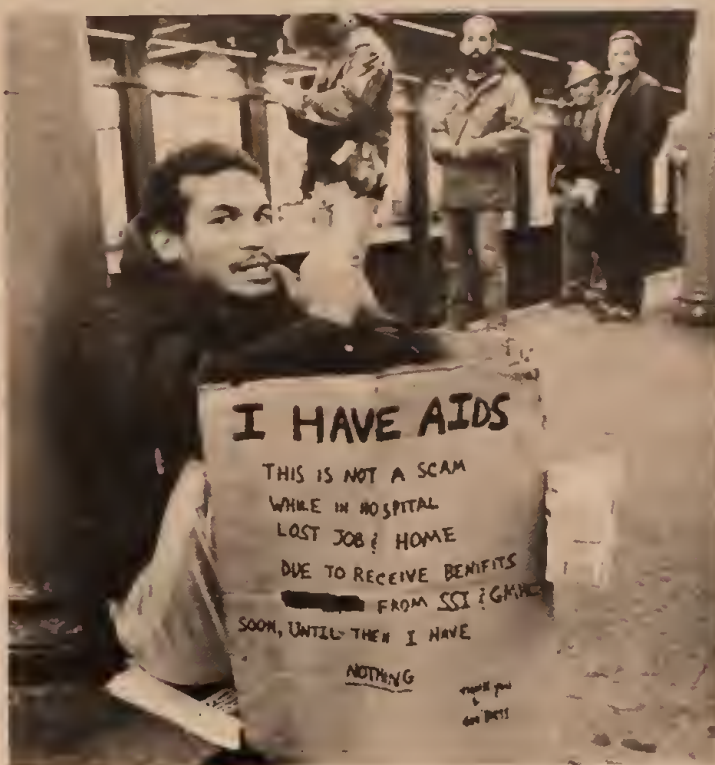


## The Politics of Death in New York City

# AIDS Devastates Gays, Ghettos



Tom McKillick/Impact Visuals



Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

Protesters hit NYC mayor Koch's criminally inadequate budget for AIDS, June 1988 (left). AIDS sufferers reduced to begging in the streets and subways.

"AIDS patients are just discharged back out to the community, where they find themselves a spot out on the sidewalk and sit with their little cup and collect money. You can't miss them, as you're on your way to work going into the hospital, they're right there with little cardboard signs that say 'I have AIDS and I am homeless, please help me.' Right in front of Harlem Hospital."

—Harlem Hospital health care worker

The world is in the midst of a raging epidemic—an estimated *five to ten million* people are infected with the AIDS virus (HIV). In the U.S., the federal government has dumped the whole problem on the cities. In New York—city of monstrous wealth and shameless glitter—people lie dying in the streets and the subways. The financial capital of America, with the biggest network of advanced medical

care anywhere for those who can afford to pay, is also the "AIDS capital of the world." Today, 58 percent of New York's 16,633 AIDS cases are black and Hispanic.

AIDS has become a plague of the ghettos. An entire generation of blacks and Hispanics has been left to rot in these concentration camps because the ruling class doesn't need them. The impact of AIDS in these communities is utterly devastating. There are *already* no jobs, no housing for the estimated 60,000 to 80,000 homeless; 45 percent of the children in New York's schools are on welfare.

- During the 12-month period ending July 1988, 4,072 new AIDS cases were reported—approximately one new case every two hours.

- Each year another 5 percent of New York City's 250,000 intravenous (IV) drug users acquire the AIDS virus. That's 10,000 new infections a year, 27 every day.

- AIDS has now surpassed homicide as the leading cause of death among women aged 25-34 and men aged 25-39, and has passed heart disease, cancer and cirrhosis to become the leading cause of death among men aged 40-44.

- 1,000 babies will be born this year infected with HIV.

- On any given night, 600 homeless people with AIDS have no place to go.

### Koch's New York: Malign Neglect

"A remarkable story of a community that did not turn away in fear but reached out to help those of its members stricken by a mysterious and frightening disease," claims the long-awaited "Strategic Plan for AIDS" released in May by the Koch administration. What a self-serving lie! New York City did absolutely nothing about AIDS for *four years* after the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) announced the epidemic in

1981. The city and state's policy was best summed up by Mel Rosen, the state's AIDS Institute director, who said: "In New York, we don't believe in throwing money at a problem."

AIDS was first seen as a "homosexual disease." But when the Gay Men's Health Crisis tried to get help from the city, Koch told them to go to hell. In 1983 the chairman of the city's Human Rights Commission was still insisting, "There is no epidemic." New York State governor Mario Cuomo said a proposed very minimal \$5 million for AIDS might be a nice idea, but "I don't have the \$5 million." From 1983 through 1985 Cuomo repeatedly balked at adding AIDS monies to the state budget. The city administration finally announced a pathetic \$6 million program for AIDS in April 1985, partly the result of pressure generated by gay activist Larry Kramer's play *The Normal Heart*, a savage indictment of  
*continued on page 5*



# Pc Partisan Defense Committee

## CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

### Free All Victims of Turkish State Repression!

On August 24 the eight-year prosecution against the Black Sea town of Fatsa in eastern Turkey came to a close. A total of 811 people were charged with "construction of the power of one class over another" under anti-communist articles of the Turkish criminal code copied from Mussolini's constitution. The judgment of war court No. 3: eight sentenced to die, 14 sentenced to life in prison, and 313 others sentenced to terms of one to 20 years in hellish Turkish dungeons!

The campaign of annihilation against this town began in 1979 when master tailor Fikri Sönmez, a sympathizer of the leftist organization Devrimci Yol, was elected mayor. Upon Sönmez' election the city began to build the "Model Fatsa," forming citizen committees to democratically control the town's finances and administration. As Turkey's "republican" rulers squeezed the working poor at the dictates of the International Monetary Fund, the country edged toward civil war. The small town of Fatsa became a symbol of political resistance. And so the "Model Fatsa" was designated for liquidation.

In July 1980 the army together with fascists marched into Fatsa wielding machine guns to bury the town's exper-

iment. Over half the adult population was imprisoned and hundreds tortured. Sönmez and 14 others—brutally murdered in jail—never made it to trial. The invasion was a precursor to the NATO-supported coup d'état two months later. Since the coup half a million people have been detained, the trade union federation DISK was banned and many of its leaders imprisoned. Torture is systematic and pervasive. The jails are filled with thousands of political prisoners and 400 face the death penalty. Today, Turkish Communist Party leaders Dr. Nihat Sargin and Haydar Kutlu are on trial facing the death penalty on charges of "communist propaganda" and "forming an illegal organization aiming to overthrow the constitutional order."

Now Turgut Ozal's bloody regime boasts of giving refuge to thousands of Kurds who recently fled from Iraq, while Turkey continues a genocidal war against its own Kurdish minority. Kurdish refugees are immediately disarmed, kept under close guard and treated as dangerous potential enemies. Contact between Turkish Kurds and the refugees is prohibited, the government having turned down all requests by Turkey's Kurds to feed and house their



Turkish military seizes Black Sea town of Fatsa, July 1980.

Der Spiegel

relatives from Iraq.

Using the show trials against Fatsa and CP and union leaders, the junta seeks to drown in blood the struggle for human dignity. But the combative Turkish working class continues to fight back. Strikes and student struggles have swept Turkey for the past year and a half. The devastation of Fatsa recalls the 1942 Nazi obliteration of the Czech town of Lidice—executing all male inhabitants to avenge the killing of Reinhard Heydrich, architect of the "final solution" for European Jewry. Workers around the world must rally to Fatsa's defense. Down with the death sentences! Free the people of Fatsa! Free Kutlu, Sargin and all imprisoned victims of Turkish state repression!

Last October French colonial "justice" set free seven Europeans in New Caledonia, self-confessed killers of ten Kanak (native Melanesian) militants, stoking discontent among the Kanaks throughout the South Pacific territory and setting the stage for the bloody massacre at Ouvéa on May 5.

After pro-independence militants of the FLNKS (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front) took hostages from a French military command unit, the government unleashed a vindictive terror campaign. Using tactics employed in the Algerian War, the French boosted troop strength on the island to 12,000 (one for every seven civilians) and ordered wholesale evacuation of entire towns. Helicopters strafed villages. Families were separated as the military rounded up Kanak youth. Two days before the French presidential elections, the government, ignoring a "prearrangement" to release the hostages, ordered a frontal assault by an elite army command unit on the cave where the Kanak militants with hostages were holed up. Nineteen Kanaks were killed in the 13-hour onslaught, their bodies dumped in a mass grave.

FLNKS leaders Alphonse Dianou and Wenceslas Lavelloï survived the

onslaught only to be executed in cold blood. French commandos pumped bullets into Dianou's leg while he lay on the ground. One of the hostages kicked him in the head, and later Dianou was thrown out of a grounded helicopter. Taken to the hospital by truck, Dianou died after being humped around on roads for several hours and repeatedly hit in the face by the commandos' rifle butts. France's Cold War "socialist" president François Mitterrand sanctioned the bloody assault at Ouvéa. Yet FLNKS' hopes for national independence rest on appeals to Mitterrand for vague promises of a vote for "self-determination" in ten years.

Today 29 Kanak nationalists, 16 of them survivors of the Ouvéa massacre, await trial in a Paris prison. The Partisan Defense Committee has contributed to the defense of the imprisoned Kanak militants, stating:

"From their dirty wars against the Algerian and Vietnamese peoples to the sinking of the Greenpeace ship by Mitterrand's government, the French imperialists are enemies of the world's workers and oppressed. The French working class must immediately take up the fight to free these fighters for independence from the clutches of their chauvinist and murderous jailers, and to jail the assassins of Dianou and Lavelloï.... We demand immediate freedom for the Kanak militants! Immediate independence for New Caledonia!"

Issue No. 8 of the PDC's *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* is now available, centering on our program of international class-struggle defense. This issue features the worldwide struggle against the death penalty—from Sharpeville, to Istanbul, to Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, and the struggle to free the class-war prisoners. We encourage 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 \$1 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■



TROTSKY

#### For the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

The Fourth International was founded 50 years ago last month, in a Europe threatened by war and fascism. Its founding document was the Transitional Program, written by Leon Trotsky, from which the following excerpt is taken. Its cadres ravaged by murderous Stalinist and Hitlerite repression, the Fourth International emerged from World War II politically disoriented. By the early 1950s it



LENIN

had succumbed to a liquidationist current which denied the need for an independent proletarian vanguard. It is our task to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International, whose banner and program remain intact, as the world party of socialist revolution.

"People's Fronts" on the one hand—fascism on the other; these are the last political resources of imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution. From the historical point of view, however, both these resources are stopgaps.... Nothing short of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie can open a road out.

The orientation of the masses is determined first by the objective conditions of decaying capitalism, and second, by the treacherous politics of the old workers' organizations. Of these factors, the first of course is the decisive one: the laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus.... As time goes on, their desperate efforts to hold back the wheel of history will demonstrate more clearly to the masses that the crisis of the proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International.

—Leon Trotsky, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (September 1938)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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### Pc Partisan Defense Committee

#### CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

NUMBER 8 \$1.00 P-93 SEPTEMBER 1988

NO APARTHEID EXECUTIONS! SAVE THE SHARPEVILLE 6!

Free All South Africa's Class War Prisoners Page 2



Save Mumie Abu-Jamal Page 8

S.P. Davis Demands Freedom Now for Germano Pratt Page 12



# WV Cuts Through Smokescreen

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. The Great American Smoke Screen

JUNE 16, 1988

Viewpoint  
by Alexander  
Cockburn

## NEWSTATESMAN SOCIETY

15 July 1988

The name of the game here is productivity and profits, as was lucidly set forth in the May 20 issue of *Workers Vanguard*, organ of the Spartacist League. Unlike most left or liberal publications, this bi-weekly has taken a strong line in favor of smokers' rights and delivered hard blows against the "beansprout totalitarians of Santa Barbara and Berkeley" and "the new generation of clean-living Yuppies . . . [who] are running point for a section of the ruling class which has decided it can improve its profit-and-loss figures by tightening up on the workforce, all in the name of 'health.'" For its heterodox stand, *Workers Vanguard* provoked the left-wing weekly *The Guardian* to award it the Jesse Helms Memorial Tobacco Leaf.

## HARPER'S

SEPTEMBER  
1988

### [Commentary] AGAINST HEALTH FASCISM

Excerpted from "Warning: Anti-Smoking Crusade Dangerous to Your Rights," in the May 20 issue of *Workers Vanguard*, a Marxist biweekly published by the Spartacist League in New York City.

In the past few months, an anti-smoking crusade has been rapidly gathering force. Smoking

## The great American smokescreen

The name of the game here is productivity and profits, as was lucidly set forth in the 20 May issue of *Workers Vanguard*, organ of the Spartacist League, and by far the most spirited publication from the heavy left sector. Unlike most left or liberal publications, this bi-weekly has taken a strong line in favour of smokers' rights. It stresses that the anti-smoking drive is just one more stratagem, along with urinetesting and lie-detectors, for keeping workers in line. With the smoking bans, about a third of the

**Bosses promote  
anti-smoking just  
to oppress the  
workers, claims  
the US's far-Left  
SPARTACIST  
LEAGUE**

## The Herald

MELBOURNE  
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 1988

### Is anti-smoking just a capitalist plot?

IN THE past few months, an anti-smoking crusade has been rapidly gathering force in America.

Smoking has been banned from all domestic flights of two hours or less. Municipalities across the country have passed

anti-smoking laws.

In New York City, a hotbed of the new health fascism, the Clean Indoor Air Act outlaws smoking in practically every indoor area imaginable.

"This is going to be one of the best self-enforced laws in the country," crowed the city's hysterical mayor, Ed Koch.

We expected controversy when *Workers Vanguard* published "Warning: Anti-Smoking Crusade Dangerous to Your Rights" (WV No. 453, 20 May). The article took aim at the "health fascist" witchhunters as well as critically examining the medical evidence on the effects of "secondary smoke." And it did get attention, from as far afield as London, England and Melbourne,

Australia. Alexander Cockburn published two columns, "The Great American Smoke Screen," in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New Statesman*. In addition, excerpts from our WV article appeared in *Harper's Magazine* and the Melbourne *Herald*, a Murdoch paper, as one might guess from the headline.

