

Her majesty's ship Antelope goes up in a ball of fire.

Falklands/Malvinas Diversion

Sink Thatcher! Sink the Junta!

MAY 24—With the “peace” missions and diplomatic expeditions shot down, the nowhere war over some jagged windswept outcrops in the South Atlantic escalated to a new bloody level over the weekend. While Margaret Thatcher talked of high moral principle, “the rule of law” and “self-determination” for the Falkland islanders, British imperialism pursued its perceived military advantage with a moonlight landing on May 21 at the isolated settlement of Port San Carlos. The Argentine troops who six weeks ago seized the archipelago, proclaiming the liberation of the Malvinas from British colonial rule, are dug in at Port Stanley, some 50 miles away across the swampy peat bog by road, except there is no road. Argentine planes have damaged several British ships, sinking a second, though suffering considerable losses themselves. The British easily established their beachhead and have reportedly packed it with men and sophisticated weapons. To date this absurd war has claimed almost 400 Argentine lives, most of them in the sinking of the cruiser *General Belgrano* early this month. Reported British deaths are about 70.

Speaking for American imperialism, the *New York Times* takes the British military emplacement on the Falklands/Malvinas as an opportunity to promote “peace” now that the Union Jack is one of the two flags to fly over the islands. And the Argentines are acting as if they might welcome it. But while Galtieri grasped the pope’s ser-

monic plea for a cease-fire, Britain’s Tories want no peace, no truce, no cease-fire. Using the 1,800 Falklanders as an excuse, they have refused to accept anything short of British sovereignty. The junta wants to use its troops to pressure for negotiations; the British say they will drive them into the sea. And that, much to the discomfort of U.S. Cold Warriors who want to get on with a serious anti-Soviet war drive, is clearly where Margaret Thatcher intends to make her stand.

But there’s also the home front, which is none too secure in either country. British leaders are promising to have it over in a matter of “days not weeks.” The media of both countries are telling the folks back home that their side is winning. The Argentines are told to expect another Dunkirk for the British. The staid *Sunday Times* of London features a comic-book-style bang-pow front-page illustration/map of the recent landing with the headline: “Next Stop Port Stanley.” On either side in this miserable little war the people will be shocked and angry at their own government if it should lose. The hope of revolutionaries is that both sides lose—and lose badly.

Whoever Wins, U.S. Imperialism Loses

“Events around the Falkland Islands could scarcely be more distressing: British and Argentine seamen sinking in watery graves, ships and planes being destroyed that better could be deployed

against the Soviet Union, a basis for lasting enmity being laid—all over a 150-year-old claim to some island sheep farms.”

So a *Wall Street Journal* (6 May) editorial expressed U.S. imperialism’s dismay that its strategic plans have been upstaged by the theater of the absurd in the South Atlantic.

Margaret Thatcher’s Britain has been Washington’s most fervently loyal ally in NATO Europe; its hysterical anti-Sovietism abroad and union-busting austerity at home have made it a favorite ideological partner for the Reaganites. Galtieri’s Argentina—land of *los desaparecidos* (the disappeared)—was slated by Washington to play a key role in suppressing the leftist insurgencies sweeping Central America. So when the Argentine junta seized the Falklands/Malvinas in early April, despite the U.S. president’s personal appeal not to, and the “Iron Lady” responded by sending an armada to get them back, Reagan could only declare lamely: “We’re friends with both countries.”

But this kind of quasi-neutrality couldn’t last long. With Thatcher pushing British imperialist pretensions to the hilt, the Reagan administration was forced to choose between the anti-Communist junta to the south and the anti-Communist Tories across the Atlantic. And it had to choose its more important ally, Britain. Just before Her Majesty’s fleet arrived in the islands, Haig announced Washington’s support to Britain, and the U.S. Senate voted

79 to 1 for a pro-British measure.

The lone dissenter was, predictably, right-wing fanatic Jesse Helms, who doubtless admires a country where leftists and other “enemies of Christian civilization” disappear in the middle of the night never to be heard from again. The senator from the Moral Majority is by no means an isolated figure in the Reagan camp. According to well-informed Republican columnist William Safire, a pro-Argentine tilt “is rampant, though unexpressed publicly, at the Defense Department” (*New York Times*, 10 May).

What distresses these Pentagon hawks is that by supporting Britain the U.S. will alienate not only Argentina but other Latin American juntas near and dear to their hearts. On the sacred cause of the Malvinas, Washington is isolated in its own ministry of colonies, the Organization of American States (OAS), where every Latin American government except Chile and Colombia voted to assert Argentina’s sovereignty over the South Atlantic battleground. Tiny Costa Rica is even talking about moving the OAS headquarters out of Washington.

The two British torpedoes which sank the Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano* (formerly the *USS Phoenix*, a survivor of Pearl Harbor) likewise torpedoed for now Reagan’s efforts to forge a grand alliance against “red revolution” in Central America extending from the butchers of Buenos Aires to the Venezuelan

continued on page 9

French Militant Nails RWL On Mitterrand

This letter from a French worker was sent to Workers Struggle, newspaper of Peter Sollenberger's Ann Arbor-based Revolutionary Workers League, six months ago. The RWL has not seen fit to print it.

* * * * *

Paris, 2 November 1981

To the editors of *Workers Struggle*,

I have just read your article "French Socialists Form Government" in the September issue of your paper *Workers Struggle*. I'm sorry to say that this article is a mass of misinformation, the result not simply of ignorance (although your sole source of information seems to be the *New York Times*) but of political evasiveness, the product of a particularly wretched form of centrism.

Let's begin with the elections. Let me assure you that the deciding issue really was not the economy. The Gaullists who abstained or voted for Mitterrand were impressed above all by Mitterrand's anti-Communism. That's why, for example, Marie-France Garaud, the Gaullist who made anti-Sovietism her campaign theme, didn't support Giscard in the second round of voting. It wasn't like the 1978 campaign at all, where the issue in dispute was supposedly the "collectivism" of the Union of the Left versus "free enterprise." Mitterrand labeled Giscard an "appeaser" [*muni-chois*, i.e., a "man of Munich"] because of his meeting with Brezhnev, and in fact, the French bourgeoisie found Giscard to be too "soft" on the Russian question.

The same goes for Mitterrand's foreign policy after the elections. He has been lecturing the British and German social democrats about "neutralism,"

playing an active role as Reagan's European recruiting sergeant. It's quite scandalous that you don't breathe a word about this. The Cold War isn't just a subject for "disinterested" commentary, but a key question for proletarian revolutionaries. What about the neu-

would be any better. You argue that Mitterrand's election would be an impetus to workers' struggles. Such a popular-front government can only be an obstacle to struggle. At this very moment, at Renault, confronted by workers who are beginning to oppose

Mitterrand, who was in bloc with the Gaullists (and not just the Radicals, as you claim) and whose own program was one of austerity and Cold War, who is being "exposed"—you or him? A brief study of the "socialist" governments in France between 1947 and 1958 might be instructive... unless, like the OCI and the United Secretariat, you want to go all the way with the Second International.

You say Mitterrand's program is "utopian." Why? Because it won't bring socialism? (Obviously, it's an open program for managing capitalism.) Because it won't revitalize French capitalism? But in the real world it certainly will bring inflation and unemployment for millions of us. Trotskyists criticize social democrats for their betrayals, not for their "utopianism." Then you add that Mitterrand isn't spending enough (!).

You observe that the nationalizations won't help the workers "much." How much is "much"? Reformists (and "utopian" ones at that) want to nationalize only 17 percent of industry; "revolutionaries" like you won't settle for anything less than 51 percent! The argument that the nationalizations are minimal is completely false and is introduced in order to hide the fact that you agree that the PS [Socialist Party] could progressively "socialize" the economy—if it really wanted to. In fact, Mitterrand is "only" nationalizing two of the major steel producers, plus key sectors of the pharmaceutical, chemical and computer industries, which reduces your pathetic complaint to dust.

In fact, these bourgeois nationalizations are harmful to the workers because

continued on page 10



Le Bolchevik

French Trotskyists support striking Citroen workers, while fake-leftists tail Mitterrand.

tron bomb, the U.S. missiles in Europe, the reinforcement of NATO? You don't say a word about this, preferring to write paragraphs of gibberish about the contradictions of Keynesianism. I call that a scandalous abandonment of defense of the Soviet Union.

Having failed this decisive test, which separates Bolsheviks from Mensheviks, there is no reason to expect that your analysis of the French class struggle

Mitterrand's "socialism," the government—which runs Renault—has just decided on a mass lockout!

In fact, your arguments are the same as all the pseudo-revolutionaries who actively campaigned for this rotten social democrat. Once again, you are formally agnostic, but this time it's just plain dishonesty. Of course, you wanted to vote for Mitterrand, doubtless with "criticisms." But when you support

Letters

Boston
21 May 1982

To the editor:

This is to inform our comrades and supporters, especially in the Boston area, of the death of our long-time friend Evan Phillips. Evan died of a stroke at 52 on May 10. We will miss him.

The grandson of coal miners from southern Ohio, Evan considered himself a Marxist for 20 years. For a while he was on the periphery of the Maoists and Progressive Labor and then he met the Spartacist League, at which time he became a supporter of Trotskyism. He never joined our ranks however, believing that his ill health would make it impossible to meet the demands of party membership. But on many occasions Evan was there when we needed him, putting himself on the line to help protect a forum or demonstration when we worried about the defense of our comrades and our rights.

Evan was there last November when right-wing Harvard students sought to bust up an SL forum on Poland. They didn't get in. We'll remember him too for his frequent attendance at SYL basic Marxism classes, helping to introduce a new generation to Trotskyism. And though I don't think Evan or his companion Linda ever had any money to speak of, they always managed to scratch up something for our campaigns.

At the branch meeting this week where Evan's death was reported, a story was told that seemed to please the comrades. Evan was a Marine during the Korean War. He was a spotter for naval bombardments and though not then a Marxist, was already disillusioned with the U.S. "mission" in Asia. Thus he took no small pleasure in the fact that the artillery could never seem to hit anything when he was on duty.

To Linda we offer our heartfelt sympathy and relate her answer when asked at the hospital if a priest should be summoned to Evan's deathbed. "In the trenches," she said, "some people are still atheists."

Mark Laughton
for the Boston SL and SYL

In Memory of Toni Randell

Torino, Italy
19 April 1982

Spartacist Publishing Co.

Dear comrades,

Together with the program of activities for our Cultural Center, please receive the expression of my most sincere regrets for the loss of comrade Tony Randell, which I have learned of only in the past few days.

Fraternal greetings,
Marcello Braccini

How to Fight Polish Anti-Communists

Iowa City
4 May 1982

... In the article in *Spartacist* No. 34 [Summer 1982], "SL/U.S. Faces the Reagan Years, For Labor Action to Bring Down Reagan!" in the section on the Black Question you seem to imply that in any publication directed at blacks only blacks should write. While it is certainly desirable to have black cadre and have them write on the special oppression of blacks, I think as far as the party is concerned there should not be black and white members, but only comrades. This is even as, I hope, we should have it in society as a whole where the amount of pigment in one's skin, the shape of one's eyes, or the color of one's hair would be irrelevant. Every comrade should be able to study issues and learn enough to write intelligently. I guess what bothers me is that your statements seem to have an echo of the old (or not so old) idea that every oppressed group can only understand its own problems and of course can only struggle to lift them. This is a self-gratifying, isolating and self-defeating idea, ultimately a lie.

Also a few issues ago in *Workers Vanguard* (I don't have the exact reference) you called for releasing the Polish Solidarity prisoners held by the Stalinists. While this would be appropriate for some types of prisoners as workers who were caught up in the events but were not hardened counterrevolutionaries, it

should not be our position to fight for freedom for the capitalist restorationists and anti-communist fighters from the Catholic Church. We correctly supported the stopping of the counterrevolution by the Stalinists; keeping the counterrevolutionaries in prison as long as necessary is a logical and correct extension. We aren't going to build a party here, or in Poland, by making concessions like this to anti-communist opinion. Ultimately these people will hate us *more* than the Stalinists.

In solidarity,
Loren Schutt

WV replies: Of course, white comrades will write for a future black journal just as they now write on the Black question for *WV* and our other publications. Such a journal would be an important step in developing a black *transitional* organization of the party to intervene in black struggle. To succeed in this goal it would have to consist predominantly, though not exclusively, of black members and supporters. For in a pervasively racist society black communists will naturally gain a better hearing among blacks. Given the strategic importance of blacks in the American proletarian revolution, developing black writers, spokesmen and leading cadre and finding the means to reach the black masses is crucial.

Brother Schutt's views on Poland and Solidarność appear in part to rest on a misunderstanding of our position. Right after the imposition of martial law last December, we wrote:

"As the immediate counterrevolutionary threat passes, these martial law measures must be ended, including release of Solidarność leaders. A Trotskyist vanguard seeks to defeat them *politically*, by mobilizing the Polish working class in its true class interests." [emphasis in original]

—"Power Bid Spiked," *WV* No. 295,
18 December 1981

The violent anti-communist demonstrations in Poland early this month indicate that, unfortunately, the counterrevolutionary danger has not passed. But, in any event, it is not our task to advise the Polish Stalinists which of the interned Solidarność activists are simply misguided workers and which are hardened anti-communists.

