



Profits rise as low-cost housing disappears

DEFEND THE HOMELESS!

The December cold snap once again brought the plight of homeless people to front page news. Liberals hung their heads in despair. Do-gooders whined about Christmas charity. Politicians posed for the TV cameras with new, but empty promises.

Meanwhile, homeless people began to take action themselves. There were occupations of vacant buildings. Fences, meant to keep out the homeless, were torn down. Demonstrations broke out protesting the deaths on the streets and demanding homes for all.

It's good that the homeless are starting to fight. All working people should support them.

Bush and Congress — Same Old Reaganism

It is estimated that there are now some three million homeless people in this country. Forty percent are families with children. At least 20% have jobs, but don't make enough to cover the rent.

The growing homelessness is not some natural disaster. Nor is it a problem of the mentally ill, as Reagan claims. It is a product of the capitalist system of exploitation and the Reaganite offensive against the masses.

Bush says it's a "national shame." But then he plans to carry out the same Reaganite policies that have caused the shame. Congress will get its own pay raise. But, when it comes to the poor and working homeless, it's claimed that "budgetary restraints" must prevail. This is a bipartisan offensive of capitalism, of the Democrats cooperating with the Republicans to attack the working people.

Capitalist Profits Behind the Housing Crisis

The source of homelessness is not hard to find. The working people are being impoverished. Social programs are slashed to the bone. The concessions drive is pushing down wages and shoving workers out the door. Meanwhile, the rich are raking in tax breaks and high profits.

And they are driving up housing costs. Much of the wealth ripped from the workers has gone not only into Wall Street speculation, but also into real estate speculation. While low-cost housing is no longer being built for lack of government assistance, the existing cheaper housing is being eaten up in gentrification schemes, "warehousing" for condos, and the like. In some cities



Thousands marched in support of homeless, New York City, December 18.

there are severe housing shortages. And everywhere rents are growing so high that many working people can no longer afford to pay.

And why? So the capitalists can make more profits.

The Struggle of the Homeless Is a Class Battle

That is why the fight for relief for the homeless must be fought as class struggle. A struggle against the exploiters. A struggle against the government and both parties that serve the

capitalists.

This is a fight against evictions and to immediately open buildings for homeless people to stay in. It is a fight against high rents and for affordable housing. It is a fight against impoverishment, against wage cutting and the slashing of social benefits. It is a battle for jobs and livelihood.

The working people have been driven too far. It is time to make the rich pay for the crisis. □

For more articles on homeless, see pages 2-3

INTIFADA! Palestinian uprising enters its second year



The Palestinian uprising — the *intifada* — has entered its second year. The ongoing strikes and protests are a daily reminder to the Israeli Zionists and U.S. imperialists that they cannot simply trample on the Palestinian people for decades, occupy their land and deprive them of all rights. Resistance is broad, deep and constant.

The Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip want an end to 21 years of brutal military occupation. The current uprising is the focal point of the decades-long struggle for the liberation of Palestine. This movement springs from the fact that Israel was established as a racist state by uprooting and oppressing the native people of Palestine.

The uprising continued through December, right in the teeth of the greatest repression yet. With the declaration of Palestinian independence by

the PLO, Israel became frantic to prevent any optimism spreading among the Palestinians. It poured troops into the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The month began with strict curfews cover-

ing almost half the population. All gatherings were prohibited. Even TV and radio broadcasts were jammed, to prevent the Palestinians from hearing

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New year's editorial:

The working class must have its party!

The new year is beginning hard for the working class.

As Reagan passes the baton to Bush, the capitalist offensive against the masses is being given a new lease on life. The Democrats are preaching cooperation with Bush — as if the masses should forget all the horrors of the Reagan-Bush regime. The union officials are cheering Democratic control of Congress — as if the masses should forget the last eight years of Democratic collaboration with the Reaganites. Jesse Jackson and other "respectable" black leaders are suggesting that now Bush may "reach out" to minorities — as if the masses should forget the last eight years of Reagan-Bush bigotry.

But the poor and working masses face the daily harsh realities of life under capitalism. And Bush offers them only more of the same — im-

poverty, racism, dirty wars against the working people of other lands. The hope for change is not in cooperation with Bush or the Democrats or the union bureaucracy or the black upper crust. Hope lies in the joint struggle of the workers themselves. In the employed making common cause with the unemployed and the homeless. In the black, Latino, and white workers linking arms. In the women and men workers standing up together. In the workers uniting as a class to fight back against the capitalists and all their henchmen.

The Working Class Must Build Its Party

To face these difficult times, the working class must have its own po-

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Smash nazi skinheads

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Support Salvadoran struggle

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What path for Latin American struggle?

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General strike in Spain

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The struggle of the homeless

Thousands march in support of homeless in New York



On December 18, homeless people, tenants rights activists, high school students and other supporters of the homeless shouted "No housing, no peace!" as they marched for over an hour down West 57th Street in New York City. Demonstrators carried colorful signs and banners declaring: "These are our homes, stop evictions," "Homes not shelters," "Stop landlord greed, roll back rent," and "Warehousing apartments is a crime." Organizers estimated that the protest swelled to as many as 20,000 people.

A week before, five homeless people died from the cold in New York streets. When people came out December 13 to protest the deaths at City Hall, police barred the doors and arrested 37 demonstrators. Another seven protesters were arrested outside a West Side apartment building where landlords have "warehoused" 90% of the apartments. Only 13 apartments are now occupied as the owners try to remove the tenants and convert the building.

The December 18th marchers were outraged at Mayor Koch. The *New York Workers' Voice* pointed out that, among other crimes, "The Mayor wants to charge rent to the working homeless who have been forced by circumstance into the City's shelters — up to \$215 a month for a flop house cot in a vast armory." There are 80-100,000 homeless people in New York. Some 30,000 of them have been herded into overcrowded city shelters and welfare

hotels. Meanwhile, according to an official city report for 1987, another 100,000

HUD orders arrest of squatters in Detroit

On Christmas eve, two homeless people occupied a vacant house in Detroit that is owned by the federal government's Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Detroit head of HUD called the police to evict the squatters. When one of the homeless refused to leave, the policemen arrested him on trespassing charges. He faces a possible sentence of up to 90 days in jail.

Later, these two and another homeless person were threatened with arrest when they occupied another vacant, HUD-owned house. They left when HUD officials denounced them as "trespassers" and declared that trespassers will be prosecuted. One of the homeless is a mother of six children aged 4 to 13. She moved to Detroit from Tulsa, Oklahoma a year ago. She is unable to get welfare benefits, and her children can't go to school, because in both instances you must have an address to apply.

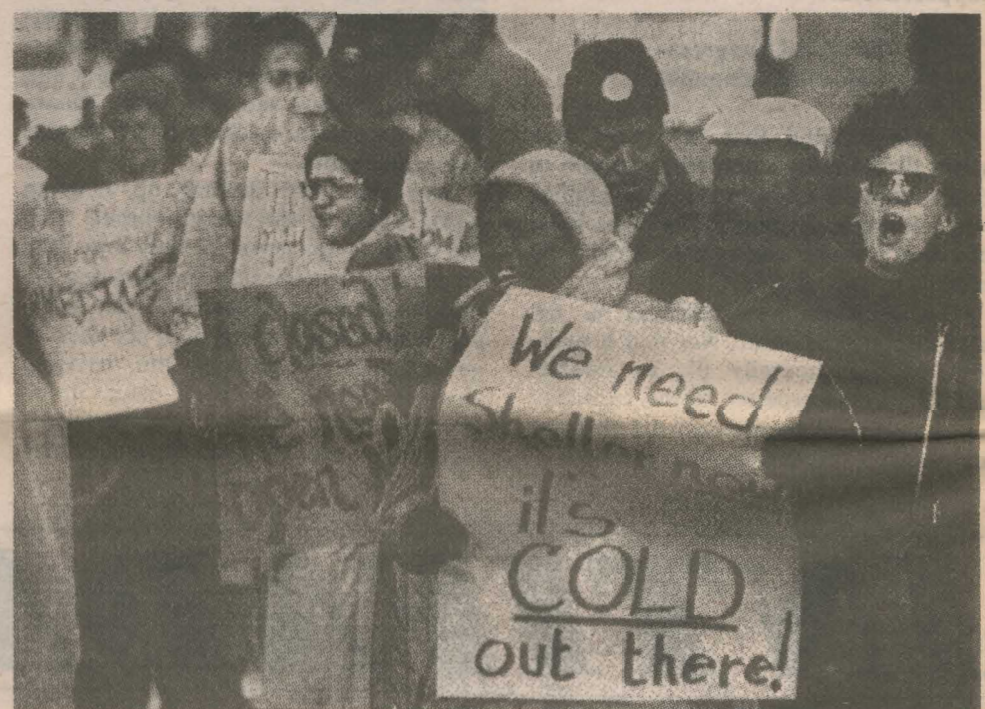
Arresting the homeless appears to be the preferred policy of the government to deal with the housing crisis. City ordinances against trespassing, panhandling, blocking sidewalks, and urinating in public are being used against the

people live with families, doubled or tripled up in mainly substandard housing. The report also notes that a million New Yorkers pay 40% and more of their income on rent. They are increasingly unable to feed their children and keep a roof over their heads at the same time.

Unfortunately, the organizers of the march are trying to turn the outrage at Koch and the horrible conditions away from mass struggle. They are trying to convert the downtrodden into voting fodder for the Democratic Party. At the rally Paul Gorman, one of the organizers, declared that the march was the "beginning of the upcoming mayoral campaign." And Jesse Jackson was a featured speaker. Still campaigning to become a Democratic Party president, Jackson declared, "You are homeless, but not voteless." He exhorted the

demonstrators to "march and vote, march and vote."

The Marxist-Leninist Party worked to combat these reformists and to help build the movement independent of both the capitalist parties. The *New York Workers' Voice* was distributed widely at the march and, before it, at work places around the city. It emphasized, "Koch's heartless policies of starving out the homeless must be defeated. But we cannot settle for a 'kinder, more gentle' housing crisis of a successor. What we need is a fight against the rich and their government. What we need is a mass movement that fights through demonstrations and other militant actions." It declared, "Make the rich pay for the housing crisis!" (Dec. 13 issue, by MLP-New York Branch.) □



Protesters in Detroit denounce HUD bureaucrats for evicting homeless people from abandoned HUD houses.

homeless in Detroit, Atlanta, Portland, Oregon and elsewhere across the country. Even getting into a shelter is no protection. It is reported, for example, that in one year's time police made 252 arrests at a single shelter in Phoenix, Arizona. The homeless people were hauled to jail for failing to show up in court on such charges as trespassing.

HUD's Fraud of "Privatization"

But what of the claims by president-elect George Bush and his new head of HUD, Jack Kemp, that "urban homesteading" can solve the homeless crisis? HUD's policies in Detroit prove the fantasy of such "privatization" schemes.

HUD has 600 houses in Detroit which it regards as suitable for homesteading.

HUD officials claim that a homeless person can lease one of these houses for six months for only \$1. But first they must put in an application proving they have the resources to pay utility bills, property taxes and insurance costs. They must also have the resources to rehabilitate the house. And they must also have the resources to buy the house after six months, paying HUD 90% of what it has cost the agency. What homeless person can meet such requirements?

In the meantime, HUD is calling out the police to arrest the homeless. Obviously, HUD's promises to help the homeless are a fraud. The homeless will have to help themselves, with the support of all working people, by fighting against the government. □

D.C. activists tear down fences against homeless

Activists from the movement of homeless people tore down fences around four downtown subway stations Christmas morning. The fences had been erected last fall and winter to stop homeless people from trying to escape the cold in the subway stairwells. The action was part of a protest against the

city's refusal to open unused buildings to thousands of street people. According to homeless advocates, city shelters are filled well beyond capacity and at least 3,000 homeless people sleep on the streets of the nation's capital each night. □

The Workers' Advocate



Theoretical-Political Newspaper of the Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

Letters:

The Workers' Advocate
P.O. Box 11942
Ontario Street Station
Chicago, IL 60611

Orders and subscriptions:

Marxist-Leninist Publications
P.O. Box 11972
Ontario Street Station
Chicago, IL 60611

Via 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): 75¢ for single copy
\$4.50 for 6 issues; \$9. for 12. From distributor: 25¢. ISSN 0276-363X

Boston hotel workers demand housing

The contract for 3,500 hotel and restaurant workers at nine Boston hotels came up last month. And the workers called for affordable housing as one of their principal demands.

This is an indication of the depth of the current housing crisis. Boston hotel workers average \$7.50 an hour. The so-called "back of the house" workers — housekeepers, dishwashers, laundry workers, cooks, etc. who make up 60% of the hotel work force — receive less.

They are having a hard time keeping a roof over their heads and feeding their families at the same time. From 1986 to 1987 the median rent in Boston rose by 68%. Boston now has the highest absolute housing costs for working class families in the continental United States.

Obviously the workers must fight to get decent housing. They need at least a

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The struggle of the homeless

Bush names Kemp to head war on the poverty-stricken

Liberal Democrats and the respectable black leaders are leaping with joy over Bush's talk of a "kinder, gentler America." Most recently they have seized on his statement that homelessness "is a national shame" to claim that Bush is different from Reagan. Cooperation with Bush has become the favorite tune sung in Congress.

But somehow the liberals missed the fact that Bush's statement on the homeless was made in defense of Reagan's policies, and that Bush has declared his intentions to continue on the same rotten-road.

Bush Defends Reagan's Shameful Attacks on the Poor

On December 19, Bush named the ultra-conservative Jack Kemp to be his Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). At the press conference he was asked point-blank if the Reagan administration doesn't bear responsibility for the homelessness.

Bush replied, "Some parts of the homelessness have been adversely affected by changes in — in how the mentally ill are — are approached. There are some understandable restraints on just totals that the federal government can spend... Everybody should bear responsibility — everybody, everybody, individual, everyone. Because it is a national shame and I want our administration to do our level best to help solve it." (*New York Times*, Dec. 20)

Amazing! Bush actually repeats the Reaganite lie that homelessness is really just a problem of the mentally ill. He defends Reagan's gargantuan spending cuts for housing and other social programs as "understandable restraints." And then he shifts the blame from the Reagan administration to "everybody." This is different from Reagan only in the fact that Bush puts a "kinder" mask over Reagan's attacks on the poor and working people.

More Cuts in Social Programs

But what then does Bush plan to do about homelessness? It's the same old Reaganite drive of enriching the capitalists by impoverishing the masses.

In the name of solving the budget deficit, Bush is again calling for mammoth cuts in social welfare programs. As far as housing is concerned, Bush will not restore the Reaganite cuts. Oh no, he says, "The federal government simply doesn't have the resources to solve this problem."

Tax Breaks for the Rich

But what about taxing the huge corporations, the big banks, the rich to get the money needed? Bush won't consider it. In fact, he says he chose Jack Kemp to head HUD because "he was a driving force in Congress between cutting the tax rates in 1981 and...cutting them again" for the rich.

Reaganite "Trickle Down"

No, the federal government won't help the homeless. Instead Bush will carry out what his new HUD secretary, Jack Kemp, called a "war on poverty that I plan to conduct through free enterprise."

Kemp's plan includes "enterprise zones" where the government would provide tax breaks and other incentives to business development in the inner cities. But this is just Reaganite "trickle down." Businessmen get handouts from the government, and somehow

that's supposed to trickle down to the benefit of working people. But under Reagan this plan made the rich richer and the poor poorer. Why would it be any different under Bush?

Reaganite "Privatization"

Kemp's plan also includes what he calls "urban homesteading" — the selling off of public housing to tenants. This "privatization" scheme is also nothing

new.

For years HUD has been trying to unload its old and decaying public projects on the tenants who live there. Like every other slum lord, HUD does not want to pay for necessary repairs and remodeling. It's cheaper to make the tenants pay. So HUD simply converts some projects into "co-ops" where in the name of tenants "managing their own communities" the poor must pay all of the bills and eventually buy the project.