# Daniloff Guilty As Charged

On the eve of the 1986 summit, the FBI arrested an alleged "Soviet spy," Gennadi Zakharov, in an elaborate "sting" operation. Zakharov was a physicist employed at the United Nations who had obtained unclassified technical data at various libraries. A week later in Moscow the KGB arrested U.S. correspondent Nicholas Daniloff on espionage charges. Instantly, the American media and the White House launched an anti-Soviet propaganda blitz, insisting Daniloff was an "innocent journalist" being held "hostage" for the "spy" Zakharov. The FBI arrest fit the repetitive pattern of nervous U.S. intelligence agencies seeking to torpedo any kind of détente with the "evil empire," and it quickly escalated into a U.S.-Soviet confrontation over the "Daniloff affair."

Soviet leader Gorbachev personally denounced Daniloff as a "spy caught red-handed." Even at the time, some U.S. papers admitted (buried in the inside pages) that Daniloff had acted as a courier for a suspicious Soviet citizen, delivering a letter to the U.S. embassy in Moscow. Yet they screamed for his immediate release anyway. In contrast, *Workers Vanguard* wrote:

"If Daniloff didn't at least provide 'tips' to the local CIA station chief or U.S. intermediaries, he'd be a rare bird among American correspondents in Moscow....

"So let's find out if he's guilty with a fair trial: an open, public trial with a defense counsel of his choice and strictly according to Soviet jurisprudence."

—A Fair Trial for Daniloff,  
WV No. 411,  
12 September 1986

But a trial was exactly what the U.S. ad-



Cynthia Johnson

Reagan with Daniloff, the hack who came in from the cold. Liberals howled Daniloff was "innocent" newsman; now he admits he passed into CIA while in Moscow.

ministration didn't want, for fear of what might come out, and a swap was arranged. We noted in "The Daniloff Dossier" that "they brought him in out of the cold to be a huckster for 'freedom'."

Now Daniloff has come out with a book dealing with the affair (*Two Lives, One Russia*, New York, Houghton Mifflin [1988]), and in the middle of 300-plus pages of professing innocence and comparing himself to his anti-tsarist great-great-grandfather, he admits the central KGB charge was true! On 22 January 1985, he relates, the mysterious "Father Roman" left an envelope for him, and when he opened it he found "another envelope, this one addressed to [U.S.] Ambassador Hartman." Daniloff now claims he "sensed a trap" by the KGB, and says his wife told him to burn

the envelope, but instead he inexplicably "decided to deliver the letter immediately." At the embassy the envelope was opened in front of Daniloff, and he saw the Russian word for "rocket" in the lengthy letter enclosed.

Two months later Daniloff was asked to "drop by" the embassy, and when he did he was invited into the "bubble," the embassy's electronically secure room used for secret conversations. There Daniloff says he was questioned in detail about his contact by Murat Natirboff, "who I later discovered was the CIA station chief"! Roman, it seems, was delivering material from a "Soviet scientist trying to contact the CIA." The KGB knew Daniloff was the CIA's courier because Natirboff and another embassy official "used my [Daniloff's] name when they contacted

Roman" on the telephone and in a letter! Not surprisingly, Natirboff left Moscow for the U.S. three days after Daniloff was arrested.

In short, Daniloff admits he acted as a CIA courier, though he incredibly still claims that from mail drop to "huhhle," he didn't know what he was doing. Whether or not anybody could be that stupid, in any case he committed the crime. Even Harrison Salisbury, for many years Moscow correspondent for the anti-Soviet *New York Times* and one who still claims Daniloff was "guilty of nothing," felt compelled to note in a book review that "the CIA had made a gift to the KGB of evidence so incriminating that even an American jury might well have concluded that Daniloff was hand in glove with the agency" (*Washington Post Book World*, 11 September).

Daniloff may be the dumbest, but he's hardly the first. Liberals howled when we declared "Shecharansky Is Guilty As Hell!" (WV No. 212, 28 July 1978). Yet *Los Angeles Times* correspondent Robert Toth admitted Shecharansky had handed him a list of pro-Zionist "refuseniks" and the top-secret Soviet defense plants where they worked. At the height of the Watergate investigations, it was revealed that at least 100 American newsmen had acted as paid CIA agents since WWII, while thousands more had a less formal relationship with U.S. spy agencies. And tops on everyone's list was that "nest of hacks," the Moscow correspondents. In 1977 the CIA promised to stop, but added that they couldn't stop journalists from volunteering information.

Now Nicholas Daniloff has convicted himself, but regular readers of WV knew long ago. And don't forget that most spectacular and deadly Reaganite spy operation gone awry, KAL 007. You read it here first: the truth. ■



# California Referendum Targets AIDS Victims

SAN FRANCISCO—Two new and extremely sinister initiatives that target the victims of the horrible AIDS epidemic are on the ballot in California this fall. Proposition 102 would make anonymous AIDS testing illegal, closing down virtually all alternative testing sites in California. It would turn doctors into witchhunters, linking to the government on anyone they "reasonably believe" will test HIV positive, and requiring the "suspects" to divulge a list of sexual partners. Prop 102 will allow employers and insurance companies to institute mandatory testing of employees and new medical insurance applicants. Tens of thousands of people will face loss of jobs, be denied insurance, and be thrown penniless onto the "mercy" of the public health system or to die like dogs in the street.

Prop 102 is sponsored by Orange County Republican Congressman William Dannemeyer and right-wing populist tax-reformer Paul Gann. These reactionary initiatives follow on the heels of the notorious "AIDS quarantine" initiatives of right-wing crackpot Lyndon LaRouche, introduced in 1986 and June of '88. Those propositions were handily defeated, with LaRouche rightly portrayed as a right-wing nut. But this time around Dannemeyer (despite his support for LaRouche two years ago) and Gann are seen as "respectable" conservative politicians. Gann, infected with HIV from a 1982 blood transfusion, makes a frighteningly effective spokesman for his racist, anti-homosexual proposition.

Equally sinister is Proposition 96, which singles out for mandatory testing "criminal" sectors such as drug users,

## Stop Propositions 102 and 96!

**PROPS 96 & 102  
Rx FOR  
DISASTER**

**Block LaRouche Dannemeyer**

**DON'T LET THEM  
PLAY POLITICS  
WITH YOUR HEALTH!**

**NO ON 96 & 102**

Like Lyndon LaRouche, Dannemeyer/Gann and Block are taking aim to further their political careers

**No on 96 & 102**

Not if we can help it!  
You can help defeat them.  
Join No on 96 & 102

**NO ON 96 & 102**

Reactionary homophobic ballot propositions are part of "social/sexual McCarthyism" of the Reagan years.

prisoners being placed in isolation for the length of their prison terms. "This could be five, six, seven years with no contact with another human being," Alexander said.

What's behind these ballot initiatives is the right-wing crusade to lock people with AIDS into a caste of "legal lepers,"

campaign against Prop 102 has gotten big play in the bourgeois and gay press. Prop 96 has been largely ignored. The reason is Prop 96's open appeal to racism and the hysteria around "sex offenders" and "drug abusers." So if some judge thinks "bodily fluids" might be involved in an alleged crime, then your civil rights are a fiction, you're tested and put away. Larry Saxxon, a black Bay Area AIDS activist, makes the point: "The AIDS epidemic is changing, it's becoming a more black and brown epidemic. And it seems the more black and brown it becomes, the more aggressive all these laws get" (quoted in *San Francisco Sentinel*, 12 August).

But opposition to Prop 96 is getting very little funding from timid liberals, who are buckling in the face of rampant cop reaction. Gay politicians have essentially given up on defeating Prop 96, even as their campaign against Prop 102 looks like it could well lose. They were all waiting for Michael Dukakis to come out against the props. His wife Kitty, campaigning in San Francisco September 30, finally announced her and her husband's opposition to Prop 102. Needless to say, not a word on Prop 96. Dukakis has opposed gay couples being foster parents. And just last month, Dukakis' Massachusetts senate guards were charged with kicking and punching gay activists at the state house in January.

On the other side, the Dannemeyer/Gann forces appear to be well financed, and the real beneficiaries of Prop 102, the insurance company vultures, are ready to move. The September 9 *San Francisco Sentinel* wrote, "there is concern that the insurance industry will come in at the last minute with its own large cash reserves to try to put the ballot measure over the top." The Dannemeyer/Gann inquisitionists want to "spare" the multibillion dollar insurance industry the "burden" of paying medical costs for AIDS patients.

Opposition to Prop 102 includes many bourgeois politicians, the California Medical Association, the California Nurses Association and such corporate heavyweights as AT&T, Levi Strauss, Pacific Gas & Electric, Apple Computer and Burroughs Wellcome (maker of the anti-AIDS drug AZT). The state AFL-CIO has come out against Prop

102, but tailing the liberals they have said nothing on Prop 96. And hog-tied to the Democratic Party, the bureaucrats will not mobilize the labor movement—the key social force capable of smashing these raving reactionary schemes.

The power of the working class can beat back the all-sided attack on democratic rights in the era of Reaganite "social/sexual McCarthyism," where children are encouraged to "turn in" their parents for "drug abuse" or "sodomy," drug police militarize the ghettos, Moral Majority bigots target abortion clinics, and the skinhead/fascist hands terrorize minorities. Yet fighters against the AIDS witchhunters have looked to the Democratic Party. Many gay activists can't conceive of labor being won to defending homosexuals. But the key is revolutionary leadership. In June 1982 in Chicago, when Nazi terrorists tried to stage a "death to queers" rally on Gay Pride Day, the Spartacist League took the lead in mobilizing union support, bringing out labor and black militants, Holocaust survivors and others to stop the Nazi scum from terrorizing gays.

Bourgeois society, at its most progressive moment during the Great French Revolution, inscribed on its banner "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." Those days are long gone and today's rulers are blatantly flying the banner "Bigotry, Ignorance and Greed." Today the hillions that are needed to speed the search for a cure to AIDS are instead, through bipartisan policy, poured into the coffers of Pentagon contractors to build the weaponry for World War III. Now the AIDS witchhunt is being used as a tool in the reactionary crusade to turn back the clock of history. But the course of the class struggle will determine the defense of all the exploited and oppressed. As we wrote in "The Agony of AIDS" (*Women and Revolution* No. 35, Summer 1988):

"AIDS exposes the gaping holes in pathetic reform schemes, 'anti-discrimination' bills, single-issue sectoralism pitting different sectors of the oppressed against each other, and every liberal patchwork scheme advocated by lackeys of the twin capitalist parties. The fight against AIDS cries out for a socialist revolution which will lay the basis for a society which will end all forms of social oppression. Only then will the limits of science be the sole limits—and those will constantly be enlarged through thoughtful, energetic research."



Props 96 and 102 seek to turn AIDS testing into police weapon.

prostitutes and prisoners. Not surprisingly, it is authored by a cop—Los Angeles County Sheriff Sherman Block. Prop 96 allows the court to "order testing for HIV of any person who bites, spits on, scratches, or transfers blood or bodily fluids to a peace officer, fire fighter, or emergency worker." It also allows the court to require HIV testing for accused (not convicted) "sex offenders." The bill is designed to turn AIDS testing into a police weapon—against gays, ghetto blacks, militants at demonstrations—anybody who looks cross-eyed at a cop can be dragged in for "testing."

Insidiously, Prop 96 will allow prison guards to demand tests of inmates, claiming they suspect them of spreading the AIDS virus. The basis upon which a test may be ordered is the exchange of "bodily fluid," including blood, semen, saliva, sweat or tears. Priscilla Alexander of the prostitutes' rights organization COYOTE noted that a positive HIV test will result in

denied jobs, entry to schools and medical insurance. To this end the bigots spread the lie that the disease is spread through "casual contact." Mandatory testing will only drive underground those who are most in need of help. We support voluntary anonymous testing—it's one of the only ways we have right now to fight against this virus plaguing mankind. While the current campaign doesn't contain the quarantine provisions of the LaRouche initiatives, which called for locking up AIDS victims in Nazi-like concentration camps, it springs from the same appetites. Hatred and fear of homosexuality are endemic to bourgeois society: gays "threaten" the sanctity of the nuclear family which is integral to the labric of bourgeois class rule.

With the '88 election campaign featuring the Democrats and Republicans competing with each other in Bible-thumping, flag-waving bigotry, an important division in the fight against the propositions has emerged. While the



Spartacists at gay rights protest in Washington, D.C., October 1987.



# AIDS...

(continued from page 1)

bureaucratic inaction, which opened that month at the Public Theater.

Today reported AIDS cases among IV drug users have surpassed those among homosexuals. The city willfully refused to do anything, even after medical experts insisted that the disease was spreading through shared hypodermic needles; no education campaigns, no drug treatment programs, no distribution of sterile needles. The city's own report admits that AIDS among IV drug users has been underreported by 150 percent. And it continues—thousands still won't get any help.

NYC health commissioner Stephen Joseph defended the city's "Strategic Plan for AIDS" as outlining "minimum services" based on "conservative" estimates (*New York Times*, 14 July). The city claims it will spend \$178 million of its own funds this fiscal year. But the Koch administration refused a proposed additional \$34 million requested by AIDS service groups, including \$6 million for ambulatory care at city hospitals, which is a vital service for outpatients. It has also refused \$2 million for preventive education for public school students, continuing an astonishingly callous and irresponsible policy

## Congressional Bigots Shaft D.C.

The U.S. Congress, playing plantation politics with the disenfranchised, predominantly black city of Washington, D.C., voted on September 30 to withhold \$3.2 billion in federal funds unless the city danced to Reagan's reactionary tune.

In an action that is seen as a test case for similar actions around the country, the Democrats and Republicans in Congress told the capital city government that it must amend the D.C. law which bars insurance companies from denying coverage to those who test positive for exposure to the AIDS virus; that the D.C. Council must revise its Human Rights Act so that religious educational insti-

tutions (like Georgetown University) can once again deny funds to gay student groups; and that the District is prohibited from spending federal or local funds on abortions for the poor, except to save the life of the mother.

