

IRAN EXPLODES



***“Death to the Shah and
U.S. Imperialism”***

November 1978

8

25c

**The Revolutionary Communist
Youth Brigade**

IRAN EXPLODES



Martyrs Square, Tehran, on Sept. 8, the day the Shah's troops shot down 10,000 Iranians

The old peasant carrying his home-made sign took a place in the front of the demonstration. The Shah's U.S.-made tanks revved up their motors and began to move in. The leaders of the demonstration called on the old man to come back from the front lines. The tanks rolled on; the old man defiantly stood his ground. The long years of back-breaking toil under the burning Iranian sun showed in the wrinkles on his face—and in the determination in his eyes. The tanks rolled on, the machine guns of the troops opened fire with a dull, heavy roar. But as the old man fell, he could hear behind him an even greater roar, a thundering roar, as thousands upon thousands of his people raised the battlecry: "Death to the Murdering Shah!"

Iran, one of the world's major oil centers, is in flames. Millions have risen in revolt against the regime of the Shah, a vicious human dog who faithfully rules Iran for his U.S. imperialist masters. Strikes have swept the factories, students have shut down universities. According to official statistics, in 2 days of demonstrations, Sept. 7 and 8, 7½ million people throughout Iran took to the streets. This was *one-fifth* of the total population; these were some of the largest demonstrations in the history of the world.

The Shah has responded with a wave of terror. Thousands have been gunned down, over 10,000 on Sept. 7 and 8 alone. Thousands more have been arrested, beaten, and tortured. Martial law has been declared in the major cities. In the city of Abadan, 800 people watching a movie which opposed the Shah's regime were *burned alive* when SAVAK, the Iranian secret police, set fire to the theater and barricaded the doors to prevent escape—or rescue.

Here in the U.S., millions of us have seen the mili-

tant demonstrations of Iranian students demanding "Down With the Shah!" and "Down With U.S. Imperialism!" on campuses, on city streets, or on TV.

Yet the U.S. media tells us that the Shah is really a "progressive," that he has brought to Iran a "spring-time of political liberalization" (*Time* magazine). They claim that the Shah and the U.S. are trying to *help* the Iranians, that the U.S. corporations are bringing them modern technology and the possibility of a better life. Iran is held up as a "showplace of development," along with other U.S. colonies like Taiwan and South Korea.

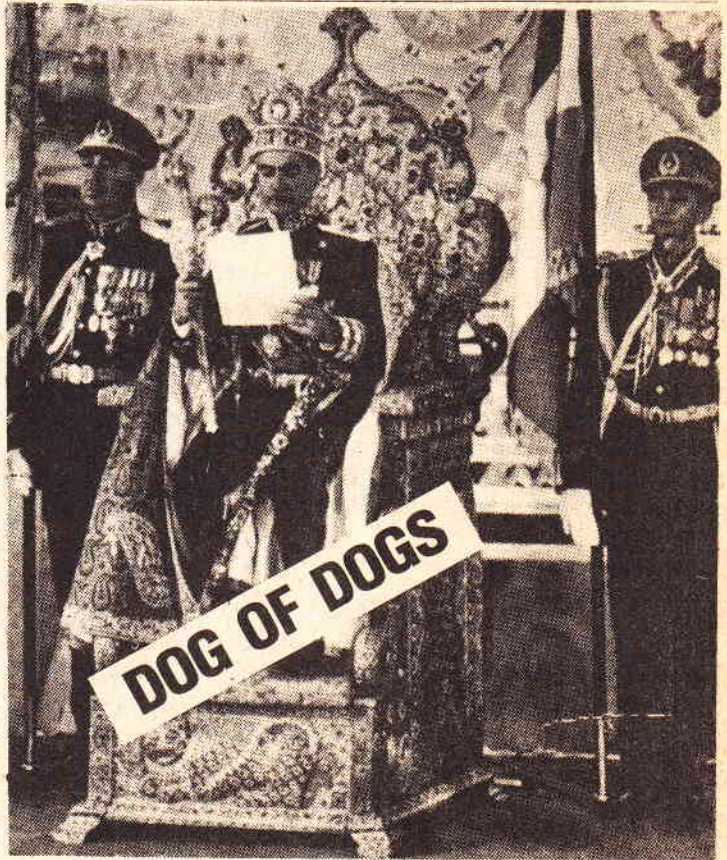
It is not the Shah but the Iranian *people*, they say, who are stubbornly refusing to be brought into the twentieth century, who are opposed to change. But when the poverty and misery of the Iranian people shows through this reactionary propaganda, and when the vicious, brutal deeds of the Shah's regime are too gross to cover up, then they admit, in the words of a recent Chicago *Sun-Times* editorial: "Yes, the Shah's a despot, but he's *our* despot." Yes, Iranian people, you live with the boot of U.S. imperialism on your neck, but you should be thankful that it's not the boot of the *Soviet* bosses.

The years-long struggle of the Iranian people answers back: We are determined to throw out the Shah and the U.S., and to live free of any imperialist masters!

* * *

What's happening today in Iran has blown the lid off all the fondest dreams of the U.S. imperialists. They thought they had the "ugly," exposing Vietnam episode behind them. They thought they had buried forever the memories of the tremendous struggle against them. And they had hoped to gear up without interference for their growing rivalry with the USSR. Instead, *boom*, up spring the Iranian people, reviving all the memories of their viciousness in Vietnam, endangering their precious investments, shattering their newly-invented "human rights" image, and uncovering over and over again the disgusting and criminal nature of their far-flung rule. The U.S. imperialists are

"King of Kings, Lord of Lords— The Shadow of God: THE SHAH" (as he likes to call himself)



very worried about what will happen as the American people learn more of the *truth* about Iran.

This is why we wrote this pamphlet—to be a weapon in our struggle against these worldwide pirates, these vampires that rule over us here too—and to be a weapon in support of the courageous and just fight of the Iranian people.



Iranians destroy Pepsi trucks, symbol of hated U.S. imperialism

Shah And U.S. Imperialism Vs. 35 Million Iranians

The wave of struggle that has shaken Iran for the past year is the largest and most militant in 25 years. All buildings representing the Shah or the U.S. are now under 24-hour guard, but they're still getting hit by the people. Police stations, government buildings, including those of the Shah's fascist political party, dozens of U.S.-owned banks and corporate offices, porno-theaters, casinos, even Pepsi trucks have been put to the torch.

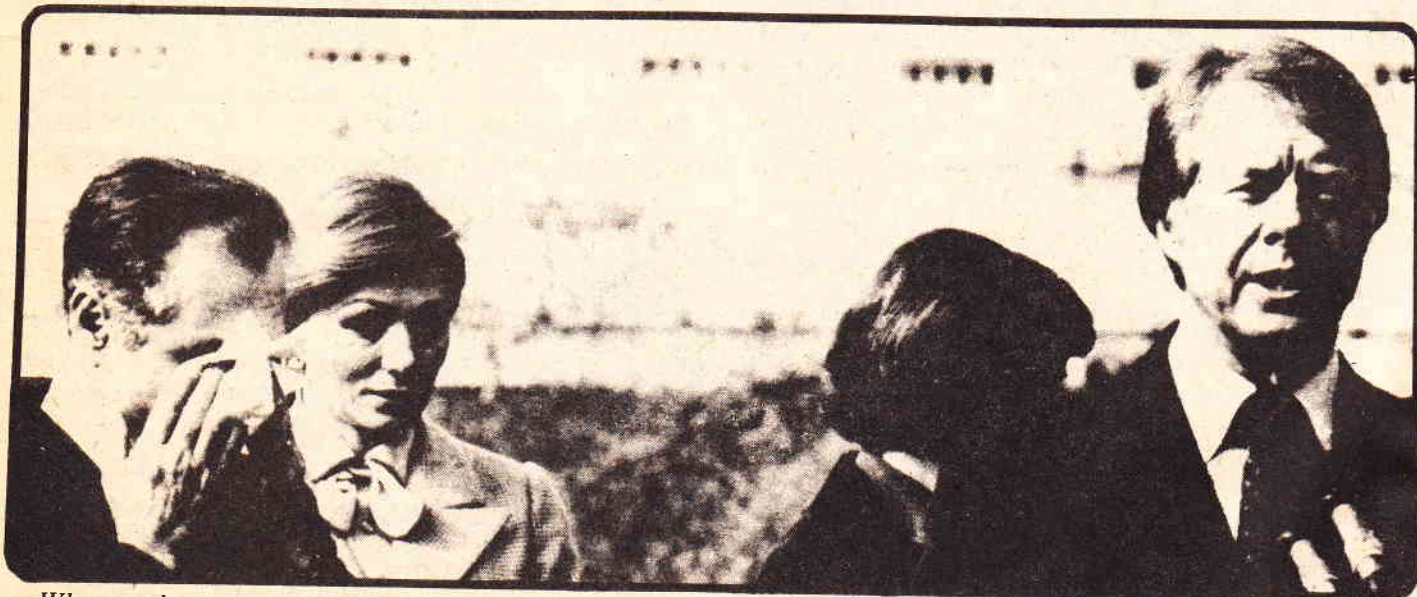
This revolutionary upsurge broke out in September 1977, when the Shah sent troops to evict thousands of people living in shanty towns on the outskirts of Tehran, the capitol of Iran. Many of these people were peasants who had already been driven off their land in the countryside by the big landlords. They had had enough. When the troops arrived, a furious battle broke out.

The Shah was worried. Faced with growing rebellion and an economic situation getting worse by the day, the Shah went to seek aid from Washington in November 1977. The people in Iran responded in huge numbers, demonstrating in their tens of thousands in open opposition to the fascist regime and demanding an end to U.S. aid to the Shah. At the same time, in the U.S., 5000 Iranian students, along with a number of Americans, demonstrated right outside the White House as Jimmy Carter and the Shah negotiated. The D.C. cops tear-gassed the students, but the tear gas drifted back into the White House, giving Mr. Human Rights and King Torture a small dose of their own medicine!

