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Iran Masses Win a Showdown

The masses of Iranian people have dealt a stunning blow to the U.S. attempts to force capitulation and release of the hostages, and thus break the back of their resistance to imperialism. The stage was set. The students holding the embassy announced that since the Revolutionary Council insisted on the U.N. commission seeing all the hostages, they were going to hand over the hostages to the custody of the Revolutionary Council. Since the gentlemen of the Revolutionary Council had hanging tongues ready to lick the boots of the U.S. imperialists, it looked like it was all over.

The Foreign Minister, Ghotbzadeh, was scheduled to pick up the hostages at the embassy. State Department officials were congratulating themselves. Newsmen were working up to some very dramatic "heavy" news commentary. Suddenly it became clear: many thousands of Iranians were surrounding the embassy saying "Don't give up the hostages!", "Death to the Compromisers!" At the time Ghotbzadeh was scheduled to show up, there were reported to be a hundred rows of people forming human chains in front of the embassy. Demonstrations went on continuously for two days, including March 8, International Women's Day. Then Khomeini, whose authority had provided the music behind Bani Sadr and the Revolutionary Council's attempts to strong-arm the students, looked at the developing situation and made a statement. All of a sudden he was backing the students, and the students reconsidered their surrender.

They issued a statement saying they refused to turn the hostages over to Foreign Minister Ghotbzadeh and demanded eight hours public notice if the exchange of custody were to take place. Amidst the outpouring of support it was clear what the message really meant—give eight hours for people to get down here and we dare anyone to try and take custody of the hostages away from us. The masses had spoken—and it was back to the drawing board for the U.S. and the Revolutionary Council.

So it turns out that our last week's headline "Iran Bourgeoisie Grabs Hostages for U.S." was off by one word: it should have read "... Grabs A/ Hostages for U.S." and they came up empty-handed. This kind of self-criticism is one we love to make; the Iranian masses did it again. Count them down and BOOM!—up they come again, rising to strike another blow at imperialism. Though the Iranian bourgeoisie and U.S. imperialists are still maneuvering for a future grab, the masses have definitely won this round.

The UN Commission took off from Iran in a huff, outraged and frightened by the strength of the Iranian

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The UN Commission tried to get away, but the militant Iranian student (above) shoves a box of secret documents found in U.S. embassy detailing American imperialists' crimes into their car.

Sparks of May 1st Fly in Birmingham

Birmingham, Alabama.

Vulcan—in the distant past, he was the god of fire and metal working, a monument to the Roman slave system. Today, his giant figure watches over Birmingham—a monument of modern slavery, a god of profit. He stands like a brother to the Statue of Liberty, holding a green or red light (depending on last month's traffic fatalities). The statue has always been the center of attention of the city parasites, who constantly argue what color his cast iron structure should be painted and who

ponder ever better ways he can serve the "continuing research of the ever growing steel industry"—notably that of U.S. Steel. Inscribed on Vulcan's base are the names of early 20th century magnates—the captains of industry. Strategically mounted on Red Mountain, Vulcan divides the rich who live over-the-mountain from the masses of people in the city below.

Vulcan—symbolic of the exploitation of the workers of Birmingham and symbolic of the oppression of Black people in the most industrialized city in the

South. He has stood over the bombing of the houses of Blacks who moved into the Kingston area in the 50s, the KKK terror of the country side, and the infamous firebombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963 when four Black children were murdered. More recently he nodded his approval when a trigger happy pig named George Sands shot

young, Black Bonita Carter in cold blood.

The people have harbored a deep hatred of Vulcan and everything he represented. He was an object of ridicule and criticism—"... he was so ugly." Area artists complained that "he

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America Inc. Wins Pinto Trial

"Not guilty" came the verdict. Ford Motor Company was on trial on charges of reckless homicide in the deaths of three Indiana teenagers who were burned alive in August 1978 when their '73 Ford Pinto exploded after being hit from behind. Ford murdered hundreds more and tortured thousands with this human barbecue pit. But after 9 weeks of testimony by eyewitnesses, doctors, "experts" and corporation executives, after Ford openly admitted before the judge that "We knew what this car was," their ruthless slaughter was ruled perfectly legal, perfectly legitimate, and "acceptable standard of conduct" for capitalist enterprises.

The history of the Pinto unfolds a gross chain of premeditated decisions on the part of Ford Motor Company. Rather than make the Pinto safer, Ford's profit drive dictated that the corporation would watch people burn up. One auto safety expert testified that when the Pinto was still on the drawing board, Ford knew that it was sure death to put the gas tank behind the axle, 6 inches from the rear bumper. In fact, he read from an ad for Ford's own Capri, the European version of the Pinto which came out in 1969. The ad boasted that the gas tank, placed *above* the axle, was "safely cradled between the rear wheels and safely protected on all sides." But, according to this expert, with the Pinto, Ford opted for more trunk space and in order to keep costs low, which would not have been the case had the gas tank been placed above the axle; the gas tank was situated behind the axle—vulnerable to even the slightest bump from behind.

Even a former Ford executive told how Ford management decided in 1969 to design the Pinto to withstand a rear-end crash of at least 30 mph without fire risk. But after investigating the cost, they changed their minds "because of cost and ensuing profits." The vehicle was literally built to explode if hit at more than 20 mph. The "cost and ensuing profits" amounted to \$6.65 per car to make a safer fuel system.

One Ford internal memorandum even more clearly spelled out the profit

motive at work behind these decisions. A chart weighed the "benefits" of avoiding damage payments to dead or burned and scarred crash victims against the cost of putting an \$11 safety device on each car, and the figures said they could save money by letting the people burn. "There's a cost and benefit to everything." That's the way Ford's lawyer put it in one of the few true remarks he made in the trial, fittingly summing up the outlook of capitalists like Ford.

This same odd motivation was the driving force behind Ford's efforts to prove its "innocence" in this Winamac, Indiana courtroom. This was the first test of an Indiana law that says a corporation can be convicted of a crime just like a person. But what had begun as a "landmark" case to "enforce corporate responsibility" for their products quickly degenerated into a ridiculous and stomach-turning defense of murder for profit.

The Pinto death-trap on wheels had claimed the lives of over 500 people and maimed and injured at least 5000 more before Ford recalled it to avoid public hearings, so now hundreds of millions of civil claims from Ford's victims hung on the Indiana verdict. The defense of the right of capital to brutally torch people in the name of profit was orchestrated by Ford's chief attorney, James Neal, who put on a star performance, punctuated by dramatic appeals to the jury on behalf of his client. He termed Ford Motor Co. "the decent people" who designed, manufactured and sold the Pinto.

In presenting Ford's "defense," Neal had the support of the bourgeois legal system from start to finish, despite the reformist efforts of a maverick prosecutor. The judge, former law partner of one of Ford's attorneys and blood brother of Ford and its class; bent over backwards to allow "the accused" his day in court. All of the "overruleds" normally reserved for shutting up defendants were aimed at the prosecutor. Upon finding Ford innocent, the jury noted that "the State never presented enough evidence to convince

us that Ford was guilty." This is not surprising; the bulk of the prosecutor's case was not even allowed to go before the jury!

Key documents like Ford's own crash tests proving Ford knew the Pinto's gas tank would explode when hit at 20 mph were ruled "inadmissible" because the Pintos tested were '71 and '72 models, even though they were identical in design to the '73 that had incinerated the Ulrich women. Results of other crash tests in which Ford engineers themselves admitted the Pinto couldn't meet a 30 mph crash standard were not allowed when the defense insisted that "other models were also tested and that made the documents irrelevant." Yet it was most "relevant" when Ford showed films of other makes and models of cars being demolished by vans to make their point that "the Pinto was no more dangerous—perhaps a bit safer—than other comparable sub-compacts."

Other key prosecution evidence was barred from the jury. Medical testimony from the doctors who examined the charred bodies and found they suffered no serious injuries from the impact of the crash (indicating that the colliding vehicle hit the Pinto at a slow speed) was ruled "too gruesome." Photos of the young women, testimony by their families, even the remarks of the one victim who survived for a few hours to the eyewitness who tried to free her still-flaming body from the Pinto—all this was objected to by Ford's attorney. It would be "too emotion-laden," he said frankly; "it would evoke sympathy and anger, and (the jury) would have no target—except Ford Motor Company."

But Ford's most cynical maneuver was reserved for the surprise star witness who provided the missing element in Ford's defense. Their whole case was predicated on the flimsy contention—backed by a procession of "expert" witnesses and a chop shop full of "evidence"—that the Pinto was hit at 50 mph. But five eyewitnesses—every person who saw the crash—testified that both cars were moving and the closing speed was 15-25 mph.

Since it couldn't shake the witnesses or adequately impugn their character,

Ford sank to the lowest depths imaginable to get across their twisted version of the accident—using the words of their dead victim to claim innocence. Thousands of dollars were spent tracking down and unearthing the evidence of a born-again hospital orderly who had responded to Judy Ulrich's frightened call "Does anyone here know Jesus?" as she lay dying of massive burns. It now became clear why Ford had objected so strenuously when eyewitnesses tried to recount Judy's words as she was pulled from the flaming car, because according to the orderly, this heavily sedated girl, burned beyond recognition, had spent her last breaths calmly explaining in minute detail how she had stopped the car in the roadway to pick up a missing gas cap when the crash occurred.

After jetting in a battalion of highly-paid Ford executives (who had bought Pintos for their families) to dutifully extol its virtues, and after a few embarrassing moments when Ford's witnesses testified against each other, including an "expert" who had previously condemned the Pinto fuel-system design as unsafe but had now "changed his mind," Ford decided they better finish up with another death-bed story from Judy, this time relayed by a nurse who also had just happened to ask the dying girl if the Pinto was stopped and been told it was. Leaving no room for error, Ford then saw to it that the prosecution was prevented from rebutting the "deathbed confessions" so crucial to their carefully constructed tale about the Pinto being stopped.

"There has to be more to life than three pieces of paper" pleaded the prosecutor as he waved three death certificates before the jury in his closing arguments. His hopes of "curbing the excesses" of the profit system by stopping companies like Ford from choosing to "sacrifice human life for private profit" were being dashed to the ground. To a class that blows people up in their cars as long as they can profit by it, the people *are* no more than pieces of paper. And when Ford's attorney instructed the jury to consider "How can any company survive?" if such action is questioned, the trial itself had already given the answer—the only way these corporations *can* survive is by the ruthless pursuit of profits. To hell with the people, let them burn.



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Another Kind of War in the U.S. Army



An entire German town—authentic down to the wooden beams—built in the State of Washington for the U.S. Army to prepare for its next war.

It was raining when we reached Regensburg, Germany. Snaking down a dirt road into a valley hidden behind dense fir trees, our jeep entered a clearing and braked to a halt. In front of us stood the white and brown latticework houses and stores of Regensburg. It was quiet. Not a person on the street, not a curl of chimney smoke, and not a sound. Only the patter of rain filling the windshield between swings of the wiper blades.

The jeep bucked forward, moving closer. I looked around. It certainly could have been Germany. The climate and terrain are identical. The layout, the buildings, and even the fact that the railroad tracks run right through the town like many European areas, makes the image very real. As we stepped from the jeep at the entrance of the town, a sign greeted us, "Willkommen Nach Regensburg."—"Property of the U.S. Army."

No, this was not Germany. This was Fort Lewis, home of the Ninth Division. This was just south of Tacoma, Washington. Regensburg is a mock German town where the G.I.s are trained in house-to-house fighting. There are about 35 buildings in Regensburg, each one identified by name in German—school, beer hall, jeweler, etc. There are two houses set aside, designated as "model fighting positions." Inside these, classes are held on how to defend a house and how to clear a house. Sandbag positions, barbed wire, fortifications for machine guns and snipers are constructed and reconstructed in the course of solving tactical problems connected with fighting in these built up areas. It is very much like the training GIs received in places like Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where they attacked and overran mock Vietnamese villages. And while the GIs only train at the site maybe five days a year, the image is clear. And if it isn't clear enough, the Ninth Division intelligence dresses up in Soviet uniforms and using Warsaw Pact weapons, challenges the GIs to dislodge them and seize the city.

Of course there is a practical side to the training too as our guide pointed out. "Fighting in built up areas is a forgotten art in the army and we're behind. I've been waiting for the British to publish some manuals on fighting in Northern Ireland from this standpoint," he lamented. And there was one division commander who wanted to reconstruct Regensburg with much taller buildings to keep pace with the growing cities of W. Germany and make it as real as possible.

The Post Information Officer (PIO) posed the dilemma in stark terms. "After seeing just how difficult it is to take cities from the enemy I understand the thinking behind the neutron bomb," he said matter of factly. And

the army is playing a game of catch-up in a sense. That's why Regensburg is now under construction for 14 new buildings and a similar site is in the blueprint stage at Ft. Bragg. But the catch-up that the military so vitally needs, and that the imperialists so vitally need, is to have the minds of the soldiers and the American people catch up and prepare for the outbreak of World War III. They need Regensburg and Ft. Bragg expanded so they can psychologically introduce more troops faster to the framework that this next war is going to happen very soon.

And they need front page stories, like the one in the *Tacoma News Tribune* (TNT) a few weeks ago that, "discovered" Regensburg, in order to prepare the general population for going on a war footing. A training site that officially opened in June, 1978, is certainly not news. But, in the March 9th issue of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, it all hangs out. Another front page spread entitled: "Fort Lewis Troops: They're Ready." The imperialists are saying it straight up—"We're getting our army together, getting the co-ed draft together, getting our whole country together—this is for real." There is one picture in the article that graphically illustrates what they're talking about. A GI, in battle gear, weapon in hand, is

charging across the Regensburg rooftop while the caption below reads: "...on his way to being ready for America's next war." The piece itself was written by a former Army instructor during World War II in an attempt to see how ready the troops really are. It is very interesting that there is only one quote in the article from a soldier with less than nine years in the service. And he spends half his time saying how ready he is and the other half saying how proud he is to come from Danville, Virginia, where they fought the Civil War for the Confederacy three days after the war was over. What a perfect heritage for a gung-ho grunt falling all over himself to fight a war to keep this modern-day slave system of U.S. imperialism alive and on top.

The Brainwash and the Lockdown

"Look, when the honchos show up on the base they hide the GIs so they don't tell them nothing revealing," Sam, a recently discharged vet told us. And an active duty GI added, "If they told us in advance that we were going to war, 90% of the division would split. When it comes down, the bars will go up on the doors and windows and the gates will be locked and the guards posted. Then the MPs and the NCOs take over. Anything goes to get you to

go. They'll knock you out and throw you on the cattle cars," Brad explained, sipping a beer. "And we're getting ready for something," he continued. "They're working our asses off two months before we're scheduled to go back into the field."

This rapidly developing world situation, Iran and the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan, is hitting the GIs right in the teeth. Who would have thought that when they joined, two or three years ago, or even last year, that World War III would be on the horizon? Thousands of these soldiers, sons and daughters of the working class, many drawn from the oppressed nationalities of this country, are being prepared to fight workers like themselves for a system that spits in their eye and guns them down in the streets. Thousands of these soldiers joined to get a job, from places like Detroit or Youngstown, Ohio, where the unemployment offices are overflowing. They joined to stay out of jail or escape being maybe the next Black murdered by pigs in ghettos like Oakland, Watts or Washington, D.C. They joined to get educated, graduate from high school or learn a trade, believing the big lies like Sam did when he signed his ass over. "They told me I was going to be an electrician. In

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A Call to Battle, A Challenge to Dare

Today, two roads open up before the proletariat and masses of people in this country. One is the reactionary, worn and hell-bound path of the red, white and blue. The other road, the revolutionary road, has a certain and victorious destination, but to get there demands conscious and determined work and struggle, right now and in an ongoing way.


The triumph of the proletarian revolution in this and every country is inevitable, because the whole of human history and the development of society itself has prepared the conditions for it and only proletarian revolution can continue to move society forward in this era.

But those who grasp this profound truth cannot sit back and wait for it to come about. Whether revolution will be able to prevent world war, whether war, if it does break out, will give rise to revolution or yet another round on the rack of capitalism—these urgent questions depend in part on what we do.

In a situation which is developing as rapidly as today's, the actions taken by the advanced section of the proletariat are of decisive importance. They will in no small part determine how far along we are and whether we are able to break through all the way when the conditions fully ripen and the opportunity for revolution is there to seize. These moments, particularly in a country such as this, are rare in history and their outcome has a profound influence on history for years, even decades, to come. Those who do understand what is going on and choose not to act are contributing to the prolonging of this destructive and decadent rule of imperialism. This programme is a declaration of war, and at the same time a call to action and a battle plan for destroying the old and creating the new. It must be taken up.

Today the words of Mao Tsetung ring out with full force:

"Seize the Day, Seize the Hour."



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Digging into Gov't Appeal

Political Basis of the Attack on Bob Avakian

As the battle to Stop the Railroad of Bob Avakian and Free the Mao Tsetung Defendants has continued to gain momentum nationwide, in particular through the work of the Revolutionary May Day Brigades and other May Day activists, important developments in this struggle have recently taken place around the very hallowed halls in which the government wishes it could proceed unopposed. Last week, the battle over the appeal was joined in the legal arena.

In January the government had filed its legal brief with the court of appeals, seeking to overturn the dismissal of the charges against the 17 defendants which took place last November 14. They filed their appeal with a motion to expedite the appeal, hoping to rush this railroad back on track at full speed. However, defense efforts to gain time to prepare a response to the government's appeal were successful. The time gained was used not only to prepare an extremely sharp exposure of government arguments made in its document, but also to marshal and unite with other forces to take up the battle in the legal arena. On March 11, attorneys for the 17 defendants filed their response to the government's brief. At the same time, a supporting *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief, prepared by Daniel

Sheehan (attorney in the Karen Silkwood anti-nuclear case) was filed jointly by the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, and the National Lawyers Guild. Any hope the government had of rushing this appeal through the appellate court, out of sight of the masses of people who had come forward to oppose this attack, and of narrowing down the battle in the legal sphere to a technical argument over the alleged "facts," has been dealt a blow both by the *amicus curiae* brief as well as the sharp exposure represented in the defendants' response.

