



# REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

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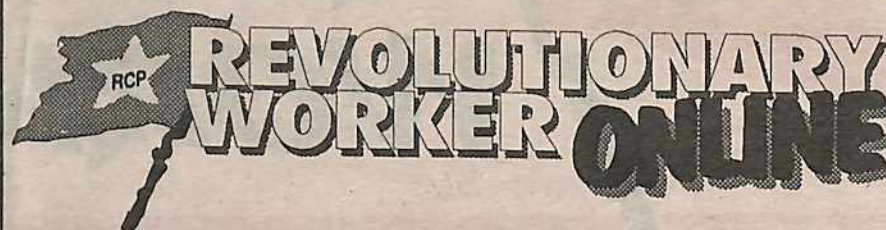
## 5 Years, 26 Days

In October 1992, Chairman Gonzalo—leader of the Maoist Communist Party of Peru—was sentenced to life imprisonment by hooded military judges of the U.S.-backed regime in Peru. The fascist regime in Peru is holding this revolutionary leader of the Peruvian people under very brutal conditions in an underground concrete dungeon at a naval

base. He is being denied visits by lawyers, doctors and relatives and deprived of proper medical care and reading materials. Peru's President Fujimori has publicly threatened to execute Chairman Gonzalo and boasted of applying psychological torture on him. And a new Constitution, made official last year, reinstates the death penalty which could be used against Chairman Gonzalo and other revolutionary prisoners. The Peruvian regime must be prevented from killing Chairman Gonzalo through the death penalty or by other means.

Fujimori has repeatedly claimed that Chairman Gonzalo has made a call for negotiations from prison. In this situation, what possible excuse can Fujimori now offer for continuing to deny Comrade Gonzalo independent contact with lawyers, doctors and friendly and neutral visitors from outside the prison in a way that meets the basic international standards for treatment of political prisoners and prisoners of war? It is vitally important for people in Peru and around the world to hear what Chairman Gonzalo's views are from Chairman Gonzalo himself—directly and unimpeded. This heightens the urgency of the fight to create an international political climate which compels the Peruvian government to grant access to Comrade Gonzalo by his legal representatives and other friends who can meet and talk directly with him.

**Support the People's War in Peru!  
Support the Communist Party of Peru!  
Defend the Life of Chairman Gonzalo,  
Fight to Break the Isolation!**



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## Three Main Points

by Bob Avakian  
Chairman of the RCP, USA

What do we in the Revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

1) The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation—here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.

2) Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.

3) Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world: Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning.

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# U.S. Bullies at It Again in Iraq

The U.S. imperialist beast is once again trying to bully its way in the Persian Gulf and is making new military threats against Iraq.

This latest confrontation began to heat up in late October when the United States pushed a resolution through the United Nations Security Council to continue the economic sanctions against Iraq. The U.S. and its close ally Britain were unsuccessful in their attempt to further tighten the sanctions against Iraq. Russia and France—who have their own imperialist agendas in Iraq—opposed increased sanctions. But the UN did threaten to step up sanctions in the future if the Iraqi government did not show more cooperation with the “weapons inspection teams.” These teams operate openly as spies inside Iraq for the Western powers.

The inspection teams are part of harsh conditions that the U.S. and its allies imposed on Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War. They can nose their way into factories and military areas, supposedly to look for signs that the Iraqi government is developing weapons that the U.S. and other powers have declared off-limits to Iraq. They also monitor video transmissions from remote-controlled cameras set up at hundreds of sites around the country. And U-2 spy planes from the U.S. regularly fly over Iraqi territory to supply the inspection teams with information.

Despite their powers to muck around in Iraq, the UN inspection teams have continually accused the Iraqi government of blocking them from finding out more. The U.S. claims that the Iraqi government is secretly developing banned weapons and uses this as justification for the continuation of economic sanctions. These sanctions are having a devastating effect on the people of Iraq. According to a 1995 report from the UN's own Food and Agriculture Organization, malnutrition and medicine shortages caused by the sanctions have killed more than half a million children in Iraq.

Shortly after the October UN resolution on continuing the sanctions, the Iraqi government ordered U.S. members of the weapons inspection teams to leave the country. And Iraqi officials also warned that anti-aircraft weapons might be used against the U-2 spy plane.

A top U.S. official immediately declared that these moves by Iraq would have “serious consequences.” U.S. Defense Secretary Cohen said that if Saddam Hussein did not back down, the UN could consider “greater economic sanctions”—including canceling the agreement reached last year allowing Iraq to sell limited amounts of oil to buy some food and medical supplies.

Cohen also said that “there are military options as well.” The U.S. currently has over 20,000 troops, many planes and a fleet of warships stationed in the region. The last U.S. military attack against Iraq was in September 1996, when B-52 bombers and Navy warships in the Gulf launched several dozen cruise missiles against targets in southern Iraq.

## Who Is the Biggest Aggressor?

With little actual evidence to back up its claims, the U.S. government claims that Iraq is developing “weapons of mass destruction.” U.S. officials say that this is a sign of Iraqi “aggression against its neighbors” and that it is “unacceptable.”

But what right does the U.S. government have to attack anyone else for “aggression” and for developing “weapons of mass destruction”? Which power possesses the world's biggest arsenal of nuclear weapons and large stockpiles of chemical weapons? Who has carried out countless invasions and acts of military aggression around the world—including the 1991 war on Iraq which killed hundreds of thousands of people and destroyed vital facilities such as water treatment plants and baby milk fac-

ories?

The U.S. rulers have even refused to sign an international treaty banning land mines—because they say they need their land mines to protect their interests in the Korean peninsula.

If the U.S. imperialists really want to stop “aggression” and “weapons of mass destruction,” they should point the finger at themselves. But, of course, the U.S. government would never agree to have international inspection teams go around its weapons factories. It would never allow a spy plane from another country to fly over U.S. territory.

U.S. officials say that it is “outrageous” for Iraq to demand that Americans be excluded from the UN weapons inspection teams. But the U.S. has made no secret of its desire to overthrow Saddam Hussein and install a more reliably pro-U.S. regime in Iraq. Last year, Saddam Hussein's offensive against the city of Erbil in northern Iraq disrupted a long-standing CIA operation that was aimed at fomenting a coup against the current government in Baghdad. Under these circumstances, isn't it perfectly reasonable for the Iraqi government to



January 1993—U.S. aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk preparing an attack on Iraq.



An Iraqi family.

Photo: Larry Everest

expel U.S. officials and demand that U-2 overflights stop?

## Imperialist Logic Behind the U.S. Moves

The U.S. bully moves and threats against Iraq are based on cold-blooded imperialist logic. It is a big embarrassment and problem for the U.S. that five years after the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein still remains in power. The U.S. ruling class could not allow Hussein to kick out U.S. weapons inspectors and shoot at their spy planes.

So the U.S. imperialists are flexing their muscles against Iraq, threatening to tighten the noose of economic sanctions or to launch new military attacks—no matter what the cost in human lives.

The U.S. actions are also meant as a signal to the other powers—that the U.S. remains the dominant imperialist player in this oil-rich and strategically important region of the world. The various imperialist countries are now mainly colluding against the oppressed people of Iraq and other countries in the region. But at the same time, there are signs of sharpening contention among these powers.

The Russian and French governments have been pushing for an easing of the economic sanctions against Iraq. Last year, France announced that it would no longer participate in the U.S.-British air patrols of the “no-flight zones” in northern Iraq.

The French and Russian imperialists certainly are not motivated by concern for the people of Iraq. France and Russia both want to extend their influence in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf by developing relations with the Iraqi government. And French and Russian companies hope to profit from oil deals signed with the Hussein regime.

Persian Gulf is to “contain” both Iraq and Iran, in order to maintain U.S. control over both countries and the region as a whole. In late September, Iranian warplanes attacked camps of Iranian anti-government forces inside Iraqi territory. The Pentagon immediately ordered the aircraft carrier Nimitz into the Gulf ahead of schedule. U.S. officials said that this move was aimed at both Iran and Iraq. The U.S. imperialists are worried that the moves by Russia and France in the Gulf undercut this “double containment” strategy.

## U.S. Hands Off Iraq!

The U.S. government says it is trying to first force Saddam Hussein to back down through “diplomatic” measures. But the U.S. has also made clear it could resort to military attacks—even if it had to act “unilaterally,” without the cover of official backing from the UN. Any such military strike will lead to even more suffering among the oppressed people of Iraq—and it must be met with determined resistance here in the U.S. But even if the U.S. does not resort to a military action this time, the deadly economic sanctions are continuing to strangle Iraq and kill many people. □

A key element of U.S. strategy in the



Demonstrators in Baghdad burning a U.S. flag, November 3, 1997.