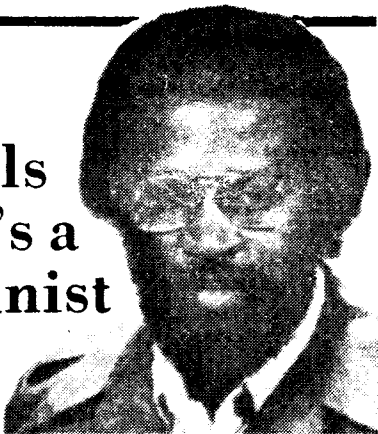
More generally, we do *not* support imprisoning people because of their *ideas*, however reactionary. As

continued on page 8

FORUM

Detroit man tells why he's a communist

DON ANDREWS



Q

Today is May Day, widely observed in socialist countries as a workers' holiday. Don Andrews, 32, is a Detroit "Trotskyist" and a member of the central committee of the Spartacist League. As a 1981 candidate for Detroit City Council, he drew some 1,000 votes. Andrews, a California native and former telephone company employee, refused to specify where he now works ("I'm looking out for myself."). But he did agree to discuss his views with *The News*.

By Owen Eshenroder

Q — Why did you become a communist?

A — I'm for mobilizing the working people in this country...I believe the working people in this country will see the necessity for taking power in their own hands. I became a communist specifically because of the contradictions that are inherent in American capitalism that I don't think are possible to resolve.

Q — Isn't it lonely being a communist in the U.S.?

A — Quite the contrary. A lot of people in Ann Arbor saw the power of our program of mobilizing labor and minorities on March 20 to drive out the Nazis...Our program was vindicated once again, our strategy of mobilizing labor and all of its allies to fight the fascist threat.

Q — But how many of those people would really identify with communism?

A — Obviously, we're getting more on the way, given the acute economic crisis in this country. (People) will see that we are indeed America's last and best hope.

Q — Do you really hold out hope for an American revolution along the lines of the 1917 Russian revolution?

A — We're not talking about reproducing the conditions of a revolution in a poor, backward peasant country. America's socialist revolution will be carried out on a far higher technological level...We won't be using wooden plows. We won't start off with lack of modern technology in order to exploit agriculture, for example. We won't start out with a huge peasantry which is immersed in age-old backwardness and poverty. We start off with an advanced, skilled working class which will be able to really create an economy of abundance and plenty.

Q — What's your reaction to the Falkland Islands crisis?

A — It's a clear case of growing inter-Imperialist rivalries. On the one hand, the nationalist dictators/butchers in Argentina won't and can't forget World War I and the fact that Argentina was an economic colony of Britain. On the other hand, the British capitalists are seeking to restore their national glory, their empire, which is impossible. And our attitude is to urge and appeal to the British and Argentine working class to wage class struggle against their respective masters.

Q — So you are not sympathetic toward either country?

A — Absolutely not. Our position is that the main enemy is at home, and we tell the working classes of the world that their main enemy are their own bourgeoisie, their own capitalist ruling class.

Q — How can you criticize the U.S. for its foreign policy and defend Russian adventurism in Afghanistan?

A — We regarded that intervention as purely defensive in character. After all, for years there have been close ties between the left nationalist regime in Kabul and the Soviet Stalinist government...The CIA backs futile insurgents who pray to Mecca five times a day in order to keep the women enslaved, to keep them from being taught how to read and write...On the other

hand, we also severely criticized the Kremlin bureaucrats who give massive military aid to bourgeois Egypt, which of course has been used to kill Russian soldiers in Afghanistan.

Q — How does your ideology differ from that of the American Communist Party?

A — We do not, unlike the American Communist Party, which is thoroughly Stalinized, follow every twist and turn of Soviet foreign policy, because that foreign policy tends to be extremely conciliatory toward world imperialism, with the result that many promising working class revolutions are sold down the drain. (The Spartacists say) our program is one of international working class revolution, and not one of peaceful co-existence with world imperialism.

Q — Doesn't the situation in Poland illustrate the failure of Soviet communism?

A — We understand that in Poland, what was at stake was a company union which was pro-Western imperialism...Reagan, Haig or none of the imperialist powers are going to bring democracy to the Soviet bloc under the guise of free trade unions, free elections; they mean capitalist counter-revolution.

Q — You want to disarm police and abolish gun control, as well as all laws against pornography, drug use and prostitution. How does that favor the working class?

A — We're not for the American capitalist government legislating for the working people and the masses in this country what movies they can see, what pornographies they can see. We're not for them rescinding their right to bear arms, i.e., for them to retain a monopoly on the means of violence, because that's basically what the gun control question comes down to.

Q — Do you believe in organized religion?

A — It's a question of science and religion begin counter-poles. We are for the greater scientific enlightenment of the working masses.

Q — Do you share the fear that many people now have of nuclear war?

A — Well, yes...The only way to avert nuclear war is for workers, led by a revolutionary party which is racially integrated, to take political power out of (capitalist) hands.



Vancouver May Day

Trotskyist League Beats Back Stalinist Exclusion

ADAPTED FROM SPARTACIST CANADA NO. 54, MAY/JUNE 1982

VANCOUVER—The Stalinists of the Communist Party wanted to keep the Trotskyist League of Canada (TLC) out of this year's May Day march in Vancouver. They even threatened a court injunction to enforce this anti-communist exclusion! But it didn't work. On May 1, while the CP literally marched under the maple leaf, pleading with the imperialist "nice guys" in Ottawa for "peace," a militant and spirited TLC contingent marched with a

banner: "Canada: Junior Partner of U.S. Imperialism! Smash NATO/NORAD! Defend the USSR!"

The CP-dominated May Day Committee which organized the march had passed a motion to exclude the Trotskyist League, the crazed Albania-lovers of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) as well as the race terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan. It was a classic Stalinist smear job, equating leftists with the murderous fascists. But this time the Stalinist amalgam didn't go down. The TLC initiated a protest letter exposing the Stalinists as the disrupters who bring cops into the workers movement and resort to the despicable practices of anti-communist slander and exclusion.

The Stalinists, who have considerable weight in the Vancouver labor movement, were not prepared for the overwhelming labor protest against their scandalous exclusion motion. The protest statement was signed by officials and members of 12 unions, including the Letter Carriers Union of Canada (LCUC), the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, the Brewery Workers, as well as New Democratic Party members, and faculty and staff at the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University.

Local 5 of the Telecommunications Workers Union passed a motion against the exclusion and sent a protest letter to the May Day Committee. Letters were also sent by the president and the secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers Union, Seaman's Section, and by the executive board of the Association of University and



Spartacist Canada

Trotskyist League contingent will not be silenced.

College Employees, Local 1. The Vancouver local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers warned they would withdraw their marshals if leftists were excluded. CP supporter George Hewison, secretary-treasurer of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union and chairman of the May Day Committee, complained that his office had been flooded with phone calls and letters as well as telegrams sent by members of the United Auto Workers, the LCUC and the Canadian Union of Public Employees in the Toronto area.

Just days before the demonstration the May Day Committee started to back down. Then they expressed concern that the TLC would mobilize demonstrators against the Ku Klux Klan who they expected to show up to provoke the demonstration. In recent months these

fascist scum have been parading the streets of Vancouver hooded and robed outside left-wing bookstores. But the Stalinists, who look to the capitalist courts and cops to "ban the Klan," wanted to let the KKK stage their provocation and to exclude the Trotskyists who fight for labor/minority mobilizations to sweep the fascists from the streets.

The TLC nailed the Stalinists and beat back their anti-communist exclusion. We marched on May Day as proletarian internationalists and we pointed out in a leaflet distributed to the demonstration: "It means fighting everywhere for the cause of the exploited and oppressed—not some kind of treacherous 'unity' with the class enemy. Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!" ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

EDITOR: Jan Norden
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Charles Burroughs
PRODUCTION: Darlene Kamiura (Manager), Noah Wilner
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Linda Jarreau
EDITORIAL BOARD: George Foster, Liz Gordon, Mark Kellermann, James Robertson, Reuben Samuels, Joseph Seymour, Marjorie Stamberg

Workers Vanguard (USPS 098-770) published biweekly, skipping an issue in August and a week in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 41 Warren Street, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: 732-7862 (Editorial), 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. Domestic subscriptions: \$5.00/24 issues. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY.

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

No. 306 28 May 1982

Kathy Ikegami Elected Convention Delegate

MAC Victory in Bay Area CWA Vote

SAN FRANCISCO—Hundreds of West Coast phone workers voted for the program of class struggle in recent delegate elections to the national convention of the Communications Workers of America (CWA). The Militant Action Caucus (MAC), which has a 12-year history of fighting the International leadership's pro-company betrayals, ran candidates in Oakland, Los Angeles and San Francisco. In SF Local 9410, MAC leader Kathy Ikegami was elected delegate with 326 votes, or 39 percent, while Kat Burnham and Paul Costan polled about 25 percent to win slots as alternate delegates. This victory came on the heels of a solid 22 percent showing for MAC in Los Angeles Local 11502 last month. In Oakland's Local 9415 first-time MAC candidate Steven Sandor John received 7 percent of the vote.

MAC's campaigns highlighted the burning issues of layoffs and downgrades. As *Workers Vanguard* has reported, the phone company is planning to eliminate thousands of jobs through harassment, firings, forced transfers, downgrades and layoffs (see "Ma Bell Plans Mass Firings," *WV* No. 304, 30 April). More than 100 Bay Area phone workers snatched up that issue of *WV*, indicating deep concern over these attacks. MAC spokesmen report that during the campaign Pacific Telephone (PT&T) cutback plans were confirmed by a mass of facts and figures brought forward by CWA members all around the Bay: operator offices closing, dispatch jobs downgraded, layoffs in Fresno and Merced, cable splicers sped up, frame attendants "surplused" in Sacramento and L.A. Particularly ominous is the tentative news of mass layoffs in the historically militant Western Electric section.

Far from leading a fight against the job cuts, the CWA bureaucrats are helping PT&T push its program through. Union leaders accept the phone company's prerogative to drive workers out by "offering" them unacceptable transfers to faraway places, imposing intolerable speedup, and arm-twisting older members into early retirement. The bureaucrats even mouth that special phone company Newspeak, in which layoffs are called "surplus situations" and "force readjustments." And they have launched frenzied attacks on MAC for telling the truth about layoffs and for calling for the union to fight.

On April 18 MAC blew the lid off a secret CWA/PT&T deal that gave the company the go-ahead to ax thousands



MAC spokesman Kathy Ikegami (right) campaigns: "The time to fight is now while we still have jobs."

WV Photo

of jobs. Local 9410 president James Imerzel responded by putting a hysterical "rebuttal" on the union's tape-recorded call-in service, which he later printed up as a leaflet. Imerzel stated, "No layoffs are projected. PT&T assured the CWA that the normal attrition of 200 employees each month would overcome any job displacement..." MAC answered Imerzel in a special flyer distributed in San Francisco (6 May):

"Imerzel has the nerve to kiss off 200 members/month as 'normal'...our union misleaders are saying giveback, not fight back. We want the union to fight. Any union leader who sits on his ass while 200 workers a month lose their jobs should be dumped. We want to lead the fight against Ma Bell's 'right' to make a huge profit by throwing hundreds of us out into the street."

Imerzel & Co. were selling PT&T's line, but the workers weren't buying. Janitors at the biggest phone installation in SF called MAC candidate Burnham to come speak to them. MAC campaigners arriving to post caucus literature on bulletin boards at work locations on both sides of the Bay

repeatedly found that workers had already done it, and that stewards were eager to take copies to distribute. Imerzel's cronies tore down some of the posted leaflets, but they couldn't keep the membership from knowing the truth. When one executive board member walked into the East Bay PT&T credit union, she was confronted by operators and clerks who waved the MAC literature in her face and demanded to know why the union had tried to keep them in the dark. MAC members told *WV* that Imerzel's smear campaign was repudiated by the workers at a May 18 Local 9410 meeting, who applauded exec board member Ikegami's report on the layoff threat and the criminal readiness of the CWA leadership to accept Ma Bell's job slashing.

The MAC election campaign placed PT&T's attacks in the context of Reagan's all-out assault on working people in the U.S. and abroad. Pointing out that "Ma Bell is bringing Reagan's program to the phone company," MAC candidates explained that narrow "non-political" trade unionism could only prepare the labor movement for further defeats. Instead, MAC called for a general working-class offensive on all fronts, for "labor action to bring down Reagan." On MAC's initiative, East Bay CWA Local 9415 voted by a large majority in March to send a contingent to the March 27 El Salvador demonstration, demanding "Military victory to Salvadoran leftists!" At the next union meeting MAC opposed a motion from the officers to donate money to the campaigns of three local Democrats. After a MAC member pointed out the need to break with the strikebreaking Democrats and forge a class-struggle workers party, the bureaucrats' motion was resoundingly voted down. A campaign leaflet distributed in the East Bay (25 April) noted:

"Reagan and the capitalists have challenged the working class of America and the world to fight or be ground into the dirt. To pay for their anti-Soviet war drive, they are starving the

poor and aged. They've declared war on the rights of black people, Latins, women—all the oppressed. They busted an entire union, PATCO. While they scream support for Solidarnosc, the Polish company union for the bankers and the CIA, they lock up and deport black Haitians and embrace South Africa. Their racist anti-Soviet reaction encourages the growth of the Klan and Nazis. Their junta in El Salvador massacres our brothers and sisters, the workers and peasants. Their anti-Soviet war drive threatens to blow up the world.

