for a genuine socialist federation of the Balkans within a Socialist United States of Europe.

Conciliation of imperialism has brought many of the ills of capitalism to Yugoslavia, at the same time undercutting even the limited ability of the bureaucracy to deal with these problems. At the 13th Congress of the ruling League of Communists of Yugoslavia last June, party leader Vidoje Zarkovic gave a devastating report:

"We are face to face with stagnation in development, with weakening unity in the Yugoslav community and in the

League of Communists of Yugoslavia, with greater distortions and departures from proclaimed aims..."

—*Yugoslav Life*, June-August 1986

Since Tito's death, the League of Communists has run a musical-chairs government with no one willing to make the hard decisions necessary to govern this multinational, crisis-ridden country. Even within the framework of Stalinist rule the current Yugoslav bureaucracy has shown itself criminally and perhaps suicidally irresponsible.

Writing ten years ago on "The National Question in Yugoslavia" (Part 2, *WV* No. 110, 25 May 1976) we warned:

"Now even the great achievements of the Yugoslav revolution—the over-

throw of capitalist property relations and the overcoming of bloody national conflicts which racked bourgeois Yugoslavia—are themselves threatened by the bureaucracy's fostering...of centrifugal forces. The conditions are being accumulated for a bloody civil war in Yugoslavia...one which may well be cloaked in the form of a 'national liberation' struggle. This is the legacy of Titoism, of Stalinism 'with a human face.' It is a legacy that the working masses must overcome by constructing a Trotskyist vanguard party capable of carrying through a workers political revolution to oust the Tito bureaucracy and thereby create the conditions for international extension of the revolution."

Today, as Yugoslavia nears the flash point, this warning has an even more burning urgency. ■

Spartacist Forum

**Defend Vietnam
Against
U.S. Imperialism!**

Eyewitness Report

**Talk and Slide Show by
Speaker Recently
Returned from Vietnam**

Friday, June 5, 7:30 p.m.
College Ave. Presbyterian Church
5951 College Avenue

For more information: (415) 839-0851

OAKLAND

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$5/24 issues of <i>Workers Vanguard</i> (includes <i>Spartacist</i>) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2/4 issues of <i>Women and Revolution</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2/10 introductory issues of <i>Workers Vanguard</i> (includes <i>Spartacist</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$2/4 issues of <i>Spartacist</i> (edición en español) | |

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

WORKERS VANGUARD

Reagan: I Am the State

Contragate Hearings: Platform for Contra Terror

"What, Reagan Worry?" headlined the *Washington Post* (17 May) as the U.S. imperialist contra in chief once again changed his story over the Iran/Contragate conspiracy. When the stories of the sinister skullduggery in the White House basement first broke Reagan declared that he knew nothing. Then he confessed "having some trouble remembering" and claimed to look forward to the Congressional hearings: "I'm hopeful that I'm finally going to hear some of the things that I'm still waiting to learn about."

But when all the president's men began testifying and pointing a finger at the King Rat in the Oval Office, Reagan and his damage control managers decided to invoke the "divine right of kings" defense. Now the Great Prevaricator arrogantly declared, "I was very definitely involved in the decisions about support of the freedom fighters. It was my idea to begin with." Reagan blithely claimed he broke no laws... as no laws apply to the "imperial presidency." In the words of French monarch Louis XIV, "L'Etat c'est moi" (I am the state).

The administration claims Reagan didn't violate mealy-mouthed Congressional restrictions on aid to Nicaragua

Congressional hearings
chairmen Inouye
and Hamilton
cover up for
contra in chief
Reagan.



contras (the "Boland Amendment") because Congress can't interfere in the president's conduct of foreign policy. The *Washington Post* (20 May) said this was "one of the most sweeping assertions of presidential power in American history." Constitutional scholar Laurence Tribe argued: "The latest White House position ultimately reduces to the claim that this President, being somehow outside the Government, is above the law" (*New York Times*, 20 May). Over in the Old Executive Office Building they're singing, "Heil to the Chief,"

Reagan über alles.