# The Off Duty Murder of Charles Campbell

## NY Jury Finds NYPD Cop Guilty

"I don't know what DiGuglielmo the younger did immediately after the killing. His goal, presumably, had been to show Mr. Campbell who was boss, to put him in his place. That is consistent with the attitude of brutal policeman everywhere. They are the first cousins of every vigilante who ever reached for a rope." Bob Herbert, *New York Times*, October

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On October 24, New York City cop, Richard DiGuglielmo Jr. was found guilty of killing Charles Campbell, a Black man who lived in White Plains, just north of New York City. The murder happened in front of a deli owned by DiGuglielmo's father in the small town of Dobbs Ferry, also north of the city.

Richard DiGuglielmo Sr. was known for his fanaticism about the parking spaces in front of the deli in the small strip of stores that could barely be called a shopping center. If anyone parked in his space without shopping at his store he would freak. There were almost two dozen police reports, dating back to 1979 where he was accused of harassing, threatening or attacking people who'd parked in "his spot." Ac-

ording to one woman who lived across from the deli, "He didn't get mad in increments. He would go from zero to 60 in no time flat." It's no surprise then that on October 3, 1996, when Charles "Chaz" Campbell, a 37-year-old sanitation worker and youth counselor, parked in DiGuglielmo's spot and went to get pizza in another shop, things got ugly real quick.

DiGuglielmo Sr. saw Charles Campbell park his car in the space and immediately ran out of the store, screaming. Campbell, who was known by his friends for being even tempered, waved him off, and told DiGuglielmo that he'd only be a minute and would buy a soda in the deli when he was done. Not good enough. When Campbell returned he was confronted by DiGuglielmo and two off-duty cops—DiGuglielmo's son, Richard Jr., and his son-in-law, Robert Errico. They had pasted a hard to remove sticker on the car window. Charles asked them to take it off. They refused. Someone yelled racial insults. Then the three men jumped Charles and started beating him. Charles pulled out a cellular telephone during the beating and tried to call for help but it was pulled from

his hands and DiGuglielmo Jr. smashed it on Charles' head. According to one witness, after a few minutes Campbell finally broke free and ran to his car but was chased by Errico and DiGuglielmo Sr. They stopped Charles from getting into his car, so he grabbed an aluminum baseball bat from the seat and swung it at their legs. Meanwhile, Richard Jr. ran into the deli and got his father's gun. When DiGuglielmo aimed the gun at Charles he didn't issue any warnings. He just fired. Three times. Two of the bullets tore into Charles Campbell's heart, ending his life.

Chaz Campbell was 37 years old. At the time of his death he had a 13-year-old daughter and had plans to marry Vanessa Maldonado. For 10 years he had worked as a counselor at a youth center. He had people who loved him and needed him. But NYPD cop Richard DiGuglielmo Jr. didn't stop to think of such things. For him, all he was was a Black man with the audacity to challenge the property relations of his father's deli and the further audacity to defend himself when attacked by three white men.

This incident happened just three days before a judge acquitted NY cop Frances Livoti of manslaughter in the murder of Anthony Baez. Livoti is the cop who put Anthony Baez in a chokehold outside his Bronx home, strangling him to death. The outrage at that verdict led authorities in Westchester County, where the murder took place, to try and chill out the atmosphere by arresting the three men involved in the beating and killing of Charles Campbell. They were all charged with assault and DiGuglielmo Jr. was charged with second degree murder.

Friends and family of Chaz Campbell formed the Charles Campbell Committee for Justice and conducted weekly vigils outside the deli. In the days after the killing almost 100 people marched the three miles from the youth center where Chaz worked to the deli where he was killed. Three weeks after the murder, members of Charles' family took part in the first National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality in New York and Chaz's fiancé, Vanessa Maldonado, spoke at the "All Powers Eve" Halloween celebration that marked the end of Refuse & Resist's "Month of Resistance."

During this year's trial more than a dozen eyewitnesses testified that DiGuglielmo Jr. had killed Campbell while he was holding the baseball bat *still*—not as he was swinging it, as DiGuglielmo Jr. claims. Several witnesses said Charles was actually *backing away* and being chased at the point he was shot. A jury of seven women and five men (all white except for one Black person) deliberated for three days and found that the cop was guilty of second degree murder. Richard DiGuglielmo Sr. and Robert Errico were acquitted of assault charges. DiGuglielmo Jr. faces a maximum sentence of 25 years to life but could be sentenced to much less time.

The press has consistently characterized this murder as "a fight over a parking spot," making it appear as if it were just



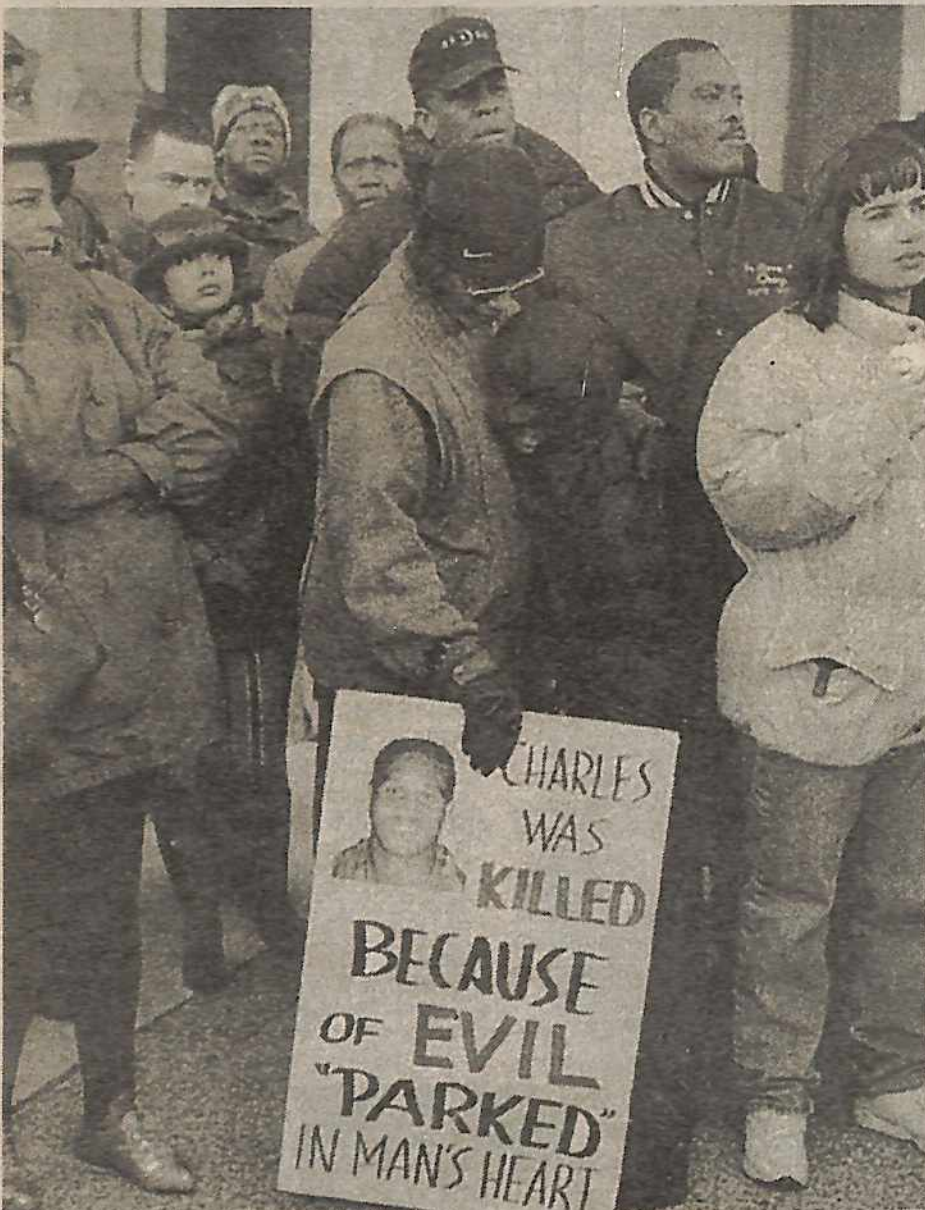
A high school photo of Charles Campbell.

pettiness running riot and downplaying the fact that this was an attack by three white men, two who are cops, against one Black man. The fact that racist names were shouted at Charles Campbell during the attack was only mentioned once, briefly, during the trial. The lawyers for the cops tried to portray this as an "unnecessary escalation of events"—claiming that Campbell just wasn't willing to "let things go." Testifying in his own defense DiGuglielmo cried on the stand when asked how he felt about killing a man. But according to the testimony of an emergency room nurse that night after the murder, DiGuglielmo Jr. told her that "he was glad he did it."