As well, HUD systematically sells off the houses it owns. But you have to have the money to pay for them — money that no homeless and few working people can afford.

These schemes won't solve the housing crisis. They won't help the homeless. But they may make some rich folks richer still. That's the Reaganite reality of Bush's program, no matter how many "kinder, more gentle" words he uses to cover it up. □

As poverty grows:

Reagan spits on the homeless

Reagan has done more than his share in creating the terrible homeless situation. His cutbacks in social programs, and the capitalist concessions drive he has been heading, have led to increasing poverty. Meanwhile the Reagan administration, with the approval of the Democratic controlled Congress, also slashed federal housing subsidies by over 75% since 1981 — from 32 billion to 7.5 billion dollars.

But Reagan is nothing if not a liar. So it comes as little surprise that before retiring from office Reagan has once again blamed homelessness not on his administration and the capitalists, but on the homeless themselves.

In a December 22 interview with ABC News, Reagan arrogantly declared, "They make it their own choice for staying out there. There are shelters in virtually every city, and shelters here (in Washington D.C.), and those people still prefer out there on the grates or the lawn to going into one of those shelters."

Of course, Reagan wouldn't notice that in December the shelters were filled well beyond capacity and tens of thousands of homeless people had nowhere to go but the streets.

Nor would Reagan notice that the majority of shelters are abominations. The crowding, regimentation, frequent police harassment, and other lousy treatment often drive people from the shelters.

The prison-like shelters are no solution to homelessness. Poverty must be struck down, evictions must be stopped, rents must be rolled back, and affordable homes must be found if the housing crisis is to be solved. But Reagan doesn't care.

In fact, he repeated the claim that "a large portion" of the homeless population is "mentally impaired." They should be in institutions, he argues, but the liberals changed the rules and let them out.

Reagan doesn't want to admit that homelessness is much broader than the mentally ill. He won't speak of the estimated 20% of the homeless who hold full or part-time jobs, according to the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Or to the millions who can find no work. And, even with respect to the "mentally im-

paired," Reagan doesn't want to admit that his budget cuts have been responsible for the lack of social services, training, and housing that these people need to exist outside of the institutions. Reagan's attitude is just lock them away, whether they need to be or not. And then Reagan's budget cutting also undermines the mental hospitals.

But what can you expect from such a capitalist dog? In the same interview he claimed that "hundreds of ads" in the *Washington Post* prove that the unemployed just don't want to work. □

BOSTON

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big wage increase and cost-of-living raises that are indexed to the actual rise in housing and other essential living expenses.

But, unfortunately, they were sold a bill of goods by the leaders of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union. The union bureaucrats called for a joint venture with the hotel capitalists. The hotels are to put into a housing fund only five cents an hour for each worker. And apparently only up to a total of \$500,000. Nevertheless, the union hacks claim this fund will provide money to build new, low-income housing; to lower interest payments on mortgages; and to help subsidize rent.

What a pipe dream. The small contribution from the capitalists will hardly buy even a couple of houses at Boston prices, much less do all the other wonders claimed by the union hacks. And, it appears, the hotels may get a partnership in managing the fund and any housing built. This can only be a noose around the workers' necks.

Even as such, this plan can only take place if the Taft-Hartley law is changed to allow the union to participate in such a fund. The contract stipulates that the law must be changed by June 1 or the money will be put, instead, into the union health and welfare fund. Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative Joseph Moakley have rushed forward to declare they will introduce such legislation. These Democratic liberals are for solving the housing crisis through "voluntarism" and "private ventures," just like Reagan and Bush. But they prefer that the union bureaucrats be made partners to managing the crisis on the backs of the workers.

Such schemes for cooperation between the workers and the capitalists won't help the workers get decent housing. It is little surprise that the union hacks agreed to the terms of this contract without letting the workers vote on it. It's up to the rank-and-file workers to fight for their own interests, a fight against both the capitalists and their new found partners, the union misleaders. □

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Looting federal funds while savings and loans go bankrupt

When looters stole the belongings of unfortunate passengers who died when Flight 103 crashed in Lockerbie, Scotland, they were put in jail. When marauding capitalists looted the federal deposit insurance of billions of dollars by taking over bankrupt savings and loans institutions, they were organized, recruited, and granted guarantees of their money by the federal banking authorities.

In December this became a feeding frenzy, as billions of dollars were looted in an attempt to meet the December 31 deadline for certain tax breaks.

The Government Pays \$5 Billion to Give Revlon a Savings and Loan

A typical deal, on December 28, involved five bankrupt Texas savings and loans with total assets of \$12.2 billion, but with equally heavy debts. Ronald Perelman, the chairman of the Revlon cosmetics empire, heads a group of investors who are taking over the whole thing for \$315 million. Meanwhile what did the agencies that insure depositors' accounts do? The Federal Home Loan Bank Board, and its insurance agency, the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC), will pour in 16 times more money, a total of \$5.1 billion, to bring these institutions out of bankruptcy.

The federal banking authorities get nothing for these billions. But the Perelman group gets control of \$12.2 billion in assets, almost 40 times their investment of \$315 million.

But that isn't all. Perelman's group also gets tax breaks that may possibly total well over \$315 million. These tax breaks are supposedly to cover the cost of the losses these institutions suffered. But, as we have seen, it is the federal agencies that covered these losses, not Perelman. The net result is that Perelman and company pay nothing. Instead the government is paying this rich capitalist and his cohorts for the horrible burden of adding \$12.2 billion to their financial holdings.

We don't have full information on the Perelman deal. But it is typical that the FSLIC also gives guarantees to the new owners that they won't lose their original investment in case the savings and loans continue to lose money. If true in this case, then Perelman and

friends not only will get their \$315 million back from the government in tax refunds. They may get it back a second time in guarantees.

If the savings and loan companies make profits, however, they will go to these new investors.

222 Sweetheart Deals

In this and other deals, expected to cover 222 institutions in 1988, the FSLIC paid out billions of dollars to finance the marauding profiteering of Ford Motor Co., Revlon, former Treasury Secretary William Simon, and other rich capitalists. It is not protecting the small depositor but handing over billions to the rich.

And what happens if these savings and loans continue to lose money? Then the FSLIC will be liable for even more billions in the future.

Meanwhile, the FSLIC wants to make 400 more such deals in the coming years to take care of the remaining bankrupt

savings and loans. The FSLIC itself is technically bankrupt, because its liabilities exceed its income. But that doesn't stop it from paying out more and more to the capitalists.

Who Will Pay for the Bailout of the Savings and Loans?

The bankruptcy of one out of every six savings and loans institutions is one of many signs that the so-called "Reagan boom" is a disaster waiting to happen. It is a threat to the entire banking system. Congress is discussing a bailout to the bankers of \$50 to \$100 billion in addition to the billions the FSLIC has already spent.

Undoubtedly the workers will be asked to shoulder much of this burden through higher taxes, higher user fees, and cutbacks in programs. This will be done in the name of solving a national problem, facing everyone. But, the ongoing buyouts of the savings and loans show that a disaster for the

masses is just a bonanza for the rich. The capitalists are making even more money off this banking disaster than these savings and loans companies would make in a normal year of operation.

Why should the workers pay for handing over banks to Revlon Inc., to Ford Motor Co., and to the other speculators who are taking over the savings and loans institutions? Let the capitalists pay to keep their banking system afloat. And if it is too much for them, and if the workers have to pay for the big banks, then they should control them as well. This doesn't mean appointing some bureaucrat to oversee them, who later will become a big capitalist himself, like William Simon. It can only mean taking over the whole economy and instituting a better system, without capitalists and banker-speculators. It means replacing bankrupt capitalism with workers' socialism. □

January 22 - Demonstrate for abortion rights!

This fall thousands of activists around the country stood up for women's right to abortion. In October mass mobilizations confronted the right-wing organization, Operation Rescue, in the streets, deflating its campaign against women's abortion rights and interrupting its plans to shut down abortion clinics. In December, hundreds more people came out in cities such as Atlanta, New York City, and Hartford, Connecticut to protest Operation Rescue's Reaganite conferences and further attacks on clinics.

January 22 is the anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision in Roe vs. Wade that gave constitutional protection to the right to choice on abortion. Demonstrations have been called nationwide in support of the right to abortion. A pro-choice march has also

been announced for April 9, in Washington, D.C. **All workers and progressive people should come out and lend their strength to the actions in their area.**

It is a basic democratic right that each woman should be free to choose for herself whether to get an abortion. Whatever one's personal views on abortion, it is essential to protect women's rights on this matter. This is all the more crucial considering the difficult conditions currently faced by working women in terms of housing, jobs, child care and health care.

The so-called "right-to-life" anti-abortion movement was spawned by the right wing. It masks its attacks on the people in the name of "pro-life" demagoguery. It uses an emotional "pro-life" appeal against abortion to recruit zealots for its entire Reaganite program, which includes social cuts (including assistance to poor mothers and children); racist bigotry; and aggression around the world. It even has its own terrorist wing which bombs abortion clinics. On Christmas morning, for example, they set fire to three abortion clinics in Dallas, causing \$90,000 worth of damages.

Unfortunately, the National Organization of Women (NOW), which called the January 22 demonstrations, and those

pro-choice organizations which are close to the Democratic Party, do not believe in militant struggle against the anti-abortionists. They are **against** confronting the "right-to-lifers" in front of the abortion clinics. Instead they advocate relying on the police to restrain the "pro-life" terrorists, and they advocate voting Democratic and lobbying Congress.

The fallacy of this path was shown again and again by recent experience. In New York, for example, on December 4, Democratic Mayor Koch's police department protected a "right-to-life" blockade of an abortion clinic for five hours, despite vehement protests by patients, staff, and other supporters of abortion rights.

Actions which draw in the masses of workers and activists, and directly confront the right wing's politics and activities, are the way to defeat the "right-to-life" movement, and defend abortion rights. The connection between the capitalist offensive and the attacks on women's rights should be exposed. The movement should base itself on the militancy and the interests of the working masses.

Demonstrate January 22! Defend women's abortion rights! □

The politics of disaster relief

Last month the press was full of self-congratulations about the flow of foreign aid to the Armenian earthquake victims. Oh, how loving and good-natured the Western capitalist governments allegedly were. And indeed, many people around the world, including the overseas Armenian community, were deeply concerned about the plight of the Armenians. But the Western governments and mass media had something on their minds besides humanitarianism.

After all, it was just a few months ago that Hurricane Joan devastated Nicaragua. Where was the outpouring of aid and human concern then? Instead the U.S. government blamed the natural disaster on the Sandinistas. And the European agencies halfheartedly gave a few pennies, saying that they were bored with constant requests from Nicaragua. The Western governments let it be known that "humanitarian" aid depended on the Nicaraguan government bowing down to their demands.

And what happened last September when floods hit Bangladesh, putting most of the country under water? Only a bit of foreign help arrived. There weren't sufficiently interesting political and strategic goals in Bangladesh. So the Western governments just sat on their hands and talked about Bangladesh as a hopeless case. Meanwhile Oxfam and some UN hu-

manitarian organizations did take some part in relief work, but they did their best to divert the revolutionary movement against the Bangladesh dictatorship of General Ershad into nonpolitical do-goodism. (See the views of the Bangladesh activists, reprinted in the December issue of the *Workers' Advocate Supplement*.) And when a powerful hurricane hit in November, continuing the destructive work of September's floods, it barely made the Western news.

The Western governments choose very carefully where to give some aid, calculating the return to expect from their largess. And they chose carefully when they got excited about Armenia. Armenia is in a strategic position. The Western governments want to increase their influence in the Soviet Union, and they have a great deal of interest in winning positions among the squabbling nationalities there.

The working people around the world are concerned with the disasters that beset their fraternal toilers in other countries. Many people give generously and warmly to what they regard as useful relief funds. But the bourgeoisie and the governments calculate coldbloodedly which disasters can be used to advance their political aims. And it is only those disasters which get the full dose of Western "humanitarianism." □



Washington gets huge pay raise

There's not a day that goes by when we aren't told again about the budget deficit. Housing subsidies must be slashed, to balance the budget. Health care must be cut, to balance the budget. Social security must be held down, to balance the budget. Welfare recipients must be driven from the rolls, to balance the budget. Taxes on the working people must be raised, to balance the budget.

But where is all the concern for budgetary restraint when it comes to the pay of federal officials?

Last month the Commission on Executive, Legislative and Judicial Salaries recommended that salaries for top federal officials be increased by at least 50%. Congress doesn't have to approve this increase. It will simply go into effect by executive order unless Congress specifically holds a vote against the increases. And no one expects Congress to act.

Under this plan congressmen would get a raise from the current \$89,000 a year to \$135,000 a year. Presently each member of Congress already earns more than the salary for 98% of the people in this country. Meanwhile last year Congress wouldn't even pass a piddling increase in the minimum wage.

As well, the commission's plan would raise the President's salary from \$200,000 a year to some \$350,000 a year by 1993. And Cabinet-level officers would get an increase from the present \$99,000 to \$175,000 a year.

Obviously "balancing the budget" has just become a code word for impoverishing the masses while enriching the elite. The capitalists, including the fat congressmen who do their bidding, are looking after their own interests. The workers must fight them if we are to defend our own, working class, interests. □

DOWN WITH RACISM!

Protests against racist skinheads in Seattle



Downtown Seattle, December 17.

On December 10 and 17, over 500 anti-racist activists took part in two militant protests against racist skinheads and neo-nazis in the Seattle, Washington area.

The white supremacist group Aryan Nation called a rally on Whidby Island 30 miles from Seattle. They were commemorating one of their would-be little fuhrers who was burned up during a confrontation with the FBI in 1984. They were hoping to use this rally to recruit young people into their racist faction of skinheads.

In November, a gang of racist skinheads in Portland, Oregon had beaten three Ethiopian immigrants with baseball bats, killing one of them. This was the latest in a string of racist outrages by the neo-nazis in the northwest. The anti-racist activists were not going to let them rally in peace.

At the December 10 racist get-together on Whidby Island, only 22 many fascists and skinheads showed up. Meanwhile, despite the isolated location and the brief time to organize, 300 anti-racists came out to loudly denounce them.

Many of the activists were burning mad and wanted to confront the neo-nazis. However, it became clear that a deal had been struck by some of the main reformist organizers of the action with the police (and with the Guardian Angel friends of the police) to prevent any kind of confrontation. A section of activists, including those from the MLP,

opposed this. A heated debate broke out on whether to change the rally site to at least be in view of the neo-nazi gathering. But the reformists were able to shout down the demands of the more militant section of activists. The reformist organizers also used physical restraint to prevent a confrontation.

Another action was called for the next week at the *Seattle Times* building in downtown Seattle to protest the promotion of the neo-nazis in the daily press. The MLP worked with some militant activists to prepare for this demonstration. They jointly produced a leaflet with the call: "March against racist attacks! Smash the nazi skinheads!" Thousands were distributed at high schools, community colleges and other places where young people congregate and at several factories and work places. The anti-racist literature was well received, with many people expressing interest in coming to the demonstration.

The anti-racists marched 200-strong through downtown Seattle on December 17. The slogans "Fight racism with militant action!" and "Nazis, thugs for the rich!" and "Death to the Nazis, death to the Klan!" could be heard echoing through the streets.

These anti-racist actions sent a clear message. The neo-nazis and racist skinheads cannot spew their filth and carry out their cowardly crimes without stirring the wrath of the workers and anti-racists. □



Rally against racists on Whidby Island, December 10.

Students repel skinhead attack in Detroit suburb

On November 29, six racist skinheads attacked a black and a white student inside Groves High School in Birmingham, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. Within seconds several other students, both black and white, jumped in to beat back the racist attack.

School officials and local police saved the racist thugs from being thoroughly

punished by the anti-racist students, providing the racists with a safe escort out of the building.