After the Shah's return, the uprisings in Iran mushroomed. The people of the city of Qum rebelled in their thousands. The Shah's troops machine-gunned 500 to death. In Tabriz, 200,000 people took part in a rebellion so powerful that they were able to seize control of the city for several days. Since then massive strikes have rocked the regime week after week. At the universities the Shah attempted to break the opposition by shutting the schools down—but this only succeeded in bringing the students together to go out broadly among the workers and peasants and join with their struggles.

These uprisings have swept the country in open defiance of the regime's military dictatorship. The regime's military forces, well-trained and well-armed by the U.S., have responded with savage brutality. They have orders to "shoot to kill." Violation of simple night curfew can easily mean prison, if not a bullet in the back. Midnight raids on resistance leaders take place daily. Thousands have been added to Iran's 100,000 political prisoners, many of whom face torture and slow death.

But the people have taken their share of the hated enemy too. Even as they bury their dead the Iranian people take every chance for revenge on the fascist regime. In Tabriz, a funeral procession carrying a coffin stopped in front of the police headquarters. As they set down the wooden box, a man jumped out of it with a machine gun and mowed down the cops standing guard at the station.



Why are they crying? Because tear gas fired at demonstrators outside White House gates November 15, 1977 blew back into the faces of the people who ordered it to be shot: (from left) the Shah, his wife, Rosalyn Carter, and J. Carter.



Iranians have always hated the rule of U.S. imperialism. Here workers demonstrate against the U.S. in Iran, June 1951, 2 years before the CIA-backed coup.

U.S. Imperialists: The Shah's Godfather

A look at any map will tell you that Iran is an "independent" country. But the U.S. imperialists set up the Shah's regime, and they keep him there. "Independence" for Iran today amounts to little more than a national flag—and even that flies under the dark shadow of the "red, white and blue."

How did this come about? Iran used to be controlled by the British imperialists. But when the U.S. came out of World War II the big winner—the top imperialist power—they began going after the holdings of the older and weaker imperialists like Britain. At this same time, the Iranian people were waging a tremendous fight against the Shah's regime which was backed up by the British. The struggle got so hot for the Shah that he fled for his life in 1951 and was replaced by a popularly elected government headed by Mohammed Mossadegh. This government immediately began to take over the British oil interests—and threatened to block domination of Iran by other foreign powers—like the U.S.

The people of Iran supported this wholeheartedly. The imperialists didn't. The U.S. in particular had been counting on taking over Britain's oil interests themselves, and by 1953 they saw they had to make a move. On August 19, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the U.S. embassy in Iran directed a coup by the military, overthrowing the Mossadegh government. They put the hated Shah back on the throne—only this time the U.S. held the reins instead of the British.

In the early 60's the Iranian people's hatred for the Shah and his new backers began boiling over. In

response, the U.S. imperialists—this time under the "liberal" Kennedy administration—helped the Shah design the "White Revolution." This was no revolution at all, but a "land reform" plan devised by Harvard economists funded by the Ford Foundation. It took some land away from the Moslem church and placed it in the hands of the biggest landlords who were the most tied in with the imperialists and who were able to use modern capitalist farming techniques which required many fewer peasant hands. Thousands of peasants were thrown off the land and the self-sufficient agricultural economy was destroyed. Then as a further "reform," they extended the Shah's spy network, SAVAK, throughout the countryside (where the regime had been weak) under the guise of

Kennedy and the Shah: "Either White Revolution from the Top or Proletarian Revolution from Below"

establishing a few rural schools and health care facilities.

On June 5, 1963, thousands of furious Iranians flooded the streets in a sudden outpouring of rage against all the oppressive "reforms." 15,000 were gunned down on that one day. The remarks of the *New York Times* 5 days after the massacre have a sickeningly familiar ring: "The Shah appears to have mounted another crisis in his drive to reform and develop the feudal kingdom of Iran. Violent rioting and a plot to overthrow his Government have been suppressed...the great mass of Iranian people are doubtless behind the Shah in his bold new reform efforts."

Vampires Go For the Jugular

For the imperialists, Iran has always been big booty. *Two-thirds* of the world's known oil reserves are in Iran and 3 nearby countries—Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait. This oil is not only the most plentiful in the world, but also the best quality, and most easily accessible. Iran's major oil city, Abadan, is the site of the world's largest oil refinery. Who profits from all this natural wealth? The big U.S. oil monopolies, Standard Oil, Texaco, Gulf, Mobil dominate almost half of Iran's oil production, as well as much of the oil in other Mideast countries. Between 1948 and 1960, for instance, the U.S. companies took home \$12.8 billion in profits from Mideast oil.

Besides the oil goldmine, some 5000 other U.S. corporations have investments in Iran—in the billions of dollars. The rate of return in this country runs as high as 50% (*MERIP Reports*, no. 69, July 1978), thanks to imperialist "development" which keeps wages at the starvation level and working conditions miserable. Investors in Iran include Chase Manhattan Bank, BankAmerica, agribusiness giants like John Deere and Dow Chemical, and manufacturers including General Motors, Westinghouse, Allied Chemical and Goodyear. Iran is also the biggest market for U.S. goods in the Middle East.

Iran: U.S. Watchdog for the Middle East

Iran has importance to the U.S. imperialists beyond the immediate profits they steal from the country. The Shah's regime is one of the main outposts protecting the U.S. empire in the Middle East. This has been particularly true since 1968, when the imperialists adopted the "Nixon Doctrine," under which certain key countries around the world—such as South Korea, Iran, Brazil—act as the imperialists' regional cops on the beat. As a staff member of the Senate Select Com-

"The idea is to get Iran to do the kind of things we wouldn't want to do directly."

mittee on Intelligence explained: "It's clear that, since about 1970, we [in the U.S. government] have decided that Iran is going to be our regional power in the Middle East. The idea is to try to make them *look independent* but, in fact, to maintain enough ties so that we can get them to do the kind of things that we wouldn't want to do directly" (quoted in *Boston Phoenix*, April 26, 1977—emphasis added).*

To pull this off, the U.S. has turned Iran into a huge

*Not only Iran, but Israel too, plays this kind of role in the Middle East. This quote reflects this guy's opinion on the primary importance of Iran—there are probably differences of opinion in the ruling class over whether to use Iran or Israel as the main regional cop.



Son of Shah, Reza Pahlavi, is learning to be a fighter-bomber pilot. He's shown here (on left) at Reese Air Force Base in Texas with his U.S. Air Force instructor. At the same time as millions demonstrated in the streets of Iran against the Shah's regime and its U.S. backers in late October, would-be Shah Reza went to the White House to celebrate his 18th birthday with his patron Jimmy Carter.

military arsenal. Since 1972, the U.S. has sold \$18 billion in arms to Iran (*Washington Post*, 9/18/77). This is more weapons than *any other country* in the world receives from the U.S. Billions more have been sold to Iran by Western European countries. The Shah's armed forces are among the largest in the world, with some of the most advanced and sophisticated weapons, ranging from Phantom fighter planes to guided-missile destroyers and hovercraft. According to some sources, huge new shipments of weapons already on order would make Iran's armed forces as big as those of West Germany in a few years, with an air force twice as big. "Over half of the nation's 1976-77 budget is devoted to the armed forces" (*Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 31, 1976).

Besides weaponry, U.S. imperialism has also exported loads of trained personnel to Iran. Some 40,000 military "advisors" can be found at all levels of government, military, corporate, and educational bodies—"the largest military aid mission anywhere." (*Washington Post*, Aug. 29, 1976) In addition, U.S. weapons manufacturers such as Bell Helicopter and McDonnell Douglas Aircraft have thousands of their own technicians in the country. 250 Iranian military officers and large numbers of pilots are trained in the U.S. every year.