When DiGuglielmo Jr. testified, he said he shot Charles Campbell three times in the chest, *just as was taught* at the police academy. He said, "You use three rounds and then reevaluate the threat." According to this, police training mandates that when a cop pulls his gun to fire, he should take aim for the heart and shoot three times.

The Campbell family is bringing a \$100 million suit against DiGuglielmo Jr., Sr., Errico, New York City and the NYPD and Westchester County (where the killing occurred). According to Randolph Scott-McGlaughlin, an attorney for the family, "The city of New York...trains its police officers to shoot to kill." Not only do they do that, they are paid for doing it. DiGuglielmo remained on "modified" duty (working without a badge or gun) but drawing full pay throughout the trial. And now, the system will work to have DiGuglielmo Jr. do a minimum amount of jail time.

There is an epidemic of police brutality and murder in the USA. And it is very rare that a cop is charged and put on trial, let alone found guilty of murder. Usually police murder is quickly declared "justifiable homicide" and the killers in blue go completely free. But there is a growing movement against police brutality and murder and the Campbell family never wavered in their quest for justice. And the authorities were not able to just cover up the cold-blooded off-duty murder of Charles Campbell. □



12-year-old Vaughn Pierre Langford-Campbell being comforted by his aunt, Gloria Jean Powell-Campbell, at a rally in White Plains, New York, November 1996.

# Abdul Haqq Faces Extradition

As we go to press, the authorities are about to take a major step in their attempt to railroad Abdul Haqq for a murder he did not commit. Haqq is a member of the December 12th Movement and a cofounder of the Black Men's Movement Against Crack. While out on parole on another political frame-up, Haqq went right back out to the front lines of struggle against police brutality and the oppression of Black people. In particular, he was active in organizing protests against the police execution of Aswon "Keshawn" Watson in Brooklyn last year. The authorities tried to hold him in prison on a bail violation, but they failed. Then on March 19, the FBI-led Cleveland Joint Terrorist Task Force arrested Haqq for a murder that happened 13 years ago.

During a series of court hearings over the last several months, Haqq and his attorneys challenged the murder charge and the government's order to extradite him to Cleveland to stand trial. On October 29, an appellate court denied their challenge. Haqq is scheduled to be extradited after a court appearance on Thursday, November 13 at 9:30 a.m. The hearing will be held at the Bronx Supreme Court, Part II, Room 607. For more information about this case, see *RW* #905, or contact the Abdul Haqq Legal Defense Fund, P.O. Box 693, Lincoln Station, New York, NY, 10037, (212)234-7788.



Abdul Haqq



# Supreme Inequality High Court OKs Anti-Affirmative 209

Students Against 209 blocking the Sather Gate entrance to the UC Berkeley campus, November 6.

On November 3, the United States Supreme Court rejected legal challenges to California's anti-affirmative action "Proposition 209." Passed one year ago, Proposition 209 bans affirmative action programs in state hiring, contracts and education.

Even before the passage of Proposition 209, affirmative action programs were being slashed at the federal and state level. While campaigning for re-election, President Clinton put forward his "mend it, don't end it" position on affirmative action while bragging that he had cut more affirmative action programs than any other president. In California, programs that provided some access to universities were banned by the University of California Board of Regents. California Governor Wilson cut programs to open up firefighter jobs to women, Black people, Latinos, Asians and Native Americans. In cities, states and from the federal government, programs that allowed some access to government contracts have been cut. One woman construction contractor described the situation as "the days of the good ol' boys are back" in the distribution of government contracts.

The U.S. Supreme Court's refusal to hear appeals to Proposition 209 comes after the high court refused to hear appeals to the *Hopwood* decision by the Fifth District Federal Court in Texas. The *Hopwood* ruling banned the affirmative action program at the University of Texas Law School, a school which denied admission to Black people until 1950.

In 1994 many people in California fought against another reactionary proposition, the anti-immigrant Proposition 187. This struggle brought a whole new generation of youth into battle. Thousands walked out of school and tens of thousands marched to fight attacks on immigrants. On the heels of this struggle, the anti-affirmative action forces came out with Prop 209. In response, student activists organized big debates at Cal State Northridge and San Francisco State. People marched over 500 miles from Sacramento to the Republican Convention in San Diego and held protests at dozens of college campuses and high schools across the state. In the days after Prop 209 was passed, students on campuses from Berkeley to San Diego blocked streets and freeways and occupied buildings, demanding that their schools defy Prop 209.

## Courts Sanction Denial of Opportunity

The decision by the Supreme Court to not even listen to the legal arguments of opponents of Proposition 209 comes at a time when the ugly results of banning affirmative action are becoming a scandal. At the University of California Law School, not a single Black student was admitted and enrolled in this year's freshman class, although one Black student who was admitted last year deferred his enrollment and is now the lone Black person in the class of about 270 students. In graduate schools across California, the numbers of Latinos, Filipino-Americans and African-Americans in graduate school fell by 18 percent in the year after affirmative action was banned in admissions. In the wake of the *Hopwood* ruling, applications to the University of Texas law school from Black students fell 26 percent and applications from Latino students were down by 23 percent. These changes in the composition of a

couple of the country's largest graduate school systems will have a wide-ranging ripple effect as these schools produce fewer doctors, lawyers and others who serve oppressed nationality communities.

The sequence of court rulings on Proposition 209 shows some infighting among the powers-that-be and the government's determination to reverse concessions made in the '60s that were aimed at dealing with racial and gender inequalities in society. The system is trying to turn the anger of the middle class away from those on top, and towards those on the bottom of society—and to push those in the middle down, and those on the bottom even further down. All this has been reflected in the back-and-forth in the courts over affirmative action and Proposition 209. Courts at all levels have contributed to lying about what Proposition 209 was about, and framing affirmative action as a "zero sum" game where if the people on the bottom take a step forward, white middle class people lose out.

California's Republican Attorney General Dan Lundren's office drafted the ballot wording for Proposition 209. Lundren was both a major backer of 209, and at the same time his office was the supposedly "impartial" arbitrator of how the Proposition would be described on the ballot. Lundren's office used the deceptive title "California Civil Rights Initiative" to describe the proposition to voters. Backers of Proposition 209, including racist ruling class figures who have a long history of supporting segregation, claimed that this initiative was *against* discrimination.

Opponents of Proposition 209 challenged this fraudulent ballot wording in court. One state court judge ruled that the ballot explanation had to at least say that the Proposition would ban affirmative action. But when polls showed that a majority of voters would oppose Proposition 209 if they knew it banned affirmative action, a

higher state court immediately stepped in and restored the original, deceptive wording. After Proposition 209 passed, Federal Judge Thelton Henderson issued a temporary order blocking its implementation. Henderson ruled that there was merit to the legal arguments of the civil rights and civil liberties organizations, who argued that it was unconstitutional to ban programs that were an attempt to undo centuries of inequality. But shortly after this Henderson ruling, a three-judge panel from the Ninth Circuit Court stepped in and overruled him with what the ACLU called a "diatribe against affirmative action." The judges wrote in their decision that 209 "addresses in a neutral fashion race-related and gender-related matters." And they promoted the lie that affirmative action hurts white men, saying "Whenever the government prefers individuals on account of their race or gender it disadvantages individuals who belong to another race or gender."

Julian Gross, an attorney with the Employment Law Center (ELC) in San Francisco told the *RW*, "One of the most disturbing things" about the Supreme Court's decision was that it let stand such an outrageous ruling from the Ninth District Court. Gross, whose organization was among those that appealed the decision, pointed out that the Ninth District Court slammed Judge Henderson for daring to consider that Proposition 209 might unconstitutionally deprive whole sections of people of their rights. Gross pointed out that in their ruling, the Ninth District Court stated, "A system which permits one judge to block with the stroke of a pen what 4,736,180 state residents voted to enact as law tests the integrity of our constitutional democracy." This exposes the *myth* that millions of American kids in civics class are taught that this is a system of "checks and balances" where laws that violate the constitution can be challenged in court.

Another attorney who has been part of the fight against 209, Angelo Ancheta from the Asian Law Caucus, told the *RW* that the decision by the Supreme Court, along with their earlier decision not to hear appeals of the *Hopwood* ruling in Texas, "sends a bad message" and that "it may mean that other states will try to enact statues like Proposition 209." In fact, in the wake of the court's decision, there were renewed calls in congress for laws banning affirmative action at the federal level.