As the defense brief states in the opening sentence of its argument section: "From its inception the prosecution of this case has differed dramatically from typical criminal prosecutions in the Superior Court, and from the prosecution of other demonstration cases in the District of Columbia." The brief goes on to cite the particular history of this prosecution, political in nature from the beginning.

From the beginning the government has tried to fuel their railroad, first by stoking it with actual criminal charges—then with their unstated conspiracy theory according to which all defendants can be held equally guilty of

any crime allegedly committed at the Jan. 29th demonstration. The appeal by the government, however, is not a mere repeat or reaffirmation of these dual tactics. In their appeal, the government is forced to still more openly spell out the political conspiracy basis for their argument, while still clinging to the pretense of alleged specific criminal acts. The "glue" that cements their double-edged theory of prosecution together in their appeal is the same brand they've been using all along: a maze of vague, arbitrary and unsubstantiated "aiding and abetting" charges. As the government's appeal document states, "The government theory now is the same as it was at preliminary hearing. By presence and knowing participation, each defendant (and logically every participant of the demonstration against Teng Hsiao-ping—RW) aided and abetted each assault which took place as part of the mass attack on January 29, 1979."

The centrality of "aiding and abetting" to the entire government "case" is sharply exposed in the new defense briefs. "The superseding indictment contained 25 felony assault counts, in 17 of which the government alleged that it could identify the principals (i.e. the persons actually alleged to have com-

mitted specific criminal acts). The indictment charged each of the 17 appellees in all 25 assaults. Had the indictment reached a jury intact, the jury would therefore have been required to make determinations of guilt or innocence on 425 assault charges, on 408 of which the government was proceeding on a theory of "aiding and abetting." The brief demonstrates how this same aiding and abetting theory also held together the original two separate indictments. 78 of the 92 charges in one of these indictments were based on the aiding and abetting theory, as were 96 of the 99 charges in the other indictment.

The specific issue raised by this appeal is whether the re-indictment of the 17 defendants, charging all defendants with the 25 felony assault counts, was vindictive. The fact that this issue has become the focus of the legal battle of the case right now has put the government between a rock and a hard place, on the one side boxed in by their political conspiracy theory, and on the other by their attempted legal camouflage of specific criminal acts. They cannot abandon this theory of prosecution because without it, their whole case will fall to the ground. Yet it is this same theory of prosecution which gave rise to the re-indictment of the defendants and, following that, was the legal basis of the dismissal and the appeal process. The government must defend its re-indictment—yet it can only do so with more of the same vindictiveness which gave rise to the re-indictment in the first place. Thus the government appeal attempts to use vindictiveness to justify vindictiveness. This twisted logic reasons that there is nothing vindictive about adding the two sets of charges together—because based on its theory of prosecution, if the government had wanted to, it could have charged all the 17 defendants with all the charges to begin with.

The defense brief drives a stake into the heart of this basic argument made in the government appeal: "We have been arbitrary in assigning guilt all along," says the government, "so why single out this particular indictment as arbitrary and vindictive?" Rather than skirting the broad political implications thrown up by this government argument and reducing the issue before the Court of Appeals to a factual dispute as the government hoped its appeal brief would force the defendants to do, the defense documents take the twisted logic of the government appeal and turn it against them.

"The actions which give rise to this appeal," states the brief, "are but another example of the vindictiveness that has characterized this prosecution from the beginning... The argument that the government's conduct has not changed hardly purifies the government's motives. It is rather additional support for the trial court's finding of vindictiveness in this particular instance."

The next logical question becomes; why did the government bring two separate indictments in the first place? When this question was first raised by the defendants last July in seeking to join the two groups of defendants into a common trial in order to put on a common defense to this political attack, U.S. attorney Mary Ellen Abrecht, in initially opposing this consolidation of the two groups of defendants, said that the government had discovered in investigating this case "two different types of cases," that the government would be calling almost none of the same witnesses in the two separate trials and that one single trial of all 17 defendants would present a great "confusion of issues." Different types of cases and confusion of issues? How could this be reconciled with the theory now openly presented in the government appeal that "all the defendants acted premeditated-

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Today there are thousands who see more clearly than ever that the call for May Day 1980 made by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP, is right on time. It is exactly what's needed to prepare for the tremendous revolutionary possibilities ahead.

The National May Day '80 Committee is calling for 3000 May Day buttons to be worn on March 27. This is the opening day of the

appeals court hearing in Washington, D.C.—the latest step in attempts by the ruling class to railroad Bob Avakian to 241 years in jail.

30,000 May Day buttons worn into the factories, schools and unemployment offices will be a powerful mass statement in opposition to these stepped-up attacks on Bob Avakian. These 30,000 May Day buttons will be a powerful declaration of our inten-

tions to intensify the battle for Revolutionary May Day. They will mark a major effort to put May Day directly into the hands of many more people. 7,000 buttons have already been distributed, thousands more badges of defiance will be distributed in one week alone.

On March 27, many will be wearing the May Day button because May Day is International Workers Day and no one else has fought harder for our class to see and act in its internationalist interests than Bob Avakian. From the struggle to uphold Mao and working class rule in China; leading people to see that our interests lie not in fighting for but against our own ruling class in the coming world war; to May Day 1980. On November 19, in the face of the bourgeoisie's chauvinist hysteria and threats to those who dare to stand up in support of the Iranian revolution, Bob Avakian said, "there is nothing they can do to make us forget our duty to the whole international working class, to our brothers and sisters and the oppressed people throughout the world."

Today not only have hundreds of thousands heard of Bob Avakian, but hundreds of thousands have heard of May Day and been inspired by the May Day Brigades, seeing in embryo the impact of class conscious workers on other workers and the rest of society. Today we are in an even stronger position to derail this railroad.

Recently in Los Angeles, a worker on the street was shocked and enraged when he witnessed cops beating a May Day organizer. As the organizer was knocked to the ground, her button fell off her shirt. The worker picked up the button, pinned it on his jacket and flaunted it in the pigs' faces. On March 27 this one worker will become 30,000. These May Day buttons will be an ominous warning to those in the marbled halls that they will not succeed in ripping off our revolutionary leadership.

Keep Bob Avakian on the streets!
Turn up the May Day heat!

Defend Our Revolutionary Leadership

March 27!
30,000
May Day
Buttons



TV Show Never Sees Verdict

Attica means its right to rebel!

It is rare for the bourgeoisie to even approach admitting any of its monstrous crimes and when they do—watch out, because another crime is in progress and those who get sucked into their game will most definitely be the victims. A crime of exactly this nature was committed on ABC-TV during prime time on Sunday night a few weeks ago with the showing of a new TV movie entitled *Attica*. This film is without a doubt one of the most consciously and insidiously reactionary films to be released in years and was intended to be a message to working class and oppressed people in this country as we go into a decade of literally earth-shaking events including the real possibility of revolution right here in the U.S.A.

The unmistakable message was—"sure you're oppressed, sure we oppress and degrade you but don't even think about rising up against us; don't even think about getting up off your knees, because we have the guns and we definitely will blow your head off just like we did at Attica if you try to go up against us." With this film the ruling class delivered its verdict on the Attica rebellion: "Attica means you lose. So be content with scraping and crawling before us as we squeeze the very life out of you and grind you to a pulp to maintain our rule."

The whole reason this film had to be made by the bourgeoisie in the first place, however, was because to this very day over 8 years after the rebellion, Attica means "It's right to rebel" to millions of working class and oppressed people in this country. To us the verdict is already in and it can't be reversed. And if their message was true that they have the guns so we might as well give up, then why would they have any need to make the film? All they would have to do is wait until we rise up and then shoot us all down. But in their own limited way even the imperialists realize that the revolutionary ideas generated in uprisings like Attica can become a powerful material force when grasped and put into practice by the masses of people—a powerful material force spelling their doom. The rebellion itself gave them a real taste of this power. As State Prison Commissioner Oswald related after he went to the yard at Attica to negotiate with the prisoners, "I had felt the scarcely controlled fury almost breathing down my neck." So too the ruling class felt that same fury.

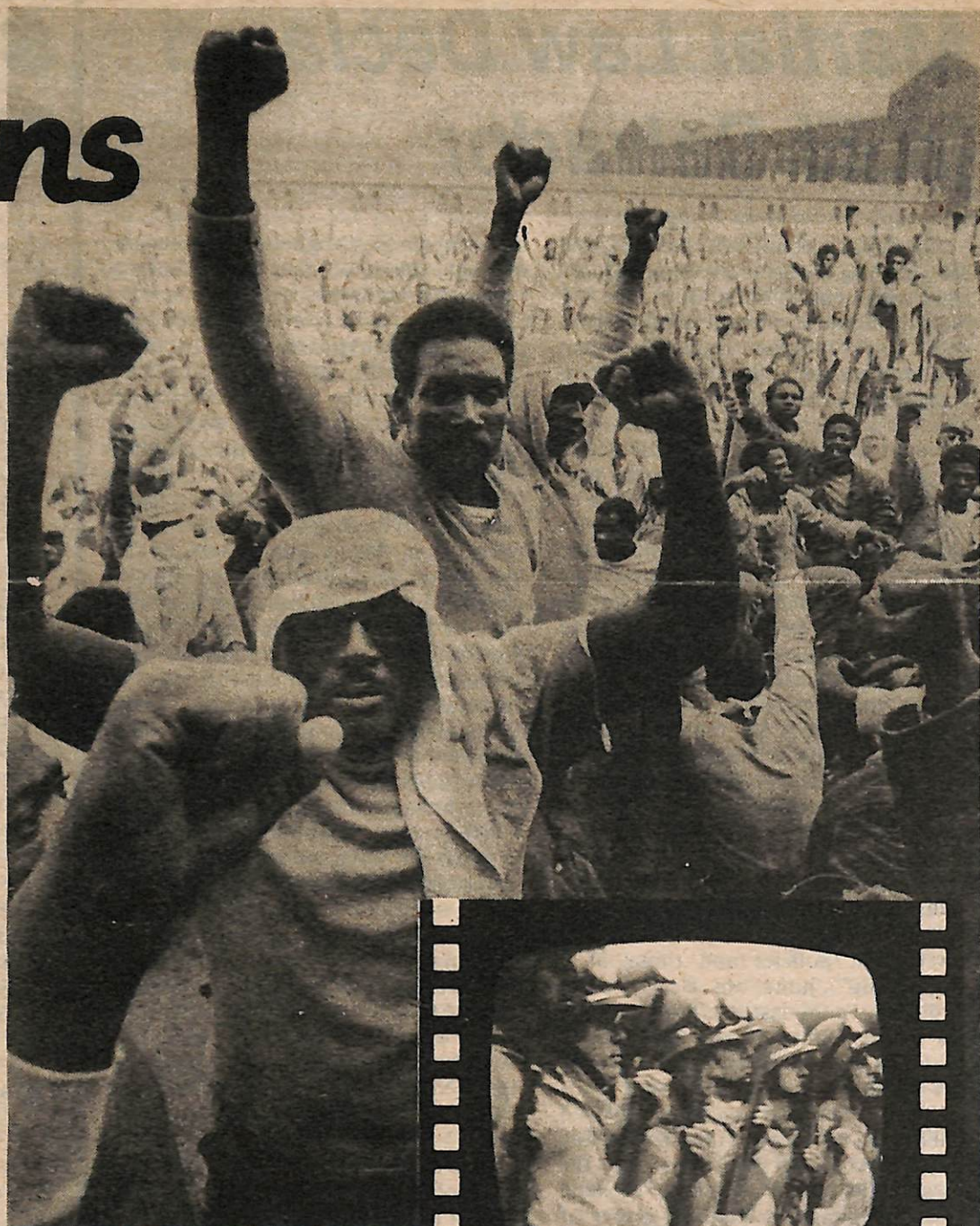
Attica was indeed a proud moment for the masses of people in the U.S.—a powerful manifesto of conscious rebellion rare in the history of this imperialist country. It was a brilliant light pointing the way forward not simply for prisoners but for all those who are being crushed and ground down under the imperialists' heel. As one of the leaders of the rebellion, Herbert X. Blyden put it to the wildly cheering Attica rebels in D yard, "We are standing here for all the oppressed peoples of the world, and we are not going to give up or knuckle under, we are going to show the way! For we have the way!"

From the beginning the 1,200 Attica prisoners' stand, particularly that of its leaders, was uncompromising and bold. Their first statement after the rebellion began on September 9, 1971 proclaimed:

We are men. We are not beasts and we do not intend to be beaten or driven as such. The entire prison populace... have set forth to change forever the ruthless brutalization and disregard for the lives of the prisoners here and throughout the United States. What has happened here is but the sound before the fury of those who are oppressed. We will not compromise on any terms except those terms that are agreeable to us.

The rebellion was the most well organized prison uprising in U.S. history. The multinational unity forged in the process of the struggle was unshakable, a fact which even the ruling class has to admit. Not only were demands for prison reform advanced by the prisoners along with the demand for complete amnesty from the state for their actions, but anti-imperialist demands, such as transportation to a non-imperialist country for those prisoners who wanted it were advanced. The prisoners declared their support for the anti-imperialist struggles of the people around the world, the Vietnamese in particular.

Far from being "a mindless act by desperate men" as the bourgeoisie and its servants try to portray it, the rebellion was in fact a conscious act of men, many of whom in the course of battling the enemy were raising their heads and looking to the day when all the madness of this society could be wiped out. As a Puerto Rican brother from Attica wrote in a statement from



The TV movie "Attica" worked hard to portray the lesson of the Attica rebellion as "You can fight, but you can't win." But millions learned the real lesson that Attica means it's right to rebel. Above: Real photo of Attica rebellion. Right: Scenes from TV movie.

60 Attica prisoners to the Native Americans at Wounded Knee:

We the Attica sixty (60) send you our revolutionary solidarity and love... We/us have lived in this monster and we know its entrails, and now we/us are the slingshot of David. This monster subjected two thirds of humanity to their economic, political and cultural domination... revolutionaries can not sit in doorways and watch the corpse of imperialism pass by. Each year that the struggle for liberation is hastened will mean that millions of children rescued from death, millions of minds freed for learning, infinitudes of sorrow spared the people. Even though the Yankee imperialists are preparing a bloodbath for america they will not succeed in drowning the people's struggles. All they will evoke is universal hatred against themselves. And this will be the last act of their rapacious and cave man system: IN STRUGGLE!

—from *Fighting Back*, The Attica Memorial Book, 1974

Liberals' Dirty Work

In its attempt to turn all this upside down and get over with their intended message, the ruling class, ABC-TV in particular, relied on middle-class liberals who were sympathetic to prison reform to do their dirty work. From their point of view this was perfect. What better way to get over with progressive-minded people than have a crew of liberals do an "exposure" of Attica (within certain strict limits, of course) from their very own class viewpoint which recognizes and is appalled by the very real oppression meted out by the bourgeoisie but at the same time cringes in fear at the seemingly invincible power of the state and worships bourgeois law and morality.

A liberal director, scriptwriter and film crew were hired and the rights were purchased to a book fittingly called *A Time To Die* by Tom Wicker, a *New York Times* Reporter who was an "observer" during the rebellion. Wicker's "balanced account" of the rebellion (meaning that while it generally conformed to the actual events at the prison, the authorities were given the benefit of the doubt wherever possible) complete with all his humanitarian concern for the prisoners as well as his fear and disdain for their actions is faithfully reproduced in the movie, although in the words of the scriptwriter, the actual TV script was "even more balanced than the book" meaning that the network took pains to whitewash the bourgeoisie's role at Attica somewhat more than Wicker's book did. While the actual conditions at the prison were prettified in the extreme, the film did provide glimpses of the real life and real situation for prisoners and particularly of what went on during the rebellion, a rare event on TV. It is this that attracted people, especially

Continued on page 13



Martial Law Declared in El Salvador

For anyone who really believed that the U.S. imperialists were opposed to a right-wing coup in El Salvador (see *RW* No. 43) because of some kind of concern for "human rights," recent developments should be enough to convince them otherwise. The U.S.-backed "progressive" junta government in El Salvador has unleashed a vicious campaign of terror on the Salvadoran people, doing it, of course, in the name of reform, as is its usual practice. On March 6, the junta announced the adoption of an Agrarian Reform Law that was supposed to give land to the peasants and "open the difficult road toward social justice." That same day, they declared a state of siege and martial law in the country. Tanks and armored cars now prowl the streets at all hours; hundreds of people are rounded up and arrested as "leftists" houses and buildings are broken into and searched by police and military patrols; gunships and fighter planes fly overhead and the press is under strict government censorship.

The difference between the current government policies and those of a "right-wing" junta are clearly practically nil. In the last two months, over 600 worker, peasant and student activists have been killed by the troops and right-wing paramilitary goons of the junta. (This in a country of 4.5 million; in a country the size of the U.S., this would be equal to the massacre of 30,000 people.) The state of Chalatenango, a longtime center of strong campesino struggle against the government, has been sealed off by Army and National Guard troops. Trained by U.S. advisors and techniques developed in Vietnam, they conduct search-and-destroy missions, burning villages to the ground and executing entire families by firing squad. Age is not a barrier to their bullets; eleven high school students between 14 and 17 years of age were gunned down by police on

March 9 in San Miguel as they prepared to leave the school they had occupied to protest government repression.

Nowhere in its five-month history has the junta's hypocrisy stood out so starkly as in its Agrarian Reform Law. Trumpeted in the Salvadoran and U.S. press as the plan that will give land to the peasants and end the country's economic and political crisis, the Reform Law will do none of the above. Instead, it is designed to prevent the land from being taken over by the masses of campesinos and keep it in the hands of the Salvadoran ruling class.