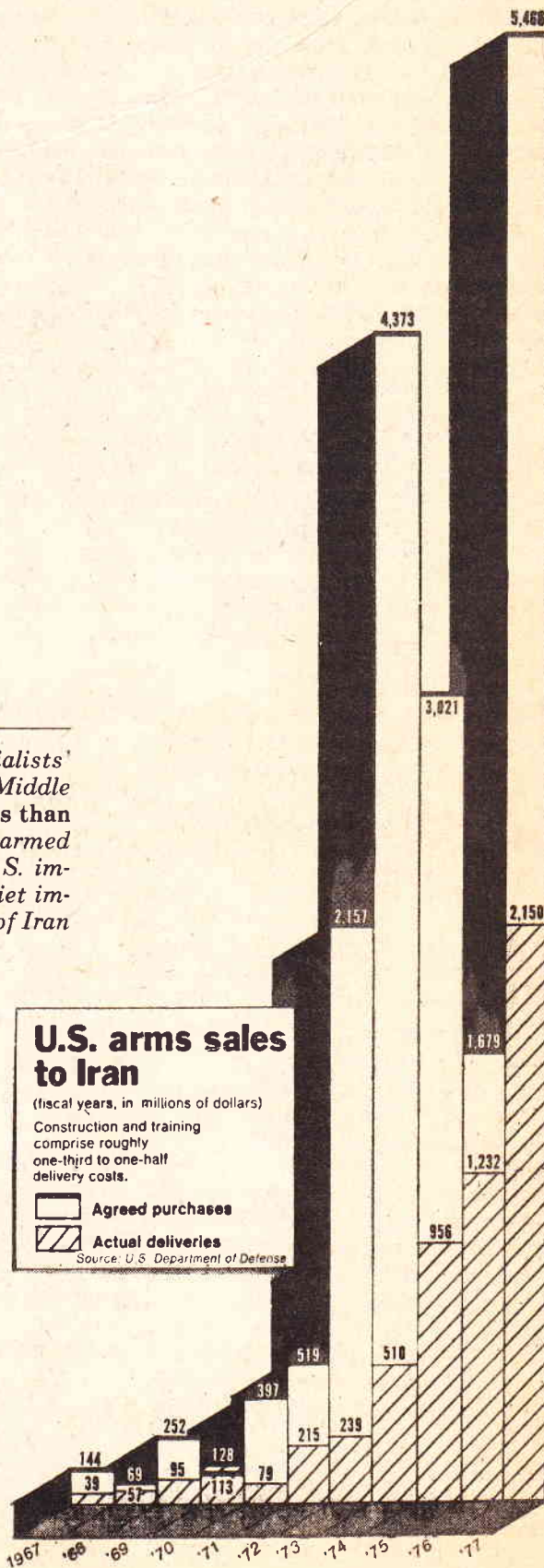
Arms to Keep Out the Soviets

The U.S. has armed Iran to the teeth. Why? It's not mainly for profits, although U.S. weapons companies do make a big bundle on Iran. The regime must be armed to protect U.S. interests against the other superpower, the imperialist Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was once a socialist country, but ever since the capitalists in that country took back power from the working class in the 1950's, the new Soviet bosses have been driven by the same law as the U.S. imperialists: "Expand, or Die." These two gangs of super-rich thugs are squaring off around the world, because each of them can only expand into the other one's turf. Armed confrontations are today breaking out between forces backed by one superpower or the other, as in Angola 3 years ago or Ethiopia today.

Just as the U.S. imperialists were able to move in and replace the older British, German, and French imperialists, so are the Soviet imperialists seeking to knock off the U.S. and become the number one exploiter of the world's people. The deepening economic crisis squeezes the profits of both these imperialists, and relentlessly forces them to quicken their drive to expand. In fact, these two imperialist superpowers are headed towards World War III.

Iran is located at the center of much of this turmoil. Although Europe, with its vast wealth and huge industrial

To enable Iran to serve as the U.S. imperialists' cop-on-the-beat protecting their interests in the Middle East, the U.S. has supplied Iran with more arms than any other country in the world. The Shah's armed forces (below) are an ace in the hole for the U.S. imperialists in their growing rivalry with the Soviet imperialists and in trying to keep down the people of Iran and the rest of the Persian Gulf.



cities, is the key prize in this struggle, the Middle East is also of vital importance. Oil is one reason. Not only do both superpowers need it, but Western Europe gets 60% of its oil from the Middle East, and Japan 90%. Control of Middle Eastern oil means control of Europe's and Japan's jugular vein. Both imperialist superpowers are going for it.

Beyond that, the Middle East is strategically located on Europe's southern flank. The U.S.-controlled guns of Iran face the Soviets all along the 1200 mile border on the north. And lying along Iran's southwest border is one of the world's chief shipping lanes, particularly for oil. They are watched carefully by Iran's huge navy.

All this means that it is crucial for the U.S. to maintain and even tighten its grip on Iran, just as the Soviets are desperate to move in. Joseph Kraft, a Washington columnist and long-time propaganda man for the capitalists, recently wrote:

"With the weak regimes in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and India, Iran is the only force of stability [!] in the area and the only barrier against Russian penetration. In these conditions the United States does not have the luxury of sniffing at corruption in Iran or playing liberal missionary on human rights."

(Mr. Kraft need not worry, the U.S. is hardly sticking its neck out for human rights, in Iran or anywhere else.)

In line with this, the Shah's regime has been used in maneuvers against Iran's neighbor, Iraq, which is largely dominated by the USSR. This has included border skirmishes and the funding of a movement headed by a reactionary general named Barezani, who took advantage of a struggle by the Kurdish people in northern Iraq against the regime there to try to increase U.S. influence.



Arms to Keep Down the People

The imperialists have also armed the Shah to keep down the struggle of the masses against everything that imperialism does to the people both in Iran and in the surrounding area. This accounts for U.S. sales of such things as thumb screws, electronic cattle prods and other torture devices—not to mention the more "standard" equipment like the 50,000 tear gas grenades and 356,000 gas masks the U.S. sent over to help out in the recent rebellions. (*New York Times*, July 9, 1978) The Shah also uses his troops to put down any revolutionary rumblings in the Persian Gulf area. A few years ago Iran dispatched a 30,000-man force to crush revolutionary forces in the Persian Gulf state of Oman.

The Shah's regime also functions like Zionist Israel in funneling arms and advisers to other reactionary rulers when the U.S. is afraid to do so openly.* Israel and Iran work closely in carrying out the interests of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East. Iran supplies oil to Israel and the two countries cooperate in trade, air transport, military training, technical assistance, and other areas. Israeli pilots have been trained in Iran and Iran purchases arms produced by Israeli companies. In the recent massacres of Sept. 7 and 8, Israeli commandos were reported at the front lines of the Shah's troops.

Iran is thus a key outpost of U.S. imperialism in a vital area of the world. President Carter put this out bluntly when he spoke during the Shah's visit last November about the U.S. relationship to Iran: "We look upon Iran's strength as an extension of our own strength and Iran looks upon our strength as an extension of theirs." Carter went on to describe the military alliance between the two as "unshakable." As their rivalry with the Soviet imperialists heats up, the U.S. bosses will certainly try to even further tighten up this "unshakable" alliance.

*For instance, a recent account in the *Houston Post* revealed that Nicaragua's dictator Somoza got U.S. arms through Israel, at a time when Somoza's position was so shaky that the U.S. didn't want to be publicly identified with his regime.

SAVAK ساواک



Taking care of SAVAK agent at Washington demonstration during Shah's U.S. visit.

SAVAK—few words are as hated in Iran as this, the name of the fascist secret police force created by the U.S. imperialists and the Shah to do much of their dirtiest work of repression against the Iranian people.

SAVAK had its beginnings in the 1940's, when the U.S. imperialists were getting ready to take over Iran from their weaker rival imperialists, the British. Several U.S. agents, particularly Brigadier General Norman Schwartzkopf (former head of the New Jersey State Police), quietly infiltrated Iran's intelligence and police agencies and developed a network of agents and informers loyal to the U.S. Their task was to identify and keep track of Iranian revolutionaries and other leaders of the people's struggles.

On August 19, 1953, when the CIA launched the bloody coup which put the Shah into power, these agents struck. Within days hundreds of leaders of the Iranian people were jailed, tortured or murdered.

To keep the Shah in power and maintain Iran as a "safe" haven for U.S. plunder, the imperialists have continued to train, arm and coach SAVAK. Thousands of the 55,000 SAVAK agents have been trained by

the CIA at military bases and CIA headquarters here in the U.S., and still more in Iran with funds from a \$2 million grant from the Agency for International Development—for "public safety."

SAVAK has served the needs of the U.S. imperialists and their Iranian lackeys both inside Iran and around the world. Within Iran, it helps maintain the Shah's rule by repression and

**"Your CIA Has Been
Very Helpful
In These Matters"**

terror. According to reports from the International Commission of Jurists, there are 100,000 political prisoners in the regime's jails. They face some of the most barbaric torture anywhere in the world, and many have been executed. SAVAK agents and informers have infiltrated all levels of Iranian society—they are in the cities, factories, villages and college campuses. It was SAVAK which headed up the setting of the movie theater fire in Abadan that burned 800 people to death.

SAVAK agents are also sent to

countries where there are Iranian students and other Iranians actively opposed to the Shah's regime and U.S. imperialism. The Shah was forced to admit the presence of SAVAK agents in Western Europe and the U.S. in an interview two years ago, saying they were there to "check up on anybody who becomes affiliated with circles, organizations hostile to my country." (The Shah, from *60 Minutes*, 10/24/76)

But it goes far beyond "checking up." SAVAK has led countless attacks on members of the Iranian Students Association in the U.S. and other Iranian students in which thousands have been arrested, hundreds beaten up, and many threatened with deportation and reprisals once they return home. In these attacks SAVAK works hand-in-hand with the CIA, Immigration officials, and local police. As one SAVAK official put it recently: "Your CIA has been very helpful in these matters." (*New York magazine*, 9/18/78)

The Iranian people here and in Iran know well how to deal with these hired rats. Many have been uncovered and have lived to regret working for the Shah and U.S. imperialism.

Imperialist Robbery—Not Aid

Through long years of domination, the British and then U.S. imperialists have plundered Iran of its resources and wealth and further impoverished its 35 million people. Iran's immense natural wealth has meant billions for the corporations, only poverty for the masses. *In fact, despite all of the talk in the U.S. and Iranian press about "economic miracles," the last few years have actually been ones of severe economic crisis in Iran:*

•The country's agriculture, upon which 60% of the people rely for their livelihood, is bankrupt. Only 10 years ago, Iran could feed itself through self-sufficient agricultural production. Today 30-40% of its food needs must be imported, mainly from the U.S., at a cost of over \$1 billion a year. In past years, U.S. agribusiness corporations, aided by tax breaks and other "help" from the regime, flooded the country with grains and other foodstuffs at prices cheaper than the peasants' products. These imports ruined many peasants and even small landlords. Unable to afford even the seed for another year's planting, tens of thousands of them have been driven under in recent years. The big landlords and foreign corporations moved in, gobbling up the land and forcing the now-landless peasants to work for them for almost nothing. Since then, with rising inflation and the agricultural economy in shambles, food prices have skyrocketed.