The legal status of thousands of affirmative action programs in California is not yet settled, although the Supreme Court's action casts a darker shadow over them. By law, these programs will stay in effect until they are repealed, or overturned through lawsuits. Lawsuits had already been filed against affirmative action programs in San Jose, and one alumni of UC's Boalt Hall Law School is suing the student alumni association to prevent them from encouraging enrollment by Black, Latino and other underrepresented students. Legal organizations committed to defending affirmative action are preparing for a wave of court battles. Oren Selstrom from the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights told the *RW* that in the legal arena, "the battle is far from over, it moves down to the ground level now in California."

## "We Won't Go Back"

On the Thursday following the Supreme Court decision not to hear appeals of Proposition 209, dozens of students blocked the main gate that leads into the campus of the University of California at Berkeley holding a banner saying "Welcome to 209." While they blocked the main gate, they left a small, side gate open with a sign above it saying "White Men Only." The action confronted every student with the implications of the passage of 209.

A protest organizer was quoted in the

Continued on page 15



San Diego State University, September 1996

# The Pepper Spray Torturers



**torture: to punish or coerce by inflicting severe pain—The Merriam Webster Dictionary**

**Northern California**—On October 16, protesters opposed to the logging of the ancient old growth redwoods in Headwaters Forest were staging a sit-in at the office of Congressman Frank Riggs in Eureka. Sitting around a tree stump they had dragged into the office, the protesters had locked their arms together with metal sleeves, making it difficult for the police to remove them from the premises. In the past police have had to cut through the metal sleeves to remove protesters.

What happened next can only be described as police torture of the demonstrators. A video made by the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department shows the police holding the protesters heads back, lifting their eyelids and wiping pepper spray directly into their eyes. It also shows the police spraying one protester in her face from just inches away. The painful screams of the demonstrators can be heard on the videotape.

This was the third time in recent weeks that police in Humboldt County have used the pepper spray chemical against protesters. On September 25, at Pacific Lumber Company offices in the town of Scotia, pepper spray was applied directly to the eyes of seven protesters who were staging a sit-in. On October 3, two protesters attached themselves to a Pacific Lumber bulldozer. When the police arrived they told the protesters, "We're going to do to you like we did to your friends in Scotia." Pepper spray was then swabbed into their eyes.

"It was like burning under your skin...the worst pain that I ever felt," 16-year-old Maya Portugal told reporters at a press conference called by the demonstrators.

Seventeen-year-old Spring Lundberg described the earlier incident at the Pacific Lumber office: "When they came to me we were singing songs and I was crouched in the fetal position. Three officers wrenched my head back and applied the pepper spray to my eyes. Then they came to me again, and pinned my head back and did it again, with my tear ducts wide open. People are not expecting law enforcement to act like this." "We were like specimens," she said, "a case study. They were putting the chemical agents in our eyes to see what would happen and what we would do...and let me tell you...when it's first applied it is so painful."

The shocking video of the incident was made public by the protesters, who obtained it as part of their court case. It has been aired widely on national and local TV, and articles on the incident have appeared in the mainstream media. There is widespread outrage at the actions of the police.

Macon Cowles, an attorney for the protesters, spoke at the press conference and compared the use of pepper spray by the sheriffs to the use of fire hoses and attack dogs on civil rights protesters in the South in the 1960s. "Now we've gotten more sophisticated and really more terrible, using chemical agents," he said. "It's not

just bad police behavior, it's psychotic behavior. This is the behavior of people who sadistically inflict pain."

## Deliberate Damage

Throughout the 1990s, pepper spray has become an important weapon in the arsenal of police forces nationwide. Police and pepper-spray manufacturers have downplayed the hazards of pepper spray. Use of pepper spray by police has been linked to at least 80 deaths nationwide (see "Facts on Pepper Spray").

The use of pepper spray by the Humboldt Sheriff's violates even the minimal safety standards of the pepper-spray manufacturers and police departments. According to literature from Defense Technology Corporation, which manufactures the spray used in Humboldt County, they "recommend avoiding usage closer than three feet because of possible hydraulic needle effect, to the eyes in particular." The videotape of the protest at Congressman Riggs' office shows police spraying a protester from a distance of less than three inches.

Hydraulic needle effect occurs when a propellant's pressure drives spray particles into the soft tissue of the eyes. Dr. David Smith, an expert on the use of pepper spray, said that use of pepper spray in the manner depicted in the video could cause damage to the eyes and scar the cornea.

Apparently no one even thought that anyone would apply pepper spray directly to the eyes of non-violent protesters. John Crew of the American Civil Liberties Union told the *San Francisco Examiner* that using pepper spray in this manner "was an incredibly radical decision, and they apparently made it without any self-consciousness because they videotaped it—and now the whole world has seen it. How could these officers think that somehow these policies and standards did not apply to them?"

## Police Justify Torture

The decision to use pepper spray against the Headwaters demonstrators was clearly made at high levels. Police from both the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department and the Eureka Police Department were on the scene. They videotaped the incident. They clearly thought that they could get away with this. "This was a very planned and deliberate decision...to use excruciating pain to coerce an individual," according to the ACLU's John Crew. "If there ever was an example of an intentional civil rights violation this is it."

And even after the exposure of the videotapes, Humboldt authorities are continuing to defend the torture of the protesters. Congressman Riggs, a former police officer, said that he considered the use of pepper spray against the demonstrators an "appropriate use of force." Riggs denounced the demonstrators on the floor of the House, calling them "reckless, wanton lawbreakers," and he defended the police involved who he said have "a difficult and dangerous job to do." He did not explain how four young women sitting around a tree stump with their arms locked in metal sleeves posed a danger to the armed sheriffs and police.

Humboldt County Sheriff Dennis Lewis, Eureka Police Chief Arnie Millsap, and Humboldt's main newspaper, the *Times Standard*, defended the use of pepper spray against the demonstrators.

The authorities and media have also responded to the exposure of the torture of the protesters and the nationwide outrage by attempting to portray the demonstrators as violent, calling them "eco-terrorists." Congressman Riggs called a press conference where two of his aides said that they feared for their lives. Despite the ridiculousness of their accusations—one aide said that the tree stump "shook the building and rattled the windows," causing her to think that her co-worker had been killed—Riggs' press conference was given widespread coverage.

The reality is that the demonstrators have a non-violence code that they strictly enforce. None of the protesters were even charged by the police with any violent act. "For Riggs to attack these young women after all they've been through is not just bizarre, it's inhumane and bordering on psychotic," Mark Harris, an attorney for the protesters, told the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* newspaper.

## A FEDERAL INVESTIGATION—OF WHOM?

In response to the national exposure of the videotapes, the FBI has sent a team of investigators to Humboldt County to investigate the pepper-spraying incident and the

White House has requested copies of the videotapes. Anyone familiar with the history of the FBI and Earth First! should be clear that the FBI is not coming to the aid of radical environmentalists. In her book, *Timber Wars*, the late Earth First! activist Judi Bari describes the campaign by the FBI and timber companies against Earth First! which included infiltration, trying to falsely paint EF! as "a terrorist organization," death threats, and more.

This political police campaign culminated in the bombing of a car being driven by Judi and fellow activist Darryl Cherney and attempts by the authorities to blame them for the bombing. Darryl Cherney and Judi Bari filed a suit against the FBI for their role in the bombing and attempted frame-up.

In addition, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the FBI already had an ongoing investigation of the Headwaters demonstrators for their sit-in at Riggs' office.

According to press reports, the FBI has interviewed Eureka Police Chief Arnie Millsap and Humboldt Sheriff Dennis Lewis as part of their "investigation." Millsap's comments after his meeting with the FBI show that this is not an investigation of the criminal behavior of the police. "I felt very comfortable with them," Millsap told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "I welcomed them here. If they had not come on this here I would have requested it. They are independent investigators and I have great faith in them."

Humboldt County is not the only area to

# The Police Murder of Brian Prosser



Brian Prosser

Brian Prosser was 39 years old. He was an accountant and lived in the upscale community of Novato in Marin County. Prosser suffered from asthma and had to use an inhaler. He is the latest person to die in the San Francisco Bay Area after being pepper-sprayed by police.

According to the police, they encountered Brian Prosser in a carport at an apartment complex in the neighborhood where he lived in the early morning hours of October 20. Brian may have been robbed—a resident of the apartment complex told investigators that a man had knocked on his door asking him to call police because he had been robbed. The police claim that when they found Brian he was incoherent and that he had his hands in his pockets. He was repeatedly pepper-sprayed by police. He was handcuffed, hit at least once with a baton, and placed face down, a position which further restricted his breathing. He died at Novato Community Hospital.