Afterwards the police treated the racists with kid gloves. The police failed to lodge any assault charges against them. Only the three who were not students were charged at all, and that was only for "loitering on school property."

At dismissal time for the next two days police patrols ringed the schools to prevent a just revenge from being carried out against the racists. And school officials transferred two of the

skinheads to another high school for their own protection. Racist thuggery had only served to stir up a hornet's nest of anti-racist sentiment. □

Demonstrations hit racism in New York City

Anger against racist attacks is seething in New York City.

On December 11, anti-racists marched in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn. They protested the racist attack on a 13-year-old black youth. Ikeem Davis was beaten by four racist thugs in October as he was leaving a hospital in this segregated neighborhood after visiting his mother.

The day before, 300 people demonstrated in Brooklyn to denounce the growing racist attacks throughout the city. The protesters called for the creation of a permanent special prosecutor to handle cases of racist terror.

And on December 3, hundreds of people shouted "No justice, no peace!" as they marched against racism in the

113th police precinct in southeast Queens.

This precinct was recently shaken up, and 50 police officers were transferred to other areas, due to a series of charges of racist brutality including sexual harassment of black and Latino women. The Patrolmen's Benevolent Association threatened a job action in defense of the racist cops. Meanwhile District Attorney Santucci, who made a name for himself organizing the cover-up of the Howard Beach attack, has granted all officers immunity in the grand jury investigation of the charges filed against them. The anti-racists came out to protest these actions in defense of the racist cops. □

The Larry Davis case and police drug dealing

Larry Davis, a 22-year-old black man, has now been acquitted for the second time of attempted murder of nine police officers. Mayor Koch, Police Commissioner Ward and the entire New York City police department are howling. The trial became an exposure of police crime and vengeance.

When Davis was a teenager, he was drawn into a ring of drug dealing and crime by corrupt police in the 44th precinct in the Bronx. But he eventually knew too much, and was in a position to do the police harm by informing on them. They decided to do away with him, and nine policemen stormed his apartment in the South Bronx. But Davis was armed. He wounded six officers, escaped the apartment, and eluded a manhunt for 17 days.

The police usually bury the evidence of their terror. But Davis lived to tell the dirty tale, and two separate juries voted

12-0 to acquit him, ruling that he justly acted in self-defense.

But, of course, the ruling class wasn't about to let him off scott free. On December 15 he was sentenced to five to 15 years in prison for illegal weapons possession. Self-defense against police terror is not tolerated by the system. The weapons charge was merely the pretext to put Davis away and use this as a threat to others who think of resisting police attacks.

On the other hand, Bernhard Goetz — the subway vigilante who shot down four black youth — received only six months on his conviction of illegal weapons possession. Gunning down black youth is not only tolerated, it is condoned.

(Based in part on the November 29 issue of "New York Workers' Voice," paper of the MLP-New York.) □

El Estandarte Obrero

Spanish supplement to THE WORKERS' ADVOCATE,
Voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the USA



By mail: \$0.50 for single copy From vendor: \$0.25
Subscription: \$3.00 for 6 issues \$6.00 for 12 ISSN 0276-4954
Order from: Marxist-Leninist Publications P.O. Box 11972
Ontario Street Station Chicago, IL 60611

The Workers' Advocate Supplement



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December 20, 1988
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Chicago, IL 60611

Rates: Via 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): \$1 for single copy; \$12 for year. From vendor: 50¢ ISSN 0882-6366



Strikes and workplace news

Postal workers picket Sears

On December 20, about 35 postal workers carried out a lunch-time picket line at the Sears Tower in Chicago. They were protesting the contracting out of postal work to Sears.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has established postal stations at 10 Sears stores in the Chicago area. They are staffed by Sears' employees, who are paid on Sears' meager pay scale, and who are not in the postal unions. This is a pilot program which, if successful, will be expanded through the midwest and eventually all over the country.

The Sears project is part of the piecemeal privatization of the postal service. Contracting out work and worksharing with major mailers is being combined with automation to eliminate postal jobs and replace them with low-paid, nonunionized workers. At the same time, the USPS is using the threat of privatization to force postal workers to slave harder and faster at their present jobs.

This vicious cycle must be fought. The Marxist-Leninist Party has been

denouncing these attacks. *Chicago Workers' Voice* articles against the Sears scheme have been widely distributed at Chicago postal stations and at the recent picket line.

But, unfortunately, the leaders of the postal unions are not up for much of a fight. The heads of the letter carriers union are praising Postmaster General Anthony Frank as a supposed fighter against privatization, even while he carries out the Sears scheme and chops off other pieces of the postal service. Meanwhile, Moe Biller of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) has praised the Sears move. He called it a return to the traditional American values of the "general store." Biller did make a token appearance at the picket line in Chicago. But perhaps his friendliness with the USPS projects explains why the APWU leaders failed to mobilize many postal workers to join the picketing, even though the main Chicago post office is only three to four blocks away from the Sears Tower. □

Resist speedup at St. Paul Ford plant

Ford Motor Co.'s payment of profit-sharing checks to its workers has convinced some people that Ford is an enlightened employer, with the interests of its workers at heart. But don't bet on it. Ford has taken the profits out of the hides of its workers through vicious speedup. Just ask the workers at Ford's truck plant in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Ford's speedup drive is sending the truck workers to an early grave. One result of the speedup has been a huge increase in accidents. In 1981 there were 122 injuries reported. In 1987 the number of injuries had grown to 475.

But Ford is still not content. It wants to squeeze even more work out of its employees. Recently Ford demanded that each worker sign an allotment — a

letter agreeing to carry out a certain workload — even if they'd never worked a particular job before. If the worker is unable to maintain the quota stipulated in the allotment, he or she can then be fired.

And what support do the workers have in fighting this blackmail? None! Their union leadership has not taken a position on the issue — it prefers to leave the decision to sign to each individual worker.

But workers are fighting back anyhow. While some workers have been pressured into signing an allotment, many militants have refused. They are beginning a fight against Ford's vicious slavedriving. □

3,000 march for farm workers

On November 19, over 3,000 marchers took to the streets of San Francisco in support of the farm workers' boycott of California table grapes. The boycott was called to demand that the California

grape growers stop using five pesticides which pose severe health threats to farm workers, their families and to consumers.

The marchers also denounced the

police for brutally beating Dolores Huerta, a top official of the United Farm Workers union. And they condemned the courts for denying farm workers the right to organize. A few days before the march, the state supreme court ruled that companies have a right to keep union organizers out of the labor camps

where the farm workers are often forced to live.

On their route, the marchers passed several supermarkets. At each store, the crowd demanded that the owners stop selling grapes and they encouraged consumers to refuse to buy the grapes. □

LTV workers vote to strike

In 1986, LTV workers went out on strike. Their union leaders ended the strike and agreed with LTV that workers would give up \$3.15 an hour in wage and benefit concessions in exchange for participating in a profit-sharing plan.

For the first nine months of this year, LTV boasted a \$453.7 million profit. This should have brought a \$5,000 bonus for each LTV worker. However, LTV announced in November that it was making an "accounting change" that allowed it to show a \$2.26 billion loss instead of the big profits it actually made. LTV claimed it was not obligated to pay profit-sharing bonuses nor would it meet health cost obligations to its workers — active or retired.

LTV workers are mad! They demanded to hold a strike vote. And they overwhelmingly voted to authorize a strike.

But so far, the union has not set a date for the walkout.

Thus opens the battles in the steel industry for 1989. Some 80,000 workers in basic steel face contracts this year. The steel capitalists are still out for concessions. And the leaders of the United Steel Workers are all too willing to give what the capitalists want.

In aluminum the USWA hacks have already proposed a sellout contract, six months before the old contract expires. They are trying to shove an agreement to replace wage increases with profit-sharing for 23,000 workers in 32 Alcoa and Reynolds aluminum plants.

The steel, aluminum, and also 15,000 can workers have a hard fight in front of them. They not only must battle the capitalist bosses, they also have to fight their own union leaders. □

Black lung benefits denied to miners

On December 6, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that 100,000 disabled coal miners cannot collect black lung benefits even though their claims were illegally denied.

In 1977, Congress passed a law giving jurisdiction over the black lung benefits program to the Department of Labor. The Department of Labor was to continue administering the program using the eligibility requirements which were established by the previous administering agency, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

However, the Department of Labor went ahead and imposed a new eligibility requirement: only miners who had worked more than 10 years in the mines could collect black lung benefits.

Over 100,000 coal miners who filed for black lung compensation from 1977 to 1985 were denied benefits. Some of the miners appealed the decision. The

Department of Labor ruling was overturned by a U.S. Circuit Court which declared the denial of benefits to be illegal. Again, the ruling was appealed — this time by the coal companies.

The case reached the U.S. Supreme Court. Here, all nine justices clearly defended the profits of the coal billionaires. While the Court declared that the Department of Labor was wrong, it also ruled that only those few miners who had appealed the original denial would be eligible to apply again for black lung benefits. Those miners who didn't appeal the decision in court — over 94,000 of them — will be barred from refileing for benefits, even though the benefits had been denied illegally.

The Supreme Court justices just saved the coal capitalists \$13.6 billion which they would have had to pay to the disabled miners. Such is the greenback justice that rules in America. □

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come close to indicating that the way out for the masses is the success of this movement over the death-squad regime. Quite the contrary. Resolution #9 demands implementation of the "spirit and agreements of Esquipulas II ... that permits a political solution to the armed conflict" in Guatemala. These are the "spirit and agreements" of imperialist pacification of the revolutionary movement, as we have already discussed above.

The stand in regard to the struggle against fascism in Chile is no better. The Quito meeting does not express support for the overthrow of the fascists through the rising of the masses — something that the revolutionaries and class conscious workers have been striving for over the last 15 years. Rather Resolution #6 demands the exit of Pinochet as a "guarantee of a real process of transition towards democracy." No uprising. No mass upheaval against fascism and its capitalist backers. No anything but requests for guarantees from the fascist generals

themselves to oversee the process of the eventual transition to free elections. The wording of this statement could just as well have been provided by the Christian Democrats (and maybe even by their friends in the U.S. embassy). But it was more likely that it was provided by the spurned lovers of the Christian Democrats, the Chilean CP, besides other Chilean reformists at the Quito meeting.

Support for Reactionary Nationalism

The Quito meeting lavishes praise on the Noriega regime in Panama. One would have thought it was a heroic anti-imperialist government.

True, Noriega has fallen from grace with the U.S. imperialist rulers, and there is a conflict of sorts between Panama and Washington. It is essential to oppose U.S. bullying and aggression against Panama.

This, however, doesn't mean painting up the regime in Panama as an anti-imperialist bastion. Sure it spouts nationalistic rhetoric to help prop itself up. Nonetheless, it has been and remains capitalist, repressive and corrupt. It is

led by a military strongman with many years of training and grooming by the CIA. Noriega is not only responsible for repression against the workers and students of Panama, but also for crimes in conjunction with the CIA against the Nicaraguan revolution and other peoples in the region.

One of the resolutions of the meeting also calls for "possession of the Malvinas Islands on the part of Argentina." The 1982 war over the Malvinas (Falklands) was another case where a reactionary regime diverted the mass discontent through a nationalist crusade. At that time too, reformism across the continent fell into solidarity with the fascist generals who then ruled Argentina. The only issue they could see was who was the rightful owner of these tiny islands — a nearsightedness which led them to support the generals in their conflict with foreign (British) imperialism. The Malvinas Islands have apparently been inserted into this resolution to reaffirm solidarity with the bourgeois nationalists on this issue.

At the time of the war, the CP of Colombia (ML) and other anti-revisionists that took part in the recent

Quito meeting had condemned support for the Argentine generals and their nationalist diversion. Today it is apparently a different story now that Alfonsín and the bourgeois liberals are in power in Argentina. Alfonsín and the capitalists continue a nationalist crusade on the Malvinas issue to divert the workers' discontent. Yet the resolution endorsing this crusade is accepted without qualification.

Why Silence About the Other Capitalist Regimes?

Meanwhile, what about the rest of Latin America? Presently, the great majority of Latin American workers and oppressed live under liberal or nationalist capitalist governments. Under these regimes the masses have been subject to starvation austerity measures and often ferocious repression. Yet the Quito meeting carefully avoided discussing these regimes. The one notable exception is its implied support for them with its high praise for Contadora and its Support Group. This makes the lack

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Students fight the crackdown at UC-Berkeley

In our last issue we reported on a fight that is brewing between the student activists and the administration of the University of California at Berkeley.

The administration has drawn up new rules against student protest. They would further restrict the time and place of "approved" demonstrations. They would also ban overnight protests and the building of the shanties that have been used in the anti-apartheid movement.

These restrictive measures are aimed in the first place at the Campaign Against Apartheid (CAA), which has organized a militant fight against UC's links with apartheid. The new regulations came out within days of a militant action called by CAA on October 26, when 500 students and activists marching with burning torches denounced UC's refusal to divest stocks in companies doing business with South Africa (despite its phony claims of having divested). The march also protested racist incidents on campus.

The administration is making its move to block CAA's activities and squelch all militant protest on campus. In doing so it has thrown down a challenge: either build the struggle against racism and UC's ties to apartheid; either uphold the fighting traditions of student protest at Berkeley — or pack up your backpacks and go home. The activists immediately took up the challenge.

On December 1, CAA organized a rally and march to protest the proposed changes. Nearly 200 students took part. Shanties were set up in parts of the campus that would be "off limits" to protests under the new rules.

At the rally several speakers denounced the attack on militant pro-



Anti-apartheid torchlight march at UC-Berkeley in March.

test. The UC administration was exposed for its support of apartheid in South Africa and racism at home.

The CAA speaker said that in 1964 students at Berkeley had to fight campus regulations — a fight that gave rise to the Free Speech Movement. He said, "These past attacks aren't unlike the attacks going on now. If the University succeeds in tightening regulations and making shanties illegal, they will undoubtedly clamp down on other student groups and other student protest."

"It's a strong tradition to go to buildings where people responsible for reaction are located," the CAA speaker pointed out. "For example, the shanty town protests were always set up in

front of California Hall because that's where the Chancellor is. He's responsible for implementing University policy so we brought the shanties to him... If the University gets its way, protests could be declared illegal just because they are not on Sproul Plaza, at noon, with prior permission, when the University wants it and how the University wants it."

The CAA speaker explained that the University is on the offensive because things are heating up on all levels. Anger is growing among the students against UC's ties to imperialism, against its pro-apartheid stand, against its racist policies which affect minority retention, faculty tenure and ethnic

studies requirements. He also pointed to UC's plans to expand ROTC and to boost development of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

He concluded by saying, "We can't abide by the restrictions of the UC administration! In South Africa if the people accept apartheid's restrictions, they accept apartheid's tyranny. In Berkeley if the students give in to UC's clampdown on student protest, they give up the student movement. The students won't do that. That is why we raise the slogan 'From Soweto to Berkeley the people fight back!'"

The MLP played an active part in building this protest. MLP activists distributed 1,000 leaflets with the appeal "Defy the Clampdown on Student Protest." The University knows the important role militant actions play in building the student movement. The administration wants to restrict protest because, as the leaflet noted, it would "prefer that its billions invested in South Africa not be the subject of public debate. It doesn't want the students to understand UC's role in support of US imperialism. It wants to hide such crimes as UC's contribution to the nuclear arsenal, its open door for CIA recruiters, just to name a few."

The MLP leaflet pointed out that the administration is counting on the strategy: "If they can tame the protests, they can tame the movement."

The December 1 action put the administration on notice of what it can expect if it dares to implement the new restrictions. "Read my bullhorn," a CAA speaker cried out to Chancellor Heyman, "its going to be a long hot spring" of militant protest. □

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of criticism of these bourgeois governments even more glaring.

"Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Mexico," the Declaration states, "are scenes of growing mobilizations of the masses against foreign domination, for independence, against the crisis and those responsible and for the punishment of those guilty of violations of human rights."