•Many of these landless peasants end up in the shanty towns which ring Tehran and other major cities, much as in other countries like Brazil or Mexico. But there are few jobs in the cities. In fact, 100,000 small businesses have been forced to close down in the past two years alone. Millions of Iranians are unemployed. In the factories, workers face brutal speedup and wages of \$2-3 a day. The factories are like labor camps, with SAVAK agents to enforce "order." Strikes and unions are outlawed, and anyone trying to lead a strike can be *executed*.

•There is a severe housing shortage. As Iran's rich buy and sell land for profit and build luxury villas and palaces, millions live in primitive huts and shanty towns. According to *Newsweek* (April 19, 1976), the average family-size apartment in Tehran costs over \$1000 a month! Many families in the cities spend 80-90% of their income trying to keep up with the soaring rents.

•The rate of inflation of prices has been nearly 30% in the last few years, and severe shortages of basic necessities are common.

•Public health and education for the Iranian people are almost non-existent. 72% of the children are illiterate, and less and less funding is going to education. The death rate among children under the age of one year in the countryside is 120 out of 1000, one of the highest figures in the world. (Iranian government source, *Kayhan*, Dec. 6, 1977) There are few doctors in Iran, and 55% of them live in the capital of Tehran. There are even fewer dentists.

•Iran's oil income, which is supposedly used for "national development," instead goes mainly to the purchase of U.S. arms. What remains is spent on luxury goods by the rich, repayment of foreign loans, and investments in other countries by Iran's wealthy. In addition, billions from Iran's oil income has been given as "loans" to France, Britain, Italy, and other countries allied with U.S. imperialism and used to purchase stock and otherwise bail out ailing U.S. and Western



"The Shadow of God's" twin sister: Princess Ashraf—His Eminence's sweet sister doubles as a big-time drug pusher in Iran and Europe. She has been arrested twice for smuggling dozens of kilos of heroin in Switzerland and France. She loses much of this hard-earned money in big gambling sprees, having dropped as much as 1/2 million dollars in a single night.

In recognition of these outstanding accomplishments, the Shah appointed her head of many of Iran's "social service programs"!

European capitalists. These have included Pan American Airways (controlled by the Rockefellers, who also *happen* to have controlling interest in Standard Oil), Grumman Aircraft, and Krupp, the West German arms manufacturers. In 1974-75, a \$1.2 billion loan was given to England to be used for water resource development there, even as many Iranian cities face severe water shortages, devastating earthquakes, and water is rationed by raising the price beyond what poor people can afford.

The ruling class of Iran, like exploiters anywhere, are driven to invest for the highest rate of profit. The needs of the people are never very profitable. After the U.S. imperialists walk off with the lion's share of Iran's wealth, the Shah and his buddies take their cut. The masses of people are left with almost nothing. Famine and disease stalk the countryside.

U.S. imperialism claims to have brought progress to Iran. They might as well claim that a rattlesnake could give birth to a swan. It can't—it's not in its nature. Their pages of rhetoric about "liberalization" and "economic miracles" can not cover up the bitter reality of Iran today. *It is these wretched conditions* brought on by the imperialists and their reactionary allies that have given rise to the growing struggle there.

As the *Programme of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA* says:

"In the nations they [the imperialists] have seized as direct or indirect colonies they distort development to fit their own profit drives, allying with the landlords, the handful of big capitalists and government officials in these nations, and turning them into their junior partners in the plunder. In

this way they try to keep these nations in an enforced state of backwardness, in order to rob their resources and make super profits by working the people in starvation conditions."

Today the system of imperialism is wracked with crisis—and the exploiters everywhere are frantically seeking to squeeze more profits from their workers and deepen their plunder. Conditions in Iran, like everywhere else, are getting worse, not better.



People stand up against guns and bulldozers to defend homes like these—because that's all many people in Iran have.



DEVELOPMENT PIONEERING AT CHAHBAHAR

This ad for a modern complex shows the media-image of Iran. Only rich foreigners and Iran's upper crust can afford such luxury—while millions live in slums.

Struggle in Iran: Who's Involved

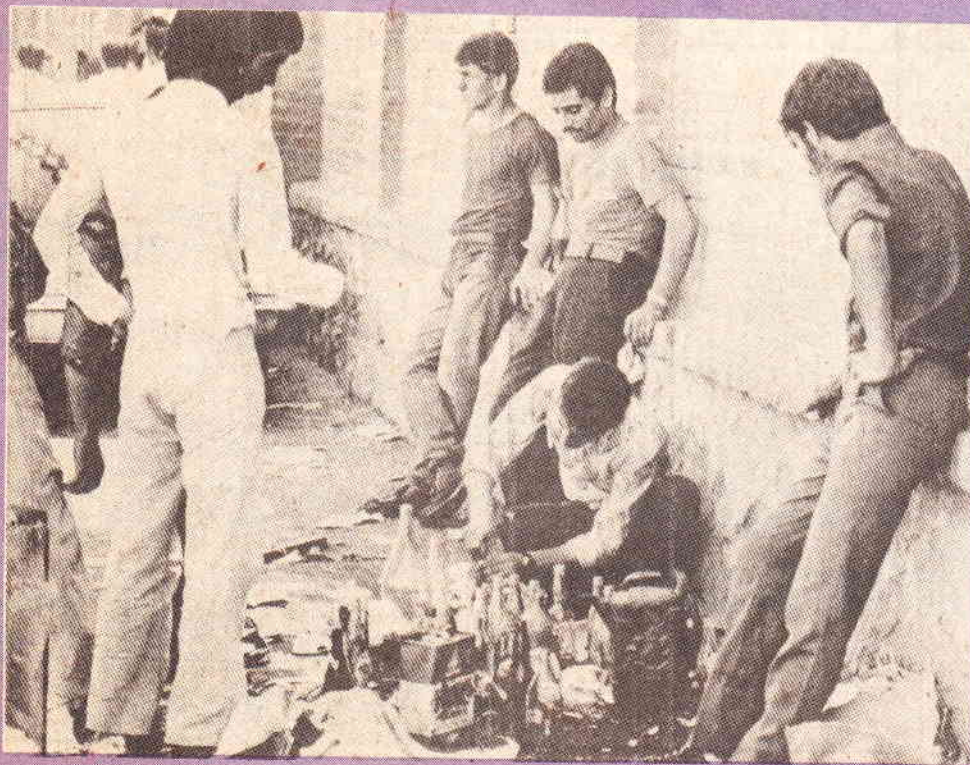
Most Iranians are bound to the land, working in feudal-like conditions as poor peasants for big landlords who are tied in with the imperialists. The workers live in acute poverty, forced to labor for almost nothing. In these conditions of super-exploitation and enforced backwardness, the great majority of people in Iran, including many different sections of society, are in revolt. The question arises: how will all this be changed and a better world built?

Revolutionary leaders like Marx, Lenin, and Mao Tsetung pointed out that only the working class can lead the fight to end all oppression. The working class *can* and *will* lead the democratic struggle to completely kick out the imperialists and their lackeys. The working class has *absolutely no interest* in the old order; and the workers, based on their experience in large-scale collective production, can best see the possibility of the masses of people coming together to organize and actually run society—socialism.

The workers' main ally are the peasants, the majority of people in Iran. Their anger, when unleashed against the feudal landlords and their imperialist masters, creates a storm of struggle engulfing the countryside and will be the main force tearing apart the old society. Students and intellectuals, professionals, and shopkeepers are joining in the struggle in ever larger numbers. And, because of the particularly backwards feudal conditions forced on Iran, even small factory owners and small businessmen will play a role in resisting the imperialists and the Shah.

To lead this struggle, the working class must have a disciplined revolutionary organization, a political Party with deep roots and solid ties among all the oppressed people. While many religious leaders are playing an important role in building the struggle in Iran today, still they cannot lead in fully carrying through today's national democratic struggle, let alone the fight to wipe out all exploitation, to put the masses of people in power and build socialism. In order to do this, the people need a communist party, which must master and apply the lessons which have been learned through history in the struggle against oppression: the science of revolution, Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought. And it must arm the broad masses of people with an understanding of this science, so that they can aim their anger and struggle at the root of their suffering: the system of class exploitation.

In Iran today, forming such a Party is a key task for the many revolutionaries who are playing an increasingly important role in the current struggle. They have a rich tradition to build on. Even at the turn of the century, communists were playing a leading role in a massive struggle which liberated sections of northern Iran (Azerbaijan, Guilan, and Mazendaran). Later, the great Russian revolutionary, V.I. Lenin, was made an honorary member of the Communist Party of Iran, signifying the close ties of the Iranian and world revolutionary movements. These revolutionary movements have a continuing influence today and this helps explain why the Iranian people are part of the



Iranians making Molotov Cocktails during recent uprising.



Demonstrations of 7½ million surged through Iran on Sept. 7 and 8.

front lines of the battle against imperialism in the Middle East.

The Struggle Today: The Stakes Are Up

In Iran today, the struggle is more and more aimed directly at ending the rule of the Shah and his regime. In late October 1978, over a million Iranians were out on strike. In the southern Iran oilfields workers on strike refused the offer of a 100% wage increase. They called it a bribe and demanded an end to the Shah's regime and the release of the 100,000 political

prisoners. 400,000 school teachers who initially went on strike for better living standards have since changed their demands to the freeing of all political prisoners. One group of auto workers in Tabriz declared that they would not come back to work so long as the regime of the Shah remains in power.

At the same time, students and others are beginning to arm themselves for confrontations with the Shah's troops. In Baneh, a town in rural western Iran, the people took over all the government buildings by armed force, killing or driving out of town all the officials of the regime. This uprising ended only when the army strafed the city from U.S.-made helicopters and airplanes.

Communist Influence Grows

In October the Shah was forced to release a number of revolutionaries who had spent as long as 30 years in his prisons. Several had been active in Iran's Communist Party when it was a revolutionary force in the struggle. As they left prison, they were met by crowds who carried them triumphantly on their shoulders to the National University in Tehran.