Congress is doing this to a city with a skyrocketing teenage pregnancy rate, with an infant mortality rate rivaling many Third World countries, and in a nation where abortion is supposedly legal! The local black misleaders, angered that their prerogatives as overseers on Reagan's plantation had been usurped, bemoaned the demise of hopes for D.C. "home rule." But one of the sponsors of the reactionary meas-

ures in Congress, Representative Henry Hyde, told D.C.'s nonvoting Congressional delegate, Walter Fauntroy, "that the rights of an unborn fetus transcend the District's right to home rule" (*Washington Post*, 1 October).

The cries of protest from Fauntroy and the District of Columbia Council ring hollow at best. Their own D.C. cops epitomized anti-gay witchhunting and AIDS hysteria when they, wearing yellow rubber gloves, arrested gays at a demonstration in June 1987. Down with the racist anti-democratic Congressional veto power over D.C.! Defend the rights of people with AIDS, gays and women!

government isn't prepared, whatever that number is."

### Harlem Hospital Hell

Over the last decade 4,000 acute care beds were cut in New York City; only last summer, the New York State Health Department called for closing 2,000 more. Faced with a city occupancy rate of over 95 percent last December, finally

in 1979, when Koch launched his plan to shut down half the city's public hospitals, outraged workers of District Council 37 AFSCME (government employees) protested at City Hall on May Day and booed sell-out DC 37 leader Victor Gotbaum off the stage. But this militancy was snuffed out by the social-democratic union bureaucrats who, in fealty to their Democratic Party "allies," ensured no effective fight was waged. Working conditions and pay have gotten so bad that nurses—even those from traditionally low-paying Latin America and the Philippines—won't take the jobs. We were told that at Harlem Hospital:

"Even basic things like counseling the spouse of somebody with AIDS just don't get done because nobody has the time. It was only two months ago that a group from the New York City Department of Health came and gave a seminar for ten Harlem Hospital workers on HIV counseling and testing. And that was the first time since the epidemic began that anything had been done to train people."

"The food trays are just brought in by the food service people. And because there aren't enough nurses, the food is just left at the door. If there's no family, if the patient is not able to feed himself, the food will just sit there and later the food service person will come back and pick up the full tray."

"Rooms are filthy. Floors are covered with urine, with bloody gauze, dressings, spilled blood. The place stinks. The prisoners are handcuffed to the rails on the side of their beds; actually they have somebody to watch over them—cops to guard them."

### Women, Babies, Homeless: A City in Agony

In the hellish conditions of Harlem and the South Bronx, the infant mortality rate is as high as some Third World countries. And now, because HIV-infected mothers can pass on the virus to babies in the womb, babies with AIDS are the fastest growing single category of AIDS cases in the country. In New York City minorities account for more than 80 percent of female AIDS cases and have given birth to more than

90 percent of the AIDS infants.

One out of every 61 babies born in New York is HIV infected. Many are "boarder babies" who have been abandoned to the hospital because their mothers have died or can't care for them. Nettie Richards, director of the boarder baby program at Harlem Hospital, noted that although the physical needs of these babies are met, there are no funds for anything else. There is no one to give them the constant attention and affection young children need; volunteers must be recruited to play with the children. "Many boarder babies are born in the hospital and live there for months or years without ever going outside the building," Richards said. Some die without ever having been outside" (*AIDS Alert*, June 1988).

This miserable situation is what State Comptroller Regan's July report calls "unanticipated increases in the number of pediatric AIDS cases"! What astounding hypocrisy! Many people predicted exactly what would happen. In 1981 Dr. Arye Rubinstein, a pediatric immunologist at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, documented cases of AIDS in black children from the Bronx. He was scorned and ignored, his paper returned unpublished because the *New England Journal of Medicine* thought it impossible children could have a "homosexual disease."

Only late this spring, seven years into the epidemic, did the city and state begin a program of counseling and testing for AIDS for New York's poor and minority women. Why this unconscionable delay? According to the *New York Times* (6 March), "testing, though voluntary, has not been offered widely, in part because of the volatile questions it raises: Should pregnant women found to be infected with the AIDS virus be urged to have abortions?" So pregnant women can't even choose not to bear babies who might be born infected with an incurable disease! Once again, "right-to-life" means death!

continued on page 13



AIDS victims are largest single group of patients at Harlem Hospital, where city cutbacks slashed number of beds almost by half.

first formulated in 1985 by then-health commissioner David Sencer: "The people of New York City who need to know already know all they need to know about AIDS."

Shortly after issuing its cover-up report, the New York Department of Health announced a precipitous cut in its estimate of the number of New Yorkers infected with HIV—from 400,000 to 200,000! They've decided there are fewer homosexuals living in the city after all, which automatically cuts the estimated AIDS infection rates. The revision infuriated gay groups, including the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), which has been picketing Joseph's offices and home, correctly charging that this is one more diversion from grappling with the AIDS crisis. The CDC tends to favor the new figure, while the city itself claims not to have changed its expectation of how many people will actually be sick by 1991. But the real point is well put by *PWA Coalition Newsletter* editor Michael Callen in an interview with *WV*:

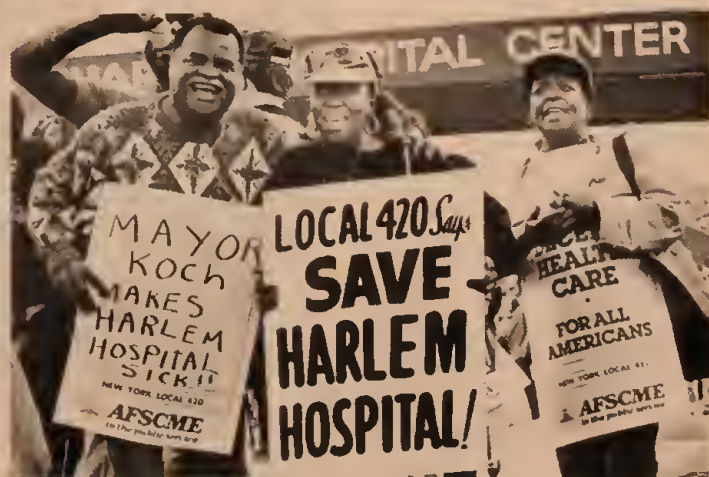
"Rather than quibble about numbers and theories about how to arrive at those numbers, let's keep asking the question: of the cases we know we have, is there adequate health care? And the answer is no. You don't need to know the number of AIDS cases that we're going to have in 1993 to know that this

the state proposed reopening a measly 500 beds. What this has meant was pointed out by the director of Emergency Services at Bellevue Hospital, who stated: "On average, 20 medical-surgical patients and 10 psychiatric patients await admissions lying inches apart, side by side on stretchers or sitting on hard chairs. People wait two, three or four days for a bed" (*Health/PAC Bulletin*, Spring 1988).

We spoke with a health care worker at Harlem Hospital, one of the eleven municipal hospitals run by the city's Health and Hospitals Corporation, who said:

"There used to be Sydenham Hospital, Logan Hospital, French Polyclinic, the Italian hospital. All those were closed, one after the other, which has left Harlem Hospital as the only facility in central Harlem. It originally had 1,200 beds and now it's been reduced down to 680. 'Nelson Rockefeller came up with a plan to dump all these psychiatric patients out into the streets, into so-called community residential centers which were never built. The hospitals are there, housing is still here. It exists, there are rooms, everything is there. It's just a matter of opening it up. But the city and the state and the federal government just aren't going to provide the money for that."

The city has cut financial support to its hospitals by 30 percent in the past decade, drastically reducing staff posi-



Harlem Hospital workers protest Koch's deadly cuts, June 1987. For free, quality health care for all!



# Fascist Metzger and His Deadly Skinhead Thugs

SAN FRANCISCO—They are gangs of white racist punks with their heads shaved, wearing combat boots, their bodies tattooed with swastikas. They dance to the beat of rock groups called "White Pride" and "Final Solution" and "groove" in the streets on intimidation, brutality and the most sadistic violence. They are armed with chains, pipes, baseball bats, iron knuckles and increasingly with guns. They pick on, provoke, beat and terrorize gays, blacks, Asians, Hispanics and anybody else who gets in their way. Quite a few are up on charges or wanted for murder. They are the "skinheads." And they must be crushed.

Over the past few years they have cut a swath of terror in the cities and towns of the Bay Area:

- San Francisco, December 1985. Skinheads assaulted a gay couple shouting "You faggots are killing us all with AIDS" and then began to terrorize two elderly black women screaming "n----rs." When the gay couple came to the women's defense they were beaten with skateboards and chains.

- San Jose, July 1987. A dozen skinheads surrounded a 54-year-old black schoolteacher threatening to lynch her if she didn't pay a "n----r tax" to walk the streets.

- Redwood City, November 1987. A 15-year-old girl in this city south of San Francisco is charged with vandalizing and defacing a Jewish synagogue with the words: "We're going to get you."

- San Anselmo, summer 1987. Skinheads threw a teenager through a plate-glass window when he tried to stop them from putting up an anti-Semitic poster.

The skinhead milieu—white punks who look and act like something out of the movie *Road Warrior*—has been around for a while in the U.S. They started out adapting the Nazi regalia, "style" and music of the fascist gangs of skinheads which emerged in Britain in the late '60s/early '70s. But as one merchant in the Haight Street district of San Francisco, where skinheads routinely "bash" gay couples, told a local gay newspaper: "Three or four years ago, they just paraded around in those ugly costumes and got drunk and passed out. They didn't know the meaning of their symbols, like the swastika and iron crosses. But now they're into it" (*Sentinel*, 29 July).

## Degenerate Products of Capitalist Decay

Now the skinheads are being recruited and mobilized by Tom Metzger's fascist White Aryan Resistance (WAR). In one of WAR's race-hate sheets a skinhead leader boasts: "We are Skinheads, Boot Boys, the proud White Aryan youth who are increasing daily... No one is going to stand in our way. Our war has just begun" (quoted in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 14 May). In Southern California, where former KKK "Grand Dragon" Metzger calls the shots for WAR, there are skinhead hands who call themselves the War Skins, the Reich Skins, the American Front Skins and the Huntington Beach Skins.

In the Los Angeles suburb of Chatsworth the leader of the "Reich Skins" is in jail for terrorizing a Hispanic family, breaking into their home armed with an automatic pistol. Another member of the same gang is up on charges for murdering a young Hispanic woman. Skinheads are suspected of burning a cross on the front lawn of a black family in the Orange County suburb of Westminster.

According to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL), skinheads are behind an ominous 150 percent increase in anti-Semitic attacks in L.A. County over the past year.

This is not just limited to California. Chicago skinhead leader Clark Martell,

head band led by former National Front organizer Ian Stuart, as "music to riot by"—is also affiliated with Metzger's WAR fascists. So are Stuart's "Blood and Honor" fascists who have links with everyone from Metzger to the apartheid Nazis of South Africa's Afrikaans



Spartacist-initiated picket at Berkeley campus radio station, as station broadcasts fascist führer Metzger.

with longstanding ties to the American Nazi Party, was convicted in 1979 of "attempting to commit aggravated arson against an Hispanic victim." According to an ADL Special Report, "'Shaved for Battle,' Skinheads Target America's Youth." "In 1986, Martell told an assembly of white racist leaders from around the country that... 'I am a violent person. I love the white race, and if you love something, you're the most vicious person on earth.'" Last February, six Chicago skinheads were indicted for viciously beating a young white woman who had black friends. They drew swastikas in her blood on the apartment walls.

The Chicago skinhead gang "Romantic Violence"—which touts the music of "Skrewdriver," a British skin-

Resistance Movement. And skinheads are suspected as the perpetrators of a chilling mini-version of Hitler's 1938 *Kristallnacht* in Chicago last November in which synagogues and eight Jewish and two Korean businesses were attacked.

The Nazi SA brownshirts were recruited from the socially pathological, criminal dregs of crisis-racked German society, used to terrorize the labor movement and Jews, and then discarded after Hitler took power. Today skinheads in the U.S. are also the product of capitalism's social decay. Some are drawn from poor whites similar to the lumpenized working-class youth who are the base of the fascist skinheads in the squalid white ghettos of Margaret Thatcher's Britain. An example is

Chicago's Marquette Park, where "skins" were among the 1,000-plus who came out for a KKK rally in August. They are losers who see no future beyond pumping gas.

But as a *Philadelphia Inquirer* article (14 May) reported: "From the affluent suburbs of the San Fernando Valley to grimy Hollywood street corners to the rural hills of San Diego groups of skinheads... have become the dominant white youth gangs in Southern California." Or in the words of an L.A. cop: "And these aren't poor kids. A lot of them come from moderate income families or above." This layer of frenzied, despairing petty-bourgeois youth produced the Charles Manson gang—cold-blooded, sociopathic killers.

With their "we don't need no education" cult of ignorance, the skinheads are the repulsive living embodiment of the Spanish fascist slogan in the 1930s, "Down with Intelligence! Long Live Death!" The absolute nihilism and violence of the layer of youth which feeds them was captured in the hit movie *River's Edge*. Based on a real-life story, it featured a teenage boy who murdered his girlfriend and then invited his (and her) friends to pay to see the corpse. Many pelted it with stones.

Take the classically fascist glorification of ignorance, add adolescent impulsiveness and refract it all through the Rambomania and all-sided reaction and racist violence of the Reagan years and you get the skinheads. They are inspired by the witchhunters and terrorists unleashed by the White House. A skinhead leaflet in San Francisco reads:

"The Great Democracy enforces your right to blow dope; turn queer; marry a nigger; kill the unborn, and do anything else to destroy America. Some people may be sick enough to accept it... but not us. We prefer Revolution, to Smash It! And replace it with a healthy White Mans Order."

## Metzger's Race-War Gangs

Today, Tom Metzger's 20-year-old son John, the leader of WAR's Aryan Youth Movement/White Student Union, brags of the skinheads: "I pat myself on the back a little bit for organizing them. We've been able to be an influence and fine tune their perceptions. We're filling a void in their lives" (*New York Times*, 13 June). Metzger's fascists have filled the "void" by directing their rage into sick, hate-filled, racist terror.