"The grossly overpaid sellout union bureaucrats like [CWA national president Glenn] Watts, AFL-CIO chief Kirkland and Autoworkers head Fraser cry 'Surrender' and 'Vote Democrat.' They join Reagan and Haig in beating the drums for war against Russia. But there are plenty of workers who want to fight Reagan, Haig and the Wall Street fatcats who call the tune for both Republicans and Democrats.... Labor must break with the Democrats, dump the bureaucrats and build a workers party to fight for a workers government."

For decades employment in the phone company was considered the height of job security, untouched by the ups and downs of the business cycle. But today no sector of the working population is immune from the general crisis of American capitalism. The capitalists can't afford to buy labor peace by promising "decent wages" and "job protection" any more, so they leave it up to union bureaucrats like Imerzel and Watts to explain why less of everything—money, fringe benefits, jobs—is the best of all possible worlds. *The labor movement can't just "hold the line" under these conditions.* The alternatives are either to be thrown further and further back under the continued misleadership of the reformist bureaucrats, or to go forward in a working-class offensive that goes beyond bread-and-butter issues. The working people need to go on a *political* offensive, using class-struggle methods to defend undocumented workers, to fight for jobs for all, to put a stop to military shipments to the butcher junta in El Salvador, to combat every aspect of racist Reagan reaction.

The MAC program shows the way forward for all working people. To bring this program to victory, class-struggle caucuses are needed not just in West Coast phone but in all the key sectors of the industrial proletariat. And above all a revolutionary, Trotskyist vanguard party to lead the struggle for the only program that makes sense today—not nickle-and-dime reforms but socialist revolution. Labor militants must devote themselves to this task, fighting for labor action to bring down Reagan and the capitalists he represents. ■

Correction

In the article "Ma Bell Plans Mass Firings" (*WV* No. 304, 30 April) we stated: "*Workers Vanguard* has also learned that the cuts will wipe out 30 percent of the Bell workforce in Oakland." While large sections of the workforce will be affected by layoffs, forced transfers, downgrades, firings, etc., the specific figure of 30 percent applies to the work crews of PBX (business phone) installers. Additional examples of the phone company's layoff plans have since come to light (see article this page).

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

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—MARXIST LITERATURE—

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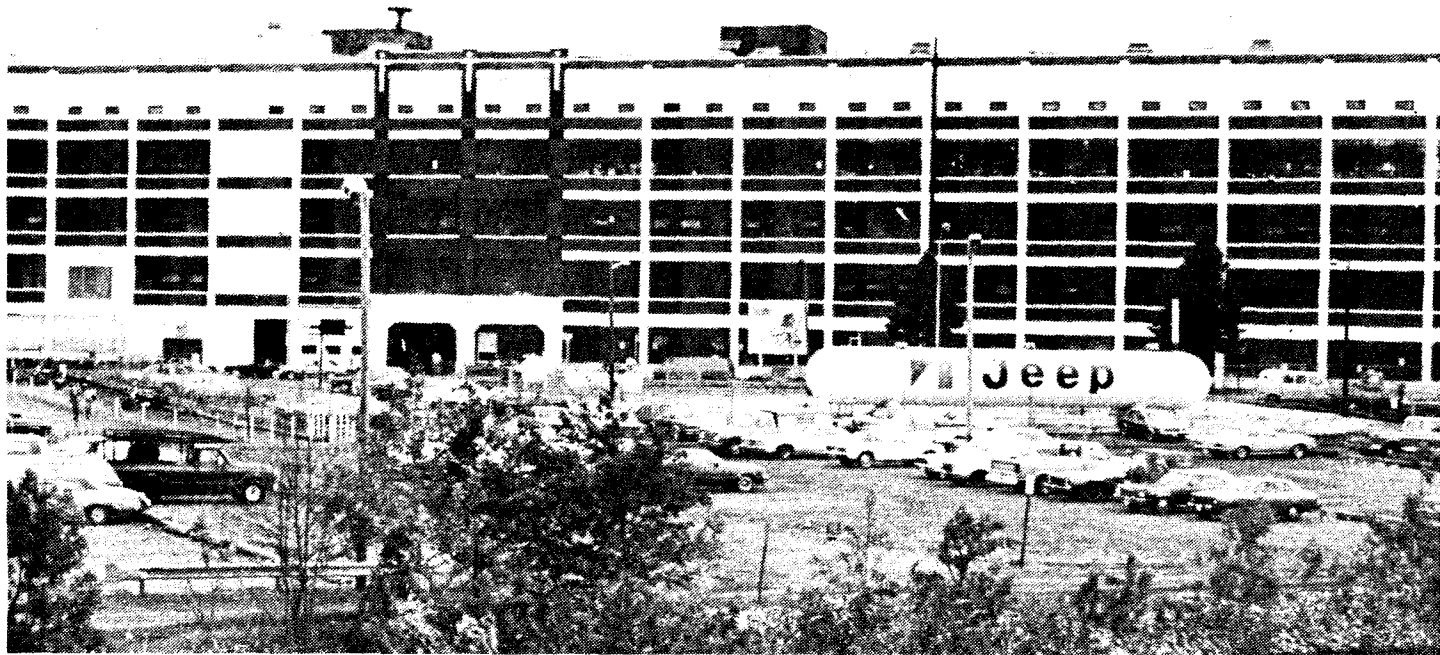
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WV Photo



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UAW chief Douglas Fraser (right) wouldn't let ranks at Toledo Jeep vote down his givebacks.

Militants Take Up Call for Two-Day Sitdown

Fraser Strongarms Toledo UAW

TOLEDO—Doug Fraser and his gang of bureaucrats finally rammed their union-busting concessions down the throats of American Motors workers, but only by staging an illegal re-vote, backed up with threats and intimidation, at the key Toledo Jeep plant. The AMC deal is the same giveback garbage forced on United Auto Workers (UAW) members at Ford and GM. AMC tried to sweeten the poison by calling the givebacks—which amount to \$10,000 per worker—a “loan.” But the Jeep workers knew they’d never see the cash again, and on May 3 they turned thumbs down on the new contract by 1,530 to 1,309. When the union leadership announced the re-vote for UAW Local 12 at Jeep, several workers distributed a leaflet calling for another rejection of the deal; but unlike the local level bureaucrats who oppose givebacks without saying *how* workers can defeat the concessions drive, the Jeep militants included a call for a two-day sitdown in the plant.

Toledo is a hard-nosed working-class town that has been ravaged by layoffs and plant closings. The decaying factories and neighborhoods mirror those of Detroit 50 miles to the north. Toledo is also a *union* town, and it has been since the Auto-Lite strike of 1934, a labor victory won through pitched battles which pitted employed and unemployed workers against cops and national guard troops. Some of the traditions forged in that class battle still survive. Toledo auto workers have repeatedly voted down Fraser’s givebacks, not just at AMC but at GM, Ford and Champi-on as well.

The AMC contract had to be

accepted by all three UAW locals concerned before it could go into effect. After Jeep workers threw the contract back in Fraser’s face, the Solidarity House misleaders and the entire executive board of Local 12—backed up by the bosses’ media opinion-makers in Toledo and Detroit—marshaled their forces to guarantee AMC its “loan.” Local 12 president Ray Okdie called on the Toledo cops to “keep order” at a May 7 union meeting, where over 1,000 angry Jeep workers voted unanimously to certify the results of the contract vote. When militants made a motion to recall the giveback negotiators, International rep Jackie Sizemore ruled it out of order.

After the meeting Local 12 officials turned the screws for the re-vote. Recently recalled workers were told they would be laid off again unless they voted yes. Chief steward Danny Wilson, the only exec board member to oppose the betrayal the first time around, made amends by going on TV to urge acceptance and by signing a “vote yes” leaflet with the rest of the exec board. Contract opponents who gave interviews to the press received threatening phone calls. Without a single Local 12 official willing to stand up to the International, the Jeep workers reversed their vote by a highly suspect two-to-one, according to “official” totals released by Solidarity House in Detroit.

When Fraser came out with his giveback pact for Ford back in February, we warned, “It’s not enough just to vote down the billion dollar betrayal. Remember ’73! From recounts and re-votes to goon squads, Fraser’s gang has experience ramming through a sellout.”

Workers Vanguard called for a wave of two-day sit-down demonstrations in auto plants throughout the Motor City area, from Flint to Toledo (see “Fraser’s Billion Dollar Betrayal,” *WV* No. 299, 19 February). Such dramatic action could spark a broad working-class offensive against the bosses’ program of austerity, depression and anti-Soviet war buildup. This call for action was taken up by the Rouge Militant Caucus, a class-struggle opposition in UAW Local 600 at Ford’s sprawling River Rouge plant.

Now on May 17, the day before the AMC re-vote, a leaflet was issued to Jeep workers entitled “Vote No! Again!” It said:

“The strike is the only real exercise of workers power against the company. We can vote and vote and vote. We can vote this contract down a thousand times and we will still be stuck with it. At this time, with the thousands of unemployed people who could be used as scabs, the sit-down strike is our only weapon. A two-day sitdown strike that is well organized could convince AMC that when we say ‘No’ we mean ‘No’.”

Such action could have a galvanizing effect on the Toledo labor movement. The ramshackle jumble of buildings that make up AMC’s Jeep division are in fact the company’s sole money maker. The workers there have been pushed to the limit by absentee harassment, job overloading and the lack of union power in the shop. Black workers in particular have suffered most under AMC’s notoriously despotic supervisory policies, and face virtual exclusion from the skilled trades. Literature of the Ku Klux Klan race terrorists, who have been active in Putnam County to the south, appeared inside the plant a few months ago. At the same time Reagan’s social service cuts and massive layoffs throughout the auto-making and auto supply industries have turned the city into a social tinderbox. The ingredients for militant struggle on the 1934 scale are there.

What’s lacking is leadership. Class battles like the Auto-Lite strike—one of three major strikes in 1934 that set the stage for the CIO organizing drives—require a leadership with the foresight and determination to win. The Auto-Lite strike was led by militants in the American Workers Party (AWP), a leftward moving organization that later fused with the Trotskyist Communist League of America (CLA). The CLA led another of the 1934 struggles, the

Minneapolis Teamster strike. Such struggles require revolutionary leadership. That’s because revolutionaries are opposed to traps like binding arbitration, explain the government (with its courts and cops) is capitalist and no friend to workers, and have a socialist program that answers the needs of *all* workers, black and white, employed and unemployed.

Union leaders today are more likely to be found breaking strikes than winning them. Fraser was prepped for the UAW presidency by leading a 1,000-man goon squad to bust a wildcat strike in Detroit in 1973. Teamster chief Roy Williams’ first official assignment in the ’30s was to go to Minneapolis as a goon to help purge the Trotskyists. And the “progressives”? They have collapsed, because they share the Fraser/Williams program of propping up capitalism. Under the conditions of capitalist decay this means enforcing the bosses’ demands for wage and benefit cuts. The capitalist goal is to convert the unions into instruments for disciplining the working class through the medium of the labor bureaucracy. Yet the unions are enormous reservoirs of social power that can be mobilized in the interests of workers, minorities and all the poor.

The Spartacist League seeks to unleash that power by building a workers party that can lead struggles like the Toledo Auto-Lite and Minneapolis Teamster strikes. Today such a party must be prepared to mobilize labor and blacks to smash the Klan, which seeks to destroy the labor movement and carry out race terror against minorities. Those sellouts who want to steal jobs from Japanese workers so AMC, Ford and GM can make more profits sure won’t lead any real struggles against the bosses: a class-struggle workers party would vehemently oppose the chauvinist protectionism pushed by Giveback Fraser. And such a workers party would organize its forces to defeat the Republican/Democratic anti-Soviet war drive, which seeks to throw working people back everywhere by restoring the profit system in Russia.

There is a vacuum of leadership in the labor movement today. It can only be filled by militants who seek to destroy the bosses’ system once and for all, by fighting for a workers government that will expropriate industry and put in place a planned economy geared to the needs of all working people. ■

Spartacist

(English Edition)
No. 34, Summer 1982

50¢

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Reagan Says: No Coup, This Time

Dominican Elections in the Shadow of El Salvador

With the election of Salvador Jorge Blanco as president of the Dominican Republic in May 16 voting, the American press chalked up a "victory for democracy" in the Caribbean. Hailing the turnout of "cheerful voters" standing in long lines at the polls, commentators linked the Dominican election to the recent electoral show by the U.S.-backed junta in El Salvador. But where the Salvador vote made death squad chief D'Aubuisson head of a bogus "Constituent Assembly," this time the victorious Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) is affiliated with the social-democratic Second International and president-elect Jorge is labeled (with considerable exaggeration) a "moderate leftist."