The National University, like other schools, has become a center of anti-imperialist activity. It has been taken over, reopened in defiance of the Shah's orders that all schools be shut down.

While the barricades at the National University were being defended from assault, a week-long conference was held to build unity among the revolutionary forces. The University's presses have been used to print materials from Marx, Lenin and other communist leaders which have long been banned in Iran.

The growth and organization of these communist and revolutionary forces, and their role in the mass demonstrations and strikes, is pointing the way forward for the Iranian people's struggle in kicking out the imperialists and doing away with all oppression.

On the TV News of November 15, 1977, the American people were treated to a rare sight: Jimmy Carter and the Shah of Iran standing together in the White House Rose Garden crying. They were getting a taste of the tear gas they had ordered to be used against the Iranian students protesting the Shah's visit in front of the White House.

On that day 5000 Iranians fought a righteous battle against the Washington cops and a rag-tag army of a few hundred "pro-Shah demonstrators" (a "rented" crowd made up mainly of Iranian soldiers being trained at U.S. bases and SAVAK agents). The Iranian students won the day—militarily and politically—and brought to the attention of millions their demands: "Down With the Shah! Down With U.S. Imperialism!"

This demonstration was organized by the Iranian Students Association (ISA) in the U.S. Around the world the Iranian students are renowned for relentlessly blasting and exposing the bloody rule of the Shah and his U.S. masters. The ISA is part of an international organization of these students who are united to demand and struggle for a democratic Iran free from imperialist domination.

Currently there are tens of thousands of Iranian students studying in the U.S., Western Europe and other countries. Many of them have been sent abroad by the Shah's regime itself. This is because the U.S. imperialists and Iranian capitalists need trained personnel—such as engineers and scientists—for oil and other industries, but such training is not available in countries like Iran maintained in a state of backwardness by the domination of imperialism.

Even if the U.S. imperialists were to fork over big money to further develop the universities in Iran, this would probably not solve the problem. Almost every year the Shah's been in power, the universities have been hit with student strikes and demonstrations. This past fall the schools never even opened. Inside Iran the students have been the kind of force described by Mao Tsetung when he said that "youth, in a certain sense, play a vanguard role" in spreading revolutionary struggle among the workers and peasants and other strata of Iranian society.

This presents a real problem for the Shah and his masters—no matter where they try and put the students, they raise hell against the regime. They deal with this situation the only way reactionaries can, through repression and slander. The U.S. press calls the protesting Iranian students "boorish and petulant children" who have no right demonstrating in America (*Chicago Tribune*, May 21, 1978). The Shah calls them "dangerous terrorists"—back in 1976 the regime actually told a visiting American that "there are only 60 people in the whole world who are opposed to the Shah....they travel from Washington to Paris to Munich...to make it look like there's all this opposition to the Shah"!!!

Today the opposition to the Shah is so massive all the world can see it, and no one believes this kind of b.s. anymore. So the Shah's SAVAK teams up with the U.S. and Western European governments to try and stamp out the Iranian student movement. ISA members have been hounded unceasingly by the police, campus administrators, Immigration and Naturalization Service and the courts. They've been spied upon, physically attacked and threatened with deportation back to the Shah's prisons and torture chambers.

As the people's struggle in Iran steps up, so do the attacks on the ISA by the imperialists because the last thing they need is for the American people to learn from the Iranian people exactly what the U.S. is up to in Iran.

Particularly within the past year, attacks on the ISA and other Iranian students have occurred in city after city across the U.S., with the cops in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles and Lexington competing for the "most vicious" award. But the masters who have let these dogs loose, the U.S. imperialists, are only *picking up a rock to drop it on their own feet*. The ISA has turned every attack, every incident of repression, into one more exposure for the American people of these tyrants and their whole imperialist system.

The struggle of the ISA, along with the volcano of rebellion erupting in Iran, is an inspiration to people in this country—a living example of how to whip these same super-rich bloodsuckers who rule over us here.

I.S.A. Shah's Worldwide Enemies



ISA battles cops in Washington during Shah's U.S. visit.

Shah: "There are only 60 people in the whole world who are opposed to me."

U.S. Imperialists Maneuver To Maintain Control

A lot is at stake in Iran. With the U.S. imperialists' competition with their Soviet rivals intensifying on a world wide scale, the U.S. has no choice but to find a way to try to hold on to Iran.

Clearly, they would prefer to continue to rule Iran through the Shah who after all has been such a loyal and worthy puppet. And they would prefer to have the Shah's troops, rather than the U.S. marines, come in to gun down the Iranian masses (as well as guard U.S. interests against the Soviets). In line with this, when the September rebellions erupted, Carter ran to phone the Shah "reaffirming the importance of Iran's continued alliance with the West (US)" and offering the Shah his "personal support." During the Tabriz uprising the imperialists backed up their promises of support by placing U.S. military units on alert and sending in new shipments of arms.

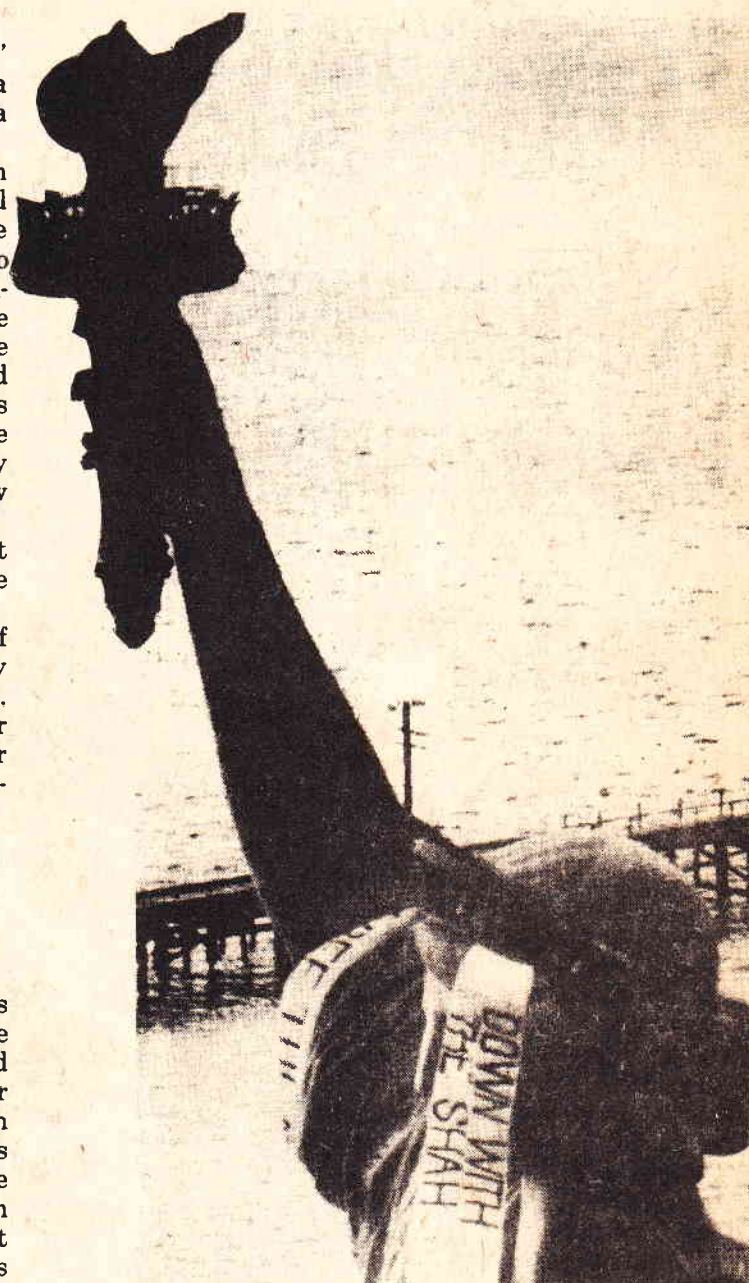
But the Shah's failure to crush the struggle, as it grows in intensity, may force the imperialists to take other courses of action.

Despite all his years of service to the imperialists, if the Shah can't do the job for them in Iran they may even decide to dump him and bring someone else in. This would certainly not be without precedent for them—in Vietnam, for example, they put into power and then threw out a whole string of dictators in an attempt to crush the Vietnamese people's struggle.

Direct U.S. Military Intervention?

The option of direct U.S. military intervention is becoming more and more of a possibility. Not that the U.S. would have an easy time of it if they were forced to protect their interests by sending in troops. After the battering they took in Indochina, combined with their difficulties stemming from the economic crisis and the widespread resistance to their domination, the U.S. cannot now afford to be tied down militarily in one country—as in Vietnam. If they were tied down, it would make it very difficult to deal with rising threats in many areas of the globe particularly from the USSR. However, Iran and the whole Middle East are of far greater strategic and economic importance to the U.S. than Vietnam was. This is particularly true as competition with the Soviets steps up to a frenzied pace.

So however difficult it might be for the imperialists to send in large numbers of troops to protect their empire, they may well decide they have no choice in Iran. With this possibility in mind, early in 1978, Defense Secretary Brown announced the formation of a



Iranian and American students seize Statue of Liberty in 1977, demanding freedom for 18 Iranian political prisoners.

100,000 man "rapid reaction strike force" which could be called out to strategic areas like Western Europe, Israel, South Korea, and the *Persian Gulf*. Already inside Iran, mercenaries from the other main U.S. outpost in the Middle East, Israel, have been seen in Tehran on the front lines mowing down Iranian protestors.

ENERGY CRISIS— OR PROFITS CRISIS?