Metzger Sr. (whose name means butcher in German) led an armed mob with attack dogs against anti-Klan protesters in Oceanside, California in March 1980. He mobilized KKK "volunteer patrols" to shoot down "illegal aliens" at the Mexican border and boasted that their "dead bodies stack up along the border." Metzger is currently facing trial with Aryan Nations führer

continued on page 12



Degenerate products of capitalist decay, skinheads are deadly recruits for Nazi terrorists like Metzger (right).



WORKERS VANGUARD



# Young Spartacus

## The Bolshevik Revolution



May Day 1917: Revolutionary workers march through Petrograd. Center banner reads: "Arm the People! Long Live the International!"

Planeta Publishers

# How the Working Class Took Power

We print below the second and final part of a presentation by comrade T. Marlow to the New York Spartacist League branch on the Bolshevik Party and the 1917 Russian Revolution. Part One, covering the period from the February Revolution through the defeat of Kornilov, is printed in Workers Vanguard No. 460, 9 September. All dates correspond to the old Russian calendar.

### Part Two of Two

From the end of September onward, Lenin continued to hammer home the point: Get on with it, do it! The people are sick and tired of the waverings of the Mensheviks. Only victory in the capital will bring the peasants over. He noted that the masses could just as easily become disillusioned with the Bolsheviks, as they had with the other parties, if the Bolsheviks failed to act. The soldiers were threatening to leave the trenches at the first sign of snow, and Lenin was quite afraid that the Central Committee was wavering, that they were putting too much emphasis on the approaching Congress of Soviets which was to be held in October.

In early October Lenin said, "Delay is a crime...a shameful toying with formalities, betrayal of the revolution." By the 25th of September, the Bolsheviks had secured a majority in the Petrograd Soviet, and Trotsky was elected its president. From that point on, they were clearly moving toward the seizure of power. The soviets openly came out and sent Kerensky's government a declaration which essentially read "resign."

The famous Central Committee meet-

ing where the question of insurrection was taken up occurred on October 10. Lenin was intransigent. He said he was going to go through the CC or he was going to go against it. The vote was 10 to 2, with Zinoviev and Kamenev opposed, again representing the right wing of the party. The day after the insurrection was voted, Zinoviev and Kamenev circulated a letter within the party opposing what they considered to be a disastrous course. They said: "Constituent Assembly and soviets—that is, the combined type of state institution toward which we are travelling." Trotsky notes that this is basically a call for a peaceful system of dual power, with a constituent assembly or bourgeois parliament on one side, and on the other side the Bolshevik-dominated soviets, with supposedly co-equal power in the government. Obviously it couldn't work. Zinoviev and Kamenev were simply against the insurrection.

On October 16 the CC had another meeting. Lenin fought for the insurrection, and this time the vote was 20 to 2, again with Zinoviev and Kamenev opposed. Trotsky wasn't present at this meeting. He was getting together the Military Revolutionary Committee, which later coordinated the October insurrection. Ironically, this type of body had been proposed earlier by the Mensheviks. Back when the government tried to remove troops from the Petrograd garrison, the Mensheviks

suggested that the soviets set up a committee to coordinate defensive activities around the capital. The Bolsheviks said "sure." They could see that this would be a very useful item to have around.

On October 17, Kamenev (with Zinoviev's approval) published the letter they had circulated in the party, publicly in Gorky's paper. This was a declaration of war against the Central Committee. Lenin called them strike-breakers and demanded their expulsion from the party. Zinoviev later wrote a letter to *Pravda* in which he tried to soft-pedal the political differences, and Stalin, on his own, editorialized that "The sharpness of tone of Lenin's article does not alter the fact that in fundamentals we remain of one opinion." Lenin is voting for the seizure of state power and these guys were against it—what is more fundamental than that? Trotsky figured that Stalin was trying to keep his bridges open to the right wing of the party in case the insurrection failed.

Now we come to the insurrection. With the securing of a majority in the Soviet and the decision to boycott the "Pre-Parliament" (a bourgeois parliamentary swamp convened as a last-ditch effort to create an authoritative body to undercut the soviets) it was clear that the days of the Provisional Government were numbered. Trotsky concluded a report to the Petrograd Soviet with the statement, "Long live the direct and open struggle for a revolutionary power

throughout the country!" This was a public statement in the Soviet, so it was hardly a secret.

Trotsky notes in *The Lessons of October* that the success of the insurrection itself was virtually guaranteed when the Military Revolutionary Committee countermanded the government's orders to move troops out of the city. This was essentially a cold insurrection. If the government can't move troops—its armed bodies of men—it can't do anything. If the soviet is able to assert its authority over those armed bodies of men, it has assumed the state power in all but the name.

By October 23 the plans had been set and all the units loyal to the Military Revolutionary Committee were on call. All that was needed was some kind of spark. True to form, Kerensky provided one by committing a provocation. That very day Kerensky decided to ban the Bolshevik newspaper. So he sent these guys over to put sealing wax on the printshop door. A girl worker ran over to the Military Revolutionary Committee and told Trotsky what happened and said that the workers in the printshop would be more than happy to continue working if they got an armed guard. So Trotsky said, here we go and sent a platoon back to secure the paper.

Lenin was still in hiding, but came to Smolny Institute in disguise, on the evening of the 24th. There had been newspaper accounts about negotiations between the Soviet and the general staff. Lenin was afraid that once again the damn Central Committee was losing its nerve. So he went in there demanding to know what the hell was going on. After Trotsky explained that

continued on page 8



# Bolshevik Revolution...

(continued from page 7)

troops had already been sent to occupy and safeguard the Bolshevik press, then Lenin was happy. He laughed and rubbed his hands together and said, "Well, well—it can be done that way too. Just take the power." And they did, that morning. All the major communications, government institutions, etc., except the Winter Palace, were seized.

During the next day, the 25th, the Palace was surrounded by a cordon of troops and Red Guards, setting the stage for the seizure. To give you an idea of how willfully blind the Provisional Government was, during a lull in the siege, an official of the government sent a cablegram outside Petrograd, saying, "The situation is considered favorable.... The Palace is under fire, but only rifle fire and without results. It is clear that the enemy is weak." Meanwhile, two thousand guys with guns are outside and the *Aurora* is training its guns on the Palace! While the ministers were cackling they asked an admiral, well, what happens if the *Aurora* opens up on the Winter Palace? The admiral replied, it'll be a pile of ruins.

The Second Congress of Soviets opened on the 25th with acrimonious debate, because the Bolsheviks had effectively seized power. The Mensheviks were irate, they refused any kind of a coalition. During the debate, the *Aurora*'s guns began to open up. At first they only fired blanks, but later they fired a few live shells. The Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionary Party [SRs], the entire right wing, walked out. All that was left were a few splinters from the Mensheviks and the left wing of the SRs, which had split.

Lenin got up and opened his speech with the famous sentence, "We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist order." They had a three-point agenda. (Think of that for the next local meeting!) One, war and peace: the declaration to the peoples and governments of all belligerent countries. Two, the land decree: abolishing private property in land. Three, setting up the government of People's Commissars. Occasionally there would be some peasant delegates from the army who got up and denounced the Bolsheviks for something, but one of the anarchist leaders summed



Institute for Social History, Amsterdam



Novosti Press

Top left: Leon Trotsky organized October 1917 insurrection. Top right: Yakov Sverdlov became Bolshevik chairman of Soviet executive, replacing conciliationist Kamenev. Bottom: Kamenev (center), "strikebreaker of the revolution," pictured with Mensheviks Chaidze and Tseretelli (left) and SRs Avksentiev and Schreider (right).



Boni and Liveright

up the feeling of the peasants regarding the land decree by saying, "We must do honour to a political party which puts such an act into effect the first day, without jawing about it!"

Later that morning the Winter Palace fell. And that was the end of the Provisional Government. Kerensky left under the safety of the American flag. How did the bourgeoisie react? The Duma, this puffed up bunch of bourgeois gentlemen, decided to go to the Winter Palace and die, and voted great,

heroic resolutions. So they go marching down the street saying, yep... we're going to bare our breasts to these brutes' bullets. They came up to a picket of sailors and they started haranguing the sailors: "We will go forward! What can you do?" One irate sailor finally looked at them and said, "We will spank you! And if necessary we will shoot you too. Go home now!" So they turned around and went away. The bourgeoisie wasn't used to fighting, they were used to sending other people to do their fighting.

That episode illustrates something, a sort of childishness. For example, the ministers would be arrested and then they would be released, and the counterrevolutionary Kadets [Constitutional Democrats] would be arrested and then they'd be released, a sort of playing around. The seriousness of it hadn't actually come to the fore yet. Trotsky

gives the example of the *Aurora* sitting right off the Winter Palace with its naval guns—how could they only hit the target three times? It was very clear that the sailors were mainly trying to make a lot of noise. Essentially what this means is that the civil war hadn't begun in earnest yet.

But that was going to change. Trotsky points out, for example, that the insurrection in Moscow was much more protracted and cost many more lives. One of the reasons he points to is the vacillation in the party leadership. They'd first swing from negotiation to action, then from action to negotiation and so on. Trotsky notes that if vacillations by the leadership are generally harmful in politics, they become a mortal danger under the conditions of an armed insurrection.

Kerensky was still on the loose. The bourgeois papers were filled with reports about how he'd gone to the front and was coming back with cossacks to save Petrograd. The apparatchiks, the civil service of the old government, essentially went on strike. So for example, when Trotsky went to get the secret treaties for the Bolsheviks to publish, he found somebody had run off with them. His translators quit their jobs. This was sabotage from within. These people weren't going to openly take up arms, but they were going to do whatever they could to make it impossible for the Bolsheviks to make the country work.

On the 29th, the military cadets staged an uprising in the name of something called "The Committee for Salvation of Country and Revolution." (If you ever see something which says "Committee for the Salvation..."—watch out for some counterrevolutionary plot.) This was comprised of the right SRs and the Mensheviks, who were joined by the right-wing leadership of the rail workers union, and it was financed by the Russian bourgeoisie and probably given a little help by the Allied embassies as well. This uprising was premature. It was easily taken care of despite occasional episodes of bloody fighting, because Kerensky's troops hadn't yet made it to the city. They were parked outside Petrograd.

The Military Revolutionary Committee had tried without success to get the military staff of the garrison to get their troops in motion to smash Kerensky's operation. Finally they resorted to a direct call to the Petrograd proletariat, and that was key. Why? Because the workers at the gun factory, instead of sending their guns down someplace else, carted them off directly to the front. The Red Guards were organized, and munitions came out of nowhere—arms, artillery, you name it. The dénouement came on the night of October 30-31, when General Krasnov's cossacks were routed at Polkovo. They had been lied to that

## The Bolsheviks in World War I

### A Correction

9 September 1988  
Chicago

Dear Comrades:

Comrade Marlow's excellent basic presentation on the Russian Revolution ("The Bolshevik Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power," Part One, *WV* No. 460, 9 September) will help educate youth club members and sympathizers for years to come. However, a photo caption accompanying the talk contains an inaccuracy. The caption beneath a shot of a field carpeted with corpses reads, "Imperialist slaughter of World War I built mass support for the Bolsheviks, who demanded peace without annexations." Yet Lenin shied away from the slogan, popular in centrist circles of European Social Democracy, of "peace without annexations."

In line with their advocacy of

the right of all nations to self-determination, the Bolsheviks opposed all imperialist annexations, whether they originated during the war or before. But as the inter-imperialist conflict progressed, "peace without annexations" became the war cry of the *losing* imperialists, a demand for a return to the pre-existing status quo. The Russian social-chauvinists used this slogan to give an internationalist cover to the war aims of their own ruling class after its Polish colony was lost to the Germans. Lenin exposed this opportunist hypocrisy in an article entitled "Peace without Annexations and the Independence of Poland as Slogans of the Day in Russia" (February 1916), counterposing the war cry of the proletariat:

"Not 'peace without annexations,' but peace to the cottages, war on the palaces, peace to the proletariat and the working people, war on the bourgeoisie!"

Revolutionary greetings,  
K. Anderson

## Spartacist Forums

Defend the Soviet Union Through World Revolution!

### Where Is Gorbachev's Russia Going?

LOS ANGELES

Friday, Oct. 28, 7:00 p.m.

Dodd Hall, Room 121  
UCLA

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Central Committee

For more information (213) 380-8239

### Labor, Blacks: Break with the Democrats—Forge a Workers Party!

AMHERST

Saturday, Oct. 15, 4:00 p.m.

Campus Center Building  
Room 162-175, UMass Amherst

Speaker

Brian Manning  
Spartacist League

For more information (617) 492-3928





K. A. Kuznetsov

Lenin (above in 1919), proclaimed October Revolution: "We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist order." Right: Putilov metal workers in Petrograd listen to report from the Soviet the day after the seizure of power.



Oetz Verlag Berlin

the Bolsheviks were committing atrocities, that the Bolsheviks were making deals with the Kaiser, that the Petrograd garrison was waiting for the cosacks to liberate them. So they started marching forward and got hit by a barrage of artillery, and realized that somebody had sold them a bill of goods. Most of the troops just turned around and went away. There was some fighting, but that was Kerensky's last gasp.

#### A Workers and Peasants Government

There was another fight within the Bolshevik Party over the question of the so-called "homogeneous socialist ministry." This is after they've taken state power. The Mensheviks were clamoring that you can't set up a government just made up of Bolsheviks. The rail workers almost decided to strike, saying they were not going to move anything unless there's a coalition ministry. Partly this got transmitted, again, through the right wing of the Bolshevik Party, which thought that the Mensheviks and the SRs and the other nominally socialist parties should be included in the government.

In principle the Bolsheviks were not

opposed to a coalition. A CC meeting on November 2 agreed to accept a coalition with any party if they would abide by soviet constitutionalism, which meant accepting the reality of the October insurrection and the fact that the soviets have a Bolshevik majority, and therefore will form the majority of the government. That was a big if. The SRs and the Mensheviks were essentially on the other side of the class line. They were in the Committee for Salvation. There was no way they were going to come over. So who remained to make a coalition with?