The most notable thing about the Dominican vote, however, was what didn't happen. There was no coup. Four years ago when PRD candidate Antonio Guzmán won the presidential vote, the army moved in at 4 a.m. to seize the ballot boxes. Only a telephone call from U.S. president Jimmy Carter, anxious to shore up his "human rights" image, stopped a military takeover. This time the troops stayed in their barracks. Does this mean the country has "definitively entered the era of freedom," as one PRD leader said? Is Ronald Reagan's much ballyhooed Caribbean Basin Initiative, aimed at heading off revolution through a "mini-Marshall Plan," working? Hardly.

In U.S. imperialism's Cold War plans, it is not of paramount importance which anti-Communist bourgeois politician sits in the presidential chair of its Dominican protectorate, as long as the masses are kept under control. (They still remember well the April 1965 uprising when it took 42,000 U.S. Marines to clamp the lid back on and banish the spectre of social revolution.) Of course, for some of the anti-Soviet war crazies in Washington, the prospect of an "authoritarian" junta just a few miles from Cuba was tempting. Besides, as one Washington columnist wrote, the PRD candidate has "a number of supporters 'with a troublesome past'." On the other hand, Jorge Blanco himself was held to be "untainted by the sort of Marxist-Leninist inclinations that are fatal to any foreigner seeking Reagan's



Dominican cops attack student protest in April during election campaign, wounding 48.

favor" (*Washington Post*, 11 May).

But mainly the U.S. has its hands full at the moment. After all the work in window-dressing the Salvadoran "elections," they resulted in a victory for "Major Blowtorch," who now has to be sold to Congress. Then there was the "Jesus coup" in Guatemala: election fraud backfired so they tried a "young officers" movement which inadvertently brought in a born-again wacko as junta chief. And now Washington's on-again, off-again invasion plans against Sandinista Nicaragua are screwed up by a ludicrous war in the Falklands/Malvinas which already cost Reagan his Argentine anti-Communist ally. The last thing the Pentagon needed was an unnecessary and possibly costly military venture in the Caribbean. Particularly since on everything that counts, domestically and internationally, like most edibles in a Dominican *colmado* (corner store), PRD policies are "Made in USA."

Yes, We Have No Coup Today

Even so, *the* issue throughout the campaign was the threat of military intervention. In Santo Domingo the question is always what are the generals and the Pentagon up to. The *New York Times* (21 May) editorialized about a "New Dominican Routine," noting: "Before Trujillo seized power in 1930, Santo Domingo had 123 rulers; all but four post-colonial leaders were military men. No President ever stepped down voluntarily." (The writer neglected to mention that the U.S. had placed Trujillo at the head of the army during its eight-year occupation of the island; that "The Goat" ruled for three decades with American backing, and then was assassinated in a CIA-engineered operation.) As a sign of increasing "democratic culture" (whose?), the *Times* pointed to Jimmy Carter's "helpful" discouragement of the 1978 coup-in-progress and concluded: "There was not even a threat this time."

Incumbent PRD president Guzmán had claimed as the main accomplishment of his regime the "professionalization of the armed forces." But for months these "professional" officers have been threatening to intervene. In February a leaked letter from one of the joint chiefs to the defense minister

accused PRD chief Peña Gómez of planning an armed revolt if his party did not win the election. Shortly afterwards, scores of leftists were arrested for poster and painting wall murals, while the National Police chief threatened to go after "vandals inside the PRD who are causing disorders" (see "Hands Off Dominican Leftists!" *WV* No. 301, 19 March). Then on April 2, Washington columnist Jack Anderson said on ABC-TV that U.S. arms were being rushed to the Dominican army, supposedly "intended to make sure the May 16th elections go smoothly."

Actually, Anderson reported, Dominican chief of staff General Lachapelle considered Jorge Blanco, the odds-on favorite, a "Communist," and "Lachapelle's people freely admit that the general will use his American arms to seize power" and prevent a PRD victory. The credibility of the report was underscored when the army chief took out full-page ads in all the major papers to officially deny the military was planning a coup that week. This apparently wasn't convincing enough, so two weeks later a second ad was published, this time over the signatures of the heads of all four services, disclaiming any intention to "subvert the constitutional order." General Lachapelle, meanwhile, confirmed in an interview (*El Sol*, 8 April) that the arms had been requested, but protested:

"I have always told my officers and recruits that the Army will support the democratic government elected by popular vote. Now... if a government is elected that seeks the destruction of the Armed Forces, then we have the right to legitimate defense. The armed institutions will oppose such a government because there's something called the survival instinct. It's just natural."

A follow-up report by Anderson explained what comes naturally to the Dominican military. It quoted a letter to Reagan from two of Lachapelle's representatives in Washington stating that they are "fully aware, and have evidence of communist infiltration and arms coming through Haiti [!], sponsored by Cuba and Russia." The letter requested enough weaponry to "equip one light infantry brigade before the May elections" (*Washington Post*, 18 April). In response a "small shipment" was rushed to the Dominican Republic,

including 1,200 M-16 automatic rifles, two cargo helicopters, three A-37 Bravo attack planes, a PTF-23 patrol boat and assorted spare parts (*El Sol*, 23 April).


But on May 16-17 the troops didn't move. What happened? Washington evidently weighed its option and flashed a red light. In late April U.S. ambassador Robert Yost announced that Washington was "neutral" in the Dominican elections. And the PRD candidate did his part, emphasizing in the last days before the vote that he would accentuate political and economic ties with the United States, downplay relations with Soviet bloc countries, and not touch the hierarchy or ranks of the officer corps. So in the end the ruling powers went along: as soon as the voting was over the victor received greetings from the businessmen's association, Gulf and Western, Ronald Reagan and the joint chiefs of staff (who reminded him to keep hands off the military).

The "Semi-Democracy" of PRD Rule

Jorge Blanco campaigned as representative of a "new generation" against two aging *caudillos*. His main opponents were the old warhorse Joaquín Balaguer, now 75 and nearly blind, who was dictator Rafael Trujillo's last puppet president; and his perennial rival, doddering professor Juan Bosch, whose moment of glory was a seven-month reign in 1963 as front man for JFK's "Alliance for Progress." In Dominican political rhetoric, the liberal/populist PRD of wealthy rancher Guzmán and Shell Oil lawyer Jorge calls itself "revolutionary." Balaguer's *trujillistas* are the Reformist Party (PR), and the bourgeois populist Juan Bosch, whose vehicle is the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD), postures as a Marxist while allying with Balaguer.

In 1978 the liberal capitalist PRD came to power on the slogan of "change." After a dozen years of Balaguer's semi-bonapartist rule, with its rigged elections and heavy repression, a large part of the country's 5.5 million people were more than ready for a switch. If only to stop the killing: 1,200 youth and leftists were killed by the police, army and paramilitary bands

continued on page 8


REPUBLICA DOMINICANA
COMANDO EN JEFE FUERZAS ARMADAS NACIONALES
OFICINA DEL JEFE DE ESTADO MAYOR
Santo Domingo, D.R.
"TODO POR LA PATRIA"

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"Depoliticized" Dominican military announces: No coup today...but they claim the "right to legitimate defense."

LETTERS

Macho on the Left

Dear Editor:

Alex Cockburn is funny. Alex Cockburn is interesting and insightful. Alex Cockburn is the first thing I turn to after the weekly trek to my neighborhood newsstand. Alex Cockburn is, alas, of times off the wall.

A case in point is his assertion that the Spartacist League line for military victory for the FDR/FMLN is "unimpeachable" [Press Clips, *Voice*, April 6]. Fidel Castro wants negotiations between the FDR/FLMN and the Salvadoran government. So, too, do Guillermo Ungo, head of the Democratic Revolutionary Front, and the Socialist International. The five commanders of the Farabundo Marti guerrilla front ask the Christian Democratic president of Venezuela to mediate between them and the ruling Salvadoran junta.

Now it's understandable why the airheads of the American ultra-left consider negotiations a sellout. After all, these are the same folks who consider Solidarity in Poland a CIA front, castigate the Sandinistas in Nicaragua for being closet bourgeoisie, and support Soviet aggression in Afghanistan. Their slogan about "Defense of Cuba and the USSR Begins in El Salvador" is certain to move the

American masses against U.S. intervention, yes? For all their protestation of Leninist fidelity, even Lenin doesn't deserve them, and probably would have dispatched the lot of them before they could have hoisted a single banner back when.

Isn't the urgent task in El Salvador to end the killing and come as close as possible to a democratic government? We can ill afford to play petty politics with real people's lives. Given the military stalemate and the inability of either the government or the guerrillas to overcome the other, negotiations not only make political sense to build a broad movement in the U.S. but offer the best hope of ending the carnage in Salvador.

If the war becomes protracted, more bloody, and bitter, only the anti-democratic elements on both sides are the gainers. Does Salvador Cayetano Carpio represent the democratic aspirations of the Salvadoran people? Does Roberto D'Aubuisson?

Of course not. Or perhaps they do. That's for the Salvadoran people to decide. The first step is to pressure the Reagan administration to press the Salvadoran government toward negotiations. Then, after an agreement and ceasefire à la Zimbabwe, comes an election with left participation. Not as easy as it sounds perhaps, but by far preferable to left macho posturing about a "military victory."

—Patrick Lacefield
Staten Island

Alexander Cockburn replies: Lacefield seems to have been so blinded by virtuous irritation that he did not notice some later remarks I made about the Sparts,

rather more critical than the comments to which he takes such exception. Other than this, his letter seems to be all over the political map. Everyone including General Haig says the killing should be stopped and everyone including General Haig says that El Salvador should get as near as it can to democratic government.

Politics (scarcely petty) involves the momentous matter of deciding how the killing could best be stopped and El Salvador properly reconstituted. Haig thinks it should be reconstituted as a third-world vassal of the United States. I support those who disagree with this view. Lacefield seems to be in exactly the same posture as those in the State Department who deplore "extremists of left and right alike" and invoke an imaginary center, and who have been speaking of the famous "military stalemate" for months.

Between the two of them, I certainly support Carpio over D'Aubuisson and regard the parallelism as the kind of odious absurdity much favored by the New Republic. Sure, I'll support Ungo so long as he is the recognized spokesman for the FDR, but he's never struck me as a particularly impressive fellow. Screw the Socialist International. Does Lacefield really think Schmidt and Mitterrand are true friends of national liberation? (And of course, comrades, I welcome their positive intervention in the Central American zone.) Who says Castro is not capable of putting the interests of Cuba before those of the FMLN? Solidarity before criticism is all very well and proper, but what is a quiet bed in New York City worth if you can't put politics in command once in a while?

Hoist on His Own Petard

"Military Victory" Haunts Alexander Cockburn

What makes Alex squirm? Ever since *Village Voice* columnist Alexander Cockburn made his comment that the Spartacist League's call for military victory to the left-wing rebels in El Salvador was "unimpeachable," he has been in political trouble. Because in trying to straddle two horses, he exposes the crucial contradiction the rest of the left would do almost anything to hide. You can't be both for battlefield victory to win war and for the popular front that wants a negotiated solution to stop it. The letter writer above, Patrick Lacefield (Harringtonite Social Democrat), has nailed him by laying out the obvious logic of the so-called "political solution," namely: stop the communists before it's too late.

Cockburn has not spared venom in the effort to separate himself from the Trotskyists of the Spartacist League. First, it was name-calling, slinging such insults as "assholes" and "bonkers" at the SL because we organized an Anti-Imperialist Contingent to call for "military victory" and defense of the Soviet bloc against imperialist attack at the March 27 El Salvador demonstration in Washington, D.C. Thus Cockburn helped justify anti-communist exclusion by the popular-frontist left, which called on lines of goons and the cops to seal off "the Sparts" from contaminating the "official" demonstration with our red flags and red politics.

When the not-so-peaceful doves screamed about his "unimpeachable" comment, Cockburn went further to join the anti-Spartacist witchhunt. The next week Cockburn suppressed a letter by Spartacist League Central Committee member Helene Brosius and responded by accusing the SL of trying to "break into the main demonstration with low-level violence." It was unadorned red-baiting of "violent" communists. Still, this account doesn't exactly square with the even more sinister slander campaign (in *Voice* letters, *Guardian* and various "socialist" rags) about hordes of mad-dog Sparts armed with clubs randomly charging the demonstration and karate-chopping innocent young women who just happened to be passing by. They can't seem to get their stories straight. Thus, in his red-baiting bloc with the anti-Spartacists, Cockburn inadvertently exposes their Big Lie fabrications.

So Cockburn wants to be for the popular front and for military victory. He can't have it both ways. The letter writer's position, on the other hand, is perfectly consistent. What kind of "negotiations" is he for? To settle the terms of surrender for the rapacious oligarchy and their military butchers who have ruled the country up to now? No, a "negotiated solution" which would prevent a guerrilla victory. Thus Lacefield writes he wants the war to end without a victory so that the ensuing government can "come as close as possible to a democratic government." He wants a government without "anti-democratic elements" such as guerrilla leader Cayetano Carpio. That is, he wants a reformed capitalist government. He's for an imperialist-supervised "ceasefire à la Zimbabwe," and doesn't want an insurgent victory that could lead to communism. In fact, he opposes communism everywhere—from Poland to Nicaragua and Afghanistan.

Following the political logic of the popular front, the letter writer argues that being against leftist military victory

"makes political sense to build a broad movement in the U.S." Sure, if you're looking for Democratic Party Senators and Congressmen as allies, it makes sense not to support a victory of the "other side." But increasingly it doesn't make a lot of sense to many people who see the evidence before their eyes that if the rebels do not defeat the junta's forces, they will simply be massacred by Major "Blowtorch" D'Aubuisson.