Last December, at the height of the cotton harvest, campesinos in their thousands took over several hundred plantations, sending shock waves throughout the country. Thousands of workers and students shook the cities with support demonstrations. Today, with the sugar harvest and cotton planting about to begin, and the political crisis in El Salvador being much more severe, an even larger wave of land seizures is definitely on tap. The consternation of the Salvadoran rulers can be seen in these words of a rich landowner in a recent interview in a San Salvador daily *El Diario de Hoy*: "It used to be when we scolded the campesinos, they would bow their heads and ask forgiveness. Now, with the help of subversive Marxists, they insult us and take our land."

The Agrarian Reform Law and the state of siege and martial law that go with it are aimed at preventing this and the accompanying mass action in the cities from happening—actions which, in today's situation, would threaten to topple the junta. Thus, the first act of this "reform" was the sending of troops in to take over 50 of the largest plantations on March 6. The junta solemnly claimed the troops were there to prevent violent reaction from the landowners; however, a spokesman for the junta's Minister of Defense let the

Send Money to the May Day Bail Fund

May Day 1980—being born through fierce class struggle. Hundreds have joined the battle, standing with their brothers and sisters around the world. As a Black worker from GM Lordstown responded to a TV commentator on "Good Morning Youngstown" who baited him about whether he was a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party: "No, but I am a member of the international working class."

The reality of some of "their" workers really getting to work—the work of preparing for revolution—has sent the rulers of this country into a frenzy attacking May Day. In the last month there have been at least 90 arrests of people building May Day and selling the *Revolutionary Worker*. The May Day Brigades have been on the front lines of this battle and the bourgeoisie has gone after them with a vengeance.

Not only are they vainly hoping to stop May Day by outrageous arrests and trumped-up charges (in Cincinnati a May Day organizer was held for investigation of grand theft auto—of a friend's car!) but they are trying to financially drain May Day with exorbitant ransoms—

★ Youngstown—The May Day 10 bail for misdemeanors was \$29,500 (lowered from \$42,000!)

★ Birmingham—The original \$300 bail on numerous Brigaders was raised to \$600 each (without any arraignments)

★ Bay Area—One local committee member arrested for posterage was slapped with \$1100 bail

As they raise their red, white and blue on a hockey stick, we raise the red flag in factories, neighborhoods and schools. A steelworker summed up this battle for May Day: "I can see it's not a war of weapons yet—but it's a war, a war for the hearts and minds of the workers."

Defend Revolutionary May Day and the May Day Brigades. Donations (and loans) are needed immediately for the May Day bail fund. Send to: National May Day Committee, P.O. Box 12039, Detroit, MI 48212.

truth slip out when he stated "the owners have left without a single complaint."

Just a glance at the Agrarian Reform Law reveals its reactionary essence. The land "seized" from the landowners is to be redistributed, not to individual peasant families but to "Peasant Associations." What an interesting coincidence, that the largest peasant association in El Salvador is the 100,000-member Salvadoran Communal Union, a government-sponsored organization that is controlled by, and is the main recruiting ground for, the right-wing paramilitary goon squad, Orden (historically a major tool of the Salvadoran ruling class for terrorizing the campesinos). So far there are no reports of any land being given to any of the peasant groups which have fought the junta—in fact, meetings of such groups are being broken up by troops under the martial law decree.

The Salvadoran "agrarian reform" is just the latest in a string of counter-revolutionary land reform schemes cooked up by the U.S. in the last 20 years or more, in countries such as Iran under the Shah (the so-called White Revolution) and other neo-colonies around the world.

Meanwhile, the U.S. government increased its military aid proposal for El Salvador from the 7 million dollars announced two weeks ago to \$11.6 million dollars to further train the Salvadoran military in counter-insurgency methods and provide them with the necessary weaponry to carry out their "reforms."

But no matter how much money and material these imperialists pour into their attempts to keep down the struggle of the Salvadoran people, they are failing miserably. It's hard to get good first hand reports on the situation, especially in the countryside, but the Guatemala City daily, *Prensa Libre*, reports that within hours after the junta's agrarian reform and martial law were announced, a "roving band of demonstrators in San Salvador" overturned and burned six official cars, two of them from the U.S. embassy. Other sources report that 2000 employees of the Government Ministry of Education went on strike March 6, demanding that security forces be withdrawn from all government buildings and all repression be ended. The National Association of Salvadoran Educators began a work stoppage on March 10 in defiance of the state of siege, and called on teachers

throughout the country to join them. And as we go to press, the National Federation of Salvadoran Labor Unions (FENASTRAS) has called for a nationwide general strike against the state of siege and martial law. The struggle of the Salvadoran people continues to batter the already severely battered junta in El Salvador and its U.S. imperialist masters as well.



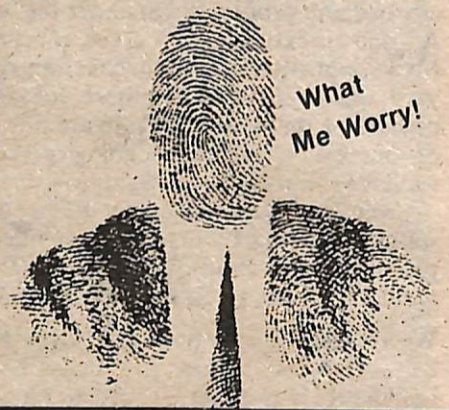
Frankfurt, West Germany.

We received the following report from the staff of Fight Back, a revolutionary newspaper for G.I.'s in W. Germany.

On Saturday, January 26 an important demonstration was held in Frankfurt, West Germany. Over 900 people marched from the campus of Frankfurt University through downtown to a rally site in a busy shopping area with banners and chants declaring, U.S. Imperialism—Hands Off Iran; Send Back the Shah; Russians, Out of Afghanistan; Down with U.S.-Soviet War Moves! The forces uniting to build this demonstration included the Federation of Workers from Turkey in W. Germany (ATIF), The Federation of Students from Turkey in W. Germany (ATÖF), the University of Frankfurt Student Government, and many other organizations, among them *Fight Back*.

The demonstration had an important impact because of its strong stand against both superpowers and its call for international revolutionary unity in the face of rapidly escalating war preparations by the U.S. and the Soviets. Almost half those taking part were foreign workers living in W. Germany, mainly from Turkey. The rest were foreign students, W. German students and workers, active duty G.I.'s as well as some veterans from the U.S. The demonstration was reported by a number of newspapers. Even *Stars and Stripes*, "the authorized unofficial publication for the U.S. Armed Forces, had to report on this demonstration—with a headline reading, "MP's Guard Soviet Mission During Afghan Protest." This was a lie, since the action never went near the Soviet mission, but it was quite revealing about just how important it is to the U.S. imperialists to fight for public opinion even within their own military.

TOP SECRET C.I.A. DOCUMENTS



- Straight from secret files of the American Embassy in Tehran
- Brought to the U.S. by the Send the Shah Back, Hands Off Iran Delegation
- 25 pages of documents—discloses in their own words what the U.S. is really doing in Iran.
- Top U.S. officials angry & appalled
- Suppressed by U.S. media

Cost of documents—\$5.00. Other donations urgently needed. Make checks or money orders payable to: Volunteer Services Fund Chap. 103 Send to: National Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Delegation of Americans to Iran 6411 Hollywood Blvd. Los Angeles, Calif. 90028

Beth Steel says: "Be an American—Work on May 1st"

Seattle, Washington. The railroad cars filled with scrap steel were pulled tight, like curtains, across the entrance to the time clock. In between the two cars were metal barricades, put together with chains, and watched over by white helmeted security guards. The crackle of a walkie-talkie could be heard periodically as another guard paced between barricades in the parking lot, motioning cars to move in some direction. From the locker room that squats in the middle of the parking lot, steel workers straggled in to the plant, passing the security chains under the taunting eyes of the guards. The guard shack behind the front lines, right next to the time clock, served as the headquarters as company personnel met, communicating to the point men in the parking lot and plotting strategy.

From the corner of my eye, I saw a flash of red. I turned. Chants began filling the air. Workers stepping out of the locker room turned too, and the locker room doors crowded up with more. Marching down the driveway, red rainslickers slashing the grey Seattle afternoon, the West Coast Revolutionary May Day brigade had come to join with steelworkers in a rally at the time clock. They marched right up to the chained barricades and began selling the *Revolutionary Worker* and calling on workers to rally right there on the spot. Shift change whistle blew and workers streamed through the time clock and into the lot.

A group of workers moved to the time clock and formed into a knot. As they moved to meet the brigade, a red flag waved from side to side above their heads. They were workers from the 12-10 shipping mill. Last year they joined with gate crashing revolutionaries and held a stop work rally on May 1st, planting two red flags on the silenced machines. Today they were bringing that flag out of the factory as they joined the rally, putting the question right out there for all to see—"The flag is in the parking lot today but who will take it into the streets on Thursday, May 1st?"

Bethlehem Steel mill is being politically electrified. And the debate over marching and not working on May Day is turning up the voltage. Six weeks ago, the gauntlet was thrown down in an open letter written by a steelworker with seven years' seniority. Right on the heels of Carter's "State of World War 3" a leaflet written and signed by this worker, issued the challenge to the whole plant. The brother was quitting his job to join the revolutionary May Day brigades. Carter's speech, conjuring up reminiscences of fighting for the bloody flag of the U.S. in Vietnam, had pushed him over the edge. "They made one mistake sending me to Vietnam—they let me come back here alive. I took the wrong road back then. And while I was crossing over into Cambodia, students were being shot, jailed and beaten, saying that the Vietnamese should whip my ass. They were right.



Seattle steel workers, with red flag waving, greet West Coast May Day Brigade for afternoon rally.

Now we're going into the 1980s and two roads are again right in our faces. We've got to choose May Day '80," he told students at a rally at San Jose State college recently.

In his open letter he challenged his fellow workers to start acting like the working class and join their class brothers and sisters around the world and make revolution. "If he quit, I've got to question everything I'm doing with my life," said one worker in the same department, who has been stopping by to see if his friend's family is okay while he's on the brigade. Among the majority of workers in that department, it was like a knock on the head. "Why did he do it?" "How's he living?" "He must be crazy!" "This May Day shit is serious business." And the cavemen too have jumped out saying that, "All the commies should quit," and that they'll be at their machines May 1st.

Right in the middle of this and conditioning this debate, events in Afghanistan and Iran were bubbling over. And the U.S. hockey team up in Lake Placid became the pro-imperialism rallying point, etching recruiting posters in the ice with their skates. The world was speeding ahead, putting even more meaning on the words written in the manifesto for revolutionary May Day. Then on Wednesday, February 13th, Red Martindale was blown up by live ammo that exploded in the melt shop. To keep the furnace full, the heaps of scap metal are barely even checked or sorted. Murder.

At a tavern meeting one night with



members of the May Day brigade, workers from one department discussed far bigger questions than wages and working conditions. Questions like violence. "It would be nice if nobody got hurt, but they're hurting us now," said one worker with 12 years. "I'm not neutral any more," he added. "I'm swinging your way because I hate all this shit coming down." Before the night was over he bought a "Break the Chains" pamphlet about women's oppression so that he could begin to understand why the hell his marriage hit the rocks. A Black worker left the tavern that night with extra copies of the *Revolutionary Worker* to set up a network. And another worker ended the meeting talking about May Day and the way the world looks to him. "It's either the twilight or the beginning. I think it's the beginning."

After the brigade hit the front gates, Bethlehem called two meetings, one for each shift, in one department. They specifically told people not to leave

work to talk to *Revolutionary Worker* sellers by the gate or to buy the paper, and not to harass the guards. At the day shift meeting they said, "There are three or four workers who are out for May Day in this plant and you should not talk to them. You all know who they are."

Right now there is a campaign underway to sell American flag decals that read, "Be An American. Work on May 1st." They're being sold for \$1 following on the heels of another decal of just a plain U.S. flag distributed by some of the cave dwellers at Bethlehem. But the demand for these new ones isn't meeting the projected sales. A typical sales attempt went like this.

"You want to buy a work on May Day sticker for \$1?"

"Fuck you," shouted one worker. "I don't want any of that shit."

"Okay, don't get down on my case. I'm just doing what I'm told."

"Yeah," came the answer, "just like you always do." □

Pamphlet from the *Revolutionary Worker*

NOW IN SECOND PRINTING price: 25¢

Excerpts from a speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, November 18, Washington D.C.



The intelligent worker knows no such thing as "my country" and sheds his "native land" every time he takes a wash.

—taken from an early IWW paper

Iraqi Kurds

More Trouble for Superpowers



Today in the mountains of Kurdistan, an area in northeastern Iraq smaller than the state of West Virginia, a revolutionary armed struggle is raging. The 3 million Iraqi-Kurds, one third of the population of Iraq and mostly landless peasants and small farmers, for years have faced devastating national oppression by the Iraqi government, backed by one or another imperialist power. Their homeland contains 8% of the world's oil reserves and borders directly on Kurdish-populated areas of Iran, Turkey and Syria.

Today these rebel Kurds are right in the middle of the maelstrom of struggle in the Persian Gulf region. The U.S. imperialists and their rival imperialist superpower, the U.S.S.R., are each trying to portray themselves as the "better superpower" while they claw away at Iraq and other countries in the oil-rich region. But the Iraqi-Kurds, along with their brothers and sisters in Iran, are showing through their struggle that they choose neither one.

The Pesh Merga, the guerrillas whose name means "those willing to sacrifice themselves" are fighting the two-thirds of Iraq's army concentrated in Kurdistan. In a battle on December 24, 1979 Iraqi troops were reported trying to clear about 300 Pesh Merga from the mountainous regions surrounding the village of Simaqli. Instead, after a day of fighting, the army withdrew, leaving behind 71 bodies of their 200 dead. The guerrillas, suffering 3 dead and 5 wounded, seized an armored helicopter, three mortars, four Greenof machine guns and sixty Kalashnikov sub-machine guns.

This is a people's war, with the guerrillas controlling areas in the mountains where troops don't dare penetrate. Here fighters of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), the united front of revolutionary and progressive groups in Iraqi-Kurdistan, hold large meetings and carry on political education with the peasants and villagers who supply and protect them. Whole villages have been emptied of all the young people, gone to fight with the guerrillas. The government has had to curtail its policy of forcibly relocating Kurds into concentration-style camps in the south of Iraq because these camps were becoming breeding grounds for revolutionaries. In a country where there had been no public demonstrations for 15 years, and where to do so means risking death, recently there were two large demonstrations in Sulaymani in the heart of Iraqi-Kurdistan, one by women and one by the students.

Just what is behind this tremendous resistance, and who are these Iraqi-Kurds, whose existence has been virtually ignored by the U.S. press while the U.S. imperialists and their Soviet act-alikes have been up to their armpits

High in the hills of Iraqi Kurdistan, Pesh Merga guerrillas prepare for battle.

trying to stamp out their struggle?

Resistance Forged in Furnace of Imperialist Intrigue

Today the Iraqi-Kurds fight under banners calling for autonomy for Kurdistan within an independent, democratic Iraq. Their struggle is clearly aimed at overthrowing the repressive Iraqi regime—which at present is backed to the hilt by the U.S.—and at ridding Iraq of its bitter history of foreign domination.

The Kurds were for years a thorn in the side of the British imperialists, who indirectly ruled Iraq after World War I. When Iraq's pro-British royal family was overthrown in 1958, the Kurds hoped for equality with the Arab majority in the new Iraqi state. But the U.S. imperialists and the gang of bureaucrat-capitalists who had recently seized power in the Soviet Union were already hovering over Iraq, the second largest oil producer in the Middle East and a country that is crucial militarily and economically to both the Western powers and the Soviets. None of these imperialists could stomach equality for the Iraqi-Kurds, whose homeland was a ripe plum waiting to be picked only if the rebellion of the Kurds was put down and their oppression stepped up.

In the early 1960's, while the U.S. oil monopolies increasingly pushed aside their weaker British partners in Iraq, the Soviets worked to subvert and gain control of the national struggle within Iraqi-Kurdistan. In 1963 in typical fashion they pointed a horrified finger at the U.S. imperialists they hoped to someday replace: "In Kurdistan the Iraqi government is pursuing a policy of mass extermination—a policy of genocide, which is contrary to elementary human rights and to the U.N. charter..." While the U.S.S.R. posed as "friends" of the Kurdish people, the pro-Soviet Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) wormed its way into a position of influence within the Iraqi government throughout this period. The ICP was the lever by which the U.S.S.R. catapulted itself into the top dog position in Iraq by the late '60s. Under the signboard of "socialist friendship and cooperation," several ports on the Persian Gulf were opened to the USSR, which began to purchase much of Iraq's oil at a price way below the world market price, and the USSR became the main supplier of advisors, tanks and bombers to the Iraqi government.

All this "cooperation" meant the Iraqi government more violently suppressed the struggle of the Iraqi-Kurds, now with the Soviet arms at their

disposal. The needs of the Soviet social-imperialists, as the young and hungry superpower cloaking its nature in socialist rhetoric, dovetailed with the needs of the big capitalists and landlords ruling Iraq, who hauled up the banner of "Arab socialism." This is a vicious euphemism for the repressive state capitalist system in Iraq, always in service to one imperialist power or the other. Repeated promises of equality to the Kurds evaporated into thin air. Instead the Iraqi government's ruling Baathist Party stepped up what they nicely termed the "arabization" of Kurdistan—the systematic destruction of the Kurdish language and culture, and the wholesale, genocidal removal of Kurds from their homeland.