This mixes everything up, real issues with absurdities. The struggle against foreign domination is a major problem facing the revolutionary movement. But instead of treating this problem seriously, it is linked to the absurdity of a fight for "independence" for Brazil, or Argentina, or Mexico or other countries where the domestic capitalists and landlords have established independent governments since the 19th century. It refers to the just demands to punish reactionaries guilty of torture and murder; but it shies away from mentioning the protests against the new liberal governments who coddle these criminals. Then there is talking without saying anything, such as laying the blame for the economic crisis on unnamed "those responsible."

What stands out here is that nothing is to be said against the bourgeois governments. There is nothing in the Quito documents against the capitalist rulers of these countries and their liberal, nationalist and social-democratic regimes. Not a peep. Meanwhile, workers and poor across the continent have been taking to the streets in often huge mobilizations against the anti-worker and reactionary policies of these governments. The silence about this is inexcusable; however, it is not unexplainable.

In Ecuador, for example, the new social-democratic government of Rodrigo Barco is imposing severe austerity measures against the workers and poor. Nonetheless, the Broad Front of the Left (FADI), a coalition of revisionist and

reformist forces, leans towards support of this government and has officials in its apparatus. This same FADI coalition was also a co-host of the Quito meeting.

This is just one of the many pieces that explain why this allegedly "anti-imperialist" meeting was deaf and dumb when it came to the Latin American bourgeoisie.

What Does This Say About Those Who Support Such a Wretched Meeting?

This brings us back to our original question: why would anti-revisionists support such a meeting?

In the case of the Ecuadorian party the matter is pretty straightforward. The Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador keeps up a number of revolutionary slogans and phrases. This includes catchwords against revisionism and social-democracy. At the same time, in its political practice it has been deeply mired in reformist politics for a long time. The recent meeting in Quito was only the projection on a Latin American scale of the reformist Ecuadorian politics on which this party has been rooted.

The situation with the Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist) is somewhat different. The CPC(ML) is linked to the militant mass upheaval of the Colombian proletariat and toilers. What is more, it is a force engaged in a severe struggle against the dirty war of the Colombian bourgeoisie. Among other things, this has given it more militant features; and it has attracted the respect and attention of revolutionaries.

Unfortunately, in recent years the guiding policy of the CPC(ML) has been shifting further and further towards reformism. This shift has moved it close to the Ecuadorians, at least on ideological and programmatic fundamentals.

We believe that this explains how the Colombian Party can praise this Quito meeting in such unreserved fashion. The front page of *Revolucion* pledges:

"The Quito Declaration and the particular Accords, Agreements and Resolutions, enrich the store of knowledge of the Latin American revolutionaries and they commit us in their fulfillment." (*Revolucion*, November 23 to December 3, 1988)

It is absurd to claim that the documents of the Quito meeting have enriched anything, much less the knowledge of the revolutionaries. It was the same reformist gruel that the revisionists,

social-democrats and company have been dishing out for years and years.

Sadly, it appears that the leaderships of a number of the declared anti-revisionist parties in Latin America are serious about their commitment to this reformist course. That is not to say that they will cling to every bit of foolishness in its documents. However, the Quito meeting is something of a milepost on the road on which they are heading. □

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world wars in this century alone, really regard avoiding bloodshed as the highest good, to which even profits and world domination are to be sacrificed?

Can the Latin American bourgeoisie, which is organizing death squads in country after country, which is squeezing the masses under the dictate of the IMF, regard sweetness and light as the highest good?

Will the death squads shake hands with their victims? And why would their victims agree to such a display?

What Does This Mean for Solidarity Work in the U.S.?

Ramos' views concerning strategy have their effect on solidarity work in the U.S. If these views are accepted, then one would similarly have to put aside building an anti-imperialist movement, and instead concentrate on pressuring the U.S. government to accept the idea that the FMLN is no threat to imperialism.

Ramos backs away from saying this openly, and instead states that, "A change [in U.S. policy] will not come directly from convincing congressmen, or the administration, of what course to follow." (p. 7, col. 4) But why not, if Ramos is right in believing that the Salvadoran struggle really was not a threat to U.S. imperialism?

But, don't worry too much about this

contradiction. Because Ramos immediately adds that he does believe in convincing the U.S. government after all. He believes that Congress and the administration will indeed come to a "realization" of their errors, if they are "pressured" a bit. Or as he put it: "It will come from the realization that U.S. policy simply does not have much space... If they are pressured by people in the region... and especially by people in the U.S., that conjunction of pressure can indeed bring about a change in policy." So Ramos believes in lobbying Congress after all — provided that this lobbying is backed up by some pressure.

A Social Explosion — Hope of the Oppressed

To defend the perspective of an "accommodation" between all parties, Ramos had to put forward the goal of avoiding "social explosion." A strange goal for an organization of revolutionaries.

What would happen if such a goal could be achieved? It would amount to bartering away the mass revolution in exchange for some ministerial portfolios. It would require winning the confidence of the U.S. government and the Latin American bourgeoisie by guaranteeing the continuation of brutal exploitation by the local bourgeoisie and multinational companies.

Is this really what the solidarity movement should campaign for? □

Down with Bush and Congress!

Support the struggle in El Salvador!

Workers and all progressive activists! As Bush takes over as chief whip hand for the American millionaires, let us demonstrate our solidarity with the revolutionary movement in El Salvador. Let's build up a militant movement against U.S. support for the Salvadoran tyrants!

The U.S. government's efforts to crush the struggle of the workers and peasants of El Salvador continues. The Salvadoran people are fighting against a regime of death-squad terror that has killed 70,000. They are fighting against a system of extreme poverty and exploitation imposed on them by big capitalists and landowners along with the American and other multinational companies.

The Salvadoran rulers reply to the protest of the Salvadoran toilers with more bullets and torture. Behind this war of repression stands U.S. imperialism. The Reagan-Bush administration has given over \$3 billion in aid to the bloodstained dictatorship, trained whole army battalions for it and sent U.S. officers to oversee the counterinsurgency war.

Yet the struggle of the oppressed marches on. This past fall, the armed anti-government guerrillas riddled government troops with a series of major attacks. Strikes and mass demonstrations are on the rise, too.

Down With the Parties that Fund the Death-Squad Regime

As Bush takes office, he has pledged to uphold the Reaganite legacy of support for the reactionary, pro-U.S. regimes in Central America. Meanwhile the blood of the Salvadoran people is covering the hands of the Democratic Party politicians as well. And on one

issue after another, they have already promised "cooperation" with the new Bush administration. The Democratic-controlled Congress plans to keep voting for hundreds of millions of dollars in aid each year for the death-squad regimes of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, and relocation benefits for contra criminals.

During the last year, the followers of the Democrats toned down demonstrations to avoid embarrassing the Democrats. And what has been the result? More years of Bush, more support by the Democrats for crushing the revolution. There can be no progress without trashing the Democrats as well as the Republicans.

The Arias Plan and Washington's "Two-Track" Strategy

All that the Democrats want from Bush is that he promise to pay more attention to following a "two-track" plan of suppressing the Central American toilers — bullets are to be combined with peace demagoguery. And Bush has been eager to give this promise.

The Democrats and Bush are aware that terror alone has not brought the Salvadoran workers and peasants to their knees. So they are trying to subvert the struggle with the false peace promises of the Arias plan. The Arias plan demands an end to revolutionary struggle against the regime. Instead it preaches that the people will find salvation in coming to terms with the death-squad government and the rule by the oligarchy.

The Arias plan has had almost a year and a half to prove itself. Instead of seeing a blossoming of democracy, just the opposite is happening. The Salvadoran oligarchy is bringing to power

the Hitler-worshippers of ARENA. And while the Arias plan orders the anti-government guerrillas to disarm, a flood of U.S. weapons continues to fill the arsenals of the fascist generals.

The Arias plan would bring at most a replay of the years of rule of the dying Christian-Democratic Duarte. Duarte promised reforms while fronting for the generals. Duarte's rule enriched many Christian-Democratic functionaries, but it kept the death squads for the people. Now the Salvadoran ruling class is again in deep crisis. Duarte's empty promises failed to pacify the downtrodden, the Christian-Democratic party is splintered and in a state of near collapse, and the Salvadoran oligarchy is moving to put in power the ARENA party of death-squad leader Roberto d'Aubuisson.

Build the Struggle Against Imperialism

Why is it that both the Republicans and Democrats, despite their squabbling, have united to try and crush the Salvadoran people?

It is because both parties represent the interests of the imperialist system.

Imperialism is a system of capitalist exploitation where the big monopolies are dominant. It is a system where the big industrialists and financiers enrich themselves not only on the backs of the workers and poor in the U.S. In their mad search for ever-higher profits, the capitalists spread their tentacles around the world to exploit cheap labor, plunder resources and carve out markets.

So the Republicans and Democrats, as parties of monopoly capital, have a common interest in preserving Central America and other areas as profit havens for the capitalists.

This is why they have no qualms about backing bloodthirsty dictatorships like that in El Salvador.

Support the Struggle of the Oppressed

True support for the Salvadoran people requires support for the development of the revolutionary struggle. Progress will never come by relying on the reasonableness of the oligarchy or its U.S. backers. The liberation of the Salvadoran people from terror and heartless exploitation can only come about by smashing the oligarchy and the grip of U.S. imperialism.

The upsurge of struggle in El Salvador over the last few months shows to friend and foe alike that major new clashes are coming in El Salvador. We must extend our militant solidarity to the workers and peasants, who are risking their lives to fight for their freedom.

Build a Militant Solidarity Movement

Anti-intervention activists! Let's hard to build up mass demonstrations and protests against U.S. intervention in El Salvador. Not illusions in Congress but all-out work to rally the workers and oppressed in the U.S. in support of their Salvadoran class brothers and sisters. We must expose and condemn the imperialist politicians and their schemes to pacify the Salvadoran people. Our support must go to the fighting workers and peasants and the development of the revolutionary struggle.

End U.S. aid to the death-squad regime!

Down with Bush!

Down with the Democrats!

Arias plan, no! Revolution, yes! □

A deal with Bush and Arias or anti-imperialist social explosion:

Where is the Salvadoran revolution going?

In the last issue of *The Workers' Advocate* we reported on the controversies in the people's movement in El Salvador. Reformists such as Guillermo Ungo and Ruben Zamora of the FDR are anxious to barter the popular insurgency for some parliamentary posts. We pointed out that the leadership of the FMLN, the main armed force of the masses, has been trying to ride two horses at once: on one hand, continuing the insurgency, while at the same time actively campaigning for a solution along lines similar to those advocated by Ungo and Zamora.

This dual stand of FMLN has been revealed again in a recent interview given by Arnaldo Ramos, a representative of the Political Diplomatic Commission of the FMLN/FDR. He spoke with *Alert!*, the paper of the solidarity organization CISPES, whose leadership has been following a reformist policy. (See the December 1988/January 1989 issue of *Alert!*, pages 6-7.)

On one hand, Ramos gives a picture of the sharpening struggle in El Salvador. He says that the objective conditions are leading to a social explosion and an insurrection, independently of the will of any individual or group. He traces the progress of the mass struggle. And he shows how only "more repressive tactics" could be expected from the Salvadoran rulers.

At the same time, he also put forward a perspective that went directly against the facts he related.



Workers march against austerity in San Salvador, January 1987.

Does the Salvadoran Revolution Threaten Imperialism?

He based his strategy on the idea of avoiding the coming social explosion "by taking the necessary steps to a negotiated political solution." He believes that "...the time is really ripe for coming to an accommodation" between all the forces involved, including the U.S. (p. 6, col. 1)

But why would the U.S. government, which, as Ramos points out, calls the

tune for the Salvadoran government, agree to a solution helpful to the people, a negotiated revolution, so to speak?

His answer: "We [the FMLN/FDR] do not represent a threat to the U.S., and we are expressing our willingness to be very serious about negotiations." (p. 6, col. 1)

According to him, therefore, revolutionary change in El Salvador is no threat to the Bush administration or the American capitalists. And, according to him, this is why change can be nego-

tiated. Up to now, it had been accepted that the popular struggle in Central America was an anti-imperialist struggle. But according to Ramos, there is no threat to the U.S. government's interests, and El Salvador is "not a strategic geopolitical point."

But in that case, why has the U.S. government poured in billions of dollars to massacre the Salvadoran people?

And indeed, don't the masses in El Salvador want an end to brutal exploitation by the American multinational corporations? And doesn't this pose a threat to the ruling circles in the U.S., which profit from this exploitation? Since when have the capitalist moneybags regarded reduction in their profits as anything but a threat and an abomination?

Do the Oppressed Have Common Interests with Local Oppressors?

Ramos is also appealing to other forces besides the U.S. He speaks of the current talks between the FMLN leaders and leaders of states in Latin America. He says that this is for the purpose of obtaining a solution that, among other things, "is intended also to seek accommodation and coexistence with the interests of the Latin American leaders and countries." (p. 6, col. 1)

But these Latin American leaders are involved in bloody suppression of the masses in their own countries. They are leaders of the Latin American bourgeoisie. They represent, for their countries, roughly what the Salvadoran oligarchy represents for El Salvador.

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See SALVADOR



U.S. imperialism, get out of Central America!

20,000 march against tyranny in El Salvador



On November 15, over 20,000 people marched in El Salvador's capital of San Salvador to protest the brutal repression carried out by the U.S.-backed death-squad regime. The bulk of the demonstration consisted of workers in trade union contingents and students.

More and more, the masses are defying the terror of the government and taking to the streets with protests and strikes. The recent action was one of a number of large anti-government actions.

Unfortunately, the November 15 demonstration also showed the attempts of the reformists to strip revolutionary slogans and toilers' demands from the masses. It was organized by the Permanent Committee of the National Debate for Peace in El Salvador. This reformist coalition, with the help of the Catholic Church, kept a tight rein on the angry masses. It promoted the idea of creating a situation in which the oppressed and the tyrannical rulers would allegedly work together to bring democracy and progress to El Salvador. This could supposedly be brought about if only the government were forced to negotiate. It promoted the Arias plan (Esquipulas II accords) as the salvation of the masses, although this plan was designed to stop the revolutionary movement and it equates the Salvadoran militants with the CIA-organized contra criminals attacking Nicaragua.

Meanwhile daily events show the

sharpening struggle in El Salvador and the social explosion that is building up. They also show that the death-squad regime isn't becoming reasonable in these circumstances, but is sharpening its swords. Only a few days before the demonstration, a trade unionist scheduled to testify about corruption in the government-controlled telephone company was kidnapped and executed. Shortly thereafter, the organizational secretary of the telecommunications workers union, Ricardo Lazo, was stabbed. Indeed a U.N. representative in El Salvador, no friend of the militant masses, recently issued a report admitting that death-squad killings are on the rise. Yet the reformist demonstration organizers want the people to believe that collaboration with the murderous regime will lead to peace and democracy!

The only rights the oppressed have are those they take through struggle against the government and the rich oligarchy. For example, the day after the big march, soldiers rounded up and beat student activists from the University of El Salvador. Only when hundreds of angry students converged on the military authorities were they released.

Liberation will not come through negotiating a few positions in the death-squad government but through overthrowing the oppressive regime and the oligarchy. □

SALVADOR Continued from previous page

Why would they sympathize with the Salvadoran workers and peasants, therefore, when they are bitter enemies of their local workers and peasants?

Ramos had the answer to that. He gave the point of unity that was supposed to unite the Latin American rulers with the FMLN leadership. He talked of the meetings of FMLN with these rulers and stated that: "One of the important points expressed in those meetings was to explain to those leaders the situation in the country, that we are geared inevitably towards a social explosion, a polarization, and that this explosion and especially the bloodshed which that could bring about could be avoided precisely by taking the necessary steps to a negotiated political solution."