When people start to question U.S. domination of the Middle East and the backing of reactionary tyrants like the Shah, the capitalists bring out their big guns. We are told that the "American way of life" may end abruptly if Exxon, Mobil, Texaco, and Standard Oil aren't able to cart off Mideast oil at bargain basement prices.

As then-President Ford put it in 1974: "No one can foresee the extent of the damage nor the end of the disastrous consequences if nations refuse to share nature's gift for the benefit of mankind."

Whose oil is this guy talking about?! For the imperialists it's never been a question of getting other countries to "share nature's gift"—the U.S. has stolen it outright. Ever since the U.S. imperialists moved in on the Middle East after World War II, they've overthrown governments, bought governments and installed whole new ones in order to get oil. Their puppet cops-on-the-beat, Iran and Israel, have served to protect this oil for the imperialists, as well as to defend their other interests in the region.

What got the imperialists, and their spokesmen like Ford, screaming is the fact that some of the same Arab leaders they've put into power or have kept in power have in the past few years demanded a higher price for Middle East oil. The imperialists only complain when these reactionaries don't follow orders right down to the last letter.

The imperialists say that we've got to support them in doing whatever's needed to protect "our" energy. Why are these bloodsuckers, who think nothing of plundering whole countries or of freezing people to death when they can't pay \$20 utility bills, suddenly so concerned about "our" interests? Smell a rat?

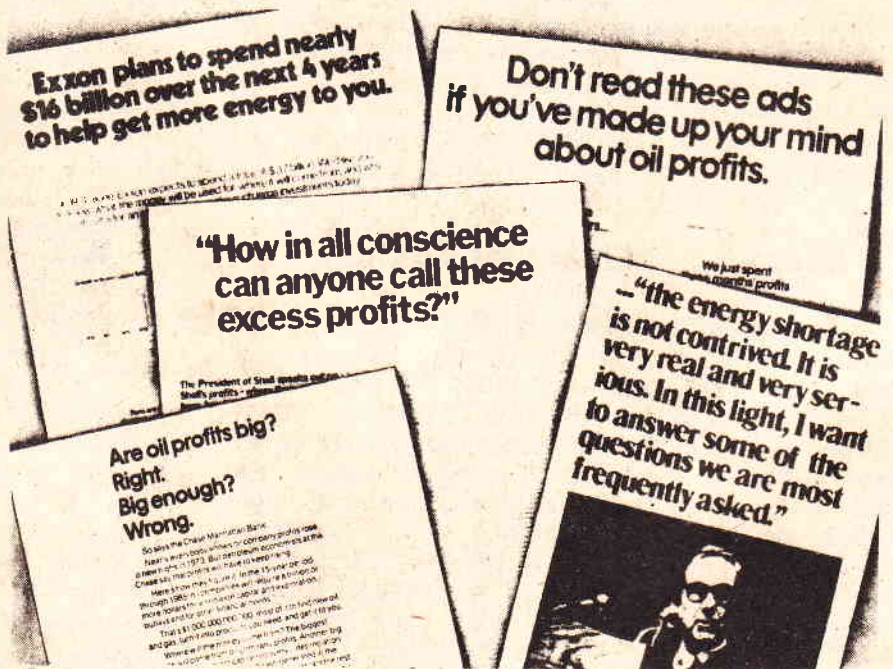
The fact is we've got nothing in common with these leeches, and no interest in helping them out. *It's them*

and their imperialist system that really stand behind the "energy" crisis they're yelling about. And even while they screech and implore us, they try in every way to make us—and the peoples of the Middle East—pay for the mess their system has led to.

Let's examine the facts. There is no actual shortage of energy, in the world or the U.S. In this country alone "the energy content of *known* reserves of fuel minerals is enough to last 190 years," said the Department of Interior in a 1969 report. And there's plenty of oil in the ground—in Texas and other states oil companies have capped thousands of wells in recent years—leaving millions of barrels in the ground.

such that the oil industry is confident its investment will bear fruit, the supply of oil will not be forthcoming." In other words—*more profits, or no oil.*

In the late 1960's, the oil companies' rate of profit (what they make compared to how much they have to invest to make it) began going down. This was mainly because of huge amounts of capital needed to buy necessary machinery for drilling, pumping and refining oil with today's technology. Earlier, oil had been the most profitable industry around—increasingly it's becoming a lousy investment for banks or anyone else. (The oil companies themselves have had to look for more profitable in-



So what's going on? The problem isn't an "energy crisis," it's a *profits crisis*. Oil companies, like all capitalist outfits, are in business to make profits, not gasoline. As one Exxon executive baldly declared in 1972: "Unless profit levels become

investments for some of their profits—such as Mobil Oil which recently bought up Montgomery Wards stores.)

Like capitalists all do when they have money problems, the oil companies have tried to place the burden

of this falling rate of profit on the backs of the people. This has meant massive price hikes. The most recent Energy Bill to pass through the Congress raises prices once again. It lifts many price controls on fuel, and some economists estimate that home heating costs may go up 15-20% this year (*Chicago Sun-Times*, Aug. 6, 1978).

So it's the capitalists' profit system that stands as a barrier to the development of energy sources. The energy lies waiting in the ground (or on the sun, wherever), and technology exists to get it. The only thing that prevents this from happening is the necessity of the capitalists to maximize their profits in their dog-eat-dog competition to stay on top.

This profits crisis makes control of Middle East oil even more crucial for the U.S. imperialists. For one thing, it's 15-20 times cheaper to pump it out of the ground there than in the U.S.—because of the miserable wages and the easy access to the oil, which usually lies near the surface. (Of course, they sell it to us at the same outrageous prices, no matter how cheap they get it.) The main hang-up for the imperialists is how they can continue to get their hands on it so cheap.

This oil belongs to the masses of people in the countries of the Middle East. And today, with the Iranian people in the front ranks, they are standing up to drive out the imperialists and control their own countries and futures.

At the end of October, virtually all of Iran's 40,000 oil workers in the south went out on strike. This was the first strike to shut down the major oil production sites in many years, costing the regime \$60 million a day in oil production. The oil workers' main demands were political—an end to martial law and freedom for all political prisoners. In doing this, these workers are hitting hard at the imperialists and their system, and bringing closer the day when the world will be rid of these parasites once and for all.

U.S. Lies to US

Shah OK, People Are the Problem

At this point the imperialists are working overtime to try to prepare public opinion in this country for the actions they're taking—or will have to take. To do this, they've set into motion their press and politicians to do some fast talking on the situation. They have what amount to two lines of defense—more accurately, two sets of lies.

Butcher As "Liberal"

The first argument is that the Shah is a "liberal" leader up against a conservative bunch of Moslems who are trying to turn the clocks back. While the Shah is butchering thousands in the streets, Carter is praising him for his "progress" in "human rights." His wife, Farah, is invited to the U.S. to receive the Aspen Institute "Humanist Award" and is praised as a leader of the fight for "women's rights." And the regime's barbaric atrocities like the burning alive of 800 people in the Abadan movie theater (see p 19) are blamed on "Moslem and Marxist terrorists." The pages of *Life* magazine treat their readers to scenes of the Shah swimming with his family and playing with their Great Dane—your typical "friendly monarch"!!

In fact, the Shah has nothing to do with "liberalization" and "modernization"—unless that's what you call poverty, famine, hunger, unemployment, prisons, and torture chambers. This so-called "modernizer" has proclaimed himself "King of Kings, Lord of Lords"—the divine ruler of Iran. How modern can you get.

Moslem "Fanatics"?

As for the so-called Moslem "terrorists" being behind the uprisings, it is true that 70% of the Iranian people are of the Moslem religion, and many of the protest meetings take place in mosques (temples). This is a natural gathering place, and besides, where else are people to go when all meetings are banned under martial law? The U.S. brings up the Moslem issue only to slander the movement. They say the people are risking their lives in demonstrations and strikes only to keep women from voting or removing their veils! This is ridiculous and only shows their utter contempt for the intelligence of the Iranian and American people. In fact, some Moslem religious leaders have played a largely progressive role in struggles against the Shah's regime, uniting with communists and other revolutionaries to fight the *real* reactionaries who are trying

to keep Iran in its backwards, colonized state.

These slanders are all part of the U.S. imperialists' efforts to justify their increased involvement in Iran and their support for the regime of a man whom most people see as a human roach. The imperialists are trying to convince the American people that they have a legitimate reason to be in Iran. They don't.

These are the same sort of lies they tried to feed the American people during the Vietnam war. "The NLF is just a handful of crazy commies in black pajamas"—"We're supporting Christian men of peace"—"there's a light at the end of the tunnel—we're about to win!" These lies were spewed out day after day in the big media. The capitalists sought to cover up the fact that in Vietnam they were supporting a handful of tyrants against the National Liberation Forces which had tremendous mass support—which is why, instead of ever reaching the "light at the end of the tunnel", the U.S. imperialists got their candle snuffed out.

Second Line of Defense: "It's Us Americans Against the World"

As the "Shah as great liberal modernizer" routine is being ripped to shreds by growing exposure of the vicious repression and wretched conditions which grip Iran, the capitalists come out in the open with: "OK, the Shah is a reactionary tyrant, but look, we Americans have got to support his regime because it's in *our national interest*. He's protecting *our* oil, the lifeblood of the Western bloc, from the totalitarian Russians, who are perched right on his northern border

ready to pounce."

OUR interests? Is it in *our* interests, the interests of the people, to gun down women and children and thousands of others in the streets?! To support the thumbscrews and the shock-torture of thousands who are fighting for a decent life for the people!? No—their precious star-spangled banner is a blood-soaked rag, hoisted by the hands of murderers and thieves.