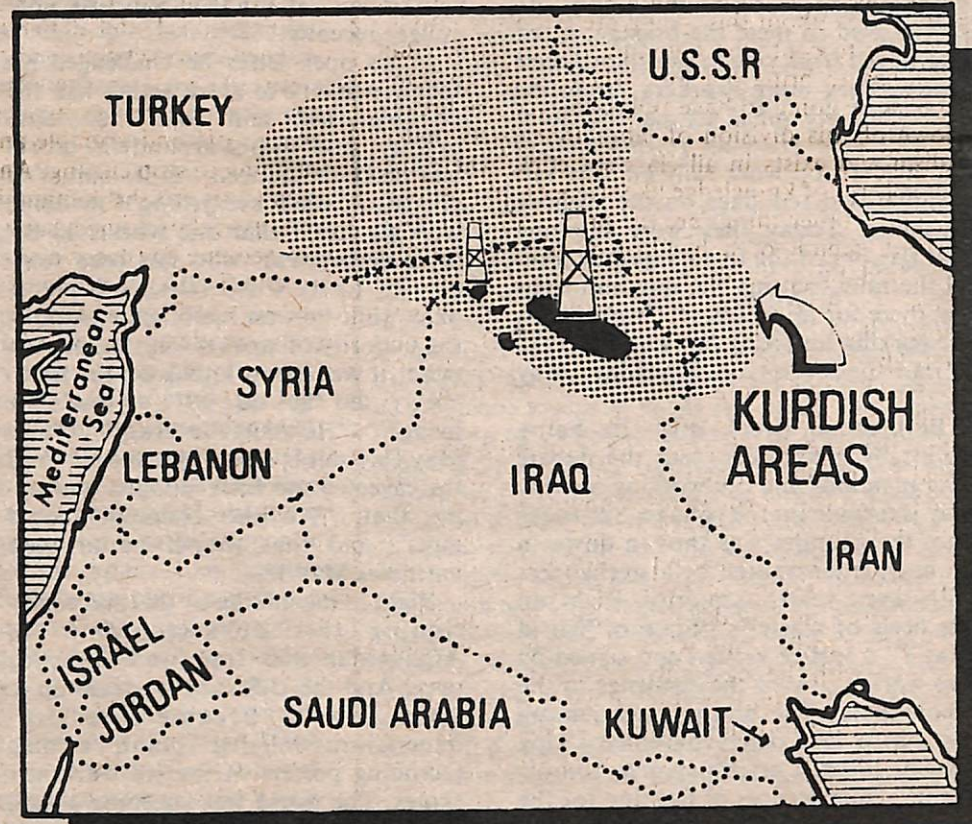
But where were the U.S. imperialists through all this? They weren't about to allow themselves to get pushed out of the action by their Soviet rivals. In 1966 they saw their opportunity in a man named Mustafa Barzani, a leader in the struggle of the Iraqi-Kurds since 1961. Barzani, himself a landlord over about 20 villages, represented the interests of the feudal class in Iraqi-Kurdistan. The CIA dangled arms and aid in front of Barzani, and promised sanctuary and supply lines to be guaranteed by the chief U.S. policeman in the Persian Gulf, the Shah of Iran. Barzani's allegiance was quickly bought. A CIA memorandum from 1974 indicated its strategy of using Barzani to pressure Iraq into loosening its ties with the U.S.S.R. "Iran, like ourselves, has seen benefit in a stalemate situation...in which Iraq is intrinsically weakened by the Kurds' refusal to relinquish its semi-autonomy (sic). Neither Iran nor ourselves wish to see the matter resolved one way or another." This was a classic example of the U.S. cynically using a nationalist struggle to further its own imperialist aims, which in this case the U.S. could very well have learned from their counterparts in the U.S.S.R.

Your Excellency, that the United States had a moral and political responsibility towards our people who have committed themselves to your country's policy..." Kissinger's curt reply sums up the U.S. "concern" for the struggle of the Iraqi-Kurds: "Covert action should not be confused with missionary work."

Rebirth of the Revolution

The *Revolutionary Worker* talked with Jamal and Kamaran, two revolutionary Kurdish students, about what happened after Barzani traitorously sold out the revolution. Jamal: "After 14 years the revolution had been destroyed. Yet after a couple of months, another revolution began with a different ideology. It was incredible...Over these years, Russia aided Iraq in bombing Kurdistan, and the US. gave aid to Barzani. The people didn't know who was a friend and who was an enemy. It was confusing: 'Is it imperialism aiding me, or is it imperialism bombing me?' But when the revolution was destroyed the people started to think. When you said that after 14 years we should know not to start another revolution with U.S. aid, the people would listen to you...We learned not to depend on any sources except our laborers and farmers—ourselves. That was fundamental to the new revolution."

In 1975, the Baathist Party declared that it would "rid Iraq of the Kurdish problem once and for all." For decades, as bad as the conditions of life had been among the Arab majority in Iraq, they were even worse among the Kurds. Although few statistics exist about the Iraqi-Kurds (since the Iraqi government refuses to collect statistics on them), it's been estimated that illiteracy is well over the 73% found among the Arabs; infant mortality is some 30-40%, and was much higher in the Kurdish refugee camps in the south of Iraq. The percentage of Kurds in



Both the U.S. and USSR are vying for control of Iraq, today the second largest oil producer in the Middle East. Some of the biggest oil fields are located in the Kurdish area of Iraq (see map).

For 14 years the struggle in Kurdistan had battered one shaky Iraqi regime after another. In 1974 alone the Iraqi army counted 7000 dead and 10,000 wounded at the hands of the Pesh Merga. Clearly feeling the heat, the Iraqi government met secretly with Iran, under U.S. sponsorship, in March 1975. They agreed that the Shah and the U.S. would cut off all military and financial aid to Barzani's forces, in exchange for Iraq's promises to become more neutral toward the Palestinian liberation movement and to start buying arms from the Western powers.

Carrying out his end of the agreement, Barzani and his commanders renounced the armed struggle and fled. Their betrayal was soon followed by a massive Iraqi military offensive. Yet before Gen. Barzani "retired" for good to Washington, D.C., this used-up U.S. puppet complained that his leadership was becoming discredited due to the Iraqi government's war of annihilation against "his people." A letter to Henry Kissinger read in part: "...We feel,

secondary schools is one-half that of Arabs.

Beginning in 1975, the Iraqi government greatly intensified its "arabization" campaign. The main university in Kurdistan was closed, Kurdish towns were given Arabic names (Kirkuk, the main city in the oil-producing area of Kurdistan, was renamed "nationalization" in Arabic), the Kurdish language was banned from the schools, and Kurdish workers in the oil industry were deported and Arab workers were brought up from the south to replace them. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan has estimated that in all 616,600 people have been deported from Iraqi-Kurdistan; that's one out of every six Kurds in Iraq.

Jamal reported on the "scorched earth" policy of the Iraqi government: "The peasants were giving food and other help to their revolutionary fighters, the Pesh Merga. So the Iraqi government tried to clear the area of Kurds, cement over the water sources,

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The Proletariat is Learning to Walk

Speech by Bob Avakian
to DC Volunteers Part 2

(Part 1 appeared in RW No. 42, Feb. 22, 1980)
In November 1979, before the lower court's temporary retreat on the charges against the Mao Tsetung Defendants, RCP Chairman Bob Avakian spoke in Washington, D.C. to a meeting of the volunteers who had come there from all over the country to "Turn D.C. Upside Down" and spearhead the fight around this case. Following are some excerpts.

"We can in no way afford to settle down." I think that point is relevant for us here. It's relevant for the question also of what happens to the Party when it gets in power. Why was the Chinese Communist Party, despite the fact that it had a long and great tradition of going through tremendous struggles, and many of its members had been tempered—why was that revisionist coup able to be pulled off in China? Why was a good powerful section of a lot of the Party members, including a lot of the leading Party members, able to be mobilized behind that coup? Because you see, there was a constant class struggle there. One of the terms of that struggle was precisely over a question not much different from, and basically the same as, the one we're facing right here: when do we get to stop eating peanut butter and sleeping on the floor and get back to being in a comfortable bed or even get some things we haven't had before?

I was in Detroit on this tour and one person mentioned to me that he can't get anywhere in this society. He'd like to be something other than a worker on the assembly line in an auto plant. He's trying to be an airline pilot. But he can't do it—he can't make the money to save up and go to school; he got the books and tried to study at home, but all he could hear was the machinery of the auto plant pounding in his ears. "So what about under socialism," he says, "am I gonna be able to be an airline pilot finally?" We had a long discussion about this, going pretty deeply into it, and we have to continue to go into this question. But what we had to bring out was, when we get to communism we're going to have fully achieved the breaking down of this division of labor that exists under capitalism and exists in all class societies, where the various spheres of knowledge like sciences, philosophy and all those other things are the private domain and the private capital of a handful of people and are monopolized by a handful of elite; right from the beginning under socialism we're going to start breaking down that division between mental labor and manual labor until we get finally to the point where people are able to do both and make their contribution in an all-round way by doing both.

But on the other hand, especially for people who see the need for revolution and see the need to carry the struggle all the way through to communism, the question in our minds cannot be, am I going to finally get to be an airline pilot when we have socialism? Am I finally going to get to do many of the things that I don't get to do now under capitalism? The question for us has got to be—and what we've got to educate and struggle with the masses to take up is—how can I make my best contribution toward moving this whole process forward through revolution so we can get on to communism and continue advancing from there on a whole new level?

Parents & "Their Kids"

This is a heavy question. Do you think that in China for example, all the workers and peasants liked it when their kids went from high school back out to the countryside, or when their kids went from high school to the army or the factory and didn't go on to college? You think every one of them liked it? Bullshit. Just think about it. Mao said that the new, socialist China wasn't all that much different in terms of a lot of the social relations and the ideas of people; even though they made tremendous advances in China, many things still weren't that much different from what they had been in the old society, from the way they are in capitalist society. Look at all these parents here—you think they're happy when their kids go to school and become revolutionaries? You know damn well they're not; overwhelmingly they say, "what the fuck is this? Is this what we worked and saved and everything and groomed you for?" It wasn't all that much different for a lot of these people in China. On the one hand, yeah, they liked the fact that there wasn't a new elite developing; on the other hand they had some real contradictions: "We suffered under the old society, we suffered enough, we had it hard enough, now there's finally a chance for somebody in our family to make it, now finally they can go to college and become an engineer, they don't have to go through what we went through. Now if the way to get ahead, to have a career, is to join the Communist Party and work hard and be dedicated and hardworking, then I guess that's what our kids should do."

You think that isn't going to happen here? What

about a lot of people who curse us now, don't want to have anything to do with us, even those who won't even admit that their kids are doing this shit now? Just wait till their fucking kids are some kind of Party member or even a leader in some locality under socialism. "Hey, that's my son (or daughter) up there! My son, my daughter, is a political leader of the whole committee for the whole district of Chicago! I know I'm going to get me a lot of good things out of this, and my grandchildren will have it much better than I ever did." Now this is the old thinking of the bourgeoisie, and it's not going to disappear or go away overnight. It has influence among the masses. And it has an influence among the Party members. You may remember that interview in the *Revolutionary Worker* coming off the tour where I said something about how a lot of us don't realize how lucky we are when the masses curse us. Maybe a lot of people understood me there and maybe some didn't. There's a really important point that I was trying to make. It has to do with where all these sugar-coated bullets come from. All of a sudden, you're in a position of authority. And even if it's not that you're hungry for personal power and you want everything, all of a sudden the masses of people, they've got to listen to you now; they didn't have to listen before, and they raised all these questions and you wanted to punch them in the mouth, and some even had the nerve to ask questions that you couldn't answer! Now you're gonna get even...

Many people will go along with the traditional way of doing things, and all that is going to transfer over to us when the Revolutionary Communist Party is in power. All that spontaneous tendency to be slavish toward authority, not to question, to blindly obey and then go off and grumble and curse—because they're not going to stop cursing. And they're going to have to listen to us, to the communists who are in authority. And instead of doing what we want them to do, which is to become conscious and get involved in the process of actually taking up and struggling over what's the road forward and what's the correct line, there's going to be a tendency among a lot of the masses—just like we have a tendency, even if we're in the Party, even working with the Party—to say, "fuck it, just tell me what to do, goddam it." There's both tendencies: one, to know about and argue about everything and not do it in a systematic way, and on the other hand, "fuck it, let somebody else figure it out, just tell me where to be, I'll get up at 5:00 in the morning, I'll go down and leaflet, I'll go to jail, I'll do what you want me to do, just tell me to do it and don't make me think." Both these tendencies exist in our own ranks and among the masses.

Today and the Future

And what we're doing here now has much longer-term implications than just this immediate battle that we're involved in right now. When people say to you, "what is socialism gonna be like?" tell them to come down to the meeting we're having the next night or the night after that. Give them a living sense of what we're going through here in this battle, because that's a model, although it's not fully developed, it's like an embryo of what socialism is going to be like—a constant struggle, people learning in the course of struggle and learning by studying a theory and applying it and bringing the two together, by going out among the masses of people and for the first time raising their heads and together with them investigating and criticizing and thinking and debating and struggling about every sphere of society, some they never even knew existed let alone others they had been told it was not their province to think about.

And what we're going through now is also preparation. Not just of ourselves because a lot of lessons are going to be learned and a lot of models are going to be developed. And, of course, they'll have to be developed further toward overthrowing this system, but a lot of the things developed in the mass forms that we're developing right now—which are going to be developed much more broadly and much more deeply in the period ahead—are going to be models and forms and vehicles for the masses themselves to actually exercise their dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, their rule as conscious masters of society. Models and forms to carry forward the class struggle that's going to revolutionize society under socialism toward the goal of communism.

Where do you think the soviets came from in Russia? They didn't come from Lenin's brain, I'll tell you that. In fact Lenin had nothing to do with the soviets at the very start. They were formed spontaneously by the

masses (and some were even developed by Mensheviks, reformers and opportunists). But what did Lenin do? Did he say, "well fuck it man, it's not my invention, so it can't be any good." No, he said something very important has been brought about here through the struggle of the masses, a mass form through which the masses themselves and their political representatives can actually take control of society and begin to bring forward the millions and millions of people to actually administer society as well as laboring to make society go forward. On that basis, he took up the model of the soviets and he waged a struggle to win over the masses of people who supported and looked to the soviets but who by no means were loyal to or following the line of the Bolsheviks—or maybe followed it in this aspect and not that, or in this hour and not the next, or on this day and not the day after, this week and not the week after.

And the same thing will be happening out here, the actions of the masses, both in terms of ideas and in terms of forms of struggle and organization. We're going to learn a lot by being out among the masses. And we're going to be learning a lot by struggling among ourselves in the forms of political and ideological struggles and the education we do. We have to be drawing the masses into this so that they can begin to get a living sense of what this whole political process and what making revolution is all about. So when they raise questions about what the future society is going to be like we can talk to them about the experience in other socialist countries and some of the basic principles that we're learning about, but we can also point to the very process that we're carrying out here in this battle and in general in fighting against this system and preparing to overthrow it.

Right now what we're doing is not only waging a very important battle and contributing to the future overthrow of the bourgeoisie but it is also an embryo developing certain forms that will be developed on a mass scale much more deeply. And through all this they can begin to get a living sense of what we're talking about. Take the example of these regional conferences we had around this battle and May Day 1980. At these regional conferences you began to get a sense of what it's like, a deeper sense of what it's like when real political and ideological struggle goes on and when the masses of people who come forward begin to get involved, to take it up, and when we begin to consciously battle out all the key questions of what we have to do and why, what the stakes are, how it's related to the broader picture of the whole world.

Role of Theory

So when people ask us how is this party and this line different we have a lot of rich material from which to draw the answers. But we're going to have to get down and study. We're going to have to make it come alive and be concrete. What it means that this party has fought and continues to fight to base itself on and not to deviate from the scientific principles and theory of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought. I'll tell you right now, and let me say it again, we have to be able to grasp clearly and deeply enough and therefore be able to break that down and enable them to see that, both by getting them active and involved and enabling them to take part in consciously changing the world. We have to break down and concretely apply this theory and we have to arm others among the masses with it, enable them to see the role and importance of theory. That's the way in which we're going to be able to show people in practice as well as through raising their theoretical understanding, that this party is in fact a much higher development and advance beyond anything that previously existed in this country, and most of all that we can make revolution and this party can and will lead it.

And how do we know that this party is not going to be turned around like others; how do we know it's not going to be taken off the revolutionary course; how do we know that, like even the Chinese Communist Party before it, it won't be taken over by revisionists, if not before then after the revolution has succeeded in seizing power? Well, we don't have an absolute guarantee of that. This is class struggle, this is not some kind of a game where you put all the things together like parts of the puzzle, where you throw all the pieces together and if you held them together right you're bound to come out with the right answer or everything is bound to be alright once and for all. This is class struggle, and this class struggle has a sharp focus also to the question of the nature of the party. Why are people joining it, what kind of a role are they carrying out in it, what's the line that guides their party, what's the outlook and orientation of the people who are in it? What we are doing at any time, including right now, is very important in terms of that, in terms of establishing and fighting to strengthen certain basic principles—that

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the party is not a clique or a ladder to climb up to prestige and power or a patronage machine but a vanguard organization whose members are central to revolution and determined to make any sacrifice, to go to the most tortuous and tumultuous battlegrounds, to carry forward the revolution.

It's not a question for us of sacrifice and more sacrifice. It's not a question of being monks and nuns and whatever have you, denying ourselves just to punish our bodies to wipe the evil spirits away. What is the question? It's a question that we're battling with now and it's going to be a much more important and decisive question for the Party as it develops more influence among the masses and especially as it leads the masses to power and it comes to the point where its members and especially leading members are in fact the people who are leading the working class in ruling society. These questions are going to come up over, and over and over again—when do we get to settle down and have things a little easier? When do we finally get to have everything that we've been denied under the old society? Well, that kind of outlook already exists broadly among the masses and we're going to have to struggle with that, but it's also going to ripen within the Party. It's going to be decisive, looking to the future. But even now, what we're doing around that question has a lot to do with whether this Party continues on the revolutionary road and even a lot to do with whether or not it is able to maintain itself as a revolutionary party and lead that struggle once the Party of the masses comes to power.