The same day in the central executive of the soviets, Kamenev voted against the resolution of his own party. Kamenev, the Bolshevik chairman, openly asked for the dismissal of the Bolshevik government and for its replacement by a coalition. And he had a lot of support in the party: Lunacharsky, Zinoviev, Ryazanov. Presented with this revolt, Lenin and Trotsky were outraged. On November 3 the Central Committee demanded disciplined behavior and threatened an emergency conference of the party which would either endorse the conciliators or expel them. The reply of the right wing was a collective

resignation from the Central Committee, at which point Lenin went public, in *Pravda*, and denounced them as men of little faith, and waverers.

Shortly thereafter, it became clear that the Mensheviks and the SRs would never compromise under any conditions, and the conciliators backed down basically because there was nobody left to form a coalition with. Kamenev was removed, deposed from the Soviet executive and replaced by Sverdlov. The Left SRs, who had been hanging on the sidelines, were sufficiently repelled by the behavior of the Mensheviks and the SRs that they decided they would join the Bolshevik-led government, and did.

Throughout November, the People's Commissars issued the decrees of the first workers state. These included: nationalization of the banks, abolition of ranks and titles in the military, election of commanders, abolition of all aristocratic titles and privileges, etc. The foundations of the new soviet state were being laid.

The compromisers always tried to put off every major social question, like the seizure of the land, or the composition of the government. They were awaiting the convocation of the Constituent

Assembly, which was supposed to be like a democratically-elected parliament. The Constituent Assembly was a hangover from February. The bourgeoisie had never wanted any part of it, had kept putting off convening it. "We'll wait till the war's over." But after October it was different. It was clear that this Constituent Assembly, which had been based on party lists from a long time ago, would in fact be dominated by right-wing parties and have considerable bourgeois representation as well. It would be a retrograde force, a focus for refounding some kind of a bourgeois republic, when the proletariat had already seized the state power. The Constituent Assembly met in early January and shortly afterward it was dispersed.

The bourgeoisie's attitude was given in Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World* in an interview with Lianozov, an industrialist, who, before the revolution, called for lynching all the Bolsheviks and added, "Or if, for example, the Constituent Assembly manifests any Utopian tendencies, it can be dispersed by force of arms." It was. Only it was a different class, the working class, that was holding the arms. ■

## Curfew Fight at Boston University No Sex Under Silber

Students beware: John Silber, the notorious twisted Bonaparte of Boston University, wants to strip booze, sex, and any rights you thought you might have from your dorm rooms in his fiefdom. Under a new Big Brother policy proposed by the puritanical Silber regime, students will no longer be allowed to have guests in their rooms after 11 p.m. on weeknights and 1 a.m. on weekends. And you can't have more than a six-pack of beer and one bottle of booze in your room—even if you've hit the legal drinking age of 21! As one BU student said, "I feel like my mother is living with me, just not in the same room" (*Harvard Independent*, 22 September). Beyond *in loco parentis*, Silber, the *in loco ayatollah*, has gone off his nut. The survival of our species on the planet is proof that people will screw, despite the turns and turds of history like Torquemada, Jerry Falwell and John Silber.

The new rules are just the latest draconian outrage from Silber. Silber is notorious for "no knock" dorm room searches for drugs, banning rock con-

certs, banning condoms, running a Hooveresque surveillance file system on student activists. This latest attempt to bring back the stifling social mores of the 1950s is part of Silber's drive to pound the student body into a mindless, obedient, scared mass of cannon fodder for the bourgeoisie. Young people who are unaccustomed to having any rights to privacy or dissent are far less likely to "make love not war" or politically organize against U.S. imperialism's crimes against humanity.

Silber turned BU's College of Communications into a CIA disinformation mill for the bloodthirsty feudalist mullahs in Afghanistan, who skin alive Russian soldiers and leftist school-teachers and want to murder any girl who can read. Perhaps what Silber and his buddy William Bennett (former Secretary of Education for Reagan) yearn for are the good old days when the only people who could read lived in monasteries—and they'd probably assign the same reading list too! A sign of the rot of this decaying racist cap-

"Madman" John Silber grooves on screwing BU students.



Thebaath/Boston Phoenix

italist society is its inability to provide basic education for its youth. America's rulers don't give a damn about the masses of black and Hispanic youth they've assigned to the scrap heap, and they're tending toward creating an equality of ignorance with rich white kids from suburbia who aren't taught the basics either.

Silber has been met by intense and almost universal opposition from BU's student body. Students have raised the minimal and polite demand "We want guests!" and taken to taping paper plates to their windows with a logo against the 11 p.m. curfew. A thousand students rallied at Marsh Chapel on September 14 and twice that

number packed the Ballroom in the student center to "discuss" the *diktat* with the *führer* himself. But a march on Silber's house was called off by timid student "leaders" who were bullied by Dean of Students Ron Carter. Carter is himself a walking incitement to riot. He says the new dorm policy "is not a ban on sex.... Students can have sex before 11:00 p.m. and after that they can play with themselves."

Silber ought to keep out of students' private lives. Fight the social/sexual counterrevolution at BU! Down with all "age of consent" laws and the anti-drug, anti-booze witch-hunt! Down with the curfew!



# Spartacist Brigadista Eyewitness Account In War-Torn Nicaragua

Young Spartacus is pleased to print a report from comrade Vinnie of the Berkeley Spartacus Youth Club on his recent trip to Nicaragua.

I went to Nicaragua for four weeks and spent three in Matagalpa as part of a reforestation project. We planted trees, terraced and weeded on a historic mountain site. During the insurrection the mountain was a stronghold of Somoza's National Guard. From its top they bombed the city and set it on fire. Many a Sandinista died before it was finally taken. Seeing the word "internacionalista" on Ben Linder's gravestone in Matagalpa, I sang the *Internationale* in my head and it took on new meaning. Learning firsthand how the effects of imperialism go far beyond the poverty of the U.S. gave me a deeper level of hatred for capitalism. I only hope that this trip has made me a better *internacionalista* to help in the fight for socialism.

Matagalpa is more concentrated than Managua and less developed. Water comes every two days and the electricity goes out about three to four times a week. The destruction the National Guard meted out was visible everywhere. Vacant lots, destroyed buildings and bullet holes were common. Walking around in Managua, it was hard to believe that it's the central city of Nicaragua. It's so spread out that it appears like some rural area of the U.S. The damage of the '72 earthquake is still visible in the downtown area. Most gutted buildings have yet to be taken down.

The lieutenant in the Sandinista army who I lived with asked me a good question. "In the U.S., with so many unemployed, so many poor, why isn't there a movement for national liberation?" First, I explained that the U.S. is the most dominant imperialist country in the world. It doesn't need a movement for national liberation but socialist revolution. I said that in the U.S. there is a need for revolutionary leadership. He tried to convince me that Nicaragua was socialist. I asked, "what

The U.S. portion of my brigade included a couple from the Boston Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), myself, and ten basically liberal types. Getting to know the YSAers was a real lesson in the degeneration of the SWP (Socialist Workers Party, the YSA's parent organization). Both YSAers complained a lot—one even asked to be moved from the house chosen for him because the chickens made too much noise in the morning! The newer YSA member felt that revolution in the U.S. was basically impossible and not worth fighting for, and that capitalism could work if it was governed properly.

## Complete the Revolution!

While the Nicaraguan Revolution is an historic advance over Somoza, the incompleteness of the revolution is striking. My first sight at the Managua airport was many little kids selling *La Prensa* and many people reading it. This open counterrevolutionary activity made me uneasy. The most striking incompleteness is that 60 percent of the property is still in private hands and the Sandinistas have no plans to change this. The nationalization of the San Antonio sugar mill last July was described as a last resort to deal with an uncooperative capitalist. The FSLN says it was a message to other owners, but they don't want to have to do it again. One FSLN representative told us that they could live with the capitalists until eternity. When pushed, she answered my question as to which class will rule very curtly, "petty bourgeoisie."

A representative from AMNLAE (Nicaraguan Women's Association) admitted that women in Nicaragua have a long way to go. *Machismo* is still strong. Women did all the housework where I stayed. A recent plan to build four day-care centers was cut back to build just one. Birth control is available from health centers, but they rarely have it. Many young women have two or three children. Women are excluded

One said he learned about idealism vs. materialism in school.

The economic situation in Nicaragua is quite poor. Numerous people complained about their salaries being too low. The family I lived with told me their combined salaries bought nothing but food and basic necessities. The average worker in Nicaragua earns 2,000-3,000 córdobas (US\$12-15) per month. Many earn less. A pair of cheap shoes is about 2,000 córdobas, tennis shoes about 7,500 córdobas. A nice shirt goes for about 4,500 córdobas. A half-pack a day habit of cheap cigarettes is about 750 córdobas; for filtered cigarettes multiply by six. Most people like to smoke but cannot afford to buy cigarettes. Walking around Nicaragua I noticed a large dichotomy between the well-dressed people shopping at the special "dollar stores" and campesinos wearing rags and living in one-room houses.

The FSLN says the reason the economy is so bad is because of the U.S.-backed contra war and the economic blockade. This is quite true. Government estimates say that both have cost Nicaragua 12.2 billion dollars and 56,000 lives. At the same time, the FSLN seems more concerned with giving concessions to the capitalists than increasing workers' wages. The ex-owners of the recently nationalized San Antonio sugar mill will be reimbursed. The pro-Sandinista union (CST) says that strikes aren't necessary, that they impede the struggle and make problems worse. At the CST office in Matagalpa we were fed the line that relations between workers and management are so good that strikes don't happen. So the workers do their work, accept their low wages, and strikes get declared illegal while the capitalists get concessions. All this from the FSLN, which calls itself a "party of the working people."

## Smash Yankee Imperialism!

It is obvious that the U.S. government has been doing its best to smash



Young Spartacus  
Spartacus Youth Club brigadista Vinnie on Calavera Hill in Matagalpa, Nicaragua.

ment prices. Many people feel that if Dukakis wins, U.S. policy toward Nicaragua will change. The government papers are sympathetic to Dukakis and a couple of officials explicitly told us to go home and vote for him. I responded by talking about Bentsen's support for the contras and the Democrats' history as the party of war and racism. Most were stunned and did not want to hear it.

The most dangerous illusion is the Arias "peace" plan. When I brought up the releasing of contra prisoners and allowing the contras to operate freely in the country, many agreed that this was quite dangerous. But they all insisted that the need for peace outweighs the concessions and that Arias will bring peace. These concessions don't spell peace, they spell counterrevolution! Some argued that Arias is working. Proof, they say, is that the fighting has decreased. But this is certainly not due to any compliance by the U.S. or the contras. The ex-U.S. ambassador, John Melton, openly participated in opposition demonstrations. Congress continues funding for the contras. The contra attacks have decreased only because they've gotten their asses kicked on the battlefield. The Sandinista offensive last March was so effective that Reagan felt he had to send troops to Honduras so that the contras wouldn't be wiped out altogether.

The nationalist dreams of "non-alignment" simply can't work in a world of two competing economic systems. The only way forward is to complete the revolution by expropriating the capitalists, eliminating the agents of U.S. imperialism in Nicaragua. But Nicaragua alone would be hard pressed to defend itself against the mighty forces of U.S. imperialism. The revolution must be extended to El Salvador, Mexico and on to the U.S. itself. Defend, complete, extend the Nicaraguan Revolution! Defense of Cuba and the USSR begins in Central America. ■



WW Photo  
American imperialism's contra war and economic blockade bring misery for Nicaraguan poor.

about the capitalist class in Nicaragua?" He said that without the capitalists there could be no trade with the U.S. But right now, with the embargo, there is no trade with the U.S. anyway. Another person put it like this: "We didn't have the experience to run the country when we took power. We had to let the capitalists run things." But since '79 the capitalists have been looting the economy, acting as the internal "fifth column" of the contras.

from the draft because they might have children. They are underrepresented in the military where some of the best-paying jobs are. Abortion is illegal and many women are hospitalized due to back-alley abortions—a deadly consequence of the strong influence of the Catholic church in Nicaragua. Most homes in our neighborhood had religious figures on the walls. Yet both of the young guys I lived with said they do not believe in god and criticized religion.

the Sandinistas, and this policy is really taking its toll in Nicaragua. Sandinista propaganda still flourishes, but the masses don't appear very enthused about it. People are desperate for something to give way. It's a universal feeling that the current war must end for Nicaragua to prosper. "Nicaragua wants peace" is the slogan of the day.

This state of war-weariness has given rise to a lot of false hopes. Dangerous illusions are being sold at bargain base-



# For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

## Defend the Kurdish People!

Adapted from Workers Hammer No. 100, September 1988, newspaper of the Spartacist League of Britain.

The so-called "cease-fire" negotiated by the United Nations may not have ended the savage and senseless war between Iraq and Iran. But it has given these two self-proclaimed "revolutionary" regimes the respite to concentrate their forces on what they do best: massacring their own peoples.

Since the middle of July, the Baghdad generals have launched yet another offensive against Iraqi Kurdistan, where also many Assyrian Christians live. This time they sent 60,000 troops equipped with tanks, helicopter gunships, heavy artillery, napalm and, Kurdish refugees say, poison gas. Tens of thousands of refugees have been forced over the rugged, mountainous border into Turkey, where Kurds have been historically more oppressed than anywhere else. Meanwhile, Ayatollah Khomeini, who inaugurated his Islamic "revolution" by killing more than 10,000 Kurds, is presently massing troops inside Iranian Kurdistan.

Dominating the headlines, condemnations of the use of poison gas issued forth from imperialist capitals like Washington and Bonn. British imperialism lagged behind its cousins maintaining a discreet silence. There are a variety of reasons, including, as the [London] *Guardian* (15 September) speculated, a desire not to offend the brutal Ozal regime in Turkey. West Germany does a brisk business selling chemical weapons materials to Iraq, and the U.S. recently refused to sign an international ban on producing or using these weapons.