The Congressional "select" committee "investigating" the Iran/Contragate scandal didn't blink an eye over the president's bald-faced assertion that his word is law. As the *New York Times* (24 May) commented, they are more "concerned that harsh criticism of the contra aid program might make them appear pro-Sandinista—or worse, pro-Communist." So for the past two weeks the Congressional hearings have turned into a platform for contra terrorists and their American godfathers. Robert



The Great Prevaricator

Owen, a yuppie "Rambo" and self-styled "foot soldier" for the contra terror operations, ended his testimony with an "ode" to the odious Oliver North.

Cashiered U.S. Army Major General John Singlaub won praise as the "honest broker" in the contra arms deals—because he sold AK-47 assault rifles for half the price charged by General Richard Secord! But not a word about Singlaub's sinister activities as president of the World Anti-Communist League (WACL), the biggest collection of fascist killers in the world. Included in the WACL are murderers and torturers from the Nazi-puppet Romanian Iron Guard and Croatian Ustashi to "Blowtorch Bob" D'Aubuisson's Salvadoran death squads. Singlaub's outfit worked with Klaus Barbie, the "Butcher of Lyon," in planning the 1980 Bolivian "cocaine coup."

While the Iran/Contragate committee treated these thieves, murderers and terrorists with every courtesy and consideration, Congress saved its venom for

continued on page 15

Andrew Young Says He'd March with Klan in Greensboro

Black Democrats Whitewash Killer KKK

In an obscene invitation to racist terror, Atlanta black mayor Andrew Young declared last week that he'd march with the Ku Klux Klan, provided the lynchers were unrobed and expressed "legitimate" white grievances! Young's remarks were all the more grotesque as he was speaking at a city celebration of civil rights—the sit-in movement which began at North Carolina A&T spread throughout the South, breaking the hold of Jim Crow. But it was in Greensboro that on 3 November 1979 KKK/Nazi killers gunned down five leftists, civil rights and union organizers. And now Andy Young, such a notorious conciliator that even Martin Luther King nicknamed him "Tom," wants the Klan to ride again.

On May 21, the *Atlanta Constitution* reported:

"Young told a gathering in Greensboro Tuesday that if he were that city's mayor and the Klan wanted to march there, he would not only issue a permit, he would march with them if they were expressing 'legitimate grievances that white males have,' such as employment."

In fact, the Klan has scheduled a parade through the streets of downtown Greensboro on June 7, the first time they have marched in that city since their heinous massacre. Participating in

this racist provocation is the very same Klan outfit, including "Grand Dragon" Virgil Griffin who plotted the KKK cavalcade of death and was a triggerman in the barrage which left five supporters of the Communist Workers Party dead on the ground. On May 20, the



Greensboro, 3 November 1979: KKK/Nazis unload arsenal of death in heinous daylight massacre of five leftists and civil rights organizers. Now Atlanta mayor Young obscenely says he'd march with these fascist vermin!

Greensboro City Council upheld the permit for the KKK march while refusing a permit for a civil rights group to hold an anti-Klan "freedom festival." The "Coalition for Unity and Justice" is reportedly going ahead with its plans.

"If they would come out of their robes, I would march with them," Young is quoted as saying. But the Klan and Nazis wore no robes that day in 1979 when they killed in broad daylight! The Greensboro massacre, carried out under Democratic president Jimmy Carter, was literally the opening shot of the Reagan years. This was a calculated government conspiracy, from the federal agent who orchestrated the racist murders to the Greensboro police and FBI informer who rode shotgun in the lead car. It became a green light for racist terror: none of the racist killers were brought to justice; they were acquitted by the courts while the victims' families and survivors were vilified as having brought on their own deaths.

Under attack from Meese's morals police, Mayor Young demonstrates his "respectability" by embracing the Klan, just as he attended a Confederate ball last summer on the 50th anniversary of the pro-slavery *Gone with the Wind*. But such outrageous apologies for racist terror have been coming from a host of "black elected officials" of late. Drugs are more dangerous than the Klan, Jesse Jackson obscenely told mourners at the

continued on page 15