Running A Country

That pull, you know, existed in China. Think about China; when they were up in the mountains fighting for power they lived on "a rifle and millet." They didn't even have wages, they didn't go to a store and buy things, they took all they had and they passed it around and made sure everybody had what they needed; it wasn't very much but they had what they needed to fight and win. And then they came down out of this mountain, they expanded out of these liberated areas in the countryside, they swept over the whole country, they swept into the cities and drove Chiang Kai-shek's army into the ground and into the sea, and as Mao summed up, when they came into the cities, took control over the cities and the whole country and then they had all kinds of problems. Even communists who'd fought self-sacrificingly for years now started adding up every hour of their work, demanding extra pay for that and extra pay for that. And it's a true fact, you can't run a whole country on exactly the same model and the same principles as you run a base area on the mountain. It's a lot more complicated than that. There's a lot more people involved, you're dealing with the whole world as well as the situation in your country. You have to advance the economy, you can't leave it on a primitive level, and even here in the U.S. that's going to be a real question. There's going to be a lot of destruction in the process of making revolution especially when you're talking about the context of world war and everything else. We're going to have to rebuild the economy and it's going to be a fight.

And as much as romantically you don't want to think so, revolution is going to hinge on a lot of things like meeting the daily necessities and dealing with the things people have gotten used to. People in this country have gotten used to certain things and even if war is going to wipe out a lot of that, they're going to want to see much of it restored or at least something in its place. They're used to seeing a lot of shit! The capitalists churn out one piece of crap after another on the TV, but they *do* fill up the screen, hour after hour. And people are used to that. If we can't deal with that, if we can't put things on TV—and not the shit on there now, but things with a revolutionary content and on a high artistic level—many people are going to say, "where are the capitalists, at least with them there was something to watch on TV." That may not sound too exciting, but that's reality. We're going to have to develop revolutionary culture that's good artistically as well as politically, or they're going to say, "fuck it it's still the same ol' goddam shit!" And I'm not talking about the slander they put out about revolutionary leaders in China, the so-called "Gang of Four" because that's exactly what they did—disseminate revolutionary culture. That's the point. It was a struggle to do that, the bourgeoisie resists that, it tries to wreck it, tries every way to prevent that from happening because they know that there is still considerable influence of their ideology among the masses of people and they know that they can utilize all these things, these old ideas, to try and win the masses of people away from the revolutionary line, or to influence sections among them.

You have to be able to make certain things function once you're in power. If you don't do that then the bourgeoisie is going to have greater success in trying to sabotage it, the same bourgeoisie that's saying right now produce, produce, produce, will be blowing up and sabotaging production once they are losing control of the factories and so on. And they'll be having some success encouraging certain backward sections of the workers not to work hard under socialism. And then there's going to be the revisionists that stand up and say the way to make revolution is to work hard. It ain't gonna be so simple and easy. It's not so simple

and easy as the idea that the revisionists say, "work hard" and the revolutionaries say, "no, we gotta have politics." We're going to have to be able to analyze the *actual conditions* at each stage to see what is the actual contradiction we're dealing with and how does the relationship between politics and the struggle to meet the needs of the people, how does that all fit together. And that necessity does tend to drag you down to the narrow and revisionist basis of just being concerned about production and meeting basic necessities above everything else; but on the other hand you can't just let the bourgeoisie sabotage and defeat you just because you cannot in fact organize society so that the elementary needs of the masses are met. That's not an easy question to sort out.

It's not so simple that every revisionist says "produce, produce, produce," and every revolutionary says "grasp revolution, promote production." True, that's what the revolutionaries do say and act upon, like they did in China, Mao and the so-called "Gang of Four," but you've got to be able to act on and implement that line. You've got to be able to win people to it, you've got to be able to overcome the resistance of the bourgeoisie and it gets very complicated, just like it's going to get a lot more complicated right here in the next couple of weeks and months and of course in the whole process of making revolution—to say nothing of the problems and the question of the struggle once you've got power.

And a lot of the situation then comes down to the fact that *you're going to have to start paying* your own cadre wages. You can't live all out of the same bowl, literally, like you did before. And then along that time your revisionists come in and say the cadre need to have higher wages, and better conditions and they got to do things the ordinary masses of people don't do. They gotta make trips, go to meetings, they gotta be able to have access to things so that they can study and lead people. All of that is what makes it complicated, because all of that is true. They do have to do that, they do have to, and I know this personally myself even today—you've got to get on airplanes and go around and do all this shit if you want to put this line out. But if anybody thinks that that doesn't have a pull on you, if anybody thinks these sugar-coated bullets are all irrelevant and don't have any effect on you—then we've got to wake up. It's a constant struggle. Nobody's going to win that all by themselves. That's a question of struggling throughout the whole party and bringing forward the masses of people to take up these questions.

Getting Things Done

And especially when you're in power, there's also a pull on a lot of these middle-level people in the Party, as there was in China. And they've got to have things in order—up to a point—they do have to get things done.

And you feel a real strong pull, like, you know, you've got to have a certain amount of order and stability. And it's true, you do. But, even though you've got to get things done, you can't make the highest principle out of that and fall into that damn line of "practical" revisionists. Order and stability and getting things done are necessary—up to a point—but on the other hand they can't be made the main thing, or what you're "getting done" is not socialist revolution and advancing to communism, but just falling into the rut of capitalism.

Without the theory of Marxism-Leninism, without being able to grasp dialectics and materialism, you're never going to be able to sort all these things out. And the masses of people are going to become disoriented and demoralized. Reality is so complex and changing so constantly that the only way we're going to be able to deal with it and lead revolution through all these twists and turns and backs and forths is by really getting down on this theory and applying it—and popularizing it among the masses and arming them with it—so you can actually put revolution in first place, fight against the pull of capitalism and its thinking and keep the larger questions and the long-range goal of communism, of abolishing classes, always in mind, while at the same time and on *that* revolutionary basis, pay attention to the practical questions and daily necessities of the masses.

The Long-Term Battle

There's no other way we're going to be able to do this and it's not enough to just go out and do, do, do. We've got to do and think and do and think... and *it's hard*. But it's also a lot more liberating and brings forward a lot more people and that's what the whole thing is all about. And that's important for us in the immediate battle and it's also important for the long term. It's a question for us here, out on the front lines, making these sacrifices, learning how to work under adverse conditions. It's very important for the immediate battle, but it's also important for the long run and what we're learning about the long-term struggle.

Let's talk about this dialectics. Dialectics means that everything moves forward through contradiction. There's a contradiction between order and disorder, there's a contradiction between stability and struggle. One thing we know from dialectical materialism that change is the order of things, change is the way in which things move forward, change is the actual state of the essence of things.

Things only exist *relatively* and *temporarily* at rest. In fact within them, they are constantly moving and changing. Everything, even the chair we're sitting on and the floor we're standing on, has got all kinds of

things moving within it. And if the right external conditions, the right temperature, whatever, comes about, you'll see that very clearly—what's solid will no longer be solid. It's only temporarily and relatively solid. The real and most important thing about it is the motion going on within it. And you've got to have, you've got to create a certain amount of order to get things done. But if order and the stability of things becomes the most important thing, becomes the thing that you're most concerned about, the thing you're most striving to bring about, then you're in fact going to settle into the rut and be dragged out off the road of revolution and onto the road of revisionism, into the road of capitulation. Because, see things need to constantly be changed, that's the state of existence of things—the constant change and the development of one thing into another. And if you try to act against that, if you try to pose yourself against that change, if you try to preserve the status quo of things, if you try to hold it back, you're going to end up inevitably posing yourself against the revolution. It's not just that some communists want things to change and be unstable; it's that this is the order of things. Things that exist, exist temporarily and conditionally and then they break up and some new things are formed out of that struggle, out of that contradiction. The old gives rise, gives way to the new.

Aren't You Discouraged?

That's what's going on in the world today. You know, the bourgeoisie laughs and mocks at us and says, "Well, look at you, you had your revolution in Russia and you say that's no good. You had your revolution in China and now that's no good. Vietnam, that's no good. Cuba, that's no good. Why don't you give up? Aren't you discouraged?"

And here we are, the proletariat of the world, and historically we're like a little baby about nine, ten months old, taking its first step and then falling down. The first time it falls down, some old fuddy-duddy says (he's about ready to step into his grave) and he says, "Look, you can't walk, you just fall down, why don't you give up." And then the baby gets up, takes a couple more steps a little bit better, a little bit more rationally. Boom! Down it goes again. And all the wise old men and women of the bourgeoisie say, "See, you're never going to learn to walk."

But, in fact, once you step back and study scientifically what you see is that here's this new thing coming into the world that's got its whole life before it, just beginning to learn how to walk and here's this tired, old reactionary fool, the bourgeoisie, about ready to go out of existence mocking and laughing at the proletariat who is just first learning how to walk and still falling. You see, this is what's going on historically. This is the process that we're going through. Why should we be discouraged when the whole future is before us. The old has to give way to the new. The new is bound to supersede the old...

So, in conclusion, what we're doing here has a tremendous impact on the immediate battle, but beyond that on the overall struggle for revolution and even the long-term question of advancing, once we've won power, all the way to communism and beating back attempts to reverse that revolution. Everything we've learned here is going to have invaluable lessons for the battles ahead and for the revolution. Every mistake we make is going to set back the battle and we have to learn from and quickly minimize it to where we are and not only shove this particular battle forward to advance the struggle on this front and overall, but we will be that much further along and we'll have that much more under our belt and that much sharper weapons to wield in terms of waging the overall longer-term battle. □

The Loss in China and The Revolutionary Legacy Of Mao Tsetung



Speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA at the MAO TSETUNG MEMORIAL MEETINGS 1978

What is Economism and Why is it NO DAMN GOOD?

The working class movement in the United States today is full of contradictions and is in a period of sharp transition. Millions of workers hate their lives, the way they're ground down, chewed up and spit out by a system they do not control; and yet, the influence of bourgeois ideology, trade unionism and reformist illusions, fostered and reinforced by the long period of the dominance of the United States, as the world's biggest imperialist power, is still very strong. Millions can see or feel that the coming era will be one of shattering social and political upheaval, including a world war between the United States and the Soviet Union; but millions do not yet grasp the fact that the working class itself can and must play a decisive, independent historical role in the coming crisis.

But the state of the working class movement cannot be really understood merely by looking at the workers "as a whole," as a monolithic bloc. For a specific feature of today's movement, which is of tremendous significance, is the coming into being of the relatively small but growing and active core of advanced, class conscious proletarians. Within the ranks of this advanced core, the question of how to overcome the still primitive level of consciousness of their millions of fellow workers, and how to transform this movement into a mighty army capable of seizing the revolutionary initiative in the coming crisis is increasingly a subject of needed discussion and debate.

The primitiveness of the workers movement as a whole is keenly felt by the advanced worker, the worker who has himself or herself "dared to dream the dream of revolution," but yet is often heard exploding in frustration: "I'd die for a chance to get my hands around the throat of the ruling class, but you'll never get the rest of these lunkheads to get off their ass and fight!" Anyone who is serious about making revolution knows that it's not a matter of a few thousand or even a few tens of thousands of fighters, however heroic, "storming the Bastille." This question of how and on what basis our movement will grow and become capable of influencing and actually leading millions in time of sharp crisis is a fundamental one.

It is a question on which there are two, sharply different lines, two different roads: do we strive to adapt our agitation and our work to the backwardness of the present movement, find some means of appealing politically to where the "average joe is at," and concentrate on leading struggles promising the workers something "concrete" or "palpable," in order to overcome our isolation and lay the basis for introducing revolutionary politics at a later stage, when the workers are ready as a result of the sharpening of the crisis and the experience they have gained in the economic struggle against the employers and the government? Or do we, on the contrary, strive to divert this spontaneous tendency in the movement toward trade unionism and reformism, unite, mobilize and bring forward the most advanced and far-sighted section of the workers, and conduct broad and bold revolutionary propaganda and agitation which exposes bluntly and vividly the thousand and one outrages, the schemes and plans for "reforms" and "improvements" of the present order, which seems so "palpable, immediate and concrete," and are in reality just so many bourgeois illusions? What's the point of something so advanced, so full of risks as May 1st? Why is a newspaper—the *Revolutionary Worker*, the main

weapon for preparing today; why not something "more concrete" like trade union struggle?

The difference between these two roads is basically the difference between what Lenin termed "economism... slavish cringing before spontaneity" and genuine, revolutionary Marxism. Lenin deeply exposed the features and reactionary nature of economism, particularly in his brilliant book *What Is To Be Done?*, which we can only scratch the surface of here.

Economism is basically the ideology of bourgeois reformism disguised as Marxism. It isn't the only opportunist deviation from the genuine science of proletarian revolution, but it is one of the most pernicious and persistent, because it has the appearance of offering a cheap and easy way for revolutionaries to "win friends and influence people"—to gain a mass base quickly by seeming to lead the workers toward goals which are practical, realistic and attainable. "How can you talk to people about some distant dream of revolution when they don't even have enough to live on now?" or, "How can you talk of revolution when people are already engaged in this or that struggle? Let's first prove that we revolutionaries can lead the masses successfully in the struggle to attain some immediate victories yielding some immediate benefits—then they'll listen to us when we talk about overthrowing the government."

In Lenin's time the Russian economists hid their line behind the two-stage character of the Russian revolution where the first task was to overthrow the Tsar, establish a democratic republic, and then move on to the socialist stage. But what the economist line meant was that the workers should simply fight for better economic conditions and leave the political struggle against the Tsar's autocracy to the liberal bourgeoisie. Never could the Russian proletariat be prepared to seize power with such a line.

Reformism is Un-Realistic

But despite the spontaneous appearance that "it's easier to reform this system than it is to overthrow it," or that "you can get workers to take up economic struggles but you'll never get them to take up the broader political questions," the reality is the opposite. Fundamentally, it is impossible to reform this system and the temporary concessions and the crumbs the imperialists were able to toss at the workers and the oppressed nationalities, meager as they were, during their period of worldwide dominance are all being snatched away. What does the future hold in store for the masses of workers and oppressed of this country as well as the world in the next ten years, as the world imperialist crisis approaches its climax and this system plunges headlong into an inferno?

Can anybody think that the masses will thank us later if we tell them today that the most important or the main thing they should be doing is fighting for higher wages, better housing, or a cleaner environment? Will the workers praise us because, at a time when what they urgently required was a vanguard, conscious leadership capable of laying bare the roots of this crisis and the tasks confronting them, we instead "adapted" ourselves to the "current level of the movement" by reinforcing the lies and dangerous illusions fostered by the bourgeoisie and their allies in the "labor movement"?

Just like Lenin pointed out to the

"economists" of his time, there is more to the world than pay stubs and today's full belly. And we can see in today's situation that the bourgeoisie, in times of crisis, finds itself forced to drag the masses into political life, forced to "train them" to view all the questions of the day from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie. "Adopt the Cave-man point of view of the bourgeoisie around Iran," they scream in 1,000 ways. View Afghanistan through the eyes of the

hypocritical class of capitalists who oppose Soviet domination only because they want to dominate everything themselves. How are the workers going to take a correct stand later if they don't get trained starting now, concretely, in breaking with the bourgeois point of view and taking up the proletarian one on every world event?

It was with this in mind that Lenin blasted the economists of his time who,
Continued on page 18



Technicians enter Three Mile Island nuke preparing to release radioactivity into the air—which they claim won't cause any "serious" damage to health or the environment.

Nuclear Accidents—Valuable Experience?

It has recently come to light that accidents at nuclear power plants are really a great boon to mankind. According to the general director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Sigvard power industry is that we have had too few accidents. It's expensive, but that's how you gain experience."

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) must have been pleased with the recent accident at the Crystal River, Florida nuclear power plant where 60,000 gallons of radioactive water flooded out of the reactor's cooling system and into the plant. The usual script of lies was handed to the press. No. 1, "There is no cause for alarm," followed shortly with No. 2, "There has been no measured off-site release of radioactive material," ending with No. 3, "Non-essential employees from some areas inside the plant were evacuated even though it wasn't necessary." Following this accident an NRC director testified to the nuclear regulation subcommittee of Congress that it was a good thing the Three Mile Island breakdown almost wiped out Pennsylvania, because this time the control-room operators "knew what to expect and how to deal with it."

In fact, the NRC was so pleased with the results of this most recent accident that they decided to provide the opportunity for even more rich experience with nuclear disasters. They blew the "all clear" whistle to signal an end to the ban on opening nuclear plants that had been imposed after Three Mile Island to cool out the anger of millions

fueled by that near melt-down.

According to Eklund's logic, it's really a shame that the Fermi breeder reactor that melted down near Detroit in 1969 didn't go all the way. After this incident a plant engineer commented, "We almost lost Detroit." Just think of the valuable experience the bourgeoisie could have gained if they had lost Detroit. Their mad scientists and statisticians could have stuffed their computers with information on how many people were killed immediately, how many died days and weeks after the meltdown and what their symptoms were, how many were maimed for life, how long it took to evacuate the area and how many weren't able to get out. What a treasure-house of experience was thrown down the drain! Of course, they would have had to wait a generation to study the malformed babies whose mothers were exposed to the radiation and this information might not be available before a nuclear war breaks out.

There is only one drawback to all this valuable "experience". Just as Three Mile Island brought tens of thousands into the streets, each new nuclear "mishap", each new brush with death, provides valuable "experience" for the masses of people about the nature of this system that plants nuclear time-bombs on our doorsteps and gets ready to burn up tens of millions in a nuclear war, and then calmly sums it up as "It's expensive, but that's how you gain experience."

Sihanouk: A Candid Self-Appraisal

On a trip to the U.S. in late February and early March, during which he met with members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and top-level officials of the State Department, Prince Norodom Sihanouk told reporters that without a strong U.S. the world "could become an immense Auschwitz. We Kampuchians," he said, "need the United States like human beings need oxygen."

It was exactly ten years ago this month that this same Prince Sihanouk had been unceremoniously deposed in a U.S.-orchestrated coup. In his book, "My War With the CIA," written while he was in exile in Peking, Sihanouk described the vicious crimes of the U.S. rulers: "The Americans and their puppets want to prevent the revolutionary peoples of Indo-China from surviving. They say in effect: 'If you do win and we have to go away—there will be nothing left for you. You will be destitute forever. Not because you lack courage or vigor but because we will have killed even your soil.' This is an extraordinary criminal aspect of American use of air power. It is worse than what Hitler did. Many of my American friends will be horrified at such an observation. But what is the difference between burning and gassing people in ovens and doing it to a whole nation out in the open?... Everyone knows of the horrors of Auschwitz and other extermination camps. But Nixon is waging a war of extermination against the entire people of Indo-China."