Washington has taken the lead among the NATO imperialists in denouncing Baghdad for using "C-weapons" against the Kurds. The Senate even voted sanctions against Iraq. Yet when the Iran-Iraq war was raging, and the U.S. was tilting heavily toward Iraq, there was hardly a peep from the Reagan administration about Iraqi use of mustard gas and cyanide. But now with the Persian Gulf cease-fire, the White House is tilting back toward Iran. Reports are now circulating of an "October surprise" in the works, trading the release of American hostages in Beirut for new arms and economic aid to Teheran and releasing billions of dollars of frozen Iranian assets, in order to help the Republicans in the November elections.

Amnesty International, one of the first organisations to expose the massacres in Iraq and report the use of chemical weapons, appealed to the UN Security Council. But the United Nations is the same institution that dismembered Palestine and provides border guards for Israeli expansion; that murdered nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba and dismembered his fledgling African nation; that provided sanction for the U.S. rape of Korea, and protected thousands of Nazi war criminals after World War II including, of course, its own secretary general, Kurt Waldheim.

The UN's predecessor organisation, the League of Nations, was responsible for imposing the imperialist partition and balkanisation of the Near East after World War I, by which Kurdistan was denied its right to self-determination and divided between four capitalist powers: Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. British imperialism played a leading role in this carving up of Kurdistan. And



Frey/Time

Kurds flee Iraqi rampage (above). Kurdish victims of poison gas attack near Iraqi town of Halabja in March (left).



Ozluks/Sipa

today 20 million Kurdish people are denied their own nation-state.

Charges of poison gas use have been denied both in Baghdad and by NATO's front man in Ankara, Ozal. That is not surprising as Turkey makes a nice profit pumping oil from Iraq (to be precise, from Iraqi Kurdistan) to the Mediterranean. As part of its "facelift" for entering the European Common Market, the Turkish dictatorship has crowed about its "humanitarian" treatment of refugees from Iraq, which consists of shipping the men back and keeping the women and children penned up in carefully guarded camps to which outside medical relief assistance has been denied.

According to the TKP's (Turkish Communist Party) *Iscinin Sesi* (5 September) Turkey has denied refugee status to the Kurds, proffering instead the meaningless status of "temporary stay." Meanwhile southeastern Anatolia, where most of Turkey's over eight million Kurds live, remains under martial law. Referred to as "mountain Turks" since the rule of nationalist leader Atatürk in the 1920s and denied the use of their language, today even their villages have been militarily occupied and their militants jailed and murdered.

Iraq has used poison gas in Kurdistan since October 1983. Last March in a battle against Iranian troops, Ba'athist forces dropped chemical weapons on the Kurdish village of Halabja, killing more than 5,000 men, women and chil-

dren. To break resistance to Baghdad's domination, the bonapartist regime is pursuing what U.S. imperialism called in Vietnam a "scorched earth" policy:

"President Saddam Hussein has razed villages—no less than 3,000 out of Kurdistan's 4,000 are believed to have disappeared—deported tens of thousands of inhabitants—either to easily controllable settlements in Kurdistan or to concentration camps in the far south of Iraq—and Arabised the more sensitive areas, such as around the Kirkuk oilfields."

—[London] *Guardian*,  
14 September

Saddam's pretext for yet another murderous campaign against the embattled Kurds was that their nationalist forces collaborated with Khomeini's troops. Indeed the bourgeois (and pre-bourgeois) nationalist leaders of Iraqi Kurds, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) headed by the Barzani clan and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) headed by Jabal Talabani, have received support from both Khomeini and the Shah. The latter exploited the Kurdish resistance to force Saddam Hussein to sign the 1975 Algiers agreement granting Iran shared sovereignty over the Shatt-al-Arab estuary. The Algiers agreement also meant Baghdad-Teheran collaboration in crushing the Kurdish resistance until Saddam tore up that agreement in 1980 by launching a territorial war against Khomeini's newly formed theocratic dictatorship.

Meanwhile, the leader of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan

(DKIP), Abdel Ghassemlou, announced recently that Khomeini was about to attack his forces because he had in turn accepted aid from Saddam. When asked by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (16 September) about the Kurds in Iraq he stated: "We are not separatists. We are Kurds, but we are also Iranians." Therefore, Saddam was their problem, it was not the job of his organisation to come to the aid of the Iraqi Kurds.

The Near East, and Kurdistan in particular, give dramatic testimony to the inability of capitalism in the epoch of imperialism's decline to solve even the most elementary democratic and national aspirations of the oppressed, toiling masses. Petty-bourgeois leftists who supported Arab nationalism and the "Arab revolution" when that was in vogue, and then switched over to the "Iranian revolution" of Persian chauvinism and Shi'ite obscurantism, reaped the spoils of their tailism in the Iran-Iraq war, especially on the killing fields of Kurdistan. And among the Kurds, some from Iraq consider themselves to be "hezbollahi" (Shi'ite fanatics) while other Kurds in Iran are being slaughtered by Khomeini's hezbollah. A proletarian perspective for the Kurdish people is needed to combat these religious and regional divisions as well.

Only the international Spartacist tendency, which gives no political support

continued on page 12

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# Fascist Metzger...

(continued from page 6)

Richard Butler for a 1983 cross-burning in the San Fernando Valley. The Aryan Nations/Order murdered Jewish talk show host Alan Berg in Denver. On trial an "Order" member testified that they gave a quarter million dollars—proceeds of an armored car robbery—to Metzger, who then set up his White Student Unions.

These days Metzger brags that the skinheads who are being organized by his son "are becoming part of our overall movement. We've gone beyond the hullshit stage. We're talking about survival now. If blacks or anybody else gives them trouble, they will smash it" (*San Francisco Independent*, 29 June). When skinheads threatened to lynch the black schoolteacher in San Jose, a leader of Metzger's White Aryan Youth Movement declared: "Skinheads are our front line warriors.... They roam the streets and do what's necessary to defend the race" (*Oakland Tribune*, 2 August 1987).

Clinton Sipes, a former leader of Metzger's WAR who quit, announcing that he was "born again," described his experience with the skinheads: "The last time Sipes spent time with his skinhead friends in San Francisco, they ran their car over someone they suspected of being a homosexual, he said.... He recalls another occasion when he accompanied a group of skinheads as they kidnapped a prostitute in Oakland and tortured her while they held a loaded automatic weapon to her head" (*San Francisco Independent*, 29 June).

Alter Greg Withrow quit as leader of Metzger's White Aryan Youth Movement/White Student Unions, skinheads broke into his Sacramento apartment, pummeled him with baseball bats and left him for dead. Five weeks later skinheads nailed Withrow to a board

Militants give skinhead thugs a thrashing in Dallas, February 27.



through the palms of his hands and slashed his chest to the bone with a razor. These days Withrow has made prime time television talk shows with his renunciation of Metzger, who, he says, "If the opportunity were right... would make what Hitler did seem like a Mary Poppins story" (*San Francisco State University Prism*, December 1987).

## Smash Racist Terror!

Over the last decade there has been a chilling rise of racist terror. The opening shots were fired by the KKK and Nazis who gunned down five anti-Klan leftist demonstrators in cold blood and in broad daylight in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1979. The Klan/Nazi killers wrapped themselves in the stars-and-stripes anti-Soviet rhetoric coming out of Democrat Carter's White House, and were acquitted by an all-white jury. That same year (1980), Tom Metzger won the Democratic primary running for Congress in Southern California. The murderous far-right lunatic fringe was bidding for "respectability."

Now Reagan, the Klan-endorsed president, salutes Nazi SS graves at Bitburg. At home skinheads raise their arms in the Nazi salute and scream "Sieg

Heil." Taking their cue from the Ollie Norths directing anti-Communist terror from the White House corridors, skinheads in Atlanta trashed a benefit to raise money for a health center in Nicaragua. Fully developed, the skinhead scum—who match the sick pathology of the likes of "Blowtorch Bob" D'Aubuisson in El Salvador and the sadistic dogs of war who fill the ranks of the Nicaraguan contras—become death squads.

When the KKK and Nazis attempted to penetrate Northern urban centers in the early 1980s with their race-hate rallies and marches, the Spartacist League initiated thousands-strong mobilizations to stop them, from Detroit to San Francisco to Chicago to Washington, D.C., bringing to bear the muscle of organized labor together with blacks and all the intended victims of fascist terror. Now the skinheads offer the fascists an opening into the cities and Metzger is organizing them as the urban stormtroopers for WAR. Meanwhile, liberal civil libertarians are defending them, claiming that the issue is not genocide but "free speech" for the fascists. In contrast, protesting an obscene Berkeley radio "talk show" featuring Metzger last spring, an SL/Spartacus Youth Club call to action declared: "Don't 'interview' fascists—MOBILIZE TO SMASH THEM!"

These sicko, Hitler-loving skinheads are feared, but they are also hated and loathed among broad sectors of the population. It is difficult to deal with packs of skinhead punks who randomly attack their victims on the streets and in back alleys. But when they have tried to come out in the light of day with their racist terror, these filth have been routed. In February an integrated crowd of 600 blacks, whites and Hispanics in Dallas drove KKKers and their skinhead allies off the streets. Neo-Nazi skinheads also got a hot reception from protesters

when they tried to march in Atlanta during the Democratic Party convention.

The fight against fascism, as Trotsky said, "begins in the factory." It is the labor movement that has the power to sweep the KKK lynchers and skinhead stormtroopers from the streets. A step in the right direction was taken by San Francisco unionists after a black member of the American Federation of Government Employees was attacked by skinheads last June. At its July meeting, his union unanimously passed a motion declaring:

"Whereas, a member of our local was brutally attacked and beaten in broad daylight on June 11th in the Haight/Ashbury area of S.F. in a savage racist assault by a mob of skinhead racists, and...

"Whereas, the fascist, Nazi-loving KKK have in the past and in the present declared themselves enemies of blacks, unions, Jews, Hispanics, gays, the foreign born and are currently engaging in murderous attacks against these groups across the country, and

"Whereas, attacks by these fascist thugs will only increase if the labor movement does not step in to act resolutely to stop them,

"Therefore be it resolved, in order to protect not only our own members and fellow workers, but to defend the whole labor movement and all other targets of Klan/Nazi attacks Local 1457 of the American Federation of Government Employees issues an urgent call to the Bay Area labor movement and to all decent people to mobilize and act decisively to put an immediate stop to the atrocities of these skinheads."

What is desperately needed to deal with these racist terrorists is some hard class struggle. In the face of a combative, mobilized and class-conscious labor movement, the skinhead slime will crawl back into the sewers. A powerful, integrated, multiracial revolutionary workers party will sweep out the Nazi-loving skinheads and all their ilk by bringing down the rotting capitalist system that spawned these deadly beasts. ■

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## Defend the Kurds...

(continued from page 11)

to nationalism, could fight every injustice against the Kurdish people and take a position of revolutionary defeatism of both sides of the Iran-Iraq war, pointing out that it provided the best opportunity to carve out an independent Kurdish nation-state since the short-lived Mahabad "Kurdish Republic" of 1946. Saddam Hussein's present genocidal campaign against Iraqi Kurds is his own acknowledgement of this. And Saddam's enemy in Teheran is equally a bloody persecutor of the Kurdish people.

A demonstration called in London by the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (Britain) on 10 September to protest Baghdad's brutal offensive in Iraqi Kurdistan showed that a deformed nationalist perspective still predominates. As the demonstration took off for the Iraqi embassy, the Spartacist contingent raised our placards, including those denouncing the Iranian mullahs as well as the Iraqi colonels, Turkey's Evren as

well as Syria's Assad. The organisers—including supporters of the Iraqi CP—resorted to calling the police in order to force an exclusion of our revolutionary defeatist and Soviet defensist policies.

The Russian Revolution demonstrated that in this epoch democratic rights and principles can only be fully realized by the revolutionary proletariat in power. That is why many Kurds look to the Soviet Union, despite its Stalinist degeneration, where their brothers and sisters enjoy democratic national rights together with the achievements of 20th century science and technology. As we stated in our greetings to a Kurdish conference held in central Europe four years ago (*WV* No. 362, 14 September 1984):

"The solution to the oppression of the Kurdish masses can only be region-wide, involving the smashing of four reactionary bourgeois regimes.... Our model is Lenin's Russia of 1917-24 where the Bolsheviks offered the national minorities the option and the advantages of association with the Soviet Federation. For our part, we are dedicated to the forging of the internationalist party of worldwide proletarian revolution and speak to you in the understanding that the future of humanity depends on its construction." ■



# AIDS...

(continued from page 5)

For homeless people with AIDS, the situation on the streets and in NYC's barracks-like "shelters" is horrible. Dr. Paul Perowsky, director of ambulatory care at Woodhull Hospital in Brooklyn, estimates 15 to 20 percent of shelter residents are infected with HIV, and about half meet the criteria for an official AIDS diagnosis according to the CDC definitions. Many are sick and unaware they have AIDS, others know it and are terrified of being beaten up by other shelter residents. Many doctors are reluctant to diagnose AIDS in those who do seek help, shelter workers told the *New York Times* (4 April), because once somebody with AIDS is admitted to a hospital, he cannot be released to a shelter and must stay there until housing can be found. And there isn't any housing.

## Mean Streets

The exigencies of administering the inner cities of this decaying capitalist society with its insane profit system necessarily lead to madness and cruelty in dealing with this raging epidemic, whose victims are largely poor, black, Hispanic and homosexual. And New York City mayor Ed Koch is notoriously neither rational nor humane. The so-called "leaders" of this city seem indeed to revel in the unspeakable degradation endured by thousands of New Yorkers. Presiding over one of the most sleazy and brutal administrations in memory, the sadistic Koch denounces those who give a coin to starving people in the streets while his buddy, the clerical reactionary Cardinal O'Connor, leads anti-abortion, anti-condom crusades in a city where begging and homelessness invite comparison with the Third World Calcutta. Real-estate mogul Donald Trump builds golden towers worth thousands per square foot while his sister-in-law, in a publicity stunt for AIDS, "camps out" in a luxury tent on the Upper East Side.

The "blame the victim" policy of this sick administration in response to the AIDS epidemic has emboldened the hard-core right wing. This has led directly to a dramatic rise in "gay-bashing" in the city. Murderous racist violence has become almost a daily occurrence, with Koch's killer cops in the lead. Police terror is Koch's real answer for everything. While whining that the city budget won't permit funding for AIDS services, Koch insists on ramming through a proposed \$110 million "anti-drug" program called the Tactical Narcotics Team—or, ominously, "TNT."