Brian's friends say that the police version does not fit the man who they know. "This does not make sense to anyone who knows the guy," a close friend of Prosser told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "His family is concerned about this.... He had a lot of people who loved him. He had a lot of big clients."

Another friend of Brian's said that he had just called her on the phone. "He said, 'I'm turning 40 and I love my life.'" She also recalled that in a previous incident police beat Brian after a 1991 arrest for drunk driving. "He got bruised up pretty bad," she said.

Novato police guidelines on the use of pepper spray say that pepper spray can be used on a suspect "as long as is necessary to accomplish control." John Crew of the ACLU told the *San Francisco Chronicle* that "this contradicts how the manufacturers say that pepper spray should be used because it implies that you spray until the suspect is subdued." Pepper spray manufacturers recommend that pepper spray use not exceed two one-half second bursts.

The police officers involved in the incident are on a paid vacation while the incident is being investigated. The Novato Police Department has refused to even release the names of the police involved in Brian's murder.

# of Humboldt County



Photos taken from a Humboldt County Sheriff's Dept. video showing deputies applying pepper spray directly into the eye of a protester.

use pepper spray against non-violent protesters. In April the University of California, Berkeley used pepper spray against students demonstrating in support of affirmative action. Pepper gas was also used against striking workers and demonstrators during the Persian Gulf war. And Israeli and Guatemalan police use pepper spray as punishment, a type of vicious

“street justice.”

The video of police torturing young women demonstrators with chemical weapons has shocked many people around the country. This is not an isolated incident but part of the escalating epidemic of police violence against the people. This brutality must be stopped and it is up to the people to stop it. □

## Facts on Pepper Spray

At least 80 people have died nationwide after being sprayed by police with pepper spray. In Northern California alone, Brian Prosser, Mark Garcia, Aaron Williams, Dustin Clark, Derek Wallace, Charles Mann, Tony Johnson, James Parkinson, Sammy Marshall, David Del Real, Jeffrey Scott, Geraldo Jaurequi, Jose Martinez and Richard Garcia all died after being pepper-sprayed by police.

What is commonly referred to as “pepper spray” is Oleoresin Capsicum (OC). OC's active ingredient is capsaicin, one of a family of chemicals called capsaicinoids that are common to pepper plants. In the body capsaicinoids release a brain-signaling compound called Substance P which helps govern pain recognition and sensitivity to heat. High capsaicin levels in the body cause the body to release too much Substance P. When a person is sprayed with OC, high levels of Substance P reach the brain and spinal cord. This causes immediate, excruciatingly painful symptoms in the eyes, bronchial passages and other respiratory organs. Breathing becomes almost impossible and the eyes are forced closed.

Pepper spray is much more painful than mace. Being sprayed with OC is like being sprayed with a substance 600 times hotter than cayenne pepper. The pain caused by OC is so intense that the National Coalition on Police Accountability has called for monitoring police use of pepper spray as a form of torture.

OC was initially developed as a bear repellent and was used by the post office for dog control in the 1980s. When cops in Australia and Britain tried to use OC, activists argued that it violates the Chemical Weapons Convention.

OC was approved with almost no scientific studies indicating its effects on human beings. In fact, there seems to have been more tests on OC's effects on dogs than on humans. There are no studies that indicate how OC affects people with asthma or other respiratory disorders, heart disease, high blood pressure, people with mental disorders, or pregnant women. There have been no studies on how it interacts with other drugs.

There are no studies of long-term damage to organs from exposure to OC. There have been no studies indicating what levels of OC are effective and what levels are toxic.

The scientific studies that do exist indicate that OC is very dangerous. A study by a U.S. army team of researchers at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland concluded that capsaicin “is capable of producing mutagenic and carcinogenic effects, sensitization, cardiovascular and pulmonary toxicity, neurotoxicity, as well as possible human fatalities.”

The Defense Technology Corporation of America (Def-Tech), California's largest pepper-spray supplier, wrote in an unpublished paper quoted in a report by the ACLU that any use of OC of more than one second “would be an overexposure, which may cause added health risks.” The Def-Tech report also stated that OC could cause problems in people with respiratory problems, nerve damage, and that capsaicin has caused liver damage in laboratory animals. A 1994 paper by the California Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment concluded that “reactions to OC may have been a contributing cause of death or exacerbated underlying conditions, such as pre-existing disease or drug use, to cause cardiac or respiratory failure.”

The FBI began pushing for approval of pepper spray in the late 1980s, citing studies by FBI Agent Thomas Ward at their crime lab in Quantico, Virginia. In 1996 Agent Ward pleaded guilty in federal court to taking over \$60,000 in payoffs from a pepper-spray manufacturer. Despite the escalating death toll pepper spray continues to be used by police departments nationwide. □



Several examples of police use of pepper spray: top, striking Staley workers in Decatur, Illinois, 1996; above, Gulf war protesters in San Francisco, 1992; below, student protesters at UC Berkeley.





Chicago



Los Angeles



Ilsa Guillen, Chicago

# It's Right to Rebel Police Brutality

**October 22, 1997:  
National Day of  
Protest to Stop  
Police Brutality,  
Repression, and the  
Criminalization  
of a Generation**

October 22, 1997: In 50 towns and cities across the U.S. people took action. Thousands stepped out WEARING BLACK, determined and unafraid, demanding justice, protesting police brutality and murder.

In city after city, people took the microphones to read the hundreds of names of people murdered by police—from the newly published report of the STOLEN LIVES project. Families of police victims raised the pictures of their loved ones—surrounded by supporters and friends. The Blue Wall of Silence was challenged. And people rose to defend the youth—to denounce a sick system that denies many of this new generation any chance for education or jobs, and that railroads them into prison by the hundreds of thousands.

The National Office of the Coalition wrote: "October 22nd actions have succeeded in building the bridge for people to walk across—clergy, lawyers, artists, prominent people stand together with youth from the neighborhoods and families of victims and shout: NO MORE POLICE BRUTALITY! The October 22 actions also stated loud and clear that this is a NATIONAL EPIDEMIC of police violence and that people want to get organized to deal with it."