Many things have changed in the last ten years, but the criminal nature of U.S. imperialism isn't one of them. Sihanouk's apparent about-face on the question is nothing more than the

pragmatic vacillation of a nationalist monarch attempting to regain power.

The U.S. rulers are clearly interested in finding their way back into Kampuchea especially with their Soviet rivals entrenched there. But at the same time, they want to keep their options open. While stringing Sihanouk along, they are trying to establish relations with the current regime of Vietnamese/Soviet backed Heng Samrin, many of whose officials and underlings were once a part of either the Lon Nol clique (which overthrew Sihanouk in the 1970 coup) or the Sihanouk regime itself.

At this point the U.S. isn't prepared to rely on Sihanouk alone, certainly not to the extent of arming his 1300 loyal officers in the U.S. and France and financing an invasion of Kampuchea through Thailand. Sihanouk suggested this as a possibility, although he was forced to admit it would probably end in failure!

The U.S. is keenly aware that Sihanouk's only unshakable loyalty is to himself. As one observer put it, "Sihanouk talks out of all sides of his mouth at once; then giggles to let you know he knows you know." They undoubtedly want him for a puppet, but they want to make sure the strings are securely fastened before they take a chance on him. For his part, Sihanouk has been trying to reassure Washington. On his recent trip he told reporters candidly, "I am almost 60. When I was young, I liked to be leftist. Now I'm getting old. I feel myself very comfortable being rightist." □

Prisoners: Take up May 1st

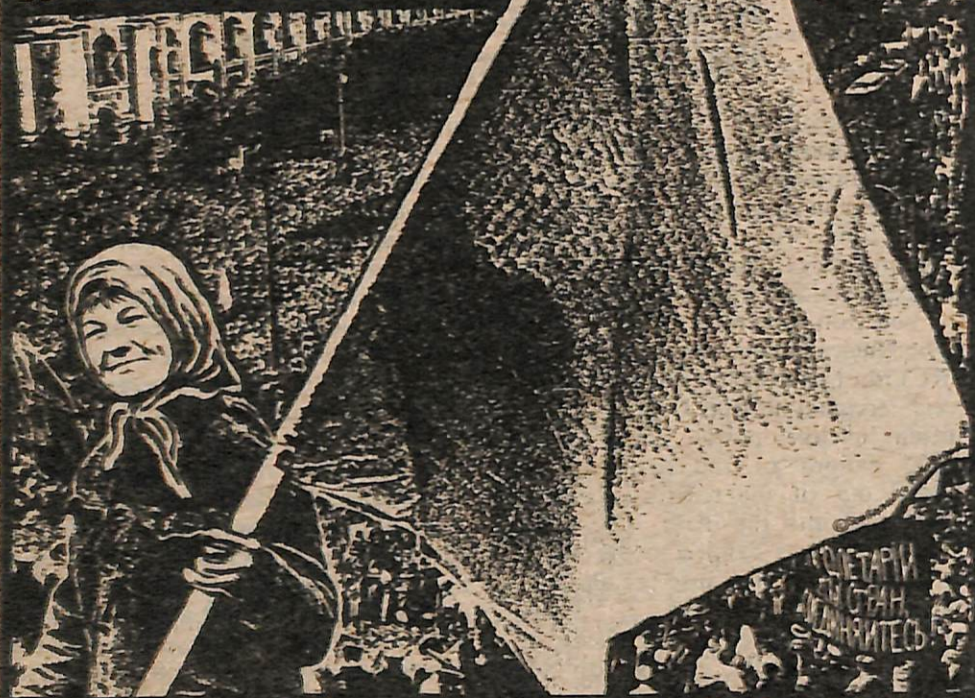
To all those whose revolutionary dreams fly out from behind the cold steel bars of the capitalists' prisons:

This May 1, the first salvos of a new decade of revolutionary upheaval will echo across this land. Thousands of the working class and other oppressed will leave their homes, their schools, their workplaces and take to the streets of this country, declaring themselves part of the international working class and demonstrating their determination to wake up their class brothers and sisters and to hurl the imperialist U.S.A. into the junkyard of pre-history.

To you on the inside—unable now to take to the streets, but inspired to act as part of this class conscious force—we call on you to find the ways to express your support, to unite that day with us in solidarity as we take history into our hands.

And beyond this, we call on you to exercise your influence on others before May 1. Your body may be imprisoned behind bars, but that doesn't mean that your power to build May 1 and educate others is held hostage as well. Make contact with your friends and relatives on the outside about May 1. In every letter you write, in every visit you receive between now and that historic day, spread the word. Make public statements. Urge all those that listen to you—and many do—to take part in opening a new chapter in the history of the working class of the world.
On to Revolutionary May 1st, 1980!

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New "Evidence" — New Lies In Greensboro Trial

Thursday, March 13.

As we go to press, the trial of the Bob Avakian Defendants continues in Greensboro, North Carolina. These nine RCP members and supporters were arrested on inciting to riot and other charges last October in the Hampton Homes housing project while calling on residents to attend Avakian's speech in Greensboro. They were subsequently convicted and sentenced to up to two years in jail. The present trial is an appeal of the earlier conviction.

The authorities have pulled out all the stops in the appeal trial, eight Greensboro cops spewing out days of tall tales. The picture the state is attempting to paint of RCP members—that of mindless robots heeding the supposed call of Bob Avakian to commit terrorist acts—is the same as that drawn in the lower court earlier. Now, however, the imaginations of the police, the D.A., his witnesses, etc., have been fully unleashed as new lies are presented as "new evidence."

One cop aimed his fire directly at the RCP member who was speaking at the housing project and whose arrest sharply angered the 100 people listening. After months of "deep thought" (and after having said *nothing* of this in the earlier trial), this cop has suddenly "remembered" a phone call the RCP member made to his wife over police monitored telephones from jail. According to our amnesiant police of-

ficer, the RCP member said, "Everything went fine. They played it just right, they played into our hands." Get it? A well planned conspiracy to commit riot, to incite the people of Hampton Homes against the cops—this is the new embellished story. Overcoming their own months-long lapses of memory, several other cops have *only now* testified that one of the RCP members on trial threatened to kill police Sgt. Wilson. Their stories have gone from abstract and general calls to "kill the pigs" to this particular threat against the life of the cop in command. The picture is now complete—these RCP members and supporters are dangerous criminals and must be jailed.

Cutting through all the lies, the defense dragged some of the truth into the light of day. In the cross-examination, one cop slipped up and admitted that patrolmen had been briefed the very morning of the arrest to be on the lookout for the RCP. This was in direct contradiction to claims by the authorities that no surveillance of the RCP had been carried on in Greensboro. The court had consistently denied defense motions for access to surveillance records on the basis that there was no surveillance. All this must have flashed through the cop's head when he corrected himself on the stand. He immediately qualified his first remark; *now* it was that the people "putting up posters and spray painting" were to be watched for.

The State's case reached a further height of absurdity when it put two

State's witnesses from Hampton Homes on the stand. The first, a "mystery complainant", turned out not to be so mysterious, just a bald faced liar. She was a backward project resident who had given revolutionaries a hard time months before the incident in October. She testified, "They all yelled 'kill the goddamn pigs' for 45 minutes" even though all the police testimony had said it was only 10 minutes! When pressed on this discrepancy, the only thing she proved was that her beef wasn't with any specific act of the revolutionaries, but their presence in general. She blurted out, "Oh Lord, they've been doing this since June!" She failed to identify *anybody* or *anything* any individual said.

The second witness virtually admitted she had been coached by the D.A., and Judge Wood personally stepped in to the rescue. He chimed, "Why, I talked to her along with the D.A. last week and she's saying the same thing now as she did then." Undoubtedly impressed with her testimony, he then denied a motion to strike it from the record.

The State rested its case and the defense moved to dismiss all charges against 5 defendants whose arrest citations were blatantly illegal. Like the thrashing of a wounded beast, Judge Wood denied all motions categorically.

On the stand came two witnesses for the defense, both Hampton Homes residents. Each had seen the defendants get hit by the arresting cops and each had seen the fury deepen in the crowd

as the cops attacked. One witness said she heard the revolutionaries talking about "freeing this man Bob" and that they'd been there only 5 to 10 minutes and "up popped the police." This strong testimony stood firm to the D.A.'s cross-examination.

In the final, desperate act of the day, the prosecutor stopped the testimony of an RCP member. The prosecutor's line ran something like this—"You swear on the bible, but you don't believe in god. What makes you have to tell the truth." (No doubt impressed by his own unearthing of this apparent contradiction, the D.A. failed to take note of another one: belief in god had not stopped a barrage of State's witnesses from lying!) Objection! screamed the defense attorney at this age old trick to prejudice the jury. But the judge sent the jury out and joined forces with the D.A. in the attack. The matter was to be settled the next day.

As the appeals trial of the Bob Avakian Defendants draws to a conclusion (the jury is expected to go out on Friday, March 14), clearer than ever is the fact that the trial is part of a general offensive aimed at the RCP and especially its Chairman Bob Avakian. The federal government is leading the way with its appeals hearing on March 27 of the charges against Bob Avakian and the Mao Defendants, but the Greensboro authorities have stepped right into line—no doubt with direct assistance. □

Attica Continued from page 5

progressive-minded people, to watch the show.

The real political limits of the "exposure" in *Attica* were actually not directly imposed by the bourgeoisie but flowed directly from the spontaneous outlook of the liberals who made it. The theme running through both the movie and the book is that if "reason" could prevail in the prison then killing and bloodshed could be avoided (with the prisoners, of course, crawling back into their cells on their knees). And the bourgeoisie made sure that *its* message was clear that if "reason" did not prevail it would inevitably bring out the guns. The responsibility is always placed on the oppressed to be "reasonable" and surrender to the authorities. This is the narrow limits of the petty-bourgeois "exposure"—really no exposure at all. The message is just what the bourgeoisie ordered—"Yes you are oppressed, your cause may even be just—but *they've* got the guns and your cause is hopeless. And this poisonous line is very consciously and deliberately developed throughout the film. After some fairly accurate and even inspiring scenes of the conditions in the prison that gave rise to the rebellion and the "festival of the oppressed" of the actual taking over of the prison, the audience is steadily set up for the kill.

In its typical perverse fashion the bourgeoisie puts its words right into the mouth of someone from the ranks of the prisoners themselves early on in the film in order to get over with what is to become the film's message. One of the prisoners in the yard pulls Wicker aside and says, "All this shuckin and jivin'... I mean I guess I'm one of them, but see I got me a wife and kid... What I want, me, is I just want to get out... Man, this is just a great big fishtank. The man up there on the walls with their guns, they're just letting us swim around and blow bubbles at each other. And when he gets set, he's gonna pull the plug and all the suckerfish will be flopping and suffocating to death." And to round the whole thing out, the same point is made directly from the mouths of the bourgeoisie itself represented by the disembodied voice of then governor of New York Nelson Rockefeller in his final phone conversation with Commissioner Oswald before the assault on the prisoners. After ordering the assault Rockefeller concluded by saying "... I think we have to look at these things not only in terms of the immediate, but in terms of the larger implications of what we are doing in our society."

And for those who were inspired by the real multinational unity that characterized the Attica rebellion, attention was paid to make sure that this idea was stomped on too. Early in the film a young white inmate from the south tells Wicker, "I just want you to know... the way we treated Black folks down home... well, here us and the Black guys are sticking together... If we don't get what we want we're going to die together." Obliging, he will be shown with his chest half blown away in the scenes of the final assault at the end of the film.

And so it goes steadily developing to its grand finale a twenty minute death threat to all who dare rebel. From every angle, the power of the state is shown. The helicopters, the tear gas, the rifles and shotguns wield-

ed by robot-like gasmasked troopers all are paraded before the cameras in the most ominous manner. "We will show you no mercy," the ruling class is saying. And just in case you don't get the point the trembling voice of Tom Wicker sums it all up: "The rebellion at Attica was begun by powerless men... the rebellion was ended by a powerful state... over the sheer, awful, final solution of the guns." Attica is summed up as 43 dead (including 10 guard hostages), a useless sacrifice for a hopeless cause.

"Such fools these hot-headed and unreasonable inmates. Didn't they know who they were dealing with?" the ruling class would have to ask. "After all, the 'observers' like Wicker knew all along they would be killed if they didn't give up. Why didn't they settle for the 28 demands agreed to by the state and return to their cells? Such tragic and pitiful fools these prisoners."

But only a fool would have gone for the state's offer of a few of the most paltry reforms that would most likely never be given and if they were instituted at all would have been snatched back at the first opportunity just as they are throughout this whole society anyway. And without the state's agreement to amnesty for all those involved in the rebellion all other reforms would be meaningless since they would all face torture and death at the hands of the guards regardless of what conditions the rebellion was ended under. Clearly, to accept the 28 points would amount to surrender and would be the most foolish act of all. The Attica brothers never seriously considered such an action and tore up the state's offer on the spot.

And who are the real fools? we might ask. Those who, fully conscious of the consequences of their actions, took a stand and struck a real blow against the imperialist monster responsible for their misery and the untold misery of hundreds of millions the world over? Those hundreds of heroic fighters who declared they would rather "die like men than live like dogs"? Those who declared the following:

We, the Brothers who were imprisoned in the Hell-hole concentration camp known as Attica, took our stand against the oppressor. Knowing well that the pigs would vamp down on us with everything in his power. But we knew then and know now that it was our right, our duty to take that stand so that the world would know that we were no longer gonna accept the demoralizing and repressive brutality committed by the prison guards and government bureaucrats. When the pigs realized that we were for real, that we were not gonna back down, then the pigs vamped down on us with their shotguns—their rifles, their tear gas and their handguns... and then they indicted 62 Brothers (now 61) for everything they could think of but the thing we did. And that is rebelling. Then they had the nerve to say that the Pigs were justified in their actions...

And they will continue to do their jobs, if we don't come together to destroy this beast. It knows we have been to the well of knowledge and will never be satisfied until all men are free. So join us to destroy this "Thing" that walks like a man but is lower than a snake.

—from a letter by Attica Brother Rahiem a/ka Alphonso T. Ross printed in *Fighting Back!*
—Attica Memorial Book, 1974

Or are not the real fools those who think they will be able to go on crushing the masses of people forever without them rising up and striking them down. And along with the ruling class aren't the pitiful liberals who would make such pathetic wimpering statements as the following from *A Time to Die* real fools:

No American would ever be free, he thought in his exhaustion and despair. That was the inescapable truth of it, harsh as the story of Lucifer's fall. They who had sought to be masters would be forever slaves. Having loosed in the traffic of souls the darkness within themselves, they had loosed as well the black living image of that darkness; and the fear of darkness made flesh, darkness rising in savage triumph, not only had haunted their world and their children's world but would haunt the world of their children's children. Because what was feared so much had to be hated—relentlessly, implacably, ruinously hated. But hate only begot hate. The hating became the hated, and hated the more.

Just what did the Attica inmates have to return to in those hell-hole prison cells? What did they really have to lose but their chains? And as far as the question on why fight a battle if you know that eventually you will lose it? Mao Tsetung spoke to this when he said: "When the Paris Commune rose up he (Karl Marx) supported it, although he reckoned that it would fall. When he realized that it was the first proletarian dictatorship, he thought it would be a good thing even if it only lasted three months. If we assess it from an economic point of view it was not worthwhile." The five days in Yard D during the Attica rebellion had an infinitely more profound effect on history than 1,200 lifetimes in prison shackles.

Just the very process of making this film testifies to this fact. Wicker relates how the extras recruited from Ohio unemployment offices got so involved in portraying the prison revolt that "it seemed for a while as if the film crew might not be able to control the action." And even the little bit of the truth in the film inspired a rebellion at the South Florida State Hospital where immediately after the telecast, prisoners armed themselves with makeshift weapons and took over the second floor of their ward to protest conditions there, surrendering only after police inundated the building with tear gas.

And at Attica State Prison itself, where four to five hundred of the original Attica Brothers are still incarcerated, officials did not dare allow TV privileges that Sunday night. It seems a few weeks ago nine guards were injured there in a rebellion that broke out in the dining hall. A few days later when one of the guards went for an inmate, hundreds of prisoners moved in unison forcing him to back down.

None of these outbreaks approached the significance of Attica nor is a whole series of rebellions just like Attica a blueprint for revolution in this country. But it must be said that the Attica Rebellion was indeed an historic revolutionary highpoint in the struggle of the American people of all nationalities. It was a powerful revolutionary example that no movie will ever be able to erase. □

MAY 1st — WELD THOSE INTO A CLASS CO

Birmingham

Continued from page 1

had no artistic quality”—until recently.

On March 3, something changed all that. Two members of the Revolutionary May Day Brigade barricaded themselves inside Vulcan and “draped it with a beautiful banner.” It was a livewire touching the smoldering anger of the people.

Hundreds demanded to know who would do something so outrageously wild and great. One woman described the sentiments that day, “It wasn’t funny, but I was laughing all the time. It was joyous!” “Joyous” to the people and “beautiful” to those culturally inclined. But there was another force to be reckoned with—the capitalists themselves who feared, most of all, the

fury that the message of Revolutionary May Day 1980 would unleash! That afternoon, the two brigaders were thrown in jail, charged with burglary (!) and “demonstrating in a public building.” In the days to come, the wounded beasts would lash out even more ferociously.

Earlier that morning, the Brigade traveled to Pullman Standard Co. in nearby Bessemer City. They marched into the company parking lot. One hundred workers gathered around and a hot struggle ensued. As some workers demanded they get off the “company’s property” and others rallied around supporting them, the cops rolled in. They grabbed one brother at the edge of the rally, threw him into the squad car and drove off. As they took him to a deserted field, they threatened, “Your friends will find your body in a ditch!”. The pigs got out of the car, unlocked the doors and ‘disappeared’, leaving the brother alone for almost one solid

hour. It was a vile setup—with the hope of being able to kill a revolutionary “on the run”. Finally, they returned to the car. They charged him with creating a public nuisance. Later, as supporters went to bail him out, they were surrounded by five cops who regurgitated the threat, “Get out of Bessemer and never come back or you’ll all end up in a ditch!”