The popular front is the question in El Salvador and the U.S. It is not that Ungo "is not a very impressive fellow," but that as the leader of a tiny middle-class movement Ungo serves as popular front-man for the guerrillas of the FMLN, a living symbol of the FDR/FMLN's commitment to "democratic capitalism." Ungo fears a military victory by the insurgents for the same reason the Kennedys do—it would destroy the existing capitalist state apparatus and therefore open the door to social revolution. So Ungo is for negotiations, but in El Salvador today, it's becoming clear that the opportunities for any kind of negotiated sellout are rapidly evaporating.

The rad-libs are upset with radical-

chic journalist Cockburn because by directly raising the question of military victory, he makes it difficult for them to play their game. Sure, they don't mind occasionally waving some FMLN flags and listening to FDR speakers as long as they can pay their dues to the ready-for-Teddy boys when time demands. They hate those "damn Sparts" because our class-struggle Trotskyist politics force the issue of revolution, of communism.

Presumably Cockburn thinks that if he only raises the slogan in his column in the *Village Voice*, federal SWAT teams won't disturb his "quiet bed" in New York, and mounted cops won't ride up lower Broadway to pen him in. He's right about that. But the popular frontier for military victory is still going to get the heat from the "political solution" 100-percenters who demand he spell out what support to Ungo and Schmidt and Mitterrand and Castro really means. And let's be clear on one thing: it doesn't mean an end to the killing, but setting the stage for more butchery. What will end the massacre of workers and peasants is a military victory which will sweep away the junta murderers once and for all with workers revolution. ■

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Washington, D.C., March 27: Red slogans inflame rad-libs.



Dominican Elections...

(continued from page 6)

during the *balaguerato*.

However timid its populism, the PRD did awaken hopes among the masses. This was reflected in several struggles which came to a head in mid-1979. The Guzmán administration had decreed "austerity" and a one-sided labor "truce." And when workers at the huge Falconbridge complex went on strike in April the government called out the army against the union. That summer when a gasoline price rise sparked a militant strike of public transport in Santo Domingo, the PRD regime unleashed the cops and a gang of thugs, the so-called *banda blanca* (White Gang), to break it, and brought in troops to occupy working-class barrios. The result: seven dead, 20 wounded, 700 arrested. Another transport strike in 1980 resulted in five dead as a result of government repression. Under the PRD, as under Balaguer, every serious social struggle has led to semi-insurreccional conditions.

Internationally as well the "change" brought about by the Guzmán administration was purely superficial. Although the bourgeois liberal/populist PRD affiliated with the Second International (SI) a few years ago, its fundamental goal is still to administer its island statelet as a loyal vassal of American imperialism. They're quite willing to host social-democratic Caribbean "summits" in Santo Domingo, and to call on SI leaders like Portugal's Mário Soares and Venezuela's Carlos Andrés Pérez to act as election observers (read "hostages") when they fear a military takeover. But over Afghanistan, Guzmán endorsed Jimmy Carter's boycott of the Moscow Olympics. Over El Salvador, the Dominican Republic joined with eight other Reagan allies in Latin America—like the Argentine and Chilean juntas—to condemn the Franco-Mexican communiqué (recognizing the FDR/FMLN) as "outside intervention." And the PRD has repeatedly refused to diplomatically recognize Castro's Cuba. On all fundamental issues they toe the Washington line.

Critical Support to the PCD

Those sectors of the Dominican masses who did break from the PRD looking for a militant alternative looked largely to the figure of Juan Bosch, still remembered as a symbol of 1965. Bosch's campaign rallies attracted volatile crowds of the urban poor and slum dwellers. Contrary to his reputation, the PLD *líder máximo* is not a man of the left but a populist *caudillo* who has gyrated wildly from one side of the spectrum of *bourgeois* politics to the other.

In the recent campaign the only definable "left" point in Bosch's nonexistent program was a call to nationalize the *land* of Gulf and Western (but *not* its profitable manufacturing and tourism holdings). As voting day drew closer he made clear his opposition to any kind of popular uprising, declared that socialist revolution is not possible "for many years," and declared that "if I win I will not govern with leftists, but most probably with right-wingers." Even though Bosch drew support from many erstwhile leftists, the "alternative" he offered was firmly embedded in the narrow limits of backward Dominican capitalism under the domination of American imperialism.

Also participating in the May elections were two leftist electoral slates, Izquierda Unida (United Left) and Unidad Socialista (Socialist Unity). Izquierda Unida is a bloc of ten "far left" groups, the heirs of the post-1965 Maoist/Guevarist guerrilla left. In its election platform the IU called for a

"democratic, popular and revolutionary government." But while urging workers to vote against the parties representing the capitalists, Izquierda Unida by its own admission made "many efforts" to approach the bourgeois populist Bosch and his PLD for a common ticket (*Unidad Marxista Leninista*, 11 March). Thus IU was explicitly *popular-frontist*, that is, it sought a "people's front" (as in Spain during the Civil War, or Chile under Allende) with so-called "progressive sectors" of the exploiters.

In contrast to the IU popular-frontists, the Unidad Socialista slate led by the Dominican Communist Party (PCD) calls for a "socialist and anti-capitalist program." According to its election platform: "Since we are a capitalist country, and the proletariat is the fundamental exploited class, there cannot be in the Dominican Republic today any revolution that is not socialist." Allied with two small groupings, the Movement for Socialism (MPS) and Movement for Socialist Unity (MUS), the PCD proclaims, "Socialism Is a Task for Today." It criticizes the Maoists' "democratic" program for "opening the road to the PRD's so-called national-democratic revolution." This is an unaccustomed and highly episodic turn for a pro-Moscow reformist, Stalinist party.

Evidently the populist demagoguery of the PRD has forced the Dominican CP into a left posture where it rejects the "schemes of alliances with the social democracy which may be valid in other situations." Going further, it now also rejects the traditional Stalinist schema of "two-stage" revolution in the Dominican Republic. And not just there. At the recent conference in Havana, Cuba on the "General and Specific Characteristics of Revolutionary Processes in Latin America and the Caribbean," the PCD delegate declared:

"Thus you cannot establish a forced separation between a so-called democratic and anti-imperialist revolution and another, socialist one, since in Latin America today these measures are closely linked, forming part of one revolutionary torrent whose final goal is the establishment of socialism on a world scale."

—*Hablan los Comunistas*,
6-13 May 1982

This has consequences on a series of questions, such as the struggles in Central America, where PCD leader Narciso Isa Conde condemns social democrats who "emphasize negotiated outcomes."

As U.S. imperialism steps up its anti-Soviet war drive this has sharply escalated the crisis of world Stalinism, a crisis which has been acutely felt in the Dominican Communist Party. Thus the PCD protested the 1968 Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia, and for years was known as a semi-Eurocommunist party. But in 1980, faced with Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" offensive, the PCD came out in defense of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. More recently the Dominican CP has been thrown into a sharp crisis by events in Poland. Last December three prominent PCDers quit the party with a declaration "No to Russian Intervention in Poland." The official party position refused to criticize the Jaruzelski crackdown, while adding that "neither prolongation of the use of force" nor a "violent and tragic outcome to this crisis lead to solutions favorable to the cause of the Polish people and socialism" (*Hablan los Comunistas*, 17-24 December 1981).

Judged from afar, the slate headed by the Dominican Communist Party appears to offer at least a rudimentary and conjunctural opposition to bourgeois populism and popular frontism, and therefore class-struggle militants could give *critical support* to Unidad Socialista candidates in the May 16 elections. At the same time, genuine communist revolutionaries must expose the dangerous contradictions of the PCD/US program. Today over El Salvador, in

order to differentiate himself from Peña Gómez, PCD leader Isa Conde may criticize the social democrats' predilection for "negotiated solutions" with imperialism and the oligarchy. But what about the Dominican Republic? In the 1965 uprising the Communist Party (then the PSP) was the only left group to join the PRD in submitting to the "negotiations" dictated by the presence of 42,000 U.S. Marines. Militants in the PCD must squarely confront the counterrevolutionary role played by their party in those crucial events, for it is the future of the Dominican revolution that is at stake.

The PCD/Unidad Socialista campaign is above all *electoralist* in its "socialist" propaganda, recalling the old Kautskyan minimum/maximum program of social democracy. The PCD talks of socialism, but where is its intervention in vital struggles (such as the 1979-80 strikes) to turn them into a broad working-class offensive against the multi-nationals, the military *and the PRD government*? While denouncing the various coup threats, the PCD does *not* call for mobilization of the masses to defend themselves against armed reaction; instead they call for a "purge" of a few "ultras" from the *virulently and necessarily anti-communist officer corps*. Such calls are just as treacherous as Allende's preaching of illusions in "constitutionalist" officers in Chile before the bloody climax of September 1973.

This electoralism is also reflected in the PCD/US call on those who "for one reason or another feel they must vote for the presidential candidates of the political choices within the system" to cast a *split vote* for Unidad Socialista congressional and local candidates. Thus while campaigning against the PRD and PLD populists, and denouncing the Izquierda Unida's overtures to the "democratic" bourgeoisie, here they open the door to class collaboration... in order to gain a few more votes for city councilmen!

For a Socialist Federation of the Caribbean!

Salvador Jorge Blanco was elected president of the Dominican Republic; the PRD was returned to office at the sufferance of the Dominican general staff and the U.S. State Department because they were a willing instrument of bourgeois/imperialist rule. And what do they get for their loyalty? Ronald Reagan put forward his answer to Communism south of the border with his Caribbean Basin Initiative, recalling Japan's "Co-Prosperity Sphere" in East Asia in the '30s, whereby these various mini-states will be tied to the U.S. market through tariff preferences. Under this plan, the Dominican Republic will receive \$40 million in American aid while its trade deficit (due to the high price oil and the low price of sugar) is \$400 million a year.

Moreover, just before the May 16 vote, Washington took a step which clearly expresses the relationship of these vassal statelets to U.S. imperialism by imposing new sugar quotas. The Dominican Republic now faces the loss of more than half its total exports. Moreover, since the mid-1970s the world market price of sugar has fallen from 64 cents a pound to 9 cents a pound. These deteriorating terms of trade, the direct expression of imperialist domination, have had a disastrous effect on the Dominican economy. So much so that last fall during a visit to the country by U.S. vice president Bush, the head of the Dominican chamber of deputies presented him with the following comparison: Cuba sells sugar to the USSR for a consistent 40 cents a pound, and buys oil from the Soviets for \$12 a barrel; the Dominican Republic sells sugar to the U.S. at 12 cents a pound, and buys oil on the world market at \$35 a barrel. So if they were a Soviet satellite, the Dominicans would be a lot better off!

But of course the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy in the Kremlin is not interested in having more satellites in the Caribbean. Cuba is expensive enough for them, and they (along with Fidel Castro) keep telling the Nicaraguan Sandinistas to do everything they can to stay in the dollar zone (i.e., leave the capitalists alone). The only road to breaking the chains of imperialism, which condemns the Caribbean masses to a future of grinding poverty, is through international socialist revolution. And if the dogma of "socialism in one country" for Stalin's Russia was a myth to justify anti-internationalist policies, "socialism in half an island" is absurd on its face. Workers revolution in the Dominican Republic must also undertake to liberate the Haitian masses from the yoke of U.S. puppet dictatorship. And particularly given the large number of Dominicans in the United States (more than half a million in New York City alone), the Dominican revolution will develop in close conjunction with the American revolution. Through the struggle for social revolution and national emancipation in colonies like Puerto Rico and neo-colonies like Jamaica, and for political revolution to replace the narrow nationalist bureaucracy in Cuba, it must aim at a soviet federation of the Caribbean in a United Socialist States of Latin America. ■

Polish Anti-Communists...

(continued from page 2)

we wrote in *Spartacist* No. 30 (Autumn 1980):

"Soviet democracy should encompass those parties, chosen by the workers and their petty-bourgeois allies, which stand for and defend the socialist order. As a norm all groupings which do not actively work to overthrow the socialist revolution should have freedom of expression, which is not the same as the right to form soviet parties. How to deal with counterrevolutionary groupings is a tactical question to be determined by such factors as their particular nature and following, the international situation, etc."

We were among the first to denounce Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's tsar-loving anti-communism when much of the left was hailing him, but at the same time we opposed the bureaucracy's expulsion of the reactionary writer from the Soviet Union. We thus made a fundamental distinction between pro-Western dissidents, like Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, on the one hand and Anatoly Shcharansky on the other, who was by all accounts guilty of trying to turn over military secrets to Western intelligence agencies. If it is now necessary to intern Walesa, Kuron, Moczulski & Co., it is not because they express anti-communist ideology (they've done that for years), but because they were moving to seize state power. In the months leading up to the imposition of martial law, Poland was on the brink of *civil war*.

Our advocacy of freedom of expression in the Soviet bloc under conditions of civil peace is not motivated by liberal idealism, but by the struggle for socialist consciousness and proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Imprisoning and censoring anti-communist ideologues enhances their moral authority and strengthens the loyalty of their followers. We want to defeat these people politically, not give them the crown of martyrs. Precisely because we know that clerical-nationalism and "free-world" imperialism are *against* the interests of the Polish proletariat, we are convinced that a Trotskyist vanguard in Poland, which today would have to be organized in underground cells, could win the mass of workers away from the Walesas, Kurons and Moczulskis. ■

Falklands/ Malvinas...