San Francisco



San Francisco



New York City





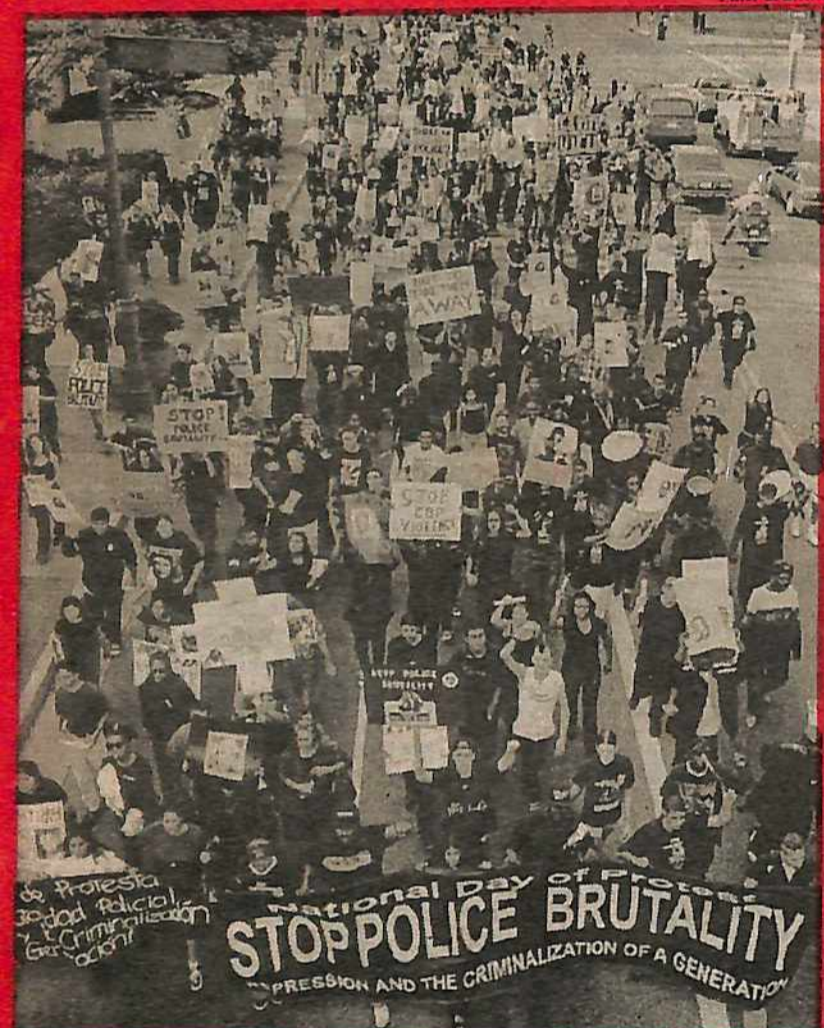
Photo: Monica Morant



Photo: Alvaro Lopez

# Against

AIM drummers, San Francisco



Los Angeles

Photo: Monica Morant

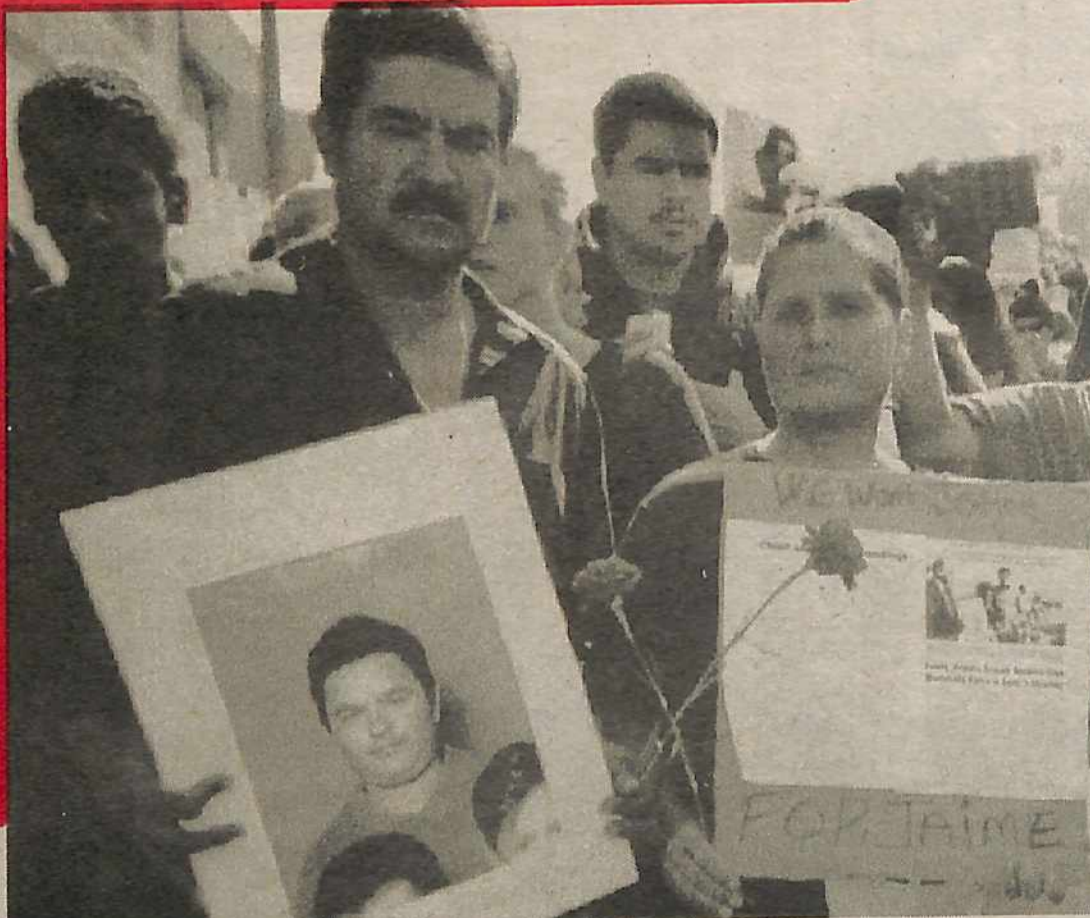


Watts drum contingent, L.A.

RWOR photo



Special to the RWOR



Los Angeles

Special to the RWOR

## Getting Over the Hump

## The Problem of

by Bob Avakian

*A new series\* by RCP Chairman Bob Avakian on the so-called "demise of communism" and the revolutionary struggle for communism worldwide. The series takes up strategic problems in the struggle of the proletarian revolution in particular countries and on a worldwide to "get over the hump" and defeat the imperialist system.*

Let's talk more about the "death of communism." This theme is a big part of the current political and ideological terrain, and it has definite negative aspects that we have to deal with—and transform. On the other hand, running counter to the tactical gains that the ruling class and reactionaries have realized from the so-called "death" or "demise" of communism—which they have attempted to magnify through their propaganda barrage and the use of all their technology and media—is that now the reality of open and more unbridled capitalism has set in in the former Soviet empire, and masses of people have begun to rebel in various ways against this.

This is very strikingly revealed in places like Poland. Now look, let's face it, I don't give a good god damn about the guy who is head of state of Poland right now. He is just another bourgeois politician—nothing really in the interests of the masses happened with his election. But, let's put it this way: who couldn't get some "artistic pleasure" out of watching that scoundrel Lech Walesa get thrown on his ass out of office. There was something very poetic about that I have to say, even though it involved no fundamental change in the society—and was only a change from one

bourgeois representative to another. But the results of that election reflected the dissatisfaction of the masses with the more openly capitalist regimes that have replaced the old phony communist regimes. In the former Soviet Union right now and in countries that were part of its bloc, such as Poland, you have this phenomenon.

In the Presidential elections in Russia, the U.S. did quite a lot to bolster Yeltsin against his main challenger, the head of the so-called Communist Party. And still Yeltsin had trouble winning the election. They tried to make a big deal of how he won decisively, but actually he got 60 percent of the vote, and the representative of the former and re-furbished Communist Party got something like 40 percent of the vote—even with all of the resources of the Russian bourgeoisie and the U.S. bourgeoisie behind Yeltsin. This is a reflection of the fact that some of the luster of the more open and unbridled capitalism—insofar as it had any luster in Russia—has come off pretty quickly even for some of the middle strata and certainly for the basic masses. They had been living under capitalism anyway, in the revisionist, phony socialist, state-capitalist form since the time of Khrushchev, but now they have run into the material-social reality of living under an undisguised form of capitalism.

## Finding Out About Capitalism

I remember one of the passages I really liked in the statement the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement put out to the masses in these Eastern European countries once the Soviet Empire started unraveling a few years back. (And, to my understanding,

various vehicles were found to get this statement out to the masses in Eastern Europe pretty broadly, and it got some favorable response there.) Now one of the parts of that statement that I really liked was where it addressed itself to the masses along these lines: If you think that there is going to be all these wondrous things happening now with the advent of open capitalist rule, you are going to be in for a big shock and it is not going to be a pleasant shock. And it added something to this effect: If you want to know what's in store now, you can go and ask someone living in a housing project in Chicago or one of the equivalent places in London. A few other examples were mentioned, and then came the part I really liked: "Or you can just wait and find out for yourselves!" That was one of my favorite parts of the RIM statement—it had just the right pizzazz and the right substance to go with that pizzazz, the right content.\*\*

And that is exactly what is unfolding now—people are in fact beginning to find out for themselves what this more undisguised and unbridled capitalism is all about and the hell and the horror it really means. And they didn't have to wait very long to find this out. Not that revisionism was any better for the people, but with this undisguised, unbridled capitalism has come not only a lot of chaos and breakdown economically but also direct attacks on the old "social welfare" measures that were extended as concessions to the working class in the Soviet Union. What is going on in Russia now parallels in some significant ways the process in the U.S. whereby the "New Deal" and "war on poverty" social contract and social programs are being

gutted and the ruling class is moving to forge a new and different "social contract" to attempt to maintain the stability of its rule.

And as all this has happened in the former Soviet Union (and former Soviet bloc), we have seen some of the luster coming off all this triumphalism of "the victory of capitalism," the "end of history," etc., etc. ad nauseam. Not that the imperialists and reactionaries are going to stop pumping this stuff out there, but some of the luster has come off even for many of the people who were initially more attracted to it.

## A Lowering of Sights

Still, in the short run, one of the things that has happened as a result of the collapse of the Soviet empire—which is presented as the demise and failure of communism because of its own inherent weaknesses and defects—is that this has had a real effect, materially and also ideologically. It has had an effect specifically in lowering people's sights, politically and ideologically. This is true even for some more advanced people. This has been the case among various strata, finding different expressions among different strata and social groups. We have to take this into account—this is part of the political terrain and in an overall sense part of the objective conditions that we have to deal with.

This is related to the fact that the initial rejection of revisionism, as these former Soviet bloc countries became unraveled, did not take the form or expression of the immediate demand for genuine socialism but a gravitation toward bourgeois democracy and undisguised and unbridled capitalism. This is especially so among intellectuals and other more privileged strata, but it also had effect among more basic masses.