On March 4, the Brigade marched into the cafeteria of the University of Alabama-Birmingham (UAB), a hospital center for specialists from all over the world. UAB has been a site of wildcat strikes, work stoppages and administrative office takeovers in unionization struggles; the Brigade’s appearance at UAB only served to fuel the flames. The UAB cops viciously attacked the Brigade members, arresting 7. Six were charged with misdemeanor riot and one brother was slapped with felony assault. The air was electrified as the workers heard of the attack and the

outrage increased when they learned of the doctors and nurses who clapped and cheered the pigs on. During her morning report, a head nurse had taken the floor to denounce the action of the Brigade. She began by reading the May Day leaflet and ended by declaring, “Communists are trying to take over UAB!” The room started buzzing as a veteran nurse jumped up to defend the leaflet. A well-known supporter of the Brigade was stopped in the halls and on the elevator by workers who wanted to know more about the Brigade’s activities. For days, her co-workers took turns doing her work so she’d be free to discuss the political questions raised.

A few days later, UAB was the scene of 4 more arrests of Brigaders when they greeted Henry Kissinger who arrived to dedicate a new medical facility.

The answer of the people to this barrage of arrests was not long in coming. Some traveled all the way from Atlanta, where a Brigade member was seriously



THE WHO HATE THIS SHIT CONSCIOUS FORCE!

threatened the week before, to take the place of those in jail. A 20-year-old unemployed brother said he'd never done anything like this before. Why did he step out now? "I believe in what they did. They did it to help the people so I wanted to come. The people involved are really concerned for *our* people. I really like that; I plan on doing more. Right now, we've got to get them back on the streets doing what needs to be done." Thousands of dollars were raised in Birmingham alone—from the factories and the UAB workers—those who could offered their homes as collateral. One area artist is hard at work on a poster of the Vulcan takeover, as others plan a painting and poetry program—the proceeds to be donated to the Brigade. One local d.j. raved for hours on the air about how this is the most exciting thing to happen in years! A Kingston youth offered his band to help raise funds.

What the capitalists fear most is

materializing right before their eyes and even in their jail. The dull grey walls are alive now with the "Pick Up The Red Flag" article from last week's *RW* and a picture of Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP. The National May Day Committee received a statement from all the women prisoners—minus one, a snitch. Thirteen male prisoners sent a powerful statement of support to the International Women's Day celebration on March 8th and another contributed a May Day poem!

Birmingham was ready for the revolutionary call of May Day. "This week," said one worker, "the people aren't talking about what the KKK or local politicians are saying but about what the May Day Brigade is doing." More stepped out for a militant demonstration held at the arraignments on March 11th. At this moment, plans are being made for a major demonstration next week. The people of Birmingham have embraced May Day as their own, passing from mere agreement to concrete action and joining in the forward march of history.

There is an urgent need for people from the South to step out, come to Birmingham and carry on the struggle. Already, people from Tampa, Atlanta and even St. Louis have packed their gear and headed out to build May Day in Birmingham. The work of the Brigade in Birmingham has brought forward many in this city who are thirsting for and actively taking up Revolutionary May Day. Come to Birmingham—turn up the heat! Contact the National May Day Committee in Detroit or a local May Day Committee. □



W. Virginia Woman Testifies for May 1st

Following is a testimonial given at the International Women's Day program in West Virginia by a woman who's recently joined the revolutionary movement. She became active in the battle around Revolutionary May Day in the last two months, and after the bust in Youngstown, donated her life's savings to the struggle around May Day and the use of her car to the May Day Brigade.

When I was fifteen I had certain goals in my life, one was a career in nursing, the other was to have a husband, children, a house in the suburbs, two cars and a color television set. A typical American woman's dream and to live happily ever after.

So I went to school and studied hard. Anyone can make it in this society, right? I became a surgical technician, met a man, fell in love and married him. He was a coalminer like my father and his father before him. We had two daughters, one that was supposed to be a boy. Life went on, the typical American dream wasn't turning out what it was supposed to be.

There had to be something more to life than getting up every day at 5, dragging my daughters to my mother's house, going to work for 8 to 12 hours and taking call after work. Then picking my daughters up from my mother's, going home, fixing supper, cleaning the house. All the womanly household chores, while my husband slept on the couch. I had to face a husband who had swallowed the lie that no matter how he had been exploited on the job for 8 hours, when he had come home he was the master of the house and was entitled to take his frustrations out on me and the family.

So I filed for a divorce in January 1976 in the hope of a better future. But this society tells us that a woman's only half a person unless she's married. By June we had reconciled forgetting the divorce in hopes that we could solve my problems.

In September my husband was killed in a mine accident. He was buried Thursday and the following Monday I was to be at the mine office to sign papers for compensation. When I arrived I was told that since I had filed for a divorce my compensation was denied but out of the goodness and mercy of the company's heart they would pay for the children. No matter the divorce had been cancelled and my husband and I had been living together as man and wife.

The company and I argued for two weeks, I finally ended up getting a lawyer fighting and winning the few crumbs the company offered. A small price for a man's life.

I didn't understand why people had to lead this sort of a life.

Then I met people from the RCP. I couldn't understand communism! I was shocked. The country teaches us we have to fight any communism. They must be crazy! We have everything in this country, the land of opportunity, freedom of speech. Freedom of speech, like Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, who spoke out against the government and capitalism and now is being railroaded by the government into jail for 241 years.

The more the RCP talked, the more I listened and the more I understood why so many people's typical American dreams turn into living nightmares.

There is a way out of this madness through revolution, building socialism. People working for the needs of the majority, not for the profits. This is no dream, it's a reality.

Today we have a Party, the RCP. We can't sit back, we have to wake up. People will have to join together and show the rulers of this country that we're not going to take the crumbs anymore. There is a better future.

That's why working class men and women both have to fight the oppression that this system breeds.

Take history into our own hands on May Day 1980!

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Iraqi Kurds

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burn the land. There is no life in that area—a 20 km. strip between Iran and Iraqi-Kurdistan, between Turkey and Iraq, between Syria and Iraq... There is no natural geographical border between Iraqi-Kurdistan and the other countries where Kurds live: Iran, Turkey, and Syria (see map). By creating this no-man's land the Iraqi government hoped to cut off the support the Iraqi-Kurds have received from these other countries, especially the Kurds in Iran.

Kamaram, who grew up in the countryside in Iraqi-Kurdistan and was one of the over 150,000 Kurds who had taken refuge in Iran during the heavy fighting in 1974, continued: "Part of the deal between Iran and Iraq in 1975 under Kissinger's supervision was for the Shah of Iran to pull out all of his support for the Iraqi-Kurds, and order Bar-

zani to make his people go back to Iraq. It was promised that the Iraqi government would give amnesty to everyone going home. Also the Shah promised that he would not close the border behind us. This was all a trick. But most of the people went back to Iraq.

"I went back with a group that went to the south. After three or four months the government started really pushing the people still living in Kurdistan, evacuating the villages and sending thousands south. I was every day facing all these new people coming there. Even the kids were still wearing their school clothes, from when they had been forced into trucks and sent south. South of Iraq was very hot and dry. I remember the town I was in, we lived in tents. More than 50 children were dying every day because there was no medical treatment. The Iraqi government gave the people money—130 fils or 30¢ in American money, a day. All the people could afford was bread."

Kamaram explained that the Iraqi government has since built concrete villages

on the main highways in Kurdistan so the military authorities can keep a close watch on the people. Many people from the refugee camps in the south as well as Kurds evacuated from the border areas have been forced to settle in these new villages—similar to U.S. "strategic hamlets" in Vietnam—with no land to raise food on and no means of livelihood.

It was out of these conditions that the new revolution was born. Kamaram met Ali Askari, a leader of the PUK and a leading member of the Kurdish Marxist-Leninist League, now known as the League of Toilers. "When I was in the south, Ali Askari was there too. I remember he said he couldn't stand the situation there. Even if he could get back to the mountains alone, he would go. He told me that if the government captured his family still he would go, because his family was no different from all the other families. If he can get to the mountains, that's the most important fight: One night he did leave, and he helped form the new revolution

in Kurdistan."

The obstacles before the Kurdish people were tremendous in 1975. Their revolution had been declared dead by its supposed leader, Barzani. The Shah had sealed the border, in effect handing over to the Iraqi government many of the Kurds' true leaders. The Iraqi government had imprisoned and executed thousands, trying to suppress even the slightest hint of Kurdish nationalism. Yet all this has not succeeded in "getting rid of the Kurdish problem."

All along, the imperialist powers expected Iraq to be just another easily grabbed-up piece of meat in this strategic, oil-rich part of the world. But they have found the Kurdish people to be a very tough piece of meat indeed. Having faced bullets "made in the U.S.A." and bombs "made in the U.S.S.R.," these rebel Kurds have set out on the road of self-reliant armed struggle—a struggle that is placing the remote mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan on the map as a base area of revolution. □

Avakian

Continued from page 4

ly and in concert in committing the assault"? It cannot be reconciled—and this is why the government appeal drops prosecutor Abrecht's "explanation" like a hot potato before it gets burned. But it is too late, because the defense brief throws this hot potato right back at them, exposing this inconsistency and the whole history of inconsistencies to the government's varied "explanations" for its actions. It shows how the government later changed its story again and claimed that the initial division into two groups of defendants and two indictments had been carried out in order to "minimize prejudice to those defendants against whom we have the least amount of evidence." But why are varying amounts of so-called evidence even a question if all the defendants are equally guilty of carrying out a "joint enterprise," as the government appeal now claims?

The government's basic problem is that it wants to have its cake and eat it too. It must invoke the specter of con-

spiracy in order to justify the 408 aiding and abetting charges, but it wants (and needs) to proceed as if this were an "ordinary criminal case," and as if it actually has proof against the defendants that "specific crimes" corresponding to the counts of the indictment were actually carried out. The defense brief's exposure of all the inconsistencies of the government's prosecution of this case becomes a sharp weapon that helps to lay bare the more fundamental contradiction in the government's theory of prosecution.

This same contradiction is also why, when the vindictiveness of the reindictment was first raised last August by the defense motion to dismiss the indictment, and a tremendous groundswelling of opposition to this attack developed among thousands of people, in its temporary retreat the government chose to follow the tactics of dismissal and appeal rather than just going back to the original indictment—an option the trial court had offered them. By conceding vindictiveness at any point, the door would be opened to further proof that all the charges in all the indictments were *always* vindictive, arbitrary and politically motivated. If the

government concedes after all, that defendant X did not "aid and abet" on 10 counts of assault—then the basis to believe that defendant Z *did* aid and abet these alleged assaults would be severely undercut. This is why the government's theory of prosecution, vicious as it is, is also the basis of serious trouble for them. They have tried to cover up the most significant case of political persecution in a decade with incredibly flimsy and trumped-up criminal charges. When they are nailed on the edge of this sharp contradiction, all they can do is come up with still more of the same viciousness—which is why this appeal represents not a mere repeat and reaffirmation of the dual tactics they've used all along, but an escalation in which they openly flaunt their "right" to politically persecute, not only the 17 defendants, but anyone who was even at the January 29 demonstration.

The legal documents filed by the defense team last week, together with the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, the National Conference of Black Lawyers and the National Lawyers Guild, are exactly two more strong nails hammering in on this contradiction.

They drive home the fact that the government's re-indictment was carried out in secret, in direct response to the defense motion to join the two groups of defendants into one trial to present a common political defense, that it more than doubled the possible prison sentence for every defendant. As the defense briefs indicate, this alone is more than enough "legal" basis for the Appellate Court to uphold the judge's dismissal order. But the defendants' documents don't stop there—they nail the vindictive nature of this re-indictment firmly to the vindictive character of the government's whole case, going on the offensive against the latest escalation represented by the appeal. In doing so, the defense has definitely joined this battle in the legal sphere, indicating to the U.S. government, its prosecutor and Court of Appeals that the masses of people are aware of the stakes of the battle being fought out today over this appeal. In the period ahead leading up to March 27, the same battle must be further joined in the factories, streets and communities of this country, and the stakes must be made known to many more millions. □

Iran

Continued from page 1

people. News cameras caught a revealing incident on their last day, as someone tossed a box of uncovered U.S. spy documents into the window of a car full of commission members. The panic on their faces told it all—they thought it was a bomb.

By Tuesday, the U.S. had dropped all pretense that the commission had been there to investigate the Shah. "The mission failed," the newscasters announced, "they were unable to get in to see the hostages." The students had been proved correct. All along they claimed that this was all the commission ever intended to do.

Not only was this a blow to the U.S., it also dashed the hopes of the "Revolutionary Council" as they sought to consolidate their leadership in Iran while proving to the U.S. that they could "do the job." Imagine the behind-the-scenes anger and embarrassment as these compromisers had to once again admit to their own helplessness before the angry demands of the people.

Since the setback took place, it appears on the surface that differences have surfaced among them. Foreign Minister Ghotbzadeh is out there as the hatchet man, openly denouncing the students and praising the "honorable gentlemen" of the commission. Behesti, after having been caught with his reactionary pants down in full support of the sellout, has "seen the light" as his popularity suddenly dropped and now "supports" the mass actions. Bani Sadr is in the background, licking his wounds and preparing for the future. Khomeini, whose statement signalled the retreat, is also looking ahead... especially to the seating of a parliament in May.

Does this mean that some of these Iranian bourgeois authorities have suddenly had abrupt changes of heart, that they are no longer intent on smothering the mass struggle and consolidating their Islamic Republic? Not at all. In fact, what we're witnessing is some new tactics with a touch of some bourgeois infighting.

Fundamentally, the position of each of these various leaders was dictated by how much each one dared or was forced to stand against the masses. Ghotbzadeh clearly drew the short straw because he is already hated by most of the people for his fawning admiration of all things imperialist, and has little to lose. The others, for their part, were all too happy to step back and allow him this dubious distinction, undoubtedly taking great pleasure in pointing out his extreme unpopularity.

Bani Sadr, true to his own weakening position, came out with a statement likening Iran "to a drowning man, whose weakness is the hostages, not his strength." Clearly he has visions of his own political power going down for a third time, fearing both the U.S., which demands he tighten his ship *now*, as well as the masses.

For him to come out bitterly voicing his anger at this point and issue ultimata to the students would result in a self-exposure that would mean political suicide. Related to this, it's important to understand that Khomeini sees Bani Sadr as the only possible leader able to unite Iran should he die. Therefore, the threat of going up against the masses would not just spell the end of a budding bourgeois political career but also would leave a big hole in the Iranian bourgeoisie's efforts to prevent the revolution from moving forward.

Four days after the transfer fell through, Khomeini issued a statement which said in part, "We shall fight against America to the death... regard-

ing the question of the spies in the hands of the students." He went on to issue three directives to the students: (1) deliver copies of the spy documents; (2) the UN commission can meet with the hostages named in the documents; (3) if the commission issues a report, it can meet with the hostages.

At the same time, Khomeini finished off his statement with the message that is closer to his real feelings on the matter reaffirming his support for the Revolutionary Council and "the honorable President of the Republic Bani Sadr" and asking "all the nation to help support them."

The statement as a whole captures the role Khomeini is playing well. He supported the masses when it was clear there was no other choice—they had already decided what to do. Then he attempted to channel their enthusiasm for struggle into support for the very forces who were trying desperately to shut the struggle down.

Why, then, if he actually sides with Bani Sadr and wants to stabilize the country behind the Islamic Republic, does Khomeini continue to objectively encourage their struggle by lending it his blessing? Again, the answer lies with the strength of the masses. Were Khomeini to openly work at a crucial time like this straight against the interests of those who support him, it would rock the country to its foundations. The masses aren't about to give up the revolution they fought so hard for, and were he to oppose them, far from cooling out their feelings, mass confusion and uproar would result, sending much of the population more consciously to the Left—the only force capable of providing any leadership.

Fearing this dramatic loss of his ability to control the situation much more than the back-and-forth that goes on now, Khomeini is forced to endorse their actions at key junctures in the struggle.

In case some of the subtleties in his message to the masses were missed, Khomeini went on TV this week telling people to "storm the ballot box" in the upcoming parliamentary elections, and "not to vote for candidates opposed to Islam, even though they say they are true Muslims." Khomeini was worried about the revolutionary Left, who oppose both superpowers, not about pro-Soviet forces, whose presence has been raised once again by some in the Revolutionary Council to create confusion.

The U.S. has, at least for the time being, put its eggs in Bani Sadr's basket. While they made noises about an embargo to punish Iran for their latest "betrayal," they are hoping he can put an end to the struggle and stabilize Iran as part of the U.S. war bloc. In Iran, the next major step is the upcoming parliamentary elections. While progressive and revolutionary forces will tactically use these to the advantage of the masses, it is clear that Bani Sadr, Khomeini and the Revolutionary Council are counting on using the soon-to-be-formed Republic as another trump card to deal the masses in hopes they'll forget about revolutions and settle down. Iran's people, as shown this week, are not likely to forget. □

REVOLUTIONARY WORKER
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Army

Continued from page 3

six years I saw two days of classrooms. I asked my CO about it and he said I was an electrician because I string wire. Hey, I string *barbed wire, commo wire and concertina wire*—that's an electrician."

"With the newbies (new recruits) they rely on the brainwash," Sam began, describing how the army intends to motivate the troops. "Don't worry if we go to war, they tell them. We're the Ninth Division, the 'old reliable', the strongest in the army. Well, the Ninth almost got wiped out in Vietnam, in 1972!" Since Sam was discharged ten months ago, it's getting more intense on the inside. War alerts, held once every six months when Sam was in, are now up to three or four a month. "And they got these John Wayne lieutenants fresh out of school, barging up the hill with a book in one hand and a .45 caliber in the other. They expect you to follow that!" Sam added. "I talk to the guys still in. It's written all over their faces. They don't know which way to run."