(continued from page 1)

social democrats. As one senior U.S. official lamented, "Whoever wins the battle, the winner of the war will be the Soviet Union" (*Wall Street Journal*, 14 May). That this bloody, irrational adventure in the South Atlantic upsets Washington's drive for World War III against the Soviet degenerated workers state is all to the good.

Perfidious Albion and Its Bennite Defenders

For Margaret Thatcher no less than for General Galtieri, the South Atlantic adventure is but a maneuver in her fundamental war against the British working people. She hopes that the shadow of imperial glory will distract attention from the rotten state of Britain, which since she came to power has experienced an economic collapse comparable to the Great Depression of the 1930s. With their typical insufferable hypocrisy, the British rulers are dressing up this colonialist diversion as a defense of "small peoples," international law and even civilization itself.

In World War II it was not Nazi Germany but "democratic" Britain which began the mass bombing of population centers. In the South Atlantic war too Britain started the mass slaughter. On May 2 the submarine *Conqueror* located the *General Belgrano* about 35 miles outside the 200-mile "war zone" declared by London. Disregarding this formality, the British launched two long-range torpedoes. Within hours the second largest ship in the Argentine navy went down. Over 300 sailors were killed. The British naval officers, who carefully cultivate a reputation for honor and "fair play," made no effort at all to rescue the survivors huddled together in lifeboats to avoid freezing to death, as many did. But when a few days later an Argentine fighter-bomber sank the destroyer *Sheffield* with only 20 casualties, British

1,800 "kelpers," 650,000 sheep (or less now that the Argentine soldiers are eating them) and 3 million penguins.

Benn's basic line is that the barren South Atlantic archipelago is not worth the blood of one of "our boys." He declaims: "Those who speak out for peace are called traitors by ministers who sold arms to the fascist junta to kill our men in the Falklands" (*London Guardian*, 24 May). And just who are the Bennites' "men"? While the Argentine troops on the islands are largely conscripts, the British are using their most elite units. These are the same military units which would constitute the shock troops thrown against any revolutionary struggles of the British working people. Prominent in the invasion are the notorious Special Air Service (SAS), lately engaged in hunting down the IRA not only in Northern Ireland but also in the sovereign Irish Republic. Then there's the Special Boat Squadron, known as "the dirty bunch" and not just because they don't wash or brush their teeth to avoid detection. What class-conscious British worker would be sorry if the professional killers of the SAS and Special Boat Squadron are wasted in the Falklands/Malvinas?

Contrast Benn's patriotic concern for Her Majesty's armed forces with Lenin, who welcomed the disastrous defeat of tsarist Russia in its 1904 war with Japan:

"It is believed that Russia's loss in naval tonnage alone amounts to 300,000,000 rubles. More important, however, is the loss of some ten thousand of the navy's best men, and the loss of an entire army...."

"The cause of Russian freedom and of the struggle of the Russian (and the world) proletariat for socialism depends to a very large extent on the military defeats of the autocracy. This cause has been greatly advanced by the military debacle which has struck terror in the hearts of all the European guardians of the existing order."

—"The Fall of Port Arthur"

The Little England Bennites seek to adjust the burden of British imperialism to its actual limited and shrinking resources. They understand that Thatcher's anachronistic colonial posturing will further ruin the economy and destabilize the existing order. One of the

"Save Our Boys" Socialists

To savor the odor of Tony Benn's "Little England" left-labour swamp over the Falklands/Malvinas it is enough to sample the papers of pseudo-Trotskyists who serve as public relations men for the Bennites. Take the *Socialist Organiser* published by well-traveled opportunist Sean Matgamna and Alan Thornett, ex-Healyite centrist and scab. The May 6 issue of *Socialist Organiser* contains a sympathetic and uncritical interview with Bennite MP Reg Race. Never has Lenin's characterization of social democrats as "social imperialists" been more fitting. Race calls for withdrawing the fleet and sparing the precious blood of Britain's elite forces because he has another program to bring Argentina to its knees:

"The quickest and easiest way of bringing the Argentinians to the negotiating table is to exercise economic pressure on them. They are clearly vulnerable to this pressure and it should be implemented."

Thornett, Matgamna and their ilk have liquidated into the Labour Party to "Make the Left Fight." Well, here is what it fights for: making the

Bank of England and the Common Market fight to strangle Argentina economically so that British imperialism can preserve its elite forces for crushing the British working class and the Catholics of Northern Ireland.

In the same issue, a long letter is published from supporters of Nahuel Moreno. So as not to offend the Argentine nationalism of these Peronists of the second mobilization, *Socialist Organiser* responds here with its position of pacifistic neutralism. No doubt Thornett seeks to join the Morenoites in an international rotten bloc like his once-heralded "Trotskyist International Liaison Committee" (TILC), about which we have heard so little as of late. And speaking of TILC, we have yet to hear from its American supporters, Peter Sollenberger's Revolutionary Workers League. Will these arch-sectoralists find a new grouping to tail in the Falkland "kelpers"? Or will the Sollenbergerites, in their usual fashion, tail much of the American left and cheer on the bloody Argentine junta from the pizza parlors and pubs of Ann Arbor?

The Workers Have No Side—The Main Enemy Is At Home!

The Main Enemy Is At Home!

Neither Galtieri nor Thatcher really gives a damn what happens to the Falklands/Malvinas. Who does? This bloody adventure is strictly an attempt by two hated right-wing regimes to divert popular hostility into the channel of chauvinist hysteria. Just a few days before it seized the islands, the Argentine junta was confronted with a 15,000-strong demonstration by the General Confederation of Labor in Buenos Aires, which was suppressed with large-scale arrests. Galtieri's Malvinas operation was designed as a maneuver, thus far successful, to outflank the Peronists and Stalinists in phony "anti-imperialism."

The Argentine leftists who have let themselves be swept away by irredentist fervor may discover they are cheering for their own prison. Such isolated bleak locales have often been used as prison compounds, like Chile's Dawson Island, and the Argentine junta has already staffed the islands with the appropriate sub-human wardens. The Argentine commander of the South Georgia Island was Captain Alfredo Astiz, who has been named by many victims as the founder of the infamous torture center at the Navy Mechanics School on the mainland. Astiz is now being held by the British, and the Swedish government is seeking his extradition for his part in the murder of a young Swedish woman in 1977, while the French government wants him for dumping two French nuns out of a helicopter. Hopefully, Astiz will be extradited to Sweden or France, where he might receive some measure of justice, rather than returned to Argentina for a hero's welcome. Then there's the present military governor of the Malvinas, General Mario Benjamin Menéndez, described by the *New York Times* (23 May) as "one of the leading planners of the military's successful effort to eradicate the leftist guerrilla People's Revolutionary Army." For this he had at his disposal the infamous "Lizard Battalion," specialists in repression and torture.

So the Argentine officer corps wants the Malvinas. Well, a victorious proletarian revolution in Argentina might just give it to them as a suitable prison camp for Galtieri, Menéndez, Astiz and the rest of the murderers and torturers who now run the country.

Groups like the American Socialist Workers Party or British International Marxist Group will not have to pay with

their lives for cheering on Galtieri's bloody adventure, but it is particularly grotesque for an Argentine leftist group like Nahuel Moreno's Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST), which claims to have lost over a hundred comrades to the junta's terror. The PST admits that Galtieri "aims to divert them [the workers] away from the struggle against their exploiters and the dictatorship," but the Morenoites support this diversion on the grounds that it is an "anti-imperialist claim" ("Statement of the International Workers League [Fourth International]," *Socialist Organiser*, 6 May). "Anti-imperialism" to go to war over a desolate piece of land on the edge of Antarctica, hundreds of miles from the mainland, with no military bases and no Argentine population for the last 150 years, in order to reclaim the heritage of the Spanish crown? This is disgusting nationalist irredentism.

Interestingly, some of the social-chauvinists in Britain too, most notoriously the fake-Trotskyist *Militant* group in the Labour Party, present Thatcher's adventure as some kind of war of national liberation on behalf of the Falklanders! There are 1,800 of them of British stock. There are now 5,000 British and 10,000 or more Argentine troops on the islands. What does self-determination mean for a group of people so small that many more are killed supposedly fighting over their rights?

In a rational world there is no reason for Britain, Argentina or any other country to have sovereignty over the Falklands/Malvinas. The islanders should be free to fish, graze sheep and host the occasional scientific expedition. Argentines should be free to emigrate there if they so choose. But we do not live in a rational world. We live in a world of territory-grabbing—even of desolate archipelagos in the South Atlantic—to whip up nationalist frenzy in order to dampen class struggle.

We are *revolutionary defeatist* on both sides in this conflict. The bloody Argentine junta, wracked by massive labor unrest only weeks ago, and the hated Thatcher government which has driven the British people into the poorhouse *can be brought down* as a result of defeat and humiliation in this war. The best outcome for the international proletariat would be if the war ground up the military machines of both reactionary governments, upsetting U.S. imperialism's anti-Soviet war drive and forcing both governments to their knees before an outraged working class. Down with Thatcher! Down with Galtieri! ■



The [London] Times

International arms bazaar booms in the South Atlantic.

politicians and the press started wailing about the loss of "our boys" and the horrors of war.

While the right and center wings of the Labour Party opposition are supporting Thatcher's mid-Victorian posturing, left Labour leader Tony Benn, portrayed by the bourgeois press as a veritable "red revolutionary," has emerged as the only rational voice of British capitalism. Unlike the Tory jingoists, he understands that Britain is in no position to fight a protracted war for a group of islands 8,000 miles away. And even if the British task force retakes the Falklands/Malvinas, what is to prevent the Argentines from moving right back once the British forces withdraw? After all, Britain, a country on the edge of penury, can scarcely afford to tie up 40 naval vessels and thousands of crack troops guarding

34 Labour MPs who voted against the invasions of the Falklands/Malvinas, Frank Allaun, explained: "If it turns into a disaster, the people will resent it deeply, and they will have the right to ask why they were not forewarned" (*New York Times*, 22 May). But precisely such a disaster for British imperialism will almost certainly topple Thatcher, throw British political life into turmoil and turn the anger and frustration of the impoverished working masses against their own rulers.

In opposition to the Bennites and other species of social-chauvinists, the Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B) sees this insane colonial adventure as an opportunity to attack British imperialism from within. American television coverage of a May 23 London "peace" demonstration focused on the banners of the SL/B proclaiming: "Falklands:

Gun Control Kills Blacks...

(continued from page 12)

wing nut. Of course, it's true there are a lot of racists out there who want guns to kill blacks, but there are plenty of black people (and working people in general) who insist on their right to be armed as a way to defend themselves. Even the National Rifle Association (NRA), historically regarded as a right-wing outfit, has been able to perceive that blacks feel threatened by gun control, and the NRA in Illinois has invited blacks into its Gun Owners Political Action Committee (GOPAC). Chicago's Reverend Russel Meek is a prominent black spokesman for GOPAC-Illinois. As Meek recently wrote in the black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender* (20 March):

"We need Gun Control like we need another four years of Jane Byrne. We need Gun Control like we need the Ku Klux Klan. We need Gun Control like we need the NAZI PARTY. We need Gun Control like we need Racism...."

Indeed, historically gun control movements in the U.S. have grown out of the racist fears of the ruling class. The earliest 20th century laws (1902 and later) were passed in the South—in places like South Carolina, Tennessee and Mississippi—as a way to disarm blacks in the face of the KKK. The 1968 Gun Control Act, the first federal anti-gun legislation in 40 years, was passed by a frightened Congress after ghetto revolts following the assassination of Martin Luther King. The law goes after cheap mail-order and import weapons, the only kind affordable to the ghetto poor. Robert Kennedy called these handguns "tools of the urban rioter," and his brother, the liberal darling Teddy, is still after them with the Kennedy-Rodino Bill, which seeks to outlaw "Saturday Night Specials." Likewise, it was after armed black students seized a building at Cornell University in 1969 that the New York state legislature rushed through a law forbidding the carrying of arms on college campuses. In 1965 the New York City council passed a bill especially to keep black militant Malcolm X from carrying a carbine for protection. When Malcolm X was then assassinated, one of his bodyguards who tried to stop the killers was jailed for allegedly violating the state's handgun law!