The common interest between the FMLN and the Latin American leaders, and between oppressor and oppressed inside El Salvador, is supposed to be the mutual desire to avoid "a social explosion, a polarization."

Why would the oppressed want to avoid a polarization, a revolution, an ex-

plosion against their oppressors? Because Ramos rephrases this as a desire to avoid "bloodshed." Now it has a nice, humanitarian ring. It is no longer a question of an agreement to suppress social revolution (the ordinary meaning of "social explosion"), but just a non-political, good-natured desire to live in peace and quiet.

True, the Latin American bourgeoisie is indeed interested in avoiding "social explosions." But this has not impelled it to be gentle and avoid bloodshed. Instead this has been its motive for repeated massacres against the people.

In Colombia, for example, the government murders one revolutionary leader after another. In Peru, the military has its death squads, and now *Newsweek* reports that the social-democratic ruling party of Alan Garcia has its own private death squads as well. (Dec. 26, p. 37) In Brazil, the new "democratic constitution" grants ultimate power to the military. While in Mexico, police murders and violence against militant peasants are a matter of course.

And these are examples of the forces that are to sympathize with the Salvadoran people, in the name of avoiding

Honduran banana workers strike

At the end of November, some 11,000 banana workers went on strike in Honduras. The strikers were employees of the Tela Railroad Company, a subsidiary of the notorious U.S. imperialist monopoly United Brands (formerly United Fruit).

The strike was in response to the company's efforts to set up a company union to undermine the present union. On November 17, wildcat walkouts broke out in the banana camps, and by November 26 a full strike was on.

The company declared the strike illegal and refused to negotiate. Meanwhile the pro-U.S. Honduran dictatorship intervened on behalf of the company. On November 29, for instance, government soldiers tear gassed strikers blockading a road.

But the workers refused to cave in. As the strike entered its second week, the Tela Railroad and the government were feeling the pinch. Not only had the

strike brought the banana harvest to a halt, but it also closed down the biggest port in Honduras, Puerto Cortes. A government official complained of a loss of over \$4 million in foreign exchange and tax revenues.

The strike ended on December 3 with a government-mediated settlement. According to union officials, the company was forced to give in to many of the workers' demands.

The U.S. monopolies like United Brands have long run roughshod over the toilers of Central America. In 1954, for example, when United Fruit was upset at the reformist Arbenz regime in Guatemala for making some minor inroads on its vast land holdings, the CIA overthrew Arbenz.

But as the banana workers' strikes and other struggles show, the workers and peasants have never reconciled themselves to crushing exploitation and U.S. imperialist domination. □

Why are the Sandinistas sponsoring beauty contests?

The Nicaraguan revolution which overthrew the U.S.-backed Somoza regime was a great triumph for the workers and peasants. But their struggle is far from over. The toilers are still threatened by the U.S./contra war, by economic blockade, and by strangulation from the local Nicaraguan bourgeoisie.

In the current Nicaraguan crisis, there are different ideas how to proceed. The Sandinista leadership puts forward "mixed economy" and cooperation with the bourgeoisie, while the class-conscious workers who rallied around the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua have their view of deepening the revolution towards socialism.

The Sandinista plan has been meeting various obstacles. The masses have been losing enthusiasm for the Sandinista organizations. So how does the Sandinista leadership plan to rectify the situation? Are they going to mobilize the people to carry the revolution forward? Use the mass organizations to carry out serious measures against the exploiters?

No, they have — resorted to a beauty contest!

The Sandinista Youth organization re-

cently sponsored the "Miss Juventud" (Miss Youth) pageant (see the opportunist *Guardian*, Dec. 14, p. 14). This beauty pageant, the first since Somoza's overthrow, was virtually identical to the degrading "Miss America"-type spectacle. There was the swimsuit competition, and the contestants were questioned on such weighty matters as television soap opera characters. The only thing missing was Bert Parks to sing the pageant theme song.

A Sandinista official connected with the youth organization said the idea behind the beauty contest was "to downplay the group's all-work, no-fun image and attract new followers." It was also used as a non-political way to promote registration for the military draft.

What a sorry state of affairs. The way to rouse the enthusiasm of the masses is to lead them in overcoming the problems facing them. To replace this by beauty contests is the counterpart in culture of the "mixed economy." Collaboration with the capitalists in economics is being supplemented by promotion of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois values in culture. □

bloodshed?

What Can Be Expected From the Death Squads?

Ramos also runs into a contradiction in his assessment of the ultra-right-wing regime that is replacing Duarte's Christian Democrats. He talks of how "more repressive tactics" can be expected. He states that, within the Salvadoran army itself, a more bloody group, the "tandona," has come to prominence, including many advocates of "total war." (p. 7, col. 1)

But how does this affect the prospects of negotiations?

Ramos says only that "Duarte...represents a power in decline. We expressed our disposition to talk to the real powers in the country, the armed forces and ARENA...and spoke of the need to participate in a broad process of dialogue in the negotiations." (p. 6, col. 1)

ARENA and the armed forces, and the death squads organized by them, are indeed the real powers in the country. So it turns out that accommodation and dialogue is to be directed

precisely at the men of the death squads. The very same forces whom Ramos says will escalate repression. These are the very forces who are allegedly so concerned to avoid bloodshed that they will agree to compromise and to giving up their profits and to guaranteeing democracy.

True, ARENA does want to avoid a "social explosion," as does the Salvadoran ruling class as a whole. That is why it has killed 70,000 victims, bombed civilian populations from the air, and committed one atrocity after another. All for the sake of stamping out the coming social explosion. Ramos doesn't explain why this same motive would now impel it to avoid bloodshed.

What Is Realistic?

Ramos' talk about everyone — from the U.S. to the Latin American bourgeoisie to "blowtorch" D'Aubuisson's ARENA — uniting to avoid "bloodshed" is the height of unreality.

Can the bourgeoisie of the big capitalist powers, which brought two

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Latin American and Caribbean meeting in Quito, Ecuador

Reformist hot air

A "Latin American and Caribbean Meeting for Solidarity, Sovereignty, Self-Determination, and the Life of Our Peoples" was held in Quito, Ecuador from November 18 to 20. It was launched with a lot of pomp and ceremony inside the "Hall of Democracy" in Ecuador's Superior Electoral Tribunal.

Usually such a meeting would be worth little attention. In many ways this was the typical get-together of Latin American reformism. Nothing comes out of such meetings but hot air, pious declarations and empty "anti-imperialist" gestures. That is all that came out of this meeting, too.

Nonetheless, there was something notable about the composition of those who worked for and supported this meeting. The list of participants included those one might expect: assorted social-democratic, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist forces from Ecuador as well as Colombia, Chile, and elsewhere; the pro-Soviet revisionist so-called communist parties from these countries; the social-democrat Guillermo Ungo of El Salvador's FDR; representatives of Noriega's ruling party in Panama; and so forth. The FMLN guerrilla movement from El Salvador was also represented because, unfortunately, its leaders have a misplaced faith in these corrupt reformist and bourgeois forces.

Not so expected to be there, however, were a number of parties that call themselves anti-revisionists. The Communist Party of Colombia (ML), the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador, and the Communist Labor Party of the Dominican Republic, among others. The Ecuadorian party was a major host of the event. The Colombian party was no less enthusiastic, with its paper *Revolucion* giving it unqualified and often front-page promotion between August and December.

These are parties that have denounced Soviet revisionism (and its Castroist variation) and its alliance with social-democracy. (At least they have done so in the past.) So why are they supporting this meeting that represents such an alliance? What does this say about their political direction? We think that these questions deserve careful consideration by the Marxist-Leninists and revolutionaries.

First, let us examine the politics of this meeting in Quito.

Latin Americanist Demagogy

The underlying theme of the meeting was for a unified "Latin Americanist struggle." This was couched in the framework of the approaching 500th anniversary of the beginning of the resistance to Spanish colonialism.

Capturing the spirit of the meeting, one of its resolutions declares: "We struggle for Latin American integration into a single sheaf of free and sovereign peoples and countries, that through regathering the most illustrious of our libertarian traditions and taking into account of every type of root that unites us, it would make possible the configuration of a new Latin American fatherland, free, just and sovereign." (See *Revolucion*, #303, Nov. 27-Dec. 3, 1988)

But a "free, just and sovereign" Latin America will not be realized by reaching back to the traditions of Bolivar. Much has changed over the last 500 years. Spanish colonialism is gone. The region has been in the main subjugated to the U.S. imperialist sphere of influence. Moreover, Latin America has been split into modern classes. This latter point is the most fundamental.

Even in past centuries, the old liberators tended to gloss over the need to strike the social roots of the oppression. It was a weakness even then. Today, with the sharp polarization be-



Workers in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil fighting against bus fare hikes, June '87. Across Latin America, the workers' revolt has been building up against poverty imposed by the local capitalist regimes and the imperialist banks.

tween the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the old slogans have become totally inadequate for the anti-imperialist struggle. Because there will be no freedom from the U.S. imperialist yoke, there will be no justice without a resolution of the class contradictions. There will be no liberation without a series of revolutions leading to the workers, peasants and oppressed overthrowing the capitalists, landlords and oppressors.

That is why it is absurd to pass a resolution about "a new Latin American fatherland, free, just and sovereign" without any connection to the revolutionary struggle needed to achieve it. It is a Latin Americanist pipe dream that can only serve to reconcile the Latin American workers and peasants with the Latin American industrialists and landlords. It is a reformist swindle that can only serve to reconcile the oppressed victims with the death squads and oppressors.

Empty phrases about the struggle for freedom and sovereignty, and even words against imperialism, flower the speeches of the ruling bourgeoisie from Mexico City to Buenos Aires. The Quito meeting merely echoed this Latin Americanist demagogy.

It can only be called empty demagogy because the documents of the Quito meeting are purged of any spirit of the class struggle or of revolution. The great struggling Latin American working class does not even get a single word of reference in the pages of the declaration and resolutions. What kind of Latin American unity is that? Surely it is not the unity of the workers and oppressed masses. It is reformist Latin Americanism of the status quo. It amounts to no more than a gentle cleaning up of the capitalist relations across the continent. To confirm this one just has to look at some of the other resolutions.

Support for Contadora and Esquipulas

Resolution #7 refers to "establishing peace and social justice" in Central America. Is this to be realized through support for the ongoing revolutions of the workers, peasants and oppressed? Far from it. Instead the resolution concludes: "In that sense we value to the highest degree the negotiations of the Contadora Group and of the Support Group of Contadora as well as the Accords of Esquipulas II."

What was Contadora? It was an effort of the reactionary capitalist regimes of Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama to put out the fires of revolutionary upheaval in Central America. It was an attempt to exert diplomatic pressure against the revolution — an attempt coordinated with U.S. imperialism's own policy of armed aggression combined with diplomatic arm-twisting.

What was the Contadora Support Group? It was another formation of the Latin Americanist unity of the big bour-

geoisie of the continent aimed at checking the revolutionary movements in Central America, stabilizing the region, and restoring the status quo of rabid exploitation and death-squad terror.

What was Esquipulas II? It was the coming together of the Central American regimes through the services of the liberal bourgeois president Arias of Costa Rica and at the behest of the U.S. Congress and State Department. A negotiating bloc was formed of the death-squad and oligarchic rulers. It made use of the liberal and reformist signboards provided by Arias; but the negotiating muscle was provided by the CIA and the Pentagon. The targets of this diplomatic offensive were the gains of the Nicaraguan revolution and the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

No one can define support for Contadora and Esquipulas as "anti-imperialist solidarity." It is reformism gone to the putrid extent of embracing the counterrevolutionary joint diplomacy of U.S. imperialism and the Latin American bourgeoisie.

It was not so long ago that the CP of Colombia (ML), the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador, and other anti-revisionist groups that took part in this Quito meeting, were vehemently denouncing Contadora. A few years ago they were sharply attacking this reactionary and pro-imperialist policy of the Latin American capitalists. Today it is a different story. The signing of this resolution in Quito, without any public qualification, is a major political retreat.

The Foreign Debt and "Just Terms of Interchange"

One focus of the meeting was the onus of the foreign debt crisis in the region. The multi-billion dollar debts owed to the New York and other imperialist banks is extracting a terrible tribute from Latin America. Every political force in the continent is compelled to speak against this tribute. However, the different political trends have divergent class perspectives about the debt crisis.

From the proletarian revolutionary standpoint, the most important thing about the foreign debt crisis is that it is raising the class struggle to a bursting point. It is intensifying the class polarization as never seen before, provoking powerful waves of strikes and protests across the continent. This is not limited to a simple protest against the terms of the International Monetary Fund. It is also a movement against the austerity measures of the regimes and the domestic capitalists who make fat profits off of both the foreign loans and off the starvation measures against the masses to pay the debt. The debt crisis calls for pushing forward the development of the strikes and battles against exploitation (both foreign and domestic) and against the ruling

governments.

The Quito meeting, on the other hand, expresses the typically reformist and even bourgeois perspective. It does not say a word about workers' actions and this growing class conflict. Instead, the Quito meeting opted for a reformist utopia. Accord #5 declares: "We struggle against the unjust economic international order," for "recuperating the control and orientation of our economies," and for "gaining just terms of interchange."

In this context, resolutions against the foreign debt are reformist play toys. They are part of the game played by the reformist and bourgeois nationalist forces across the continent, including a number of ruling regimes. Because these forces want to blunt the class struggle by blaming the starvation policies against the masses on purely foreign causes. They want to hide the fact that the debt is one link in the whole capitalist chain. They want to perfect this chain by "gaining just terms of interchange," which is a far cry from utilizing the mass indignation against these unjust imperialist relations to build the revolutionary movement to break the chain altogether.

In July 1985, there was a "Trade Union Conference of the Workers of Latin America and the Caribbean on the Foreign Debt" held in Havana, Cuba. The same reformist utopianism was preached there as at the Quito meeting. Supporters of the CP of Colombia (ML) took part in this conference. We do not know what these supporters said in Havana; however, the CPC(ML)'s newspaper *Revolucion* harshly criticized the reformist scheming on the debt question. Among other things, it denounced the schemes for "a new international economic order" as a "bourgeois, three worldist thesis, which aspires to the economic integration of the Latin American bourgeoisies in order to 'defend themselves' from the 'injustices' of imperialism. It seeks a breather for the native bourgeoisies before the possibility of social outbursts ... This verifies the truth of our labeling the revisionists and social-democrats as agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers' movement." (See the article "In Support of Imperialism and the Bourgeoisie" in the July 15-18, 1985 *Revolucion*. Quoted in the Sept. 1, 1985 *Workers' Advocate*.) Clearly, the CP of Colombia (ML), and other anti-revisionists have been changing their views about the reformism of the revisionists and social-democrats over the last three years.

It might be noted that this same Accord #5 from the Quito meeting ends with the slogan: "Non-payment of the external debt." To the uninitiated this may sound pretty militant. But in the context of Latin American politics it is understood as an elastic compromise. It sounds like an expression of sympathy for the militant demand to renounce the debt; but in fact it leaves the door open for the demands for temporary or partial moratoriums on payments and other forms of "non-payment" preferred by the reformists.

For Reformist Compromise With Reaction

The Quito meeting declared itself against the dictators in Chile and Paraguay. It also condemned the brutal "dirty wars" against the masses in Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru.

But there are different perspectives for the struggle against fascism and tyranny. Here too the Quito meeting set forth the path of reformist compromise.

For example, in Guatemala there is a militant armed movement of the workers and poor. The Quito meeting doesn't

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General strike rocks Spain

Spain was shut down by a one-day general strike on December 14. This was the first general strike in 54 years, and was a powerful setback to Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez' austerity drive against the Spanish working class.

At midnight, the beginning of the strike was dramatized when workers at the government television station pulled the plug right in the middle of the late-night news broadcast.

The one-day strike brought commerce, industry and transport to a standstill throughout Spain. All major factories were shut down, as were public transport and government offices. Banks, schools and restaurants were closed.