The city blocked every suggestion for the widespread distribution of disposable syringes, in line with Reagan's drug witchhunt. Finally New York City health officials announced an "experiment" to give 200 addicts clean needles, starting sometime this fall. This is both timid and cruel—200 needle recipients (less than .01 percent of the minimum estimated number of IV drug users in the city) will be picked from a list of addicts seeking drug treatment, while a second group of 200 will be chosen for "comparison" and not given clean needles, while their "drug behavior and AIDS infection will be monitored" (*New York Times*, 12 August). Meanwhile, for about a quarter million junkies there are only 30,000 places in methadone clinics. At a news conference called by the New York Citizens Commission on AIDS, a former addict, now infected with the AIDS virus, said, "In my years on the streets, I came in for detoxification at least 15 times. Each time, I was told to come back" (*New York Times*, 16 September).

Drug addiction is the scourge of the ghettos because desperate poverty and hopelessness lead to desperate measures to escape, even for a few moments, the daily hell of ghetto life. Drug use is the classic "crime without a victim"—

the addict himself is the victim. The criminalization of drugs by the bourgeois state multiplies the price by a hundred, forcing the addict into a life of crime while dealers and their cop protectors (where the cops and the dealers aren't simply the same people) make big bucks. But the fact is, the government would rather administer public health through the cops than with scientists. As we said in "The Agony of AIDS" (*Women and Revolution* No. 35, Summer 1988), "Amid the compound horror of AIDS and the poison of drug addiction, the only hope is to decriminalize drugs, remove the stigma and get these people to some help fast."

## Free, Quality Health Care for All!

As horrifying as the official AIDS "body count" statistics are, they don't even begin to reveal the true extent of



Koch's cossacks bust heads of Harlem protesters fighting against closing of Sydenham Hospital, 1980.

the epidemic. The CDC definition of AIDS is so narrow that only those who become ill with certain recognized diseases (like pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, or PCP) are counted. There are probably ten times the number of ARC (AIDS-Related Complex) patients in the country, some of whom die without ever getting "official AIDS." And as medical experts learn more about the disease, it is becoming clear that almost everyone infected will get sick in one way or another.

According to the rules of this truly barbarous medical "system," only the "official AIDS" patients can get access to what paltry services are available, such as Medicaid, disability or social security. But as one medical expert said, "The disease is HIV disease. It starts when you become infected with the virus. And its complications continue from there" (*Washington Post*, 5 June). All social and medical services should be immediately available to all HIV-infected people, who are subject to a wide variety of common and bizarre ailments often not even recognized as AIDS by doctors.

This country shares with South Africa the distinction of being one of the only two industrialized countries in the world with no national health system (and, not accidentally, among the few that retain the death penalty). Medical care continues to deteriorate, with vast consequences not only from the new scourge of AIDS but from older enemies of mankind as well. After 100 years of steady decline, rates of tuberculosis, long considered a key indicator of public health, have been soaring across the country among the ghetto poor. And an epidemic of syphilis and other sexually-transmitted diseases has exploded among young black and Hispanic men and women. Syphilis has increased 150 percent among blacks and 73 percent among Hispanics in the last few years—and this is a curable disease! In the last few years, it has doubled among women, leading for the first time in decades to an increase in babies born with congenital syphilis.

HIV itself is part of the cause for these hideous illnesses, because the immune suppression caused by the virus can make other infections especially virulent and difficult to treat. (The rise of sexually transmitted disease also makes it easier for HIV to spread through genital lesions.) But equally to blame are bad housing, poor nutrition, and severe cutbacks in public health spending which have chopped millions from programs to combat these diseases. There is little doubt that the witchhunt atmosphere directed at AIDS sufferers is driving "underground" people with every kind of venereal disease. But in a more impersonal way, medicine for profit cuts against the early detection and treatment of everything from coughs to cancer—people can't afford to come near a doctor until they know they need one in the worst way.



The increasing gap between the rich and the poor is nowhere more blatant than in medical care. In New York, a third of all hospitalized AIDS patients at any one time are in the municipal hospitals, which have only 16 percent of the acute care beds. While foreign royalty rent luxury suites at the world-renowned NYU Medical Center, welfare mothers wait for days for care at deteriorating public hospitals. Others simply die on the streets.

Quality health care for all is objectively within the reach of material possibility, but not within the framework of this capitalist system, which cannot provide the necessities of life to its citizens even though the productive capacities and technology exist to feed the hungry across the whole planet. And while "throwing money" at AIDS won't guarantee a cure or vaccine early on, it would at a minimum ease suffering for the dying and, as treatments improve, prolong life expectancy. But it will take socialist revolution to rip the profit motive out of the health system.

## It is Desperately Necessary to Fight!

Whatever the right-wing yahoos in the White House may think, America needs New York City: it's the financial and cultural center of this country and moreover the de facto capital of the American empire. But the ruling class of this outmoded social system increasingly finds intolerable its wage-slaves' needs for jobs, housing, education, health care. Today American capitalism has no use for the inner city poor in the ghettos and barrios, even as a "reserve army of the unemployed" to hold down wages. Significant layers of white workers are permanently unemployed, even living in tent caravans in public parks as they chase jobs that just aren't there, because the nation's heavy industry has been left to rust. The new welfare bill passed in Washington—with overwhelming bipartisan support—is an open declaration of savage indifference to the fate of black America. Its punitive "workfare" pro-

visions include forcing women into slave labor programs while cutting off child support.

The working people created the wealth of this city and it can't run without them—motormen driving the subway trains, women mopping the floors and making the beds in the fancy hotels, Teamsters and dock workers, teachers and garbage collectors. It is desperately necessary to bring the power of organized labor to bear to fight for the needs of working people and all the oppressed! To take back the givebacks and halt the rulers' drive toward abject misery for the masses, what's needed is a leadership that's not afraid to fight to win. But the union bureaucrats—not only the openly racist fat cats but equally the smoother "labor statesmen" who seek to placate their members with "social justice" rhetoric—give up in advance, hiding behind the fears and demoralization their own sellout policies have engendered.

Over a decade ago, in response to the hank-engineered New York fiscal crisis scam which started the massive cutbacks in basic services, the craven union tops threw their members' pension funds down the "Big MAC" sinkhole in the futile hope of "making the system work." Today they're still singing the same tune—instead of going after what we need, they plead for whatever crumbs are "available" after the multi-billions are ripped off for the war budget. Now these labor "leaders" who have made inertia into a way of life are suddenly running around like crazy telling workers the answer is to get Dukakis into the White House. As we wrote during a NYC Spartacist League election campaign in 1985,

"The budget ax that came down on New York was the cutting edge of the drive to shore up American capitalism by dismantling the social welfare programs that had been built up out of the New Deal. 'Reaganomics,' this calculated policy of eliminating financial reform for the masses, was begun by the Democrats."

America used to boast it was "the richest country in the world" but now the fashionable ideology is naked greed and gloating injustice, as hungry kids are sneeringly starved amidst cries of "no more free lunches." The agony of New York is the decay of capitalism raised to fever pitch, the heartless injustice of the system under a magnifying glass. The big-time crooks sit in their lofty offices dreaming of new fortunes to be made by sleight of hand and juggling of paper, while far below, the subways are a disaster area, the bridges are falling down and whole families are sleeping in alleys in "homes" made of cardboard boxes. And in the face of a medical technology that can perform miracles of microsurgery, people are dying every day of disease and neglect in the corridors of hospital hellholes. The greedy, vicious, incompetent rulers of this country are running it into the ground. We'd better get organized and take it away from them. ■

### Women and Revolution

Criminal State Neglect as Epidemic Rages

## The Agony of AIDS

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# Soviet Union...

(continued from page 16)

"But its most worrying legacy may be regional economic disparity. Variations in regional patterns of employment will produce economic inequalities between ethnic groups. Machine tool builders in Russia will soon race ahead of cotton growers in Central Asia. These differences are certain to create resentments."

Decades of mismanagement by the Kremlin bureaucracy have undermined the belief that there can be equality between the Soviet peoples on an increasing plane of material well-being. Much of the intelligentsia throughout the USSR identifies social and national equality with economic stagnation and leveling down. So they're going for the inequality route—decentralization and market competition.

Stalinism has been synonymous with national oppression of non-Russian peoples in the Soviet Union. Under Stalin (himself a Georgian) this meant Russification of the non-Russian republics of the USSR, the state which had been conceived by the Bolsheviks as a genuinely free union of peoples. (A contemporary analogue to Stalin is the "solution" to the national question in Romania by the ultra-Stalinist Ceausescu, who has ordered thousands of Hungarian villages in Transylvania razed from the face of the earth.) But once the iron lid of repression has been lifted by Gorbachev, you get the flourishing of national particularism and chauvinism as the result. And the most dangerous of these is the emergence of the black-shirted *Great Russian Nazis of Pamyat*, which has been staging weekly provocations in Leningrad. A massive, organized demonstration of Leningrad workers and youth to *crush Pamyat* would be a decisive signal that there is no place for nationalist chauvinism in the homeland of the October Revolution.

What's needed is the Marxist program which animated the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. It is necessary to reforge in the Soviet Union an authentically Bolshevik party committed to central planning under workers democracy, social egalitarianism and equality between peoples, and proletarian internationalism. Only such a program can liberate the creative energies of all Soviet peoples, overcoming the potentially fratricidal national conflicts which loom ever more ominously in Gorbachev's Russia.

## Behind Resurgent Armenian Nationalism

The intense nationalist agitation in Armenia and the Baltic republics underscores the historic bankruptcy of Stalinist bureaucratic rule and the dangerous effects of Gorbachev's efforts to "reform" it. For the Armenians have traditionally been the most pro-Russian of Soviet nationalities, while in the era of the October Revolution Latvia and, to a lesser degree, Estonia were strongholds of Bolshevism.

As a small Christian people in the Near East, the Armenians have long looked to Russia as a protector against their hostile Islamic neighbors, especially Turkey. The Armenian Dashnaks were the only nationalist party in the Russian empire to support the tsarist autocracy. At the outbreak of World War I, the Dashnaks formed volunteer regiments to fight for Russia against Ottoman Turkey. Partly in response, the Turks massacred over a million Armenians the following year.

Amid the anarchic conditions in the Caucasus created by the Bolshevik Revolution and ensuing civil war, Armenia achieved a short-lived independence under the Dashnaks, who collaborated closely with the White Russian general Denikin. Yet even then a majority of Armenians regarded unity with Russia as the only permanent basis for military security and economic stability. To save



**National conflict erupts in Soviet Caucasus (at right) over demands for transfer of Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region from the Azerbaijani to the Armenian republic.**

themselves from an invading Turkish army, in late 1920 the Dashnaks negotiated an agreement with the Bolsheviks which de facto incorporated Armenia into the Soviet state.

Armenia has subsequently become one of the most prosperous regions in the Soviet Union. With its well-educated working class and large intelligentsia, it is a center of high-tech industry and scientific research in the USSR. Under Gorbachev's *perestroika*, with its emphasis on rewarding competitive superiority, the Armenian bureaucrats and intellectuals had expected to gain even more, particularly at the expense of less developed Azerbaijan. Thus Armenians are in the vanguard of "market socialism" in the Soviet Union. The idea of *perestroika* in Yerevan is that Armenians will be the factory managers, Russians the production workers and Azeris the janitors.

has produced a wave of rabid chauvinism in Armenia. The *Washington Post* (12 September) quotes as typical an Armenian fruit merchant:

"Azerbaijanis are just Turks, the same lot, and if I see a Turk, I'll kill him. They killed our grandparents, and now they want to kill us. We could live with them if they were only human beings. But they act like animals."

A *New York Times* report from Yerevan cites a prominent Armenian intellectual offhandedly commenting "we are a nation surrounded by barbarians," while in the streets an agitator "loudly called for Christian nations to hand together against the predominantly Moslem Azerbaijanis, who, he declares, 'breed like cockroaches'."

The Armenians, a few hotheads notwithstanding, do not want to separate from Russia. They know that as a small, independent state of some three million people in the Near East they would be

tions in a democratic and equitable manner. Under a regime of workers democracy the borders of the various republics and autonomous regions could be adjusted according to the will of the peoples involved. Moreover, if the Soviet Union were carrying out a program of revolutionary internationalism, smashing the reactionary CIA-backed mullahs in Afghanistan instead of temporizing and then pulling Soviet troops out, if the USSR were promoting the program of proletarian revolution in Iran, which would extend the gains of October for example to Iranian Azerbaijan, rather than capitulating before the anti-Communist Khomeini—then the Soviet peoples would not be consumed by feuding over age-old national grievances at home.

## Estonia and Latvia Were Bastions of Bolshevism

In the Western media the Soviet Baltic republics are presented as hotbeds of anti-Communist nationalism. In recent months mass demonstrations have taken place in Riga and Tallinn and Vilnius, under the flags of the independent bourgeois Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian states of the interwar years. Yet these "independent" states were created through the direct intervention of Western imperialism after crushing the pro-Soviet, revolutionary workers of Estonia and Latvia. Historically, this region was a stronghold of Bolshevism.

From its formation just prior to the Revolution of 1905, the Latvian Social Democrat Workers Party was closely linked to Lenin's Bolsheviks. This reflected the exceptionally high level of class consciousness—scarcely contaminated by nationalism—of Latvian workers, including many farm laborers, who hated not only the German-speaking Baltic barons and Russian bureaucrats, but also the Latvian bourgeoisie and rich peasants. Until 1917 the Latvian party was the largest component of the Russian social democracy. "Menshevism was an unwanted child in the Latvian SD," writes Andrew Ezer-gailis in his work, *The 1917 Revolution in Latvia* (1974), and in the year of the revolution "Bolshevik dominance was assured in the Soviets from the very beginning" unlike the rest of the empire.