They seek to seduce us with talk of "our oil." *Whose* oil?! *Who* lives in splendid mansions, clothed in mink and jewels, surrounded by servants, all bought and paid for with the billions in profits produced by the back-breaking toil of millions in Iran and around the world. The crimes of these imperialists are a bloody testament to their unquenchable thirst for their own personal gain.

Especially as their economy is increasingly being torn apart at the seams, the rich capitalists call on the working class and poor people to prepare to jump into uniform and fight—perhaps die—to protect *their* giant investments and *their* billion dollar profit margins and *their* control of the resources and wealth of the region. And it's exactly in times of crisis like these that it becomes clearer for all to see that the imperialists are the common exploiters and oppressors of people worldwide. It's them and their class that drives people down in this country, into a life of hard labor, with prices always climbing, unemployment threatening millions more. They call on us to stand together, rich and poor, capitalists and workers, to defend our "common interests."

Meanwhile, the Soviet bosses do the same. They say to their workers: "Look at how these U.S. imperialists treat the people of Iran, arming the butcher Shah so he can murder more of the Iranian masses. We Russians



Demonstration by over 5000 workers at Tabriz truck company, Sept. 6, 1978.

must oppose this!" they solemnly declare. And all the time, the Soviet imperialists are making their own plans to extend their plunder and domination, while they ruthlessly exploit the Soviet workers.

The people and the capitalists in any country can

never stick together—they have no common interests. The capitalists live by choking profits out of the working people; the only solution to this is for the working people to smash the capitalists and their rotten system and end all exploitation.

Fan the Flames of Rebellion!



Washington, D.C., November 1977— Iranian students charge Shah's phony "support" demonstration.

Today in Iran, the millions rising up in angry revolt against oppression and enforced backwardness in their country are an inspiring symbol of resistance to imperialism. Even more than resistance, the struggle of the Iranian people is a sign of how people around the world are taking matters into their own hands, declaring they have been slaves too long, and this misery must and will meet its inevitable doom. They are proclaiming that they will do far more than spit on the American flag which has represented the domination of their country—they will level the very structure upon which this flag flies, sweep away the imperialists and their local stooges, and go on to build a whole new society.

The strength and impact of the Iranian people's struggle has the imperialists in a frenzy because they are well aware of the enormous consequences of a massive movement of the people aimed at doing away with everything they stand for. Here we should learn something from the imperialists: If we hear their teeth chattering from fright, something very important is taking place which demands our support.

The Iranian people's struggle is a call to people fighting imperialism everywhere, including right here, to rise up and fight this system. The Iranian people are showing us today that only through the struggle of millions can we bury the imperialist system once and for all.

The lessons of the Vietnam War era tell us that our actions *do* make a difference. The tremendous movement against the war in Indochina and in support of the struggle there made that war a lot more difficult for the imperialists to wage. Beyond this, it raised the understanding of the nature of this man-eating system for millions of people around the world.

Today, we must fight against our rulers' schemes to keep the Iranian people under their thumb. As they spread outrageous lies and distortions, making preparations to postpone their certain doom, they expect—hope—that the American people will go along with their barbarous actions. We cannot, and we will not.

- We must demand that the U.S. Get Out of Iran! This includes hitting at all U.S. ties to Iran, including recruiters on the campuses from corporations with big holdings in Iran, including politicians like Carter who have given and continue to give support to the regime. It means demanding the withdrawal of all the 40,000 CIA and military advisors who are already in Iran. We must show through our actions that it's not some "bad foreign policy" which has the U.S. doing what it's doing in Iran, but rather the actions of the imperialist system, and the logical outcome of its domination of much of the world today. **Continued on page 21**

SHAH'S AGENTS TORCH THEATRE

What follows is an account of what took place inside and outside the Rex Cinema on the night of August 19, 1978, in Abadan—excerpts from an article printed in Resistance, publication of Iranian Students Association U.S.

Our report is drawn from the observations of people in Abadan—people who were at the Rex Cinema, people who gathered as the full horror of the death trap unfolded, people whose sons and daughters, sisters and brothers were burned alive, people who led the front ranks of demonstrations less than 24 hours later.

We apologize for one aspect of our report: the weakness of language. The full horror of the events themselves is difficult to convey in any language.

* * *

First, a few words about Abadan: The biggest oil refinery in the world is in Abadan. That's what it is known for. Also, it's so hot and oppressively humid in the summer that construction and oil workers are on their jobs by 5 a.m. and cannot work later than

10 a.m.; they resume work around 3 p.m. and continue until 8 o'clock. Furnace blasts of 130 degree heat beat down on the city for hours every day during the summer and evenings are often 90 or 100 degrees. Because of the vast stretches of oil refineries and petrochemical plants, the most advanced fire-fighting equipment exists in Abadan and it is regarded as the most sophisticated in the whole Middle East.

Oil workers in Abadan are militant strikers. Throughout 50 years, the duration of Pahlavi rule in Iran, Abadan has been a center of anti-regime and anti-imperialist demonstrations often rallying tens of thousands and even several hundred thousand from the entire region. Their discipline and political consciousness has marked Abadan as one of the most progressive and actively anti-Shah areas of Iran.

The Rex Cinema, located in one of the working class neighborhoods, was a center of anti-Shah activity. The building itself housed a bookstore and coffee shop where rare copies of progressive literature could be secret-

ly obtained and eagerly distributed and discussed. It was a favorite meeting place for anti-Shah people, especially workers and students of Abadan.

On the evening of Saturday, August 19th, there were to be two showings of a movie called "Reindeer." It is a generally progressive film... depicting the injustice of tyranny and oppression and the heroism of struggle against it.

The second showing began around 9 p.m. The audience was mostly working class, many entire families, old and young people, men, women and children, a number of students. 830 people packed the theater. The lights went out. The movie began.

* * *

Outside the Rex Cinema, a few dozen people who were passing by noticed smoke seeping out from the roof. It was between 9:30 and 9:45 as people stared curiously at the building. In silence, they saw heavier and heavier smoke. Within minutes,



Shah's agents "inspect" Rex Theater in Abadan, burned to the ground by SAVAK. Almost 800 people were burned alive in the inferno. But 20,000 residents of Abadan took revenge the next day and there has been nearcontinuous uprisings in that city ever since.

people were heard commenting that "it must be empty."

Many movie theaters have been targeted during 10 months of demonstrations. But people automatically assumed that any theater fire meant that NO ONE would be inside. All theaters had been empty before being hit by demonstrators. And suddenly people were asking, "Why the Rex?" The pornographic theater, in another section of the city but not far from the Rex, would have been the target. Not the Rex.

Within minutes, people realized that maybe the Rex was NOT empty.

Suddenly, seeming to come from nowhere, police vans and army trucks

filled the entire area. Soldiers and police poured out of the vans and surged in front of the building. People were now rushing forward...

The wall of police and troops barricading the door suddenly attacked.

Flames were all around the building. In a roaring blaze, the entire theater was walled with fire.

PEOPLE ARE BURNING!! PLEASE HELP THEM!!! screamed someone from the roof, jumping two stories to the ground. As the crowd stared in horror, police swarmed over him, clubs and bayonets aimed to the ground where he had fallen. Within seconds, police killed him.

Shots rang out. People screamed from the roof. They were being shot! Two, three, then another two were breaking through the roof, scrambling to the edge ready to jump to the ground. They were being shot before they reached the ground.

To one side, people noticed a section of the wall about to crumble. It was being broken through from inside and two or three people were frantically trying to get out to safety. The crowd rushed to rescue them. Before they reached the edge of the building and the people desperately trying to get out, police surrounded them, shoving with rifle butts and clubs, pushing them back. Struggling frantically against the police, people watched in agony as only two or three were able to escape, leaving behind scores of others trapped by falling timbers and totally drowned in flames.

The scene in front of the theater

was now a pitched battle between crowds desperately trying to get to the doors and scores of police and troops fighting back all attempts at rescue.

The front of the building was now a raging inferno. It was 11:30. At 11 o'clock a truck carrying one water tank had pulled up several hundred feet from the theater. People ran in vain to bring it close to the blazing theater. It was a drinking water truck and was empty and couldn't use the oil company's hydrants, they were told.

* * *

Inside, the lights had gone out. The movie had started. Smoke curled into the theater. Within minutes, flames were all around them.

People rushed the doors. They found them chained from the outside.

Heaving themselves against the main door, they had finally succeeded in breaking one door. As they tried to push through the door, they saw that they were shoving against a solid wall of troops, armed with machine guns, pushing them back inside the deadly fire!

"Anyone comes out—we'll shoot!" shouted the troops. The doors had been re-chained. The death oven was sealed.

* * *

For four hours, the fire raged. Crowds battled and fought against the police, heaving desperately against the armed troops. By 2 a.m., they knew that everyone inside must be dead...

Then: the Army fire truck arrived. The Navy fire truck arrived. The National Iranian Oil Company fire truck arrived. And a petrochemical company fire truck arrived.

After everyone was dead, the fire trucks began to put out the fire.

Police kept up the barricade. Troops backed up the police. The crowd was pushed farther and farther back from the ruins of the theater and the charred remains of families,

friends, and comrades...

As dawn broke in Abadan on Sunday, August 20th, police and troop reinforcements arrived and by early morning a swarm of several hundred troops barricaded the entire area against crowds of shocked, horrified, grief-stricken witnesses to one of the most desperate crimes of Pahlavi tyranny. It was not the first crime; it will not be the last. But as the burning sun rose over this scene of savage murder, the grief and shock and horror was already transforming into a raging, fearless revolutionary storm. Within hours, Abadan erupted with thundering calls of **DEATH TO THE PAHLAVI TYRANNY! DEATH TO THE SHAH! BURN HIM!**

* * *

By the next day, the Rex theater was surrounded by thousands of troops. No one was permitted near the scene.