Madrid resembled a ghost town. Cafes, corner shops, newspaper stands and movie theaters were all closed. Some department stores that tried to open were surrounded by militant pickets. Even sports events were canceled in support of the strike. Daily newspapers did not publish, and the only TV and radio broadcasts were news bulletins about the strike.

Pickets went up around all the factories in the industrial belt around Madrid. In the evening, rallies were held in many places, including one that drew 100,000 in Barcelona.

The government itself admitted that 7.8 million workers, out of a total work force of 11.8 million, stayed off the job.

Two days later, a huge rally of nearly a million workers marched through Madrid. Workers burned effigies of such figures as Prime Minister Gonzalez, the Economics Minister, and the chief of the employers association.

Gonzalez' social-democratic administration was stunned by the turnout. It had organized a tremendous hysterical campaign against the strike. But the pressure of the workers was such that even the trade union center controlled by the ruling Socialist Workers Party endorsed the strike call.

Social-Democratic-Style Reaganomics

The December 14 strike was a sharp rebuff to Gonzalez' economic policies.

Like the social-democratic government of France next door, the Spanish social democrats have been implementing Reaganite economic policies. But the workers are beginning to burn with anger against a nominally "socialist" government which is leading the capitalist austerity drive.

Since joining the European Common Market a few years ago, Spain's economy has expanded and undergone restructuring. This has been a boom for the capitalists and well-off, while conditions for the workers have worsened.

Gonzalez liberalized the Spanish stock market, and foreign investments poured in to the tune of \$35 billion. The rich rapidly got richer, and Spanish executives are now among the richest in Europe.

Like Reagan, Gonzalez brags about all the new jobs this boom has supposedly created. But again like the U.S., many of these are low-wage temporary jobs, while better paying permanent jobs are being eliminated left and right. The bottom line for the workers is job insecurity and a lowered standard of living: the unemployment rate has remained stuck for years at 20% of the work force, while many of those working are in worse jobs.

The "Youth Employment" Fraud

Gonzalez' latest measure, which sparked the December 14 general strike, was his "youth employment" scheme.

Spain's unemployment rate, 20%, is the worst in Europe and a national scandal. But among the youth it is 40%! In 1987 the government was rocked by restiveness among school-age youth, when



Spanish workers battle riot police during general strike on December 14.

Gonzalez tried to raise college tuitions and restrict college entrances. Spanish youth were infuriated that Gonzalez, while presiding over an unemployment scandal, would try to restrict their alternative, going to school.

So this year Gonzalez came out with his "youth employment" scheme, supposedly to provide jobs for young people. Under this plan employers would be allowed to hire youths on a temporary basis. These temporary jobs would last only 18 months, after which the employers would have to fire them. They could possibly take them in as regular employees. But under the government's scheme, the employers would probably hire new temporary workers in place of the other ones.

Young workers hired under this plan would not accrue seniority, and none of their time worked would count toward retirement pensions. The youths would be paid minimum wage, regardless of how much the workers around them were being paid. And as an extra sweetener to the capitalists, besides giving the employers extra tax incentives, Gonzalez promised to pay them a direct subsidy for every youth hired under this plan.

Of course the capitalists were delighted. It would give them a pool of low-paid temporary workers to exploit, and with government subsidies to boot. As well, this plan would bring with it a downward pressure on wages and conditions for all workers.

Workers were also mad that the older unemployed would have a worse time than ever. Due to such a plan, new hires would come from the ranks of the youth, and those above 25 would have a nearly impossible time finding work. The Spanish workers have had enough of Gonzalez' capitalist austerity measures. Opposition to the "youth employment" scheme became the main rallying cry for the general strike of December 14, joining with the demands of public sector workers and pensioners for raises to keep up with inflation.

Gonzalez Tries to Bluff

As the general strike deadline drew near, Gonzalez refused to back down from his plan. Gonzalez felt this was a good time to prove to other Common Market governments that he is a tough capitalist manager who can face down his own workers. The government pooh-poohed talk of a strike and went all out to oppose it.

In the face of this pressure, even the trade union leaders vacillated on what was going to take place: they predicted that no more than four million workers would participate.

As it turned out, twice this number participated in shutting down the

country. Gonzalez was forced to admit in parliament, "Those who called it [the strike] won and the government failed. The government's economic policy can and should be negotiated. ...The government's image...has been hit hard...." (*New York Times*, Dec. 22)

At last report, Gonzalez has offered to withdraw his "youth employment" scheme, and has offered to negotiate the demands of the strike with union leaders. (Aside from rejecting the "youth employment" scheme, other main demands of the strike were for wage and pension raises and for broadened unemployment benefits — only 35% of those unemployed in Spain receive any benefits.) But he is still far from agreeing to the demands.

The Dirty Role of the Fake "Communists"

The strike was officially headed up by the Workers Commissions (CCOO), the trade union center associated with the faction-ridden revisionist Communist Party. As a result of the strike, the Spanish revisionists have been able to recoup some of their waning influence among the workers. But this is not

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consider giving it up. Thus the need for vigilance.

Nothing the imperialists have in mind for the Palestinians goes anywhere near fulfilling the people's desires.

What have Palestinians fought for all these decades? What are they shedding so much blood for in the uprising?

The Palestinians want full national rights. The Palestinian people want to breathe freely, not be subject to daily police repression.

The Palestinians also want the right of refugees to return. Most were expelled 40 years ago and they live in awful refugee camps in the neighboring countries.

National rights for the Palestinians can be best secured in a democratic and secular Palestine, a society with equal rights for both the Arabs and Jews who live there.

Beyond the issue of national rights, the Palestinians, who are mainly toilers, also want social improvements. This has been a big driving force in many of the historic struggles. A democratic order would allow the Palestinian toilers the best conditions for their struggle for social and economic gains.

Instead of throwing their hopes in the PLO-U.S. talks, the Palestinians must develop a revolutionary strategy. This includes developing the uprising. It includes work to mobilize the Palestinians

something they deserve, since they did their utmost to keep the strike tame.

The revisionists worked hard to keep the strike "orderly and peaceful." They shied away from militant actions and from the outset made it clear that they did not want the strike to be seen as any sort of challenge to the government itself.

Thus, they made a point of calling the protest a *paro* (a work stoppage), rather than a general strike. As Santiago Carrillo, head of one of the revisionist CP factions, said in an interview with the Madrid daily, *El Pais*, "The trade unions have had the consideration not to talk about a general strike, but rather of a stoppage, and they have acted like this because in our country the idea of a general strike traditionally has a revolutionary connotation and historically has often emerged linked to a policy of bringing down the government."

The CP leaders and trade union bigshots went to great lengths to assure the social-democratic regime and the Spanish bourgeoisie that "revolutionary connotation" or even the idea of "embarrassing the government" was the furthest from their mind.

Because of the huge success of the December 14 strike, the government may well end up making some adjustments to its economic policies. But the working class needs more than some minor adjustments. To struggle for more substantial change, the workers need not just a one-day work stoppage but a general policy of militant class action.

To organize along such a policy, the Spanish workers will have to overcome the tame reformism of the trade union bureaucrats. The bureaucrats have already made it clear that the only struggle of the workers they are interested in is one where the workers agree from the beginning to keep their hands tied behind their backs.

To organize the class struggle, the fighting workers of Spain need to cast aside the revisionist CP and build their own revolutionary communist leadership.

(Some of the material for this article came from "Red Chronicle," a Marxist-Leninist newsletter published in English by "Nuevo Octubre" in Madrid.) □

in Israel proper who have been held back by reformist leadership, such as the Israeli CP. It includes organizing support from Palestinians and other Arab toilers in the neighboring countries. And it includes linking up with progressive Jewish workers. □

STRUGGLE

A Magazine of Proletarian Revolutionary Literature

Vol. 4, No. 4 Fall 1988



Poetry Fiction Art

Struggle is a literary journal of the Detroit Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA.

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What should we expect from U.S.-PLO talks?

In December, the Reagan government did an about-turn on its policy of refusing to talk openly with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

After Arafat's speech to the U.N. General Assembly in Geneva, and a further "clarification" press conference by Arafat the next day, the State Department announced that it was finally satisfied that the PLO had met its conditions for talks. It was satisfied that the PLO had indeed recognized Israel and renounced "terrorism."

Only a few weeks earlier, after the PLO Council meeting in Algiers had made a declaration with these same positions, the State Department had said that it was not enough. And to dramatize its stand, Secretary of State Shultz even refused to give Arafat a visa to come speak at the UN in New York.

What happened? Were Arafat's remarks in Geneva different than the PLO Council declaration? Did the PLO go further in meeting U.S. demands?

Not really. The squabble appeared to be over minor wording. But between Algiers and Geneva, the U.S. imperialists

put the PLO to the test. Through Swedish intermediaries, the U.S. sought to take part in actually writing Arafat's UN speech. It was a big pressure game, designed to see if the PLO leader would kneel when Shultz said "Kneel." This is what led to the change of policy. Even Arafat was conscious that he was being asked to grovel on his knees. In response to a question at his Geneva press conference, after he had made his remarks, he replied: "Didn't you read my statement? Read it. It's clear. Do you want me to do a striptease? It would be unseemly."

The PLO leaders' latest declarations mark the flowering of a capitulationist course they have been on for years now. They represent the despairing hope of a reformist leadership that a deal can be struck with Israel and the U.S. government. The PLO leaders believe that if they can prove to be moderate enough, the Israeli regime and its U.S. backer will concede to some sort of Palestinian mini-state.

The PLO leaders have given up the idea of bringing liberation to the Pales-

tinians through the overthrow of an Israeli state based on privileges for Jews and oppression of Arabs. They have abandoned the perspective of a democratic Palestine which would provide equality for Jews and Arabs alike, in favor of the status quo for Israel and a separate state for them.

A New Day for the Palestinians?

With the latest U.S. announcement, all sorts of voices are shouting that a new day has dawned in the Middle East. West European imperialists rejoiced. The Soviet revisionist bloc said hurrah. The Arab bourgeois regimes were pleased. The PLO itself was ecstatic. And reformist voices in the U.S. left are talking of great opportunities in the making.

But is that so? What can the Palestinian people and their friends really expect of the coming U.S.-PLO talks? Are these opening up an opportunity towards liberation or do they represent a new, cunning maneuver by imperialism against the Palestinian struggle?

Israel Remains Intransigent

Israel has refused to go along with the U.S. maneuver. Never mind that it used to say that if Palestinian leaders recog-



Rally on first anniversary of intifada, Seattle, December 10.

nized Israel and renounced terrorism, it may consider talks with them. The Israeli regime says, as always, it doesn't matter what the PLO says, for the PLO supposedly has a hidden agenda to destroy Israel. The Israeli bourgeoisie even hastily brought together a "national unity" government of right-wing Likud and social-democratic Labor to hold the line against the PLO.

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See PLO

INTIFADA!

Continued from front page

news or speeches by PLO leaders.

Widespread Protest Actions

Despite this repression, protest actions continued to break out. The first week of December Palestinians imprisoned at a detention camp in the Negev desert went on a hunger strike. They were supported by a general strike in the West Bank and Gaza. As a result of this action, the political prisoners won some demands.

The territories were shut down again by a general strike for two days on the anniversary of the *intifada*, which began December 7, 1987. Israeli forces were concentrated in every town and village, but were still not able to prevent protest marches from being held. Protesters clashed with troops in many cities, refugee camps and prison camps. The troops killed at least two Palestinians. On the anniversary there were also marches in support of the Palestinians in some towns inside Israel. Thousands marched in Nazareth and Tel Aviv.

For the week after the anniversary, things were relatively quiet in the occupied territories. Zionist soldiers took out their frustrations on small boys and girls. They shot and killed one young boy. Another they picked up for questioning, took for a ride in their jeep, and threw out at high speed, killing him. Soldiers arrested a group of young schoolgirls and charged them with conspiring. They held the girls for days, beating them occasionally. And when a group of women demonstrated outside Red Cross headquarters in Jerusalem, asking for better treatment for their imprisoned relatives, Zionist troops attacked them with batons and tear gas. All in a day's work for the brave soldiers of Israel.

In mid-December huge protests broke out again. The occasion was the December 16 funeral of a young boy murdered by troops. Thousands of people turned out for the funeral in Nablus, the West Bank's largest city. Israeli snipers stationed on roofs overlooking the funeral fired into the crowd, killing eight people. Helicopters then sprayed tear gas all over the city. Protests broke out throughout Nablus and then spread to nearby towns. For the next three days the occupied territories were again gripped by a total general strike, while the Israelis imposed a total, 24-hour-a-day curfew.

At the end of the month the territories

were again shut down by a general strike. Soldiers fired on crowds during the strike and killed at least two.

Hundreds of Martyrs, But a New Mood of Self-Confidence

For the Palestinians, the cost of the uprising is high. The bourgeois press puts the number of Palestinians killed at more than 300. The Palestinians themselves say over 425 have been killed by gunfire, beating, tear gas or fire, and another six have died in detention. They have suffered 30,000 arrests, and of these over 35 have been deported. In frenzied raids Zionist troops have uprooted tens of thousands of trees, vandalized thousands of homes, and totally demolished 400 houses. Israel has closed hundreds of schools, newspapers, and social institutions in the occupied territories.

But the Palestinians have been willing to make such sacrifices because they are determined to fight for freedom. With the *intifada* they have gained a new spirit of power and self-confidence. They have learned how to stand up against their oppressors. They are learning how to organize a sustained uprising. Their political consciousness has grown.

Today the very fact that the imperialists want to talk to the PLO is a sign of the Palestinian uprising's strength. Not much can be expected of these talks (see adjoining article), but the imperialists are scared stiff of the continuing struggle of the masses. They are looking to see if promises of a deal with the PLO leaders will quiet down this volcano of struggle.

Zionism Stands Exposed

The Palestinian uprising has already struck major blows at Israel.

The Israeli economy has suffered big financial losses due to the strikes and the decline in tourism. But most important, Israel has had even bigger political losses. The myth of a "civilized, democratic" Israel surrounded by "barbarian" Arabs stands more shattered than ever. All over the world people have seen the representatives of "civilization" systematically beating, torturing, gassing and shooting a small, heroic people who simply stand up for their rights.

The more desperate Israel becomes in trying to squash the uprising, the more it gets exposed. Journalists recently confirmed rumors that the Israeli army



Young Palestinian women fight in the front ranks of the intifada (uprising) against Israeli rule.

has established official death-squad units to beat up and/or assassinate individual leaders of the uprising. Angered by this exposure, the army ordered some of these journalists beaten up by these same units.

Similarly, Israel has desperately been trying to suppress all news of the uprising. Journalists have not been allowed freely into the occupied territories in months. It has now been confirmed that the Zionists are advised on press suppression by officers of the South African army, who have been visiting the occupied territories incognito. So much for the Zionists' claim that they have nothing to do with apartheid!

U.S. Supports Israeli State Terrorism

The U.S. government has been making a big show about forcing the PLO to "renounce terrorism." At the same time the U.S. fully supports Israel's daily state terrorism against the Palestinians. Israel's guns, ammunition, tear gas and other supposedly non-lethal poison gas, its hi-tech incendiary bombs and its wooden clubs — all are obtained, directly or indirectly, with

U.S. aid. In every international forum the U.S. staunchly defends Israel's "obligation" to "maintain law and order" in the occupied territories.

Recently the U.S. reaffirmed its support for Israeli state terrorism by removing the ban on sale of cluster bombs to Israel. In the 1982 invasion of Lebanon Israel used these horrible bombs against civilian targets, massacring thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians.

Solidarity With the Uprising!