We have seen this phenomenon at work—this lowering of sights and this gravitation, at least initially, towards more of a belief that capitalism was the way to go. So, now, when people see the "death of communism," but then on the other hand they also see some of the luster coming off of "the triumph of capitalism" and they feel the effects of what's happening with the economy in the former Soviet bloc—the immediate spontaneous reaction is not to say "We want revolution to overthrow this system and bring back socialism, real socialism." People go in many different directions spontaneously—including, as a significant social phenomenon, a number of people moving toward the right. Or they simply become more passive, more paralyzed politically and ideologically. They lower their sights in terms of what they think is possible and therefore desirable. And this applies not just in the former Soviet Union and the countries of its bloc, but more broadly throughout the world. People have been propagandized with this whole notion, this unscientific summation of what's happened in the Soviet Union, and that it represents the "death or failure of communism."

And many people have lowered their sights as a result of all this—lowered their vision as to what is possible, and what is desirable—because there is a unity of opposites between how people view possible and desirable. What is considered to be impossible also tends to get transformed into being regarded as not desirable in certain ways. If you get your sights lowered, even things you might abstractly or in another context think are good ideas become not good ideas because you see them as not possible, and to put your energy into that is not worthwhile and is in fact bad. This is the negative dialectic that can set in. Of course, this is far from the universal reaction. Not everyone responds this way, and even for those who do—or certainly for many of them—this reaction is not permanent.

It is perhaps ironic that precisely in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, after only a few years of more open unbridled



Moscow

# Lowered Sights

and undisguised capitalism, masses of people are revolted by and revolting against this in various ways. Yet and still, this phenomenon of the lowering of sights, politically and ideologically, is an important aspect of the current "social terrain" that we have to reckon with in our work.

This affects how we have to work and what work we have to do to raise people's sights, raise them to a qualitatively different vision. Here, obviously, we cannot rely on spontaneity. What is required is giving people a correct understanding of this so-called "death of communism." We have to get into the reality of the *defeat*, not failure, of the first attempts at creating and developing socialist society, in the Soviet Union (where capitalism was actually restored several decades ago) and then in China (where it was restored two decades ago). And we have to get into the *real* and profound historical lessons that must be drawn from this, not the lies and distortions that the imperialists and reactionaries are so noisily and incessantly trumpeting. It requires giving people an historical perspective on this from a correct, in other words a proletarian class, viewpoint.

## Against the "Everything Is For Sale" Morality

A related point here, which I think is potentially very important, is that we certainly have something going for us on the positive side. And we have to figure out how to maximize this. Because with all this sort of unbridled and unrestrained commodification that's going on, including in the culture and other aspects of the superstructure, people are becoming *sickened* by it, even where they don't have a scientific understanding of it.

Everything is openly and crudely a commodity these days, even in a qualitatively greater way than before. Everything has a commercial tag associated with it very directly, brazenly. Put simply, everything and everybody appears to be for sale. This is the going "ethos" or spirit of the times—it is being aggressively put forward by the ruling class. And, on the other hand, the effects of this are far from positive for the great majority of people—even when they get swept up in it, the effects of it are far from positive for the great majority of people. It has many negative consequences for different strata of people in different ways.

I think that, for various people, particularly though not only in the middle strata, one of the attractions of "traditional morality" and the Christian Right is that they appear to be putting forward some values and morals in contrast to this crass "materialism," that is, consumerism and commercialism (everything and everybody for sale). Recently, I was reading an article about the appeal of this right-wing ideology and the people being interviewed were talking about how they want something more than just consumerism and all that.

Of course, particularly in the middle strata, while they say they want something more than all this consumerism, they're not so inclined toward *giving up* the consumerism. That's the beauty of this fascist ideology and all this "traditional morality" from the point of view of the bourgeoisie—it does not really call on people to give up all this consumerism and dog-eat-dog. And that makes it a lot easier for this ideology to get over with people—spontaneity goes a lot more with it. This is one of the appeals of these people, these Christian Fascists—they appear to be putting forward, and they assert that they're putting forth, transcendental basic values in contrast to a lot of the madness that's been unleashed by what's going on in the material base of society and by associated things in the superstructure that are being promoted by the bourgeoisie to a significant degree. (Even the criminal activity that the masses get caught up in is, to a large degree, encouraged by the ruling class in various ways and used as a

rationalization for imposing even harsher police state rule, particularly over the masses in the ghettos and barrios.)

But in opposition to this fascist ideology and bourgeois ideology generally, *our* ideology and our motivation really stands out: not being self-centered; not being selfish and looking out for yourself (for "number one") above everything else; not being motivated by or getting into petty rivalries and back-stabbing; having a definite integrity consistent with our strategic objectives, in other words, integrity in the sense that we mean what we say, and we say what we mean, that we're not for sale, that we can't be bought. This is not to say that no individual will ever be broken or sell out, but collectively speaking we cannot be tortured or bludgeoned away from our stand, speaking of the Party collectively. All this is very powerful and inspiring to masses of people as they learn about it and see it in practice. It stands out against all this unbridled "everything for sale-ism" and all the rotten corruption associated with this.

As people run into the concrete results and manifestations of what's going on in the economy and what the ruling class is promoting through the superstructure, the contrasting fact that we're not for sale, that we're operating out of some more overriding principle which is objectively in conformity with the interests of the masses and with where society needs to go—this is a potentially very powerful "pole of attraction" for people.

It's not just that we have some good ideas and we're principled people, although that's true, but what we're fighting for is objectively the only possible resolution of the underlying contradictions of society that's actually in the interests of the masses of people and ultimately of humanity as a whole. This has a potentially very powerful "attractive pull," exactly in a situation where people are thirsty for something that makes sense out of everything going on and all the craziness that is being unleashed.

## A Dramatic Contrast

We shouldn't think that this is going to solve all of our problems by any means, but we also shouldn't underestimate this as a positive factor that's going for us. In other words, to put it simply, what we're about stands out in very sharp contrast to the bankrupt ideology and dog-eat-dog mentality and underlying dog-eat-dog and exploitative reality promoted by and promoting the ruling class—what they're grounded in and what they promote.

Today those bourgeois values are assuming the most putrid forms, and the most putrid forms are very consciously being promoted by the ruling class in order to degrade and demoralize the masses of people. This is having an effect.

Sometimes I get to see tapes of some of these tabloid shows in the U.S. And it's very clear when you watch them that, besides all the general bullshit, there is a conscious design and policy to promote this putrid stuff in order to disorient and demoralize a lot of people and to get them to see things in terms of the "flaws in human nature" and how messed up everybody is—and also to get them to gravitate more toward traditional morality and the traditional social relations that this morality serves. This whole way of thinking is directly opposed to people gaining the consciousness that the problems in society, and in people, have their source, fundamentally, in the underlying production and social relations and in the ruling ideology that serves those relations of exploitation and oppression.

So what we're all about stands out in very sharp relief. One of the main objectives of the Morality essays\*\*\* is to speak to that contradiction: on one hand to lay bare the ugly reality and essence of "traditional morality" and the underlying relations that it's upholding, and on the other hand to put forward our ideology and our morality as a beacon to inspire people

towards something higher which is based on a material reality that's strategically more powerful than what capitalism has going for it. Our communist morality and our ideology overall does represent the actual necessary resolution of these underlying contradictions, in the interests of the broad masses of people not just in the U.S., but worldwide.

At the same time, it is important for us both to think more deeply about *and* to speak openly to the masses about all this—including the world-historical problems of the proletarian revolution. We should put it out openly to the masses and involve them in grappling with these contradictions, on the basis of what we call our "strategic double-c": our strategic *contempt* for the enemy, and our strategic *confidence* in the masses and in our cause.

We should do this especially as we grapple more and get more understanding of these questions, but it's a dialectical process. We don't want to go off into a corner and refine all our understanding and only *then* speak to the masses. That would result in another case of the more we do that the *stupider* we'll get. It's a back-and-forth process of refining our understanding while speaking to the masses about the world historical problems that have been encountered by the international proletariat to this point in the struggle to move from the bourgeois epoch to the epoch of world communism, in other words, to carry forward the world proletarian revolution. We have to be speaking to the masses about these questions, rather than ducking them. Strategically we should welcome these questions. We should welcome the fact that

these contradictions are sharply posing themselves.