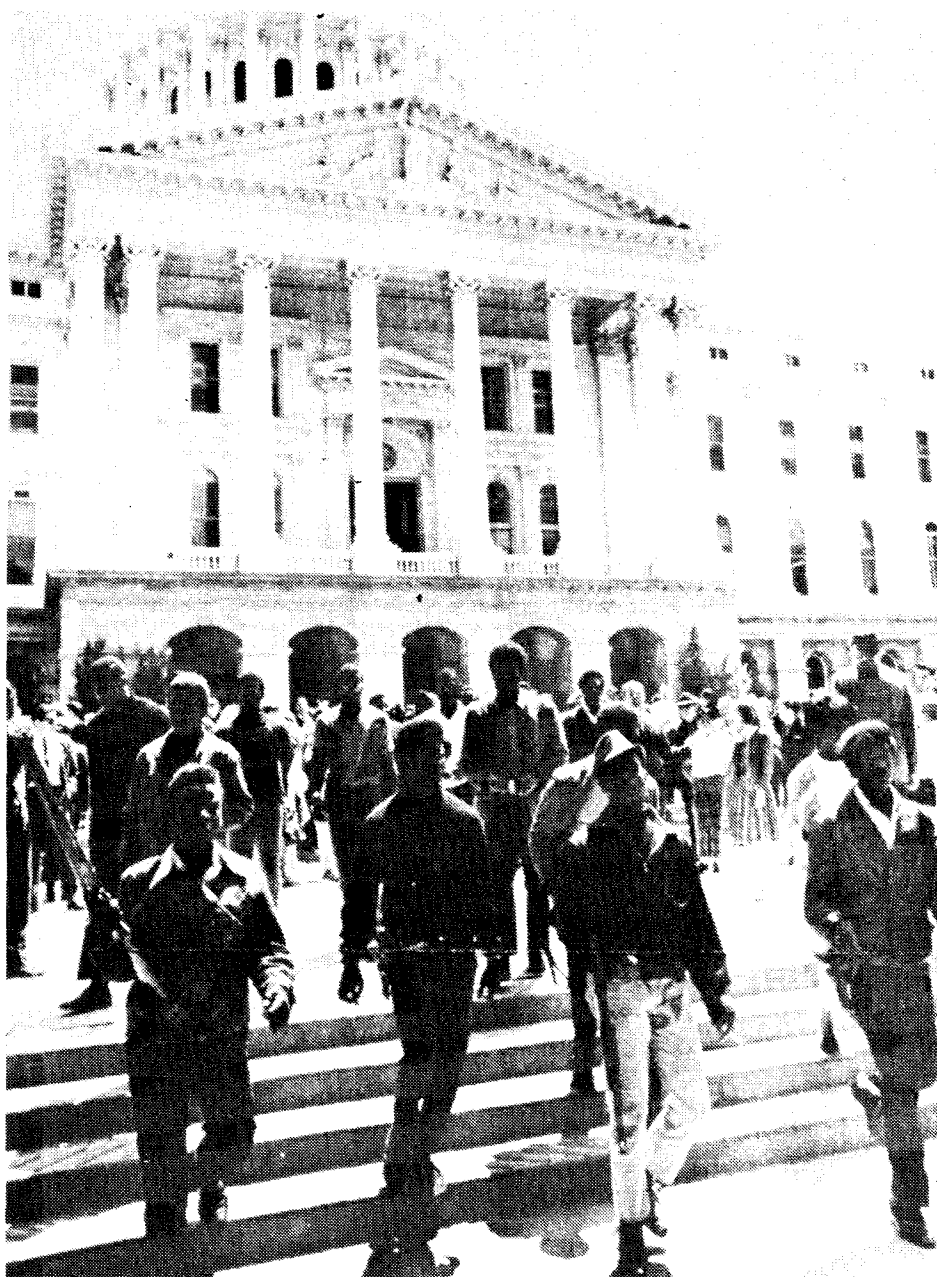
In California, where gun control is hottest today, it used to be perfectly legal to openly carry a loaded weapon—until Huey Newton's Black Panthers started to actually do so in the mid-1960s. In his book *The Black Panthers* Gene Marine describes the kind of scene

that got California its first gun law:

"The first confrontation with the police came on Oakland's Grove Street, just outside the Panthers' storefront headquarters, on a fall afternoon in 1966. [Bobby] Seale, Newton, and a half-dozen others had been in the headquarters (learning to field-strip weapons, Seale says) and walked out carrying their guns.... As they emerged, a police car drove by. The startled policeman immediately notified headquarters of the presence of a body of armed Negroes.... 'What are you doing with the guns?,' the cop demanded. 'What are you doing with your gun?,' Newton asked in reply."

Armed Panthers began patrolling the black community and appeared at anti-police brutality rallies throughout the area. In no time at all a conservative white legislator from an upper-class community next to Oakland introduced a bill to outlaw the carrying of loaded guns within incorporated areas. After an armed group of Panthers demonstrated against the bill in 1967 at the state capitol, it was rammed through. Soon there was a nationwide campaign, part of the FBI's "Operation CHAOS," to get the Panthers. In April 1968, two days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, 17-year-old Bobby Hutton was murdered by Oakland police, who fired more than a thousand rounds, then shot him in cold blood after he surrendered. In December 1969 hundreds of Los Angeles police and SWAT commandos, armed with M-60 machine guns, tear-gas launchers, dynamite and helicopters, attacked the L.A. Panther office with a five-hour barrage, then arrested and framed Panther leader Geronimo Pratt. That same year in Chicago, Panther leader Fred Hampton was murdered in bed by a police raid. "Gun control" was the first salvo in the war against the Panthers.

Today every black person in America knows that racial violence, fascist terror and cop terror are dramatically on the rise. When Chicago's anti-gun ordinance went through in March, the *Chicago Defender* conducted a poll of 205 black leaders. Sixty-eight percent were in favor of having guns for self-protection—and one-third reported that they had been threatened by a cop with a gun! (Yet black Democratic hustler Jesse Jackson remains loyal to the bosses by supporting gun control.) In February there was a wave of police terror against Chicago blacks following the killing of two white policemen. A terrorist dragnet (hailed by Mayor Byrne) sent an army of cops into the black community. Cars were capriciously stopped and searched, homes were broken into and ransacked, blacks hauled off and held without charges. Police burst into the home of a black paraplegic and shot him dead, claiming that the cripple had threatened them



Wide World

Black Panthers demonstrate against gun control at California state capitol, 1967.

with a baseball bat! And the existence of a fascistic police gang called the "Ghetto Raiders" has been exposed. It's no wonder that Chicago blacks are angry when gun control proponents seek to render them more helpless in the face of this terror.

Bonapartism, Fascism vs. Working-Class Revolution

The decline of capitalism is marked not only by a decline of economic power, but a degeneration of bourgeois parliamentary democracy. The ultra-right fringe now includes elements who openly advocate a military takeover (see article in this issue), and the accumulated SWAT teams and other police forces are now regarded by many bourgeois circles to be insufficient. So while the restraints on the fascists (KKK, Nazis, etc.) are being relaxed, the push is on to disarm the working class and blacks in particular, as part of a drive toward a "strong" state—in which the govern-

ment, pretending to balance between the classes, seeks to free itself from all restraints in the name of preserving "law and order."

The U.S. today is not such a bonapartist regime, although the appetites are visible and gun control is an element in that direction. The second amendment to the U.S. Constitution (the right to "keep and bear arms") exists because radical bourgeois democrats like Tom Paine and Sam Adams wanted measures to hinder the rise of despotic governments. Gun control kills, it kills blacks in particular, it kills in the service of a desperate ruling class which long ago became a bar to human progress and will seek to maintain its position through naked state terror. It is this class and its thugs which must be disarmed through victorious proletarian revolution. No gun control! For the right of black armed self-defense against racist terror! For labor/black mobilization to stop the fascists! ■

French Militant...

(continued from page 2)

they are part of a scheme for restoring French capitalism's international competitiveness by a plan of trustification and rationalization involving massive subsidies for research and capital investment, and massive layoffs. These government subsidies, added to the cost of compensation, will mean a considerable increase in taxes on the workers, redoubled inflation and stagnation (accompanied by still more layoffs) in the private sector. In the steel industry alone, 20,000 layoffs are foreseen. Furthermore the nationalizations are part of a grandiose protectionist schema, which as any Marxist knows, is an attack on the entire world proletariat. But you, like the rest of the reformists and centrists, merely whine about the "insufficiencies" of this campaign to reconquer the French national market,

a reconquest which, by the very nature of imperialism, could well end up being a military "reconquest," an imperialist war.

Mitterrand's "democracy" is a flimsy cover for his brutal campaign of capitalist austerity. That you take these "democratic" "concessions" by Mitterrand (to whom, the working class?) as good coin demonstrates a profound parliamentary cretinism. You "forget" that the immigrant workers are still being thrown out, that the cops continue to commit racist atrocities and break strikes....

Obviously the social-democratic experience here in France should serve as a lesson for the American workers. But you are incapable of drawing them, because you don't have a revolutionary program. This is amply proved by the particularly ridiculous and stupid last section of your article, entitled "The Way Forward," which purports to present a Trotskyist program.

We are told that a French Trotskyist party must "assemble cadre on the basis

of the transitional program, workers' revolution, proletarian dictatorship, socialism and communism." No less! But it's all just cheap phrasemongering. "Success in building a French party," you say, "will require not only a correct program, cadre and links to the working class. It will require also a correct policy." Now we get to the real stuff: the rotten maneuvering which passes for "tactics." But you can't give any lessons on this score to the Lamberts, Krivines and Mandels. Unfortunately for your writer, not being on the spot, he can't be more precise about the nature of this wheeling and dealing, which accounts for the paucity of the paragraph which sagely advises us to "advance transitional demands and calls to action" (unspecified).

But the worst slap in the face to Trotskyism is the remark, "Fortunately, France has a great many militants who consider themselves Trotskyists," adding in the same breath that none of them "come close to what the French working class needs." Imagine Trotsky writing that about the POUM during the

Spanish Civil War; after all, they "fortunately" considered themselves Trotskyists! And what is wrong with these groups? All we get is embarrassed silence since, after all, they have the same program as you! Further: "a series of splits and fusions"—who, what, where, when? It's the same old song and dance about the "family of Trotskyism," a mutual amnesty in which everybody is a little bit right and everybody is a little bit wrong, and one day we'll reach unity based on a slimy centrist programmatic eclecticism. "Policy" before program, "abstention" on defense of the USSR, "critical" support to the popular front, and tailoring reality to fit your centrist confusion: I doubt very much that this unappetizing mixture will be any more palatable to the American proletariat than it is for French workers.

Bolshevik greetings,
Gilles D., worker at Renault-Cléon,
member of the CGT union

P.S. Mitterrand is spelled with two r's and two t's. I believe Trotsky wrote something about "Attention to Trifles."

New York Times' Vested Interests

In terms of "fighting crime," New York state's "tough gun control law" has been a total bust—there are over two million illegal handguns in New York City alone, while crimes committed with guns are escalating. But that was never the real point of the draconian law which promised one year in prison—no exceptions—to anyone found carrying an unlicensed gun. A new campaign, spearheaded by Assemblyman John Dearie and supported by the *New York Times*, to make the wearing of "unlicensed" bullet-proof vests by citizens illegal, exposes these "law and order" gun control campaigns. After all, nobody was ever offed by a bullet-proof vest. And they're not even that useful anyway. Like gun control laws, this drive to license and run background checks of people who buy bullet-proof vests is intended to *increase the state's monopoly of legal violence*.

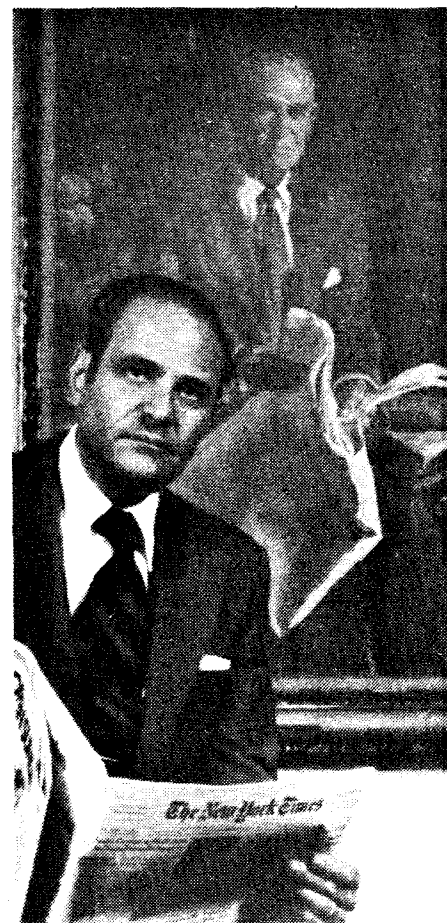
When the cops start firing, they don't want anyone shooting back—or even protected against their murderous bullets. Who are the "common criminals" they are worried about getting the vests? Mafia figures and hit-men have long had theirs. Street

thugs can't afford them. But the victims of the Greensboro massacre—self-proclaimed communists who were targeted by the Nazis/Klan, local and federal police—might be alive today if they had had bullet-proof vests. There is a rising tide of fascistic terror and cop violence in Reagan's America—and the capitalist state doesn't want the future victims protected against it.

The *Times* editorialized on March 29, "The legitimate demand for vests is not yet great, and it's hard to see how a reasonable licensing requirement would impose hardship." No hardship for the likes of wealthy *Times* publisher Arthur Ochs "Punch" Sulzberger, that is. We do recollect that a couple of years ago the *New York Post* revealed that "Punch" keeps a .38-caliber pistol (licensed, of course) in his desk drawer—not to mention the guards at the door of the *Times* building, and who knows what else. What about cab drivers, people who work late, subway workers, shopkeepers—there are millions of citizens Sulzberger doesn't think have any "legitimate" need for self-defense and protection. But then, he's got *his* piece, *his* cops, *his* courts.