At the outbreak of the 1917 Russian Revolution all eight Latvian regiments in the tsarist army went over to the soviets. The Lettish Rifles—whose heroism in the Civil War was legendary—were the only regiments from the old tsarist army to be incorporated intact into Trotsky's Red Army. In the November 1917 elections to the Constituent Assembly, the Bolsheviks received 70 percent of the total vote in Latvia, 40 percent in Estonia—far higher than in Russia where much of the peasantry still supported the petty-bourgeois populist Social Revolutionaries. However, the fledgling soviet republics of Latvia and Estonia were crushed when the German imperialists overran and occupied the region in late 1917.

With the collapse of Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany in November 1918, the



**Lenin's last struggle was directed against Stalin (third from left) and his lieutenant Ordzhonikidze (at right), over their Great Russian chauvinism against Georgian Communists. Photo from 1925.**

Beginning last year, Armenian intellectuals launched a campaign to transfer the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region, a mountainous enclave of 150,000 inhabitants, from the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan to Armenia. As we wrote last spring, "Since a majority of inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh are Armenians who want to be part of the Armenian republic, that is their democratic right" ("Behind the Armenia Crisis," *WV* No. 450, 8 April). But the Karabakh movement is only part of an irredentist program for consolidating Greater Armenia. Next on their agenda is the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan, once part of Armenia but now with a majority Azeri population. The demand to transfer Karabakh has been rejected by the Kremlin bureaucracy for fear of opening the door to endless territorial claims and counterclaims by the various Soviet nationalities.

Frustration over Nagorno-Karabakh

easy prey for stronger Islamic neighbors, especially Turkey. Traditionally they have appealed to the Russians as a fellow "Christian people" to unite against the Muslim infidel. Armenian bureaucrats, intellectuals and petty-capitalist entrepreneurs also understand their relative prosperity stems from being a culturally and technologically advanced section of the Soviet economy. They just wanted a better deal in partnership with the Russians. But when Moscow didn't give them what they wanted, the mood turned dramatically against the central government. Back in February-March demonstrators in Yerevan carried portraits of Gorbachev and hailed *glasnost*. No longer.

Gorbachev's *perestroika* has unleashed a new round of communalist bloodletting in the Caucasus. Yet the Stalinist regime *cannot* resolve the myriad national disputes, claims or aspira-



Latvian and Estonian workers again moved to take power into their hands. Proletarian uprisings from within and support of the Red Army from without led to the formation of the Latvian Soviet Republic in early 1919. The American bourgeois historian Stanley Page in his study on *The Formation of the Baltic States* (1959) acknowledges: "In Latvia's working class, Soviet rule did find some basis for the establishment of a government able to call upon a substantial percentage of the population for support. A workers' rebellion heralded the coming of the Red Army into Riga, and similar risings also anticipated the Reds' capture of Jelgava and Ventspils." In Estonia, likewise, the advance of the Red Army was greeted by working-class uprisings.

However, Soviet power in Latvia and Estonia was crushed by an unholy alliance of British and German imperialism, White Russian forces and native bourgeois nationalists. The principal architect of counterrevolution in the Baltic was Britain, whose fleet proved an effective weapon in the battles for the coastal cities. Tallinn fell to the counterrevolution at the end of 1918, Riga held out for another five months. Following the birth of the "independent" Baltic states, their bourgeois rulers, puppets of Western imperialism, unleashed a white terror that decimated the Communists. An attempted uprising in Tallinn in 1924, engineered by Zinoviev, was a failed putsch. In the following decades the once powerful socialist proletariat of Latvia and Estonia was progressively weakened.

In the '30s the right-wing regimes in Riga, Tallinn and Vilnius became increasingly repressive toward the left and workers movement, instituting a *numerus clausus* to restrict Jewish enrollment in the universities, unleashing pogroms. Following the 1939 Stalin-Hitler pact, Moscow incorporated the Baltic states into the USSR as a strategic defensive measure. However, Stalin left the old bourgeois order virtually intact. When Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa against Russia in June 1941, the Baltic countries were again overrun by the German army. The Nazi occupiers and their local allies exterminated not only Jews but anyone suspected of Communist sympathies. When the Red Army liberated the Baltic republics in 1944, the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian collaborators retreated with the Wehrmacht, becoming the first of the Captive Nations Cold Warriors in Bonn and Washington.

Today, Latvia and Estonia are the most economically advanced, Westernized parts of the USSR. The nationalist bureaucrats and intellectuals now want

to retain control over every rouble generated in these republics. Activists in the Latvian and Estonian Popular Fronts—supposedly formed to promote Gorbachev's "reform" program—are demanding that self-financing be applied not only to individual enterprises, but also want full control of all foreign trade in the hands of the republics, including trade with other parts of the Soviet Union. A petty-capitalist entrepreneur in Estonia quipped: "We'll have our own currency. The rate'll be three Soviet roubles for an Estonian rouble."

On October 1, the Popular Front of Estonia held its first national congress in

house of peoples. The Bolsheviks fought against the imposition of the Russian language on non-Russian nationalities, but they also opposed the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists who demanded "national-cultural autonomy" and official sanction for their language. Lenin insisted: "The national programme of working-class democracy is: absolutely no privileges for any one nation or any one language..." As was proven in practice through the October Revolution, a program of consistent democracy among the mosaic of nationalities under the tsarist empire could *only* be implemented through the proletarian seizure of power and

Nonetheless, practically all parts of Yugoslavia have seen militant workers strikes and protests against the increasingly desperate economic conditions.

On at least three occasions in the last several months workers have stormed the parliament in Belgrade. Both the rising working-class anger and growing national hostilities were dramatically demonstrated in a rally of 70,000 in the central Serbian town of Kraljevo a few weeks ago. Officially, the rally was to be a Serbian nationalist protest over the exodus of Serbs from the predominantly Albanian region of Kosovo. However, the rally turned into a bitter attack on bureaucratic parasitism. A



Soviet troops pulling out of Afghanistan. Stalinist bureaucracy ducks internationalist duty, fuels nationalist rivalry among Soviet peoples.

the Lenin Palace of Culture in Tallinn. Reportedly, a quarter of its leaders are members of the Communist Party. But CP approval or no, where this is headed is toward the breakup of the USSR. "Naturally, independent Estonia is the aim of each Estonian," said one Popular Front organizer. Among other things, they are demanding the power to stop immigration of non-Estonians (some 40 percent of the population and half of Tallinn is now Russian), and call for the exclusive use of Estonian as the official language.

These demands amount to an attack on the very foundations of the Soviet Union. The language question in particular was seen by Lenin and the Bolsheviks as a key aspect of the struggle for national equality in the tsarist prison

the creation of a centrally planned, collectivized economy.

And only on a thoroughly *internationalist* program could the working masses seize power. It was under Stalin and the nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" that Bolshevik internationalism was reversed and Great Russian chauvinism and anti-Semitism again reared their heads in the Kremlin. Lenin's last political struggle, in 1922-early '23, was against Stalin's drive to impose on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the old tsarist principle of "Russia, one and indivisible." Lenin insisted that "freedom to secede from the union" was fundamental, not a paper clause to cover the Russifying bureaucracy. At the same time, class-conscious Soviet workers of all nationalities must oppose movements for secession which are in reality a cover for bourgeois counterrevolution. While the Latvian Soviet Republic of 1919 was an independent workers state closely allied with Soviet Russia, the forces now pushing for an independent Latvia and Estonia are increasingly anti-Soviet and anti-Communist. Thus Western imperialism welcomes and foments Baltic nationalism as a hoped-for first step toward the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

#### For Social and National Equality

The roots of the present Soviet crisis lie deep in decades of Stalinist bureaucratic misrule, now aggravated by Gorbachev's *perestroika*. Wherever "market socialism" has been introduced, it has generated widening social, regional and national inequalities. These tendencies have reached an extreme point in the country which originated "self-management" and "self-financing" 40 years ago, namely, Yugoslavia. Today, Yugoslavia is wracked by a 200 percent inflation rate, mass layoffs, a savage austerity program imposed by world bankers, and violent hostility between the various national republics and autonomous regions.

union leader at a railroad car factory exclaimed:

"Return all you have taken from the working class! You with your privileged pensions, which are bigger than the pay of entire brigades of steelworkers, do you ever blush when you collect them?"

"We demand the right to dispose of the proceeds of our work."

—New York Times,

23 September

Such sentiments could lay the basis for a struggle against the parasitic bureaucracy uniting the proletarians of all the diverse nationalities. But that requires an internationalist communist leadership.

Yugoslavia has experienced "market socialism" for four decades. In the Soviet Union, the very introduction of *perestroika* has produced a deepening economic and political crisis. There exists among Soviet working people a deep reservoir of egalitarian and collectivist values, the belief that what is produced in society should be available to all of its members more or less equally. Soviet workers have been told for decades, and they believe, that the productive resources of their country belong to them. Thus *perestroika* is bound to produce massive popular resistance which can open the road to proletarian political revolution to shatter the Stalinist bureaucracy.

After coming to power in 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev enjoyed what in American parlance would be called a "political honeymoon." The confrontation over food lines in Krasnoyarsk last month and the nationalist uproar in Armenia and the Baltic republics indicates that Gorbachev's "honeymoon" with Soviet working people is over. For Soviet workers to take back political power requires the leadership of a revolutionary Marxist party, a new Bolshevik party. And like the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, it would be based on the inextricable link between the struggle for authentic workers rule in the Soviet Union and the fight for world socialist revolution. ■

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## TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA



# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Armenia at the Flash Point



Der Spiegel  
Strikers in Stepanakert demand Armenian control of Nagorno-Karabakh region.



Independent  
Police move against nationalist demonstration in Yerevan, capital of Armenia.

## Soviet Union:

# Perestroika Fuels Nationalist Turmoil

In mid-September Soviet leader Gorbachev, appearing in public for the first time in six weeks, was confronted by angry working people in the Siberian town of Krasnoyarsk. "Go to our stores, Mikhail Sergeyevich," they shouted at him, "there is nothing there!" "Lines everywhere! For meat, for sausage, for everything!" A few days later the Soviet news agency TASS reported that in the southern Caucasus mountain republics "mass-scale fighting" had broken out between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh, this time with guns and knives. Faced with communal rioting and general strikes, virtual martial law was declared in Karabakh while Soviet troops cordoned off streets in the Armenian capital of Yerevan. Now in the Baltic republic of Estonia, anti-Russian nationalist forces have founded a "popular front" aiming ever more openly at secession from the USSR. Such are the bitter fruits of *perestroika*.

*Perestroika* (restructuring) was supposed to spur economic productivity, leading to more harmonious socialist development. Instead it has produced intensified social and national conflict as various groupings are out to get a bigger piece of the economic pie and political power at someone else's expense. The turmoil in Soviet society is reflected in the upheaval in the upper echelons of the Kremlin oligarchy. In a dramatic move last week Gorbachev purged or downgraded his conservative critics in the Politburo. Yegor Ligachev was ousted as ideological overseer, Andrei Gromyko as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet and Viktor Chebrikov as head of the KGB. Supposedly Gorbachev now has a more effective, *perestroika*-minded team. But it will take more than a shakeup at the top of the bureaucracy to overcome the food shortages or resolve the festering national conflicts such as the Armenia crisis.

*It will take a proletarian political revolution to return the Soviet Union to the road of workers democracy and revolu-*

*tionary internationalism, the road of Lenin and Trotsky.*

In the last few weeks and days the scale of nationalist turmoil in the Caucasus and the Baltic region has escalated dramatically. For months the Armenian capital of Yerevan has witnessed mass demonstrations numbering in the hundreds of thousands demanding that the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh be removed from the Azerbaijani republic and ceded to Armenia. Up to half a million people thronged the center of Yerevan in July to protest the USSR Supreme Soviet's decision maintaining the status quo. The capital of Karabakh, Stepanakert, has been gripped by an off-and-on general strike since the spring. In late September, an Armenian rally (called by local bureaucrats) degenerated into a riot. After

reports that Azeris had ambushed a bus filled with Armenians, mobs left the Armenian rally and attacked Azeris in the nearby town of Khadzaly; in the fighting nearly 50 people were wounded, one of whom later died. In Stepanakert, Armenians roamed the streets for two days setting fire to homes abandoned by Azeris.

A deadly cycle of nationalist retribution has been set in motion that threatens the internationalist foundations of the Soviet state. Khadzaly came after the heinous anti-Armenian pogrom in the Azerbaijani city of Sumgait in February in which Azeri mobs brutally murdered at least 26 Armenians and six Azeris. As communalist violence escalates, Azeris long resident in Armenia have fled in fear of their lives to Azerbaijan, and vice versa. At the time

of the October Revolution, the fate of the Caucasian peoples was closely linked to each other and with the working class of Petrograd and Moscow. The Baku Soviet of 1918 was led by Armenian, Azeri and Russian Communists. Prodigious economic growth based on socialist economic relations led to an increasing interpenetration of peoples. But now the net result of more than six decades of Stalinist bureaucratic rule is forced population transfers whose ultimate logic is genocide.

Several days after the outburst of Armenian chauvinism, on September 28 riot police with truncheons broke up a demonstration in the capital of Lithuania, Vilnius. Protesters reportedly shouted at the police, "Occupiers, get out of here!" The Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been rocked by an explosion of anti-Soviet nationalism which, unlike the communalist feuds in the Caucasus, is more or less explicitly directed against the Soviet central power. On the occasion of the anniversary of the Hitler-Stalin pact in August, tens of thousands marched in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius. Marching under the flags of the interwar bourgeois states, notorious for their persecution of Jews and Communists, many of the protesters carried placards which obscenely showed a hammer and sickle joined to the Nazi swastika. This is the language of the CIA's "Captive Nations" crowd.

What the Baltic republics and Armenia have in common is that they are among the most advanced parts of the Soviet Union, and they are playing out the dog-eat-dog logic of *perestroika* with its market-oriented reforms. A recent article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (31 August) made the perceptive observation:

"In addition to this political turmoil, Gorbachev's economic reforms are likely to exacerbate the ethnic crisis. *Perestroika* is already producing unemployment, inflation, and recession ...

*continued on page 14*



AFP  
Tallinn, Estonia: Demonstrators march under flag of "independent" Interwar republic, a bastion of anti-Semitism and anti-Communism.