By night, army trucks pulled up and loaded up with bodies and stole them away to mass graves in fear of people's furious and powerful rage.

At the cemetery, not one body was recognizable.

Two bulldozers, noticed by residents two days earlier near the cemetery, suddenly disappeared by Monday night. The drivers have not been seen since.

Five days before the fire, a Navy captain is reported to have told his officers, "don't go to any movies this week."

To this hour, Abadan has been in continuous demonstrations against the criminal regime. On the second day of mourning, at least 30,000 people rallied at one of the Mosques and erupted in demands for **"DOWN WITH THIS FASCIST REGIME! DOWN WITH 50 YEARS OF PAHLAVI RULE! DEATH TO THE MURDERING SHAH!"**

President Carter's message to the Shah during the massive rebellions, Nov. 1, 1978:

"We wish the Shah our best and hope the present disturbances can soon be resolved. We're thankful for his move toward democracy. We know it's opposed by some who resist democratic principles. But his progressive administration is very valuable, I think, to the entire Western world."

- As the threat of direct military intervention by the U.S. grows, so must our moves to oppose this. We must tell the American people what the struggle in Iran is really about and what side we must take, how we must stand with the Iranian people against the imperialists. It also means taking actions against ROTC on campuses, military recruiters, and news media who are trying to build support for military intervention.

- We must expose the constant barrage of lies and propaganda about the struggle in Iran. This means hitting particularly at the big capitalist media, in addition to the "think tanks" and reactionary professors and publications which are doing everything in their power to slander the righteous struggle in Iran. Debates, letters to the editor, picket lines—there are many ways to strike back at the media and their intellectual hired guns.

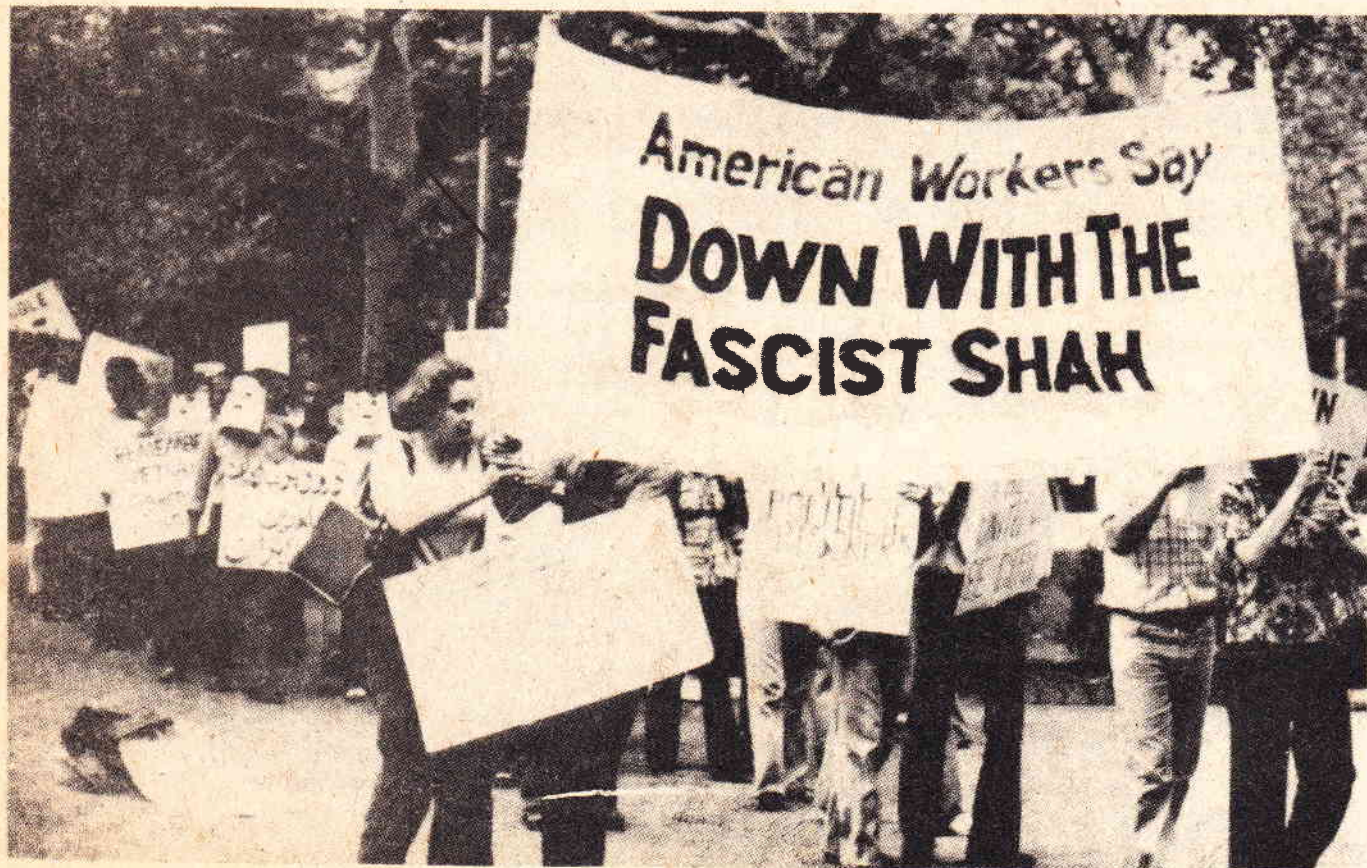
- The Iranian Students Association is stepping up its actions in support of the struggle in their country,

bringing the message to millions of Americans. The capitalists are stepping up their harrassment, jailing and threats to deport members of ISA. Deportation to Iran can mean prison, torture, or even death. We must oppose this harrassment of our Iranian brothers and sisters and stand shoulder to shoulder in our common fight against U.S. imperialism.

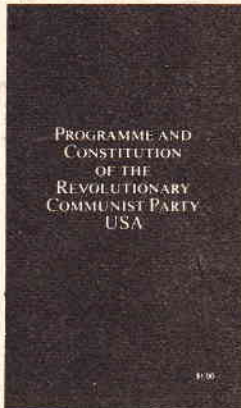
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The outrage which millions in this country feel against the infamy of the Shah must become a thorough understanding that what we are witnessing in Iran is none other than the system of imperialism getting battered and beaten at every turn by people determined to gain their liberation. Only those who are ignorant of the situation in Iran, or those who support the blood-thirsty domination of these 35 million people in the Middle East can stand idle as these events unfold.

**A Victory for the Iranian People—
A Victory for the People of the World!
A Defeat for Imperialism—
A Victory for the People of the World!**



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Programme and Constitution of the RCP, USA

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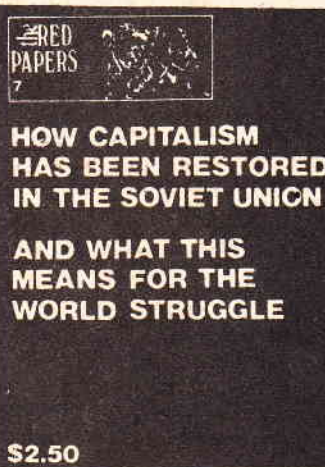
The Programme of the RCP summarizes the present situation facing the working class in its struggle and points the road forward. It is a concentration of the Party's basic aims, strategy and tasks as the Party of the working class. It sets forth to the working class the goal of its struggle—revolution, socialism and ultimately communism—and the means to achieve this historic goal. It is a guide to action.

The Constitution of the RCP summarizes the basic Programme of the Party and sets down its basic organizational principles which enable it to carry out its tasks and responsibilities as the Party of the working class.

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“How is it possible for a socialist country, a country where the workers have seized state power under the leadership of a Communist Party, to revert to capitalism?”

“The answer is complicated, but lies in the fact that socialism doesn't drop from the sky. It comes into being through revolution to overthrow capitalist society, but, as Marx writes in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, it is ‘in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society...’”

Red Papers 7, p. 125

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The Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade

The RCYB is the youth group of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA (RCP).

We are communist youth from the streets, ghettos, and college campuses throughout the country. We are youth who see that this capitalist society by its nature is driven to exploit and oppress the people in this country and around the world.

Yes, we are communists! We are the ones who you've been told to hate in the schools and newspapers—in the same way that the slaves were told to hate freedom—exactly because communism is the only real solution to the problems we face in this society. We stand squarely against the capitalist system, against its profit system which leads to millions out of work, the brutal oppression of minority peoples, lying politicians who represent only their capitalist backers, wars for “democracy” which are really wars for imperialist plunder and conquest (like the one now heating up between the two arch-imperialist rivals, the U.S. and USSR).

We stand for socialism, the rule of the working class, where working people take control of all the wealth they have built and use it for the benefit of the people throughout the world. We stand for communism, which will be a classless society after socialism has been achieved in every country in the world, where all people work in common for the good of society, and the capitalists are finally a thing of the past, not to return. We are Marxist-Leninists, and Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought is our scientific theory to understand the world, and, on that basis, develop ways to change it and prepare for revolution.

The RCYB is made up of youth of all nationalities, because it's a common fight we are waging. And we are nationwide, because capitalism is in every one of the 50 states.

The RCYB's main tasks are:

- 1) Leading the masses of youth in struggling against the attacks and abuses they face;
- 2) Fighting at the side of the working class under the leadership of its Party in the overall struggle against imperialism and for revolution;
- 3) Broadly and boldly propagating communism among the masses, especially youth.

To join the RCYB, people should agree with the basic stand of the RCYB, that the imperialist system is responsible for all the problems in society, that socialism and communism are our goals, and that the revolution must be led by the working class and its political Party, the RCP.

For more information write RCYB, P.O. Box A3836, Chicago, IL 60690. □