As the Palestinians enter the second year of the uprising, progressive workers and youth in the U.S. have to persist with the painstaking and difficult work of building solidarity with the Palestinians here in the U.S. We cannot line up behind the U.S. government's maneuvers with the PLO leaders. Nothing good will come from that. We must continue to spread the truth about the shameful U.S.-Israeli jackboot that the Palestinians suffer under. We must support the Palestinian revolutionary struggle for liberation. Support for the *intifada* must be at the center of our solidarity efforts. □

For workers' socialism, not revisionist state capitalism!

Workers strike in Yugoslavia

Having failed to deal with the economic crisis that has brought Yugoslavia 228% inflation and 15% unemployment, the government of Prime Minister Branko Mikulic resigned on December 29.

In the meantime, a new round of workers' struggle is shaking up Yugoslavia. The government has been discussing a new economic reform package, which includes another austerity program. The government says it is needed to curb inflation. But workers are tired of never-ending austerity.

On December 27, more than 1,000 rail workers struck in Slovenia for higher pay. This was the first rail strike in post-war Yugoslavia. In Vojvodina, theater workers went on strike to demand a 60% pay increase. In Macedonia, workers geared up for struggle in the face of sharp rises in gas, rents and other

public services. And plans were being discussed in Croatia for a general strike.

Meanwhile, the Yugoslav regime is again coming under fire for new corruption scandals. In the most recent example, local officials in Bosnia illegally acquired plots of land for expensive summer houses. The federal government has also been implicated in it.

Today Western-style capitalist reforms are all the rage in the state capitalist countries of Eastern Europe, Russia, and China. Gorbachev in Moscow is currently the most prominent champion of this path. But revisionist Yugoslavia was a pathbreaker in this. Its experience highlights that this road is a disaster for the working people.

In the state capitalist countries the workers' future lies not in more capitalist reforms, but in fighting the revisionist bourgeois regimes towards new, socialist revolutions. □

Poland: Private enterprise is no answer

On December 23, the Polish parliament approved two new economic reform bills. The Warsaw government, which falsely claims to be socialist, says that the new reforms will bring prosperity to the masses. But in fact, they will only allow stepped-up exploitation of the Polish workers by private capital — both domestic and foreign.

The Law on Economic Activity opens the door to private capital in all but a few strategic enterprises, such as medical drugs and explosives manufacture. It removes the restriction that a single private enterprise could only have 50 workers and it guarantees the private sector equality with government enterprises.

The Law on Foreign Investment allows foreign companies to set up operations with an unlimited number of workers and allows foreign corporations to own up to 100% of their enterprises. It also lowers taxes, grants a three-to-six year tax haven, and allows profits to be sent out of the country.

Behind the label of socialism, Poland is really a state capitalist country which already has a sizable private sector in agriculture, services, and light industry. But the state capitalist bureaucrats have put the economy in deep trouble. A big part of the crisis is due to a huge debt burden to the Western banks. The Polish working people have been ravaged by ever-increasing prices and constant shortages of necessities. With

the new economic reforms, the bureaucrats who rule Poland hope to find a way out of the crisis by increasing the weight of the private sector and foreign capital in the Polish economy.

The reforms have been pushed through by the new government of Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski. His industry minister Mieczyslaw Wilczek played an especially prominent role in this. Wilczek's social status speaks volumes about the capitalist character of revisionist Poland. He is a member of the misnamed United Workers' Party, the ruling party, and at the same time he is a wealthy, private capitalist owner of a chemicals factory near Warsaw that employs some 60 people. He is described by the London *Economist* as a zloty billionaire (Polish currency) who lives in "a small house in the English style," complete with "swimming pool, tennis court and peacocks."

It is little surprise that such characters are enthusiastic about increasing the role of private capital in Poland. But contrary to what the government promises, Western-style reforms will not bring prosperity to Polish workers. They will only fatten the local zloty billionaires and profit the Western multinationals who will invest in Poland under the new laws.

In the 1970's the revisionist bureaucrats promised that Poland was going to get prosperous by taking out loans from

Western banks. Look where that brought the Polish workers: the bankers got their pound of flesh while the Polish

masses suffer even more. The new capitalist panaceas will not turn out that much different. □

What has the free market brought to China?

Deng Xiaoping and the other present-day leaders of China have made big promises that through Western-style capitalist reforms, China will become prosperous. The Chinese revisionists also keep up a pretense — although a very thin one — that they still stand for socialism. They claim that they are merely learning from capitalism for the good of all the Chinese people.

But the capitalist road does not bring prosperity for all. Capitalism inevitably means class division — it means a widening gulf between rich and poor. And reports from China bring this out every day.

Malnutrition, Price Hikes and Layoffs

As a result of changes brought in by the Chinese revolution, the food problem for the masses had been basically solved, but now a decade after Deng Xiaoping's free market reforms, 100 million people — a tenth of the population — are officially said to be malnourished.

In some of the booming coastal cities, new millionaires hire child labor for sweatshops while beggars roam the streets.

The conditions for the working people get worse day by day. For one thing, the masses are being ravaged by increasing prices. Today inflation stands at over 40%.

Meanwhile, the government orders "anti-inflation" measures. But just as in other capitalist countries, these measures mean austerity for the masses. That includes mounting layoffs. Layoffs of workers are also the result of rationalization measures being carried out in industry as part of the drive for capitalist economic reforms. Chinese officials say that employment security, which used to exist in China for workers, has ended up making labor unproductive. The Chinese revisionists believe in the capitalist view that starvation and insecurity are essential to motivate labor.

The scope of such layoffs can be seen from the example of Shenyang. In this northeastern industrial center, a city of

4.1 million people, 300,000 workers — 15% of the work force — are being laid off as "redundant." About 60,000 have already lost their jobs.

A Backward Capitalist Attitude Towards Women

In still another new plan, the Chinese leaders have come out with the proposal to reduce the number of women workers. This appears to be part of the layoffs being carried out under the rationalization drive. Women workers are seen as the least productive, thus they are to be among the ones to go.

The English-language *China Daily* said recently that "The facts ... have revealed that the development of productive forces will be hindered if the rate of women's employment is raised blindly." It went on to expound that "Women employees are physically weaker than men, and women bring a lot of problems to enterprises. For instance, they need long leaves to bear children and to breast-feed their infants. All these factors indicate that the high rate of women's employment has to be reduced." (Quoted in *San Francisco Chronicle*, Nov. 23)

Such an attitude has nothing in common with socialism. It is in fact a backward, capitalist stance which looks at economic matters merely from the standpoint of profit and production, damn the needs of the masses.

Socialism stands for full equality of women. This doesn't just mean assuring equal legal rights for women, but it also means all types of measures to assure real social equality for women. This includes helping draw women into all aspects of social life — from the work places to the administration of the economy and government.

At the work places this would mean that a socialist system would work to meet women's special needs such as child care, care of infants, etc. It certainly would not complain of such things as a drag, as the Chinese revisionists are doing. But the Chinese leaders aren't socialist, they see workers only from the angle of the account books. □

PLO Continued from page 12

The Israeli stand shows the deep hostility it feels towards granting any concessions to the Palestinians. It shows how extreme the racist attitude of the Israeli ruling class is.

This underscores why democracy can come to this land only with the overthrow of the Zionist regime.

Imperialism Wants To End the Uprising

But look closely at the U.S. stand. It has not made any concessions to the Palestinians whatever. Agreeing to talk with the PLO is neither here nor there. The real issue is what goes on in those talks, what is to come from them.

What the U.S. wants is the end of the uprising. This is the first demand. U.S. Undersecretary of State Michael Armacost recently said, "I think it would be very helpful if there is a subsiding of violence... Violent means are not going

to bring about the objective the Palestinians want."

It is only the Palestinian uprising that brought the Palestinian problem back to the top of the agenda of U.S. foreign policy. After the big setbacks to the PLO with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the White House was content to simply let the Israeli jackboot take care of things. But the uprising has struck big blows at Israel, and it has got the Arab bourgeois regimes worried about its destabilizing influence. Imperialism too does not want this mass upheaval to infect the other countries of the area.

The Long-Term Prospects

Mind you, the U.S. has not changed its mind one bit about support for Israel. The same statements agreeing to talks with the PLO reaffirmed support for Israel and Shultz emphasized that the U.S. does not support a Palestinian state. In fact, Washington hasn't even asked Israel to get back to its pre-1967

borders, something which is part of the UN Resolution 242 that the U.S. points to all the time.

There is obviously today a slight difference between the U.S. and Israeli tactics. While Israel thinks repression alone is enough, Washington believes that the promise of a deal is necessary to calm the Palestinians. While drawing the line against a Palestinian state today, the U.S. is willing to offer the Palestinians the Carter administration's Camp David formula of limited autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza, albeit under the overall reign of the Israeli government.

This is next to worthless for the Palestinians. It means the "autonomy" of being allowed to take out the garbage and have some municipal offices for a better-off strata of Palestinians, but it changes nothing basic about their oppression.

However, if the uprising continues to develop, it is possible that the U.S. may be willing at a later date to agree to a

mini-state. Some of the West European imperialists already think that this may be needed. But everyone makes it clear that the mini-state they are willing to consider is something which must be based on firm guarantees that Israeli security won't be harmed. Thus they insist, the mini-state must not have an army, must keep down rebellious elements, etc. Thus the preference that such a mini-state should be confederated with Jordan, a reactionary Arab government which has shown its ruthlessness in keeping the masses down.

Not What the Palestinians Have Sacrificed So Much For

The things on the immediate agenda for the U.S.-PLO talks are dangerous for the Palestinian people. The *intifada* is what has brought the Palestinians a new strength behind their cause; they can't

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The World in Struggle

Reformist union leaders sell out French strikers

The wave of public sector strikes that shook France this fall has subsided for now, as subway maintenance workers returned to work on December 21.

Unfortunately, the subway workers were not able to achieve their demand of a raise of 1,000 francs per month. In fact, even though the strike was growing stronger and was a big thorn in the side of the French government, no pay raise at all was achieved. This was due to the sabotage of trade union bureaucrats linked to the revisionist French Communist Party, who ordered the subway workers to prematurely end the strike.

The workers carried out on-again, off-again strikes for three weeks, concentrating on the four main subway lines of Paris. Their strikes produced tremendous traffic jams in Paris. The government led by social-democratic Prime Minister Michel Rocard ordered army troops to ferry commuters back and forth, but the soldiers could hardly make a dent in the huge traffic jams. Rocard's tactics also backfired, since bus drivers then went out on strike in sympathy with the subway workers.

In early December the trade union bureaucrats associated with Rocard's Socialist Party had agreed to a sellout deal that would grant the workers a raise of only 300 francs per month, far less than the 1,000 demanded by the

workers. The workers voted down this settlement and continued to strike.

The strike was now officially headed by bureaucrats associated with the revisionist Communist Party. These bureaucrats used the strike to give themselves a militant reputation with the workers, but they were never serious about fighting for the workers' demands. In fact, the aim of the CP was merely to use the workers' struggle for its electoral ambitions.

For one thing, the CP sought to pressure Rocard's Socialist Party for an electoral agreement in upcoming municipal elections. In the meantime, "works committees" were elected among the transport authority workers. Based on its popularity from the strikes, the CP won these elections, and that done, proceeded to immediately call a halt to the strike. The CP also gave the ruling Socialist Party crucial parliamentary assistance when it faced a no-confidence motion.

So with the help of the revisionist CP, Rocard has been relieved of a pressing problem of working class discontent, freed to resume his capitalist austerity drive against the workers. And the workers' demands were cast aside. This is another example of how the revisionist, false communists betray the working class. □

Government employees strike in Greece

Government workers carried off a one-day general strike in Greece on December 14. They were protesting the government's budgetary proposals for 1989 which do not provide adequate pay raises for government workers. The nationwide strike closed all primary and secondary schools and universities. Hospitals were also closed except for emergency services.

The social-democratic government of

Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu has also recently been shaken by a series of corruption scandals. Aides and close friends of Papandreu have been implicated in illegal arms sales and defense procurement contracts. While driving down the wages of ordinary government workers Papandreu's fake "socialists" are getting rich the old-fashioned way: they steal it! □

Opposition to worship of dying emperor in Japan



Demonstration October 9 in Kyoto, Japan denounces emperor worship.

Hirohito, the emperor of Japan, has been critically sick this fall. Using this as a pretext, the Japanese capitalists and their government have launched a big campaign to promote emperor wor-

ship among the masses.

The emperor cult has always been used to promote nationalism among the Japanese people, to promote the idea that all Japanese, workers and bour-

geois alike, have a common stake. Today in Japan, workers' anger against capitalist rationalization of industry is growing, and struggles against nuclear installations and militarism are continuing to develop. The emperor worship campaign seeks to divert the masses away from struggle.

But this campaign has met with a number of protests around Japan. On September 29, a Tokyo demonstration

denounced the emperor for his responsibility for World War II. On October 9th, 3,000 people rallied in Kyoto against the emperor campaign. In various other places, actions have been organized to demand that municipalities remove stalls set up to collect signatures for the emperor and that schools not hold memorial services when Hirohito dies. □

Haitian workers come out against Gen. Avril's regime

Haiti was shut down by a general strike on November 21. This was the first major struggle by the masses since the soldiers' coup of September 17, which overthrew Gen. Henri Namphy and brought Gen. Prosper Avril to power.

The immediate cause of the strike was an industrial dispute at the Acierie d'Haiti national steel mill. Management brought in a new robot and forced workers to speed up to keep the robot running. On November 7 workers at the plant staged a work stoppage to protest the speedup. The next day management fired 80 workers for organizing the work stoppage. The fired workers were all members of CATH, a major trade union center in Haiti.

The union demanded that the steel workers be rehired, and organized the general strike to back up this demand. The strike on November 21 completely shut down the industrial area around Port-au-Prince, and shut down most other commercial activity as well.

The general strike also put forward other demands against the government.

For one thing, it demanded that the government stop persecuting Father Aristide. Aristide is an opposition figure who earned the wrath of the Namphy regime and the Tonton Macoutes, the secret police of the old Duvalier tyranny. He is a populist, supports "liberation theology," and has stands ranging from militant reformism to petty-bourgeois revolutionism. The Macoutes had tried to murder him, and it was Namphy's apparent support for that attempt which brought about his

regime's downfall. But since then, the government and the church hierarchy have both been hounding Aristide, trying to force him into exile.

The general strike also demanded that the government take active measures against the Tonton Macoutes, which still exist as right-wing vigilante forces. Strikers demanded that the government purge its forces of Macoutes, that the Macoutes be disarmed, and the most notorious ones put on trial. They also demanded freedom for present political prisoners. These include many soldiers who took part in the revolt of September 17 but who tried to expand it to a purge of the Macoutes.

The strike also put forth economic demands of the toilers, for lower prices on gasoline and food.

Since coming to power, General Avril has ingratiated himself with the U.S. State Department and Congress by spouting some "democratic" rhetoric and promising to hold elections — someday. As long as Avril holds the Haitian toilers in check, the U.S. imperialists are glad to overlook small details like Avril's long-time Duvalierist loyalties. Meanwhile the Macoutes remain entrenched in the police and army, poverty of the masses worsens, and those who protest are fired or sent to jail.

The U.S. imperialists and Haitian exploiters would like Haiti to remain in this wretched situation, but the recent general strike shows that the workers' resistance is not about to go away. □

Student protesters battle police in London

Students protesting cuts in government grants battled police in central London on November 24.

Fifteen thousand students gathered for a march on parliament to oppose Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's new scheme to replace grants with loans. Hundreds of police blocked them from reaching the parliament building, so the students sat down in central London and blocked major streets.

The students kept up their demonstration for hours, chanting slogans and tying up traffic, until mounted police

suddenly charged into their midst. Hundreds of students were injured by trampling horses, and 60 were arrested. This broke up the daytime protest, but that night 2,000 students marched on police headquarters to protest the assault on their demonstration.

Besides the proposal to replace grants with loans, Thatcher also wants to eliminate social benefits for students. Since November students have been holding sit-ins and demonstrations all over Britain to oppose the proposals. □

Nigerian workers say no to austerity

Workers in Nigeria are fighting against the increasingly harsh austerity measures of the government.