The *Times* and the capitalist class it represents are just protecting their own "vested interests." "Prominent citizens," unlike the rest of us, can easily get a permit and businessmen just hire rent-a-cop guards or even a private army if they feel the official police are not adequate. Indeed, the *Times* reported recently that when its new distributor in Rhode Island had been threatened by two armed gunmen, it was quickly "provided with armed security guards" (*New York Times*, 15 April). Who's kidding who? The *Times* doesn't hesitate to go for the guns when *it* feels threatened.

This "vest control" drive has nothing to do with stopping "criminal terror," but with enforcing *cop* terror. Capitalism breeds poverty, frustration, race hatred and violent crime. The state's answer—more cops, more prisons, and now vests for "good" (bourgeois) people only—only makes for more violence. As part of our organizing to sweep away this decaying capitalist system and our defense of democratic rights, we oppose gun control laws and say "No guns for cops!"—capitalism's uniformed racist killers.



New York Times' publisher "Punch" Sulzberger: He's got his gun.

Halstead

California's Coup Senator

After Reagan, Führer Schmitz?

LOS ANGELES—With Klan-supported candidate Ronald Reagan in the White House, all the right-wing nuts in the country are crawling out of their holes to threaten the working class. California's Republican state senator John Schmitz is a case in point.

A loyal Reagan supporter, Schmitz last fall predicted that a failure of Reagan's programs would lead to "chaos, breakdown of law and order, mobs roaming the streets," and he had visions of the Soviets trying to "move in." "The best we could probably hope for is a military coup," he said, later adding cautiously: "A good military coup, not a bad military coup." Schmitz has some real connections for his "prediction"—he is an officer in the Marine Corps Reserve and brags about preparing "war games" for his "volunteer mobilization training unit" (*Los Angeles Times*, 30 October 1981).

Enjoying the publicity ensuing from this comment, Schmitz went on to launch a sicko, woman-hating, anti-

Semitic tirade in his capacity as member of the senate's constitutional amendment committee and the state commission on the status of women. When witnesses showed up to speak against his proposed constitutional amendment outlawing abortion, he denounced them in a press release as an "Attack of the Bulldozers," "murderous marauders," and "pre-organized infestations of imported lesbians from anti-male and pro-abortion queer groups in San Francisco and other centers of decadence." He denounced his L.A. audience as "a sea of hard, Jewish and (arguably) female faces," and called one witness, NOW activist Gloria Allred, a "slick bitch lawyeress" (*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 23 December 1981). LAPD chief Daryl "Choke Hold" Gates echoed Schmitz' anti-Semitism, asserting that the Russians were infiltrating a band of pickpockets under the guise of emigrating Soviet Jews in order to disrupt the 1984 summer Olympic Games to be held in Los Angeles!

There have of course been many right-wing nuts on the fringes of American legislatures, and Schmitz' past profile is not unusual. He was a leading member of the John Birch Society since 1963—until the current furor caused even the Birchers to ask "with regret" for his resignation from their national council. He openly admires the witchhunting tactics of former senator Joseph McCarthy, was briefly elected to the U.S. Congress in 1968 and ran on Wallace's ticket in 1972. Today Schmitz has enough political clout that he was recently welcomed at the White House by national security adviser William Clark.

What's new here is the shift to the right in the right-wing nut fringe. The old-line right fringe—people like Birchite ex-Congressman John J. Rousselot, or Senator Jesse Helms—merely advocated ultra-reactionary policies within the framework of American parliamentarism. But with the election of Reagan, such people have become part of the bourgeois *mainstream*, and the nut fringe now consists of people who openly advocate military dictatorship, including a growing number of open fascist groups (Klan, Nazis, etc.). And Carter's Democratic Party is just as responsible as Reagan's Republican Party. This year, for instance, California Klan leader Tom Metzger is running as a Democrat for U.S. Senate. So Schmitz, who is running for the U.S. Senate seat now held by reactionary Republican senator Hayakawa, plans to run in *both* capitalist party primaries on June 8.

The Schmitz coup-talk is indicative of the accelerating decay of American capitalism, which is breeding among the bosses a growing loss of faith in "democratic methods." And the economic turmoil is creating a base for a burgeoning and frustrated right-wing populism that could be fertile ground for recruiting the future shock troops of fascist terror. In a suggestive article on "Post-Conservative America" (*New*

York Review of Books, 13 May), Kevin Phillips observes that when the "New Right" voted for Ronald Reagan they did not vote for "free market" conservatism. Pointing to the recent electoral successes of such avowed fascist candidates as Metzger and Gerald Carlson in Michigan, he notes that the right-wing populists are looking for a more corporatist, authoritarian government to enforce their racist/chauvinist social values:

"...the morality of the majority would be upheld and enforced, though with politically convenient lapses; the star-spangled banner would wave with greater frequency and over more parades; increased surveillance would crack down on urban outbreaks and political dissidents perceived as extremists."

As the Cold Warriors in the White House heat up their new anti-Soviet war drive, the choice posed ever more starkly for humanity is socialism or barbarism. Although a minority today, two-bit Führer Schmitz and Kluxer Metzger are the face of barbarism. But it is not only the middle class and "Sun Belt" suburbanites who are becoming enraged with the economic turns of the screw. The American working class, which Phillips doesn't even consider a contender, and particularly its large black component, can't just sit back and take it as Reagan reaction drives them to the wall. The proletariat has the power, as shown by the AFL-CIO's mammoth march on Washington last September 19, and when it moves it won't be for a racist police state of Big Business and the New Right. But the pro-capitalist bureaucrats fear that a real mobilization of labor's millions to bring down Reagan would quickly escape the straitjacket of Democratic Party politics. It must directly confront the capitalist system of war and depression, and that requires a revolutionary, Trotskyist leadership that will sweep away the two-bit Führer Schmitzes and Kluxer Metzgers forever. ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office

Box 1377, GPO
New York, NY 10116
(212) 732-7860

Amherst

c/o SYL
P.O. Box 176
Amherst, MA 01004
(413) 546-9906

Ann Arbor

c/o SYL
P.O. Box 8364
Ann Arbor, MI 48107
(313) 662-2339

Berkeley/Oakland

P.O. Box 32552
Oakland, CA 94604
(415) 835-1535

Boston

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

Champaign

c/o SYL
P.O. Box 2009
Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 384-7793

Chicago

Box 6441, Main P.O.
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 427-0003

Cleveland

Box 91954
Cleveland, OH 44101
(216) 621-5138

Detroit

Box 32717
Detroit, MI 48232
(313) 868-9095

Houston

Box 26474
Houston, TX 77207

Los Angeles

Box 29574
Los Feliz Station
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 663-1216

Madison

c/o SYL
Box 2074
Madison, WI 53701
(608) 255-2342

New York

Box 444
Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10013
(212) 267-1025

San Francisco

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

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA

Toronto

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

Vancouver

Box 26, Station A
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2L8
(604) 681-2422

WORKERS VANGUARD

S.F. Mayor Feinstein Shoots Down Democratic Rights

Gun Control Kills Blacks

1984 is only 20 months away, and now they're coming to get your gun.

Who? Liberal groups like the National Coalition to Ban Handguns (NCBH), which supplied the money and expertise for the recently passed "model" anti-handgun ban in Morton Grove, Illinois. And who funds the NCBH? The U.S. Conference of Mayors—the front-line enemies of working people and minorities.

San Francisco's mayor Dianne Feinstein rose to power with endless campaigns against the "greedy" working people—from the infamous 1974 "Prop L" wage-cutting scheme to scabberding during the 1976 city workers strike. Now she's pushing an ordinance to ban outright the possession of handguns, with possible jail terms of up to six months. Of course her proposed ordinance would allow her pal, police chief Cornelius Murphy, to exempt selected individuals—like Feinstein, who is known to have carried a .38 pistol. (At any rate, the mayor has her own bodyguard, chauffeur and private limousine at taxpayers' expense.) And in case you're thinking of keeping your piece anyway, Chief Murphy vows his cops will have a "talk" with you—no doubt like the SF cops did in the notoriously racist "Operation Zebra" in 1974, when every black man became the target of an escalated "stop and search" campaign, and the cops gave South African-style "passes" to those already searched.

Following Feinstein's lead, other California cities like Sunnyvale, Berkeley and Pleasant Hill are considering gun bans. And statewide, a liberal group called Californians Against Street Crime and Concealed Weapons is pushing a November ballot initiative to restrict gun ownership. The initiative would require the registration of all "concealable firearms" by 2 November 1983, freeze the number of legal pistols and require mandatory jail terms for possession or sale of unregistered guns.

In Chicago, meanwhile, Mayor Jane Byrne recently pushed through an ordinance in the city council freezing the number of legally registered handguns. In 1981, when Byrne pulled her racist stunt of staying a few days at Cabrini Green, Chicago's hellish ghetto housing project, she brought along an army of city police to protect her and, incidentally, terrorize the local black population. But blacks are not to be permitted any armed self-defense. A black city council member who voted against the new ordinance spoke for all blacks when she stated that "the perception of black people happens to be that they need some protection."

...Only Outlaws, Cops and Fascists (and Publishers)...

With American capitalism sinking into a hellhole of unemployment lines, Reaganite racist nightriders, wholesale firing of trade unionists, "moral majority" book-burning and so on, the liberals like Feinstein and Teddy Kennedy have their "solution": strengthen the armed fist of the state, and disarm the working



UPI

class and black people. After all, the state is a specially organized body of armed men, as Engels observed—and the state jealously guards its monopoly of violence. American frontier capitalism once found it useful to supplement state power with an armed citizenry—so long as the "good ol' boys" used their guns against "injuns," blacks and Mexicans. But now the right to "keep and bear arms" could backfire against the ruling class, and so it is being targeted in the general offensive against democratic rights.

Sometimes they talk about fighting "violence," but the best-organized perpetrators of wanton handgun violence—the cops—are deliberately exempt from the liberals' gun control campaign. From 1967 to 1979, for instance, U.S. cops killed an average of 359 people a year, and half of those victims were black, according to a University of California-Berkeley study (*Amsterdam News*, 2 June 1979). In Chicago during 1974-78 cops shot over 500 people, 80 percent of them black or Latino (*Los Angeles Times*, 9 May 1981). And in Los Angeles in the 1975-78 period cops shot 278 people, killing 123 of them, according to the ACLU. Typically there was not a single prosecution of an LAPD cop for these killings!

Meanwhile the cops have been lobbying for gun control: just recently the International Chiefs of Police persuaded Reagan not to abolish the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF). Instead the BATF's notorious anti-gun operations will be

transferred to the Secret Service, where they will enjoy the holy mantle of "protecting the president." Disarming the killer cops and other government armed forces is the one thing which actually would cut down on shooting deaths under capitalism. In southern California's killer cop city you could start by taking away the LAPD's tanks, armored personnel carriers, helicopter gunships and automatic rifles, and dismantling the trigger-happy SWAT teams. But you won't find the gun control proponents advocating that.

The liberals try to cover their tracks by appealing to understandable fears of being robbed, mugged, raped or murdered. But gun control has nothing to do with fighting crime. A *San Francisco Chronicle* telephone poll in late February ran heavily against Feinstein's ordinance. Unlike the feminists' "alternative" of karate lessons, the handgun is rightly seen as the Great Equalizer: "This is a woman's issue," one pro-gun caller argued, while a woman transit worker noted, "I'd rather have Dianne catch me with a gun than have some thug catch me without one." SF gay activists defend gun control by evoking the 1978 assassination of gay supervisor Harvey Milk, but forget that under Feinstein's ordinance Milk's killer, an ex-supervisor and ex-cop, would certainly have had a gun (the problem was that Milk didn't). There is no solution to crime under capitalism, but self-defense is a whole lot easier when you got a gun!

These days the liberal authoritarian "we-know-what's-good-for-you" move-

ment takes in everything from gun control to outlawing smoking to banning coke machines in schools. The smugness of the whole thing is repulsive to the average person living in the grubby real world. And the hypocrisy factor of the leading gun-control liberals is simply breathtaking. Arthur O. Sulzberger of the *New York Times*, who steadily editorializes for gun control, has got *his* gun. And Feinstein's got her .38 and her police chief pal. But when, say, blacks in Santa Clara County get their homes shot up by the Klan, the liberals tell them to forget guns, call the police—who simply laugh it all off as a "practical joke." If the liberals get their way and guns are outlawed, only outlaws, cops, big shot politicians, publishers and fascists will have guns.

The real crime is the default of the left, such as the Communist Party who, in throwing in their lot with Democratic liberals, long ago capitulated to the disarming of the working class. In San Francisco, for instance, the labor darling of the reformist left, Charles Lamb of Local 2 of the Hotel, Restaurant and Bartenders Union, sits on Feinstein's gun control "task force" committee, along with Jack Crowley, head of the SF Central Labor Council. The labor misleaders' attempts to pacify the ruling class by surrendering hard-won rights will only aid the ruling class: virtually every serious American labor struggle has been met by armed violence from the state, from the railroad strikes of 1877 to the SF dock strike of 1934 to the 1978 coal miners strike.

Blacks and Guns: Liberals Worry

So now the liberals try to paint every proponent of handguns as a racist right-
continued on page 10



Ressmeyer

San Francisco's mayor Feinstein in police jump suit.