That's the point. Which way are the GIs going to go? Which way will they point those weapons? A recent experience from the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) out at Ft. Lewis drove home the point that if war breaks out, at the outset confusion and "just trying to survive" will only lead to the GIs running into the hands of the imperialists. VVAW was out at a park talking to GIs about the upcoming war and Revolutionary May Day. A few fools told them to split. They continued agitating and pretty soon they were surrounded by 25 soldiers. A scuffle broke out and blows were exchanged. The few fools, led by the son of a colonel who was a former attaché to Iran, were right in the middle of the fight. But what was the sentiment of the majority of the GIs? "Leave us alone. We hear it on the news, on the post, on the TV. You guys have already been through it. We've got to fight this one. Just leave us alone."

These soldiers represent the bottom line in the army, they are the intermediate forces who say straight up, "I'll fight to survive, to stay alive." They are trying to hide now, hoping like Brad hopes, "that my 10 months that I've got left will be up before the war comes." But hoping won't cut it as the army lets out all stops to prepare for a war which will put them on the front lines all over the world.

But it isn't all smooth sailing for the imperialists. Their armed forces is their achilles heel. Not everybody is the colonel's son. Not everybody is the confederate patriot. "If they go to war again, it will be rough. GIs don't give a shit," Brad begins. "I blame myself for being in here. My whole family was military and I joined because of that. I made a mistake." Brad's brother was in Vietnam. Brad remembers watching his brother low-crawl across their bedroom floor at night, sound asleep. Since Brad has been in the army, his brother has gotten worse. He's a vegetable. The legacy of Vietnam weighs heavy on the military's attempt to motivate the troops. Their "almighty" U.S. Army got whipped. And thousands look at that war as a rich man's war, fought for the Wall Street bankers. And thousands inside the army today have friends or brothers like Brad's. They have heard the stories from guys like Brad's brother about how in his division, the 82nd Airborne, three officers were killed in about as many months. Two of them were stabbed in their sleeping bags for calling parade muster in the battle zone. Vietnam, where the main pillar of the imperialists, their army units, began to crack and rebel, battling other army units sent into quell them.

"They push you until your head is overloaded. I never thought of killing, but towards the end I said to myself, 'why not use what they taught me on them?'" Sam continues, the bitterness spilling from his gut, "They shouldn't have taught me this shit if they didn't want me to use it on the outside." This is why the military and the NCOs can't rely only on the brainwash and the "I'm proud to fight for my country" crap. They must rely on force. They

must rely on all sorts of degrading methods of indoctrination and intimidation to get the GIs to go out and fight their own class sisters and brothers. Shakedowns are regular. They search soldiers' lockers on the spot to keep the GIs always looking over their shoulders. And if you really get rebellious, there's an Article 15 waiting for you—a military law that enables the army to keep you in extra time, without pay, if you don't tow the line.

The army actively promotes racial tension. Not so much inside each unit because they need some discipline, but between units and platoons because what they don't need is unity. Brad said his head is all messed up because of the way they use the Black NCOs. He sees them as the prejudiced ones spreading all this racial crap, and not the hand of the brass behind them. There are fights at least two times a week from the racial tensions.

And if the military can't get you at each other's throats, or scare you away with an Article 15, you can lose yourself in a sea of drugs. The army looks the other way because drugs dull the edges. The GIs figure that 95% of the army, here and in W. Germany, uses drugs. "Hey, when I was in Germany, I saw it." Sam says laughing. "The 509th Airborne is a division of smack freaks." The drugs succeed where the other things fail. One of Sam's friends overdosed on drugs 72 hours before he was to be discharged because he was so damn happy to get the hell out.

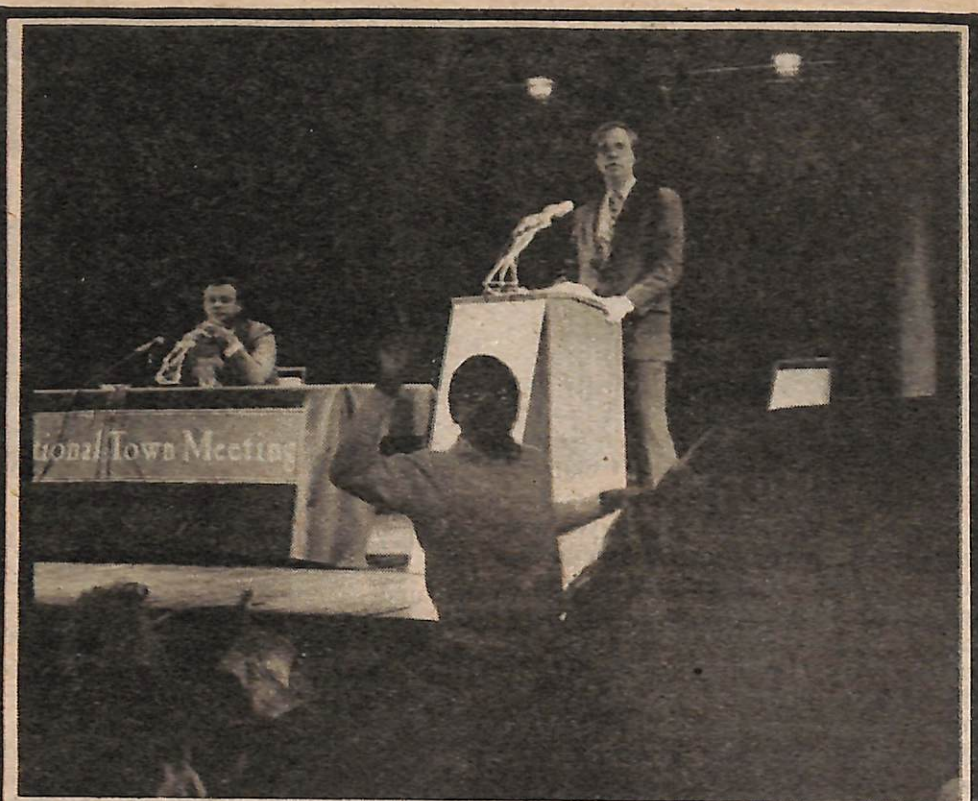
Turning the Fantasy Around

It became obvious why the writer for the *Post-Intelligencer* didn't quote any of the privates. And the headline of the article, "They're Ready" sounds more like wishful thinking than actual reality. You can see the seething anger, rebellion, and frustration that will come to a head as things go more up for grabs and the imperialists desperately try to win World War III. Like one Black GI said as we rapped after he had finished guard duty, "We've got a big job to do. Most GIs don't give a shit and the rest want to get the hell out. Most don't even know of the RCP. They need to have it broken down to them." And that's what he was doing when the brass moved on him. After he had played the tape of Bob Avakian's 1979 May Day speech in the barracks, killing the batteries in his tape recorder five different times, political posters and copies of the *Revolutionary Worker* began popping up all over. The brass ordered all of it off the walls. Recently, he was busted and framed for robbing a bank. The charges were switched to possession of pot. "They offered me a choice between a court martial and becoming a snitch. They're preparing the court martial," he said simply.

"We have to work with the military like I do," Sam said when the discussion turned to how we would get GIs out into the streets on May Day. "I start handing the *Revolutionary Worker* out when my friends come over." And the question is, with all that's going on, how will those who are ready to turn the guns around on officers now, going to be the leaders of armed political revolt right inside the army? How will all those who see fighting to stay alive come to see that joining with the class-conscious workers to make revolution and end war once and for all is really the only thing worth fighting and dying for?

A little taste of this was dished out by GIs and veterans one night as they belly crawled past the sentries into Regenburgh. Not to seize the town from the Soviets. Not to run across rooftops for the imperialists. But to proclaim in the face of the plans for World War III that, "We've got other plans." Because what was found in Regenburgh's town square the next morning was posters of the *Revolutionary Worker*, dozens of May Day manifestos, and spray-painted slogans on all the buildings facing the center of town. It was a call to all the GIs to start preparing now, using the *RW* newspaper on and off the base and marching in the May Day demonstrations to ready themselves for revolution in the 1980s.

The activity of all the GIs who march on Thursday, May 1st, will send tremors through the ranks of the ruling



Winston Lord, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, tried hard to keep his cool as he announced to a live, nationwide radio audience, "we have been disrupted!" How rude. How disrespectful. Right in the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts while Zbigniew Brzezinski was performing. Brzezinski, Carter's national security advisor (and the Democrats' version of Dr. Strangelove) had come to lecture the national town meeting on the topic "The U.S. in 1980: America's Basic Option." The national town meeting is "made possible by a grant from Mobil."

Unfurling a red banner which read, "These dogs prepare for World War 3—We Won't Fight for Them, But Against Them," two agitators from the D.C. May Day Committee called on workers across the country to march with their class on May Day. The national town meeting, which brags about presenting both sides of the great issues of the day, promptly had the agitators dragged out. May Day 1980 is one "basic option" Brzezinski, Mobil and the rest of them must try to silence.



class. They will count with trembling fingers the men and women in fatigues, learning from the Iranian students and marching with faces protected, and who are organizing right inside their very armed forces. An even stronger message will be proclaimed to the working class and oppressed people around the

world and here at home! That this world war may be started by rival imperialist governments but it does not have to end that way. Behind the red banner of the international working class we will be turning the guns around to defeat our own capitalist army. □



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Economism

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as he wrote, were hung-up on "catchwords like: We must concentrate, not on the 'cream' of the workers, but on the 'average' mass worker; 'Politics always obediently follows economics.'" Lenin blistered "No. To advocate such a view, we repeat, is merely to lay the blame where it does not belong, to blame the masses of workers for one's own philistinism (who are the real lunkheads—RW)... We must blame ourselves, our lagging behind the mass movement for being unable as yet to organize sufficiently wide, striking and rapid exposures of all these despicable outrages. When we do that... the most backward workers will understand, or will feel that the students and members of religious sects, the muzhiks (peasants) and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life." (*What Is To Be Done?*) So Lenin gave tremendous emphasis to politics over economics, to the importance of class-conscious workers being aware of the actions and views of other classes and to the central role of a national newspaper of political exposure. He said a communist's ideal "should not be a trade union secretary, but a tribune of the people, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place."

The point, of course, is not that the fight against attacks on workers' living standards and the oppression that people face today should not be waged. They can be a starting point for masses awakening. The point is that the masses already have a thousand reformist chaletons making careers out of pandering to people's illusions. What it means to be the vanguard, what it means to be farsighted and class-conscious, is to understand that these illusions are chains which we must lead the workers and masses of people in breaking. And because they are lies and illusions, and because, to be frank about it, revolution is far more attainable, palpable and concrete, speaking in a fundamental historic sense, than the most clever schemes for reform, there exists a powerful material basis for a revolutionary line to take root among the masses.

Of course, starry-eyed idealism won't make it. We know that there's a lot of workers out there whose outlook has been so narrowed down, constricted and bourgeoisified that they think like and act like petty philistines—as exemplified by the angry remark of one worker to a comrade selling the *Revolutionary Worker* at a plant gate: "Yeah, but suppose I don't want to think?" These people are going to have to be slapped in the face hard by the brutal crisis and the impending collapse of what they still think is some eternal "American Way" before they'll wake up and decide that they do want to think. And there is also a core of hardened, and encrusted outright reactionary labor aristocrats, led by the trade union bureaucrats, who will probably go down fighting and dying for their right to lick the boots of the capitalists and maintain their positions as goons and overseers over the rest of the workers.

Even the more advanced workers tend to get pulled back to the level of the intermediate, even whipped around by the backward, when their understanding slips. They have to understand that at any given time the workers always divide into sections of advanced, intermediate, and backward and that the point is not to "mobilize everybody." That's why Chairman Bob Avakian wrote, talking particularly about May 1st in his major New Years 1980 article "In no way should the taking of 'independent historical action' by the advanced section of workers in this country, even if it is relatively small at this time, be underestimated or downgraded."

Spontaneously, people forget this. Even the fact that workers work together, socialized in industry, which is a great potential strength of the working class, can turn into its opposite temporarily if the advanced workers get

sucked in by the "social pressure" exerted by the backward. This spontaneous tendency is consciously reinforced by the trade unions, which are, at most times, a real pit of retreat for the advanced. What Lenin said about only fighting the economic struggle as a whole—that "the framework is too narrow"—definitely applies to the trade unions. In fact, in imperialist America they have been thoroughly corrupted, a quagmire trap for the advanced to slowly sink in. In the unions, the capitalists have the structure for their "carrot and stick" routine—we'll punish you, or if you "play ball" maybe there'll be a little slot for you. They have a whole system of handcuffs that they call "union channels" designed to suffocate any sparks of struggle and understanding under a mound of red tape. This all has to be pushed aside, or the workers' struggle at best will amount to the struggle for a little better conditions under the wage-slavery of capitalism.

All this makes for a powerful spontaneous pull away from real revolutionary work. So despite the fact that Lenin laid waste to the economists of his time, this ugly disease comes up again and again. The old Communist Party in this country practiced it for years. So even when the objective conditions have been more favorable for revolutionary work here (like in the '30s Depression) the workers' movement for the most part never made the transition to a class-conscious one here. Even today the pathetic CP scrambles around recommitting itself to the economic struggle as "the decisive arena" as its Chairman Gus Hall put it, in an article two years ago. Such a line is only aimed to keep the workers' faces buried in their bellies as the world roars by around them.

The Revolutionary Communist Party has learned from this and has no intention of throwing away the chance for revolution when it does arise. So we, too, have had to struggle against economism. This struggle became a major part of a split in our ranks two years ago when some old CP-style opportunists (now calling themselves the Revolutionary Workers Headquarters) left our ranks in order to uphold counter-revolution against Mao's line in China. In the course of the struggle against them, and the whole line which they concentrated, our Party was able to shed the economist line adopted at our founding Congress that economic work should be our "center of gravity", which means nothing but subordinating all else—including revolution—behind the economic struggle.

A Radical Rupture

So when we speak of "diverting," or of making a "radical rupture," with the spontaneous pull of the mass movement to expend its energy and zeal in the fight for reform, what we really mean is diverting the masses from and leading them in making a radical rupture with bourgeois ideology—the very ideology which has as its foundations the system of wage slavery.

Exactly because the revolutionary core of class-conscious workers today is still relatively small and bourgeois ideology still exerts a very powerful grip, revolutionary work today means sharply challenging and struggling with many backward ideas among the masses. But this must not be understood one-sidedly, or the material basis for such revolutionary work will not be grasped. Not only does the unfolding of events and the sharpening of the crisis today confirm and reinforce the analysis of our Party, which is that this coming decade will see the climax of imperialist crisis and the sweeping of hundreds of millions of people into political life, but even today among millions there exists, side by side with the illusions, the cynicism, and the low level of consciousness which is the legacy of living in a powerful imperialist country, even smoldering hatred for oppression, and erosion of illusions, and spirit of discontent which can be tapped and developed.

In other words, millions of workers and others, who sometimes appear to the advanced worker in moments of frustration as mere "lunkheads," also have dreams and aspirations of a higher order. It is the job of revolutionary

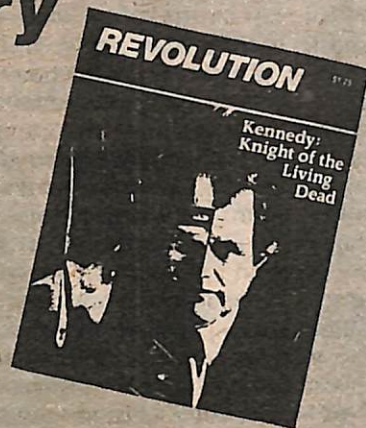
"tribunes of the people" to speak to these higher aspirations, to develop them and to show through our propaganda and agitation, as well as through the bold example of the advanced forces themselves, that these higher dreams indeed have a basis in reality and can be transformed into reality. This is the opposite of the degrading theory of economism, which slavishly "cringes before spontaneity" and is itself a theory of lunkheads and those who are convinced that the masses can never and have no right to rise above the stereotypes of "lunkishness" which the bourgeoisie likes to describe as "your average worker."

The revolutionary, class-conscious forces carry out the work on the stage provided by the objective situation. Is there some magic road to "getting a million workers around us" tomorrow? No, there isn't; it is not possible to do this; but what is possible and what we are doing, is bringing forward the tens of thousands of advanced, awakening members of our class, wielding them together into a dedicated determined force which is capable of influencing millions, causing them to sit up and take notice, and to declare that in the coming decade of the 1980s not just one road, but two roads, stretch out before the working class and the masses of people. The campaign to build revolutionary May Day (the manifesto of which promises the worker no palpable, and immediate "benefit" whatsoever, but which calls on the workers and the masses to take a stand against national discrimination and discrimination of all kind, to defend and rally around the masses revolutionary leadership and especially the Chairman of the RCP, Bob Avakian, to stand with the revolutionary people of the world and to

trample on the filthy red, white and blue flag of imperialism, and to fight for the independent historical interest of the working class in the coming war and crisis) and the broad distribution of the Party newspaper, the *Revolutionary Worker*, which trains the people to observe and understand every event and every development of the class struggle from the standpoint of the class-conscious worker, are far more crucial to the growth of our movement on a solid, revolutionary foundation than a hundred struggles for petty reforms and revokable concessions from the ruling class.

As the initial call for May Day 1980 put it, "...our force will be overwhelming and we'll finally triumph." The embryonic movement of today will become the colossus of tomorrow, capable of sweeping all of history before it. But our revolutionary movement will grow, not by "moving with the groove," and "going with the flow," by bowing to spontaneity and falling into the pit of economism. Our movement in embryo is the embryo of the new social order, the rule of the working class—a new social order which, through our revolutionary work and with the terminal crisis of imperialism approaching the boiling point, millions and hundreds of millions will be demanding, fighting and dying for, because revolution and socialism are the only way out, the only real road forward, and the only political goal which corresponds to the objective interests of the working class and all mankind. It is right now, at the very dawn of this upsurge, that every advanced, class-conscious worker should spit full in the face of economist "cringing before spontaneity" in the best Leninist tradition. □

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