The government is bankrupt due to the fall in world oil prices, and is shifting its fiscal crisis onto the Nigerian toilers.

The government stopped paying railroad workers last August. In early December the workers got fed up with this situation and went on strike. They

have paralyzed train service throughout the country.

Also in December the national airline announced the dismissal of 3,000 employees, one-third of its work force. Police in riot gear were ordered in to surround the airline's headquarters, to prevent attacks on it by angry workers. With the deepening of the capitalist economic crisis, class lines are being drawn more sharply in Nigeria. □

Sudanese fight starvation government

Khartoum, December 29: Sudanese police fired on protesters today, killing at least one person, as strikes and demonstrations continued. Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, was gripped by a general strike for the second straight day, and protests spread over the entire country.

The general strike was called to protest the government's announcement of price increases on food items December 25. This included a 500% increase in the price of sugar.

The strike shut down all public transport, including airlines, and telephone lines were dead. Thousands of Sudanese demonstrated in the streets, surrounding government offices in Khartoum and demanding that the government resign.

The government announced it was withdrawing the increase in food prices. But the government's position remains shaky, as the Sudanese masses are growing angry with continuing starvation. □

From revolutionary Kurdistan

(The following article, "In Revolutionary Kurdistan," is from the Dec. 1-15 issue of "Report," newsletter of CPI-The Committee Abroad.)

On October 14, Komala Peshmargas (militant fighters of the Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran) from Fo'ad battalion entered the city of Marivan. On their way they confronted the regime's military forces. In an armed clash which ensued, a large number of the regime's cars and a substantial amount of the regime's ammunition were destroyed. The base of the Pasdarans (Islamic Guards) was set on fire and many of their men killed. Peshmargas then entered the town and joined the people who were marching in the streets shouting the slogans "Long live the Communist Party of Iran!" "Long live Komala!"

These political-military operations are carried out under conditions when the whole of Kurdistan is under military occupation of the regime. By laying down careful planning and organization, and with the help of the

people, Komala Peshmargas have so far managed to destroy many of the regime's fortresses and military forces and carried out their communist propaganda work.

Public Meeting in Sanandaj

From September 23, for a period of 15 days, Komala Peshmargas held public political meetings for the people in the city of Sanandaj. Some of these meetings were held at places only a few kilometers from army bases. In these meetings, Peshmargas and people talked about the present position of the regime, pressures imposed on the people and the ways of organizing workers' and toilers' struggle for the overthrow of the regime.

Execution Threats

Faced with the slow progress of its compulsory conscription policy in Kurdistan, the Islamic Republic has recently resorted to yet another form of

intimidation and suppression. On the 9th and 11th of September it was announced that if anyone called for recruitment refuses to register with the local recruitment offices in Sanandaj, Saghez, Marivan, Bookan and Sardasht, he will be executed.

The organized resistance of the Kurdish people against this policy of the regime during the past few years has been so extensive that the regime has no alternative but to resort to executions and a show of strength through mass murder, in order to maintain its "credibility" and "authority."

Mass Evacuation

In October the Islamic government

Workers' struggles in Iran

(The following news items are taken from the Dec. 1-15 issue of "Report," newsletter of the Communist Party of Iran — The Committee Abroad.)

* Recently, miners at the Zir Ab mines (in the north of Iran) protested against military conscription. Although there is a cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war, the Islamic government continues to recruit workers for military services.

The protest started when workers refused to follow the Pasdarans' (the regime's paramilitary forces) instructions on conscription. A mullah (clergyman) came to the mine in order to help the Pasdarans and talk the workers into accepting these instructions. But, not only did the workers not accept his jargon, they demanded the dissolution of the "Islamic Council" which was actively involved in this matter. The authorities have not yet succeeded in implementing their policy in this mine.

* It was recently announced in the

officials and army personnel forced the people of 15 villages to evacuate their houses. They also notified the inhabitants of 37 more villages to evacuate their villages till spring 1989. These forced evacuations took place in Baneh area (in the western part of Iranian Kurdistan).

By carrying out such suppressive measures, the regime aims to harness the mass revolutionary movement in Kurdistan. Through these vicious aims it tries to maintain strategic areas in Kurdistan, prevent the movement of the Peshmargas in the central part of Kurdistan, and thus control the struggles of the people in these areas. □

Momtaz textile factory (in Shahr-Ray, Tehran) that 200 workers have been chosen by the authorities to serve in the army. On the days when they were supposed to be taken to the garrisons, workers' families gathered outside the Pasdarans' headquarters and protested. So far we have no received further news of this protest.

* On October 14, workers at the Beshasab building firm in Sardasht (in Kurdistan) complained to the governor-general of Azerbaijan about the delay in the payment of their wages. To resolve the conflict, he attended the factory and made some promises. On the next day not only did the employers not pay the wages, but they announced that the firm was going to be closed down. This meant the 170 workers would become unemployed. It should be noted that during last summer workers had gone on strike and succeeded in increasing their wages by 20%. □

CP of Iran condemns new wave of executions in Khomeini's prisons

(The following is a statement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran dated September 25, 1988.)

The Islamic Republic has begun a new wave of harassment, torture and executions in its prisons. For the past two months, the political prisoners were kept in absolute isolation from the outside world, their family visits were prohibited, and now the news about this new escalation of harassment, torture and execution in the prisons of the Islamic Republic is made public.

Today it is common experience by everyone living in Iran that the very existence of the Islamic Republic is based on the complete denial of political freedom, continuous persecution, suppression, torture and execution. It is also a common experience that every time the Iranian regime faces a crisis from within, and is confronted by a resurgence of the protest movement of the masses, it resorts to a new wave of political persecution, torture and execution in the prisons. In the face of these difficulties the Islamic Republic covers up its impotence and fear by resorting to thuggery and a show of violence. This new wave of atrocities is, above all, the reaction of the Islamic Republic in response to its present crisis and weakened position brought about by the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war. The defeat of the Islamic Republic in its war aims and policies silenced the shouts of "war, war" by the heads of the Islamic Republic and its lackies; discredited the methods of suppression used by the regime during the war period; and intensified the internal conflicts of the government. All these happened at a time when a new round of mass protest was gaining momentum. Under such circumstances the Islamic Republic realized more than ever before that its nightmare of losing control was about to become a reality.

It is to overcome this that the Islamic Republic now strives for a new wave of persecutions, torture, and execution in its prisons and has once again lined up all its repressive forces, in the hope that in this atmosphere of "catch-and-tie," persecution and execution, the toiling masses will refrain from an extensive struggle against it.

By resorting to a show of violence in the prisons, once again the Islamic Republic is striving to make up for the disintegration of its war suppression and counter the new round of internal crisis. Along with this effort, the regime's propaganda against the opposition political organizations has intensified; working class activities and vanguard workers have been besieged; and everywhere a new wave of arrests and persecutions has again been organized. The murderers and torturers have once again been given a free hand to break resistance in the prisons; the most savage methods of torture have again been applied; and during the past three months, yet more political prisoners have been sent before the firing squads.

In order to reconsolidate its rule of suppression and terror, the Islamic Republic has also set its hope in the silence and approval of the international community. With the end of the war, the Islamic Republic has promised the imperialist states that it will accomplish the "economic reconstruction" of the country and will organize the free movement of capital in Iran such that the Iranian workers and toilers remain completely without rights and deprived. The craving for the appropriation of huge sums of profit that this reorganization of workers' exploitation promises and which will be pocketed by the European and American capitalists has reduced the previous international pressures on the Islamic Republic. In this respect circles and organizations

whose support of the so-called "human rights" in this or that country solely depends on the needs and expediences of the relations of the Western imperialists with the governments of these countries, have all shamelessly remained silent in the face of this new wave of crimes and violations committed by the Islamic regime.

Workers and Oppressed People of Iran!

The Islamic Republic's new attack must be nullified by your own strength. The Islamic Republic cannot free itself of the consequences of its defeat, since your just demands for a human life have long sounded the death knell of this regime. Do not retreat from your demands and come forth for an ever greater and more powerful struggle. Confront the Islamic Republic's onslaught and struggle more resolutely in support of the political prisoners and for their freedom.

Workers!

Unite. We shall not let the henchmen and thugs of the Islamic Republic extend this new wave of arrests and persecutions to our work places and threaten our ranks. We must be ready for any kind of such assaults and set to work to free our comrades, more resolutely than ever. We are duty bound, with all strength and unity, to raise the banner of freedom of political prisoners before all the freedom-loving people and call upon all the oppressed to struggle in unity with the workers.

Families of the Political Prisoners!

We all feel the sorrow and miseries which you suffer. Without any doubt, any worker and freedom-loving person too shares this sorrow with you. You are

not and must not be alone in your struggle in support of the rights of your imprisoned loved ones and in your struggle to free them. Unite. Untiringly disclose the crimes committed by the regime, and the situations of the prisons. Call upon all the people to support your struggles and participate in your struggle to free the political prisoners. Visit the prisoners in groups and increase your protest gatherings. Let the voice of your protest be heard louder from every neighborhood and work place, and let greater efforts be organized for the freedom of the political prisoners. The new onslaught of the Islamic Republic must be fought back.

By coming forth, you workers and oppressed will, without any doubt, force the Islamic Republic to retreat. Let the regime which has resorted to torture and execution in order to make up for its fear and impotence, hear its death knell in this slogan chanted by millions of workers and the oppressed:

Free all political prisoners!

Down with the Islamic Republic!

Long live freedom, equality, workers' rule! □

MARXIST-LENINIST BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

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The working class must have its party!

Continued from front page

litical party. Not a "special interest group" buried within the Democratic Party, but a rallying center to defend the class interests of all workers. Not another electoral rainbow coalition, but a general headquarters for struggle. The Marxist-Leninist Party is building such a headquarters, such a center. It has shown its worth in these trying years.

At a time when no lie is too great for the Reaganites, and the TV and press do little more than sing the glories of the bosses, the Marxist-Leninist Party has kept alive the voice of the working class. With its newspapers and leaflets the Party spreads the news of mass struggle, broadcasts the truth about what's going on, distributes the working class point of view in the workshops, the neighborhoods, the schools. It is a breath of fresh air, lifting the masses, and inspiring them in their own strength to stand and fight.

At a time when the union officials are holding back strikes, and reformist big shots are converting protest demonstrations into election rallies, the Party has fought to defend the mass movements. Whether confronting racist skinheads and reactionary "right-to-lifers," or launching job actions and picket lines, or raising slogans in support of the revolutions of the toilers in Central America and of the black masses in South Africa, the Party has worked to rebuild the mass movements and to free them from the corrosive enslavement to the capitalist parties.

At a time when layoffs disorganize the masses, and groups of struggle evaporate into voter registration coalitions, the Marxist-Leninist Party works to build up organization. Uniting the fighters, pulling militants together into networks for spreading leaflets and resistance in the shops, forging anti-imperialist groups among the activists, the Party trains the masses in how to organize and shows them that organization is where the strength of the working class resides.

The Party of Science and Socialism

How is it that with all of the capitalist attacks, with the disorganization, with the setbacks to the mass movements, the Party has been able to preserve itself and continue to organize and mobilize among the masses?

It is because the Party is inspired by socialism. It knows that the catastrophes of capitalism, whether Western-style or Gorbachev's revisionist state capitalism, are not only devastating the masses today. The crises also show that this system is ripe for change. That it's ready to be replaced by a better system, by workers' socialism.

It is because the Party is based on the science of class struggle. Marxism-Leninism sums up the history of working class struggle around the world. It shows that the world is not only ripe for change, but that it is the working class which is the force that is strong enough to bring about that change.

It is because the Party has its roots among the rank-and-file workers. Not in the upper crust, the labor aristocracy, the bureaucrats, but among the workers on the bottom who are suffering from the speedup and layoffs, from the unemployment and impoverishment. These are the ones who are angry, who are fed up, who are looking for the way to fight.

It is because the Party is connected to the international working class movement. The Party is not held within the confines of the ups and downs of struggle in the U.S. It is inspired by the revolutionary outbursts that have crossed the globe and has managed to link up with the revolutionary Marxist-Leninists in other countries who are fighting their own rulers and against imperialism.

It is because the Party always stayed linked with the on-going class struggle. And its traditions date back to other days, days of revolutionary struggle in the 1960's. And so it can see that today's quiet is simply the calm before the storm.

20 Years of Struggle for the Marxist-Leninist Party

The Party's direct experience goes back 20 years. Back to May 12, 1969 when the American Communist Workers' Movement (Marxist-Leninist) was formed.

The comrades who founded the ACWM(ML) saw the need for a single rallying center for the working class. They took on themselves the task of uniting the Marxist-Leninists and spreading party concept among the masses. The ACWM(ML) was founded to provide a national center for the work to re-establish the vanguard party of the working class.

Over the years, the ACWM(ML) fought for Marxist-Leninist unity and

brought together a number of Marxist-Leninist groups and individuals. After one of these campaigns the Central Organization of U.S. Marxist-Leninists was formed. Through years of all-sided struggle, and out of the fight to unite the Marxist-Leninists against social-chauvinism, the Party itself was founded in 1980.

The ACWM(ML) was formed by activists from the raging struggles of the 1960's. It was a fighting organization that battled the fascists and resisted police attacks, despite hundreds of arrests in its first few years of existence.

The ACWM(ML) was formed out of the anti-revisionist movement. The U.S. workers had once had their own party. But in the mid-1930's the old Communist Party gave up its revolutionary convictions, revised the Marxist-Leninist theory, and began to submerge the workers' movement in a liberal-labor coalition with the Democrats. Those who formed the ACWM(ML) had direct experience with the sabotaging role of the revisionists and learned to hate them. So it fought the revisionist CP,

and the revisionist concepts influential in a number of groupings, and worked to restore the revolutionary teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

The ACWM(ML) faced many obstacles and made many errors. But with its revolutionary spirit, with its determination to apply Marxism-Leninism in practice, with its abiding faith in the revolutionary capacity of the working class, it learned from its mistakes and pushed ahead the struggle for the Party.

The history of the ACWM(ML), and of the last 20 years of struggle for Marxism-Leninism, is part of the hard-won experience of the working class movement. On this 20th anniversary, our Party is launching a campaign to learn from that history. We will carry articles, hold meetings, and spread the lessons from that struggle among the masses.

Class conscious workers and revolutionary activists, join with us to build up the Party deep among the working masses!

20th anniversary of the founding of the American Communist Workers' Movement (Marxist-Leninist)



ACWM(ML) organized a militant protest to smash up the "hard hat" movement's attempt to hold a rally in Cleveland, July 26, 1970. The "hard hat" movement was launched by the Nixon administration as a chauvinist crusade to support the U.S. war in Viet Nam. The active resistance of ACWM(ML) to them and their police defenders was a major factor in the quick collapse of this pro-war movement.



ACWM(ML) organized a demonstration in Cleveland, June 20, 1970, to protest a visit by Vice-President Agnew. Agnew was the darling of the capitalist ruling class for his vicious, reactionary attacks on the mass movements of the 1960's.



Activists of the Cleveland Draft Resistance Union at the march on the Pentagon, October 1967. Activists from CD RU were among the founders of ACWM (ML). ACWM(ML) was built by activists from the mass movements of the 1960's who realized from their own experience the need for a Marxist-Leninist Party to organize the working class for socialist revolution.



The proletariat is the greatest class in the history of mankind. It is the most powerful revolutionary class ideologically, politically and in strength. It can and must unite the overwhelming majority of people around itself so as to isolate the handful of enemies to the maximum and attack them.

The Workers' Advocate

PEOPLE'S VICTORY IN VIETNAM AIDS U.S. WORKERS



Inside: Palestinian People's Struggle

One of the earliest editions of THE WORKERS' ADVOCATE. ACWM(ML) stood for revolutionary agitation among the workers right from the outset.