The fact that there have been temporary setbacks in the world proletarian revolution is a real problem for us. Obviously, we're still feeling the effects of the loss of China in many different ways, but that's part of the objective reality that we have to confront and transform through revolutionary struggle. Yes, it poses problems for us, but we shouldn't be ducking them. We should be welcoming questions and challenges about this, and we should be speaking to the masses about them and giving the masses our understanding and learning from the questions that they pose, to help deepen our understanding as well as theirs. □

- \* IN THIS SERIES:  
Part 1: "Ruling the Court Is Not a Straight Line Thing," *RW* No. 927.  
Part 2: "What Will It Take to Get Rid of This Obsolete System?" *RW* No. 930.
- \*\* The RIM statement "Cast Away Illusions! Revolution—All the Way!: An Appeal to the People of Eastern Europe from the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement" is available in *World to Win* magazine Issue No. 15, 1990.
- \*\*\* "Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones: The Reality Beneath William Bennett's 'Virtues,' Or We Need Morality, But Not Traditional Morality" and "Putting an End to 'Sin' Or We Need Morality, But Not Traditional Morality (Part 2)." Excerpts from these essays—including a series on "What Is Communist Morality"—appeared in the *RW* from January 28, 1996 through May 12, 1996.



Manhattan

## 80th Anniversary

# The 1917 October Revolution How the Bolsheviks Seized Power

The ruling class preaches that armed revolution is impossible. They say the system is too powerful to be overthrown by oppressed people. And they say that even if revolution happened, the people would just make a mess out of everything, and end up suffering even worse. *But history shows they are lying. History shows that revolution is possible and very liberating!*

1997 marks the 80th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. In 1917 the working class in Russia rose in an armed insurrection and seized the capital city, Petrograd. It was the beginning of the first successful proletarian revolution in history.

The old Russian society was a brutal capitalist society, headed by a king called the Tsar. The vast majority of people were poor peasants who labored on land owned by big rich landowners. Workers were crammed into a few rapidly growing cities and forced to work in huge new factories under murderous conditions. The country was controlled by wealthy capitalists allied with the big landowners, who supported the Tsar and the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1917 Russia was deep into World War I—a war that killed millions of people, as the big imperialist powers fought over who would have the biggest empire.

Poverty, brutal exploitation in the factories, hunger and the slaughter of war created a powerful revolutionary mood among the workers. The revolution was led by the Bolshevik Party, a revolutionary communist party headed by V.I. Lenin. Through years of civil war, the working class built its own army and beat back the exploiters, who were fighting to strangle the revolution.

Once power was in the hands of the working class and its party, it immediately became possible to start transforming society and liberating people! The new revolutionary government decreed that the land now belonged to the peasants. At the same time, this new revolutionary state withdrew Russia from World War I—and declared peace.

Most important, the seizure of power in 1917 made it possible to continue the revolution and establish a new, socialist society. The new revolutionary government created equality among peoples, and working people of all nationalities were free to participate in the process of revolutionizing all aspects of society. After Lenin died in 1924, the revolution continued under the leadership of Joseph Stalin. Under extremely difficult conditions, the revolutionary people created a planned socialist industry and a collectively owned agriculture. Education and medicine were available to the masses of people for the first time. The new socialist state became an inspiration to revolutionary people all over the world. And during World War II, this new socialist state was strong enough to break the back of Hitler Germany after the Nazis invaded Soviet Russia.

When Stalin died in 1953, capitalist forces inside the Communist Party, headed by Nikita Khrushchev, staged a coup. They destroyed the dictatorship of the proletariat and restored capitalism in 1956. The once-revolutionary Soviet Union became an empire run by big-time exploiters, capitalism was restored, and a life of suffering was brought back to the masses of people in the Soviet Union.

It was this state-capitalist system that broke apart in extreme crisis after 1989, causing the Soviet ruling class to undertake a transformation to a more privatized form of capitalism. Capitalist rulers throughout the world now often point to the suffering of the people and the economic crisis of this period of the Soviet Union's state-capitalism—in order to claim that revolution is useless.

Most people know very little about this first working class revolution. The October Revolution is an important part of the "hidden history" of the international proletariat. This history has been hidden and lied about because it proves that oppressed people can make a proletarian revolution and liberate themselves!

This week, the *Revolutionary Worker* continues reprinting a series on the October Revolution in Russia—in honor of the revolution's 80th anniversary. This "hidden history" will help our readers understand more deeply how the proletariat made this revolution. This series is adapted from an article, "The October Revolution and the Military Tactics of Leninism," which appeared in the Spring 1993 issue of *Revolution* magazine.

## Part 2: Leninist Tactics: Triple Audacity and Relying on the Masses



Revolutionary sailors load machine gun belts in preparation for battle, October 1917.

On the night of October 10-11 the Bolshevik Central Committee voted 10 to 2 to set the course for armed insurrection. The Central Committee took this decision amid a rapidly fracturing social order. Kerensky had ordered the removal of the naval fleet from Petrograd. The masses feared that Kerensky was planning to hand over Petrograd to the German army and give them the job of crushing the revolutionary movement there.

The people resisted accordingly. The garrison units proclaimed that they would refuse any orders to evacuate Petrograd, and the soviets—over the opposition of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leadership—voted to back the garrison committee. Moreover, the soviets moved to form a "revolutionary defense committee." The committee's avowed purpose was to resist German attack, but it could also fight against further treachery by the Kerensky government. The garrison and soviet were now in virtual open mutiny against the government. This could not last long and could ultimately only be settled by force of arms.

All this did not mean, however, that the Bolsheviks had a sure shot for insurrection. Important problems still had to be solved, and quickly.

First, *military* preparations for insurrection were lacking. The masses had demonstrated (and fought) with arms in hand during July and had defended Petrograd against Kornilov in August. But insurrection requires something on another level altogether. It means developing an *offensive* strategy for seizing power, marshaling forces to strike, setting targets, coordinating attacks, etc. It means welding the



Red Guards leave to carry out the orders of the Military Revolutionary Committee, October 25, 1917.

masses organizationally to function as an army, to wage war, and to take the offensive. This is qualitatively higher than even the mass armed defense of a city—it is a leap of the highest magnitude. And to effect this the party had to move from the sphere of dealing with political problems to the related but qualitatively different military sphere.

### Taking the Offensive and Relying on the Masses

All during this period Lenin's leadership made the crucial difference. He hammered on two main points. First, the Bolsheviks could not wait for more favorable conditions, they had to move immediately to rally the masses onto the offensive. And second, above all else they must place their reliance on the proletariat in arms. Writing shortly before the insurrection, Lenin noted Marx's insistence that insurrection is an art, and not a spontaneous happening. He then elaborated on the rules of this art:

- (1) Never play with insurrection, but when beginning it realize firmly that you must go all the way.
- (2) Concentrate a great superiority of forces at the decisive point and at the decisive moment; otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organization, will destroy the insurgents.
- (3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest determination, and by all means, without fail, take the offensive. "The defensive is the death of every armed rising."
- (4) You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered.
- (5) You must strive for daily successes, however small (one might say hourly in the case of a town), and at all costs retain "moral superiority."

Marx summed up the lessons of all revolutions in respect to armed uprising in the words of "Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: *de*

*l'audace, l'audace, encore de l'audace*" (audacity, audacity, yet more audacity).

What was the key to such tactical audacity? The organized strength of the masses. Lenin wrote:

The most determined elements (our "shock forces" and young workers, as well as the best of the sailors) must be formed into small detachments to occupy all the important points and to take part everywhere in all important operations, for example: to encircle and cut off Petrograd; to seize it by a combined attack of the sailors, the workers, and the troops—a task which requires triple audacity; to form detachments from the best workers, armed with rifles and bombs, for the purpose of attacking and surrounding the enemy's "centres" (the officers' schools, the telegraph office, the telephone exchange, etc.). Their watchword must be: "Better die to a man than let the enemy pass!" (Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVI, 180-181, "Advice of an Onlooker")

To carry through this orientation would require a breathless race from behind. Lenin's line required a drastic rupture, a leap into the unknown and unprecedented. Everything that had been won up until then would be risked; but only this line and orientation could win everything.

Meanwhile, events continued to move at a machine-gun pace. On October 19 the Provisional Government, emboldened by a public letter from the Bolshevik leaders Kamenev and Zinoviev opposing the insurrection (!),<sup>1</sup> began to concretely prepare for a clampdown. Armored cars mounted with machine guns positioned themselves in front of the Winter Palace (the government headquarters). Reinforced patrols of cadets cruised the city streets. The government ordered the arrest of agitators in the barracks. That night the high chiefs of the military divided the capital into special districts and laid plans for raids on and occupation of

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The Red Guard of the Vulkan factory pose outside the plant, October 1917.

<sup>1</sup> Kamenev and Zinoviev wrote to a non-party newspaper arguing against any idea of "our Party initiating armed demonstrations of any kind in the immediate future." This plainly implied that the Bolsheviks were about to move. This costly betrayal gave the government an excuse to carry out repression. Lenin replied to their arguments for delay with what John Reed called "one of the most audacious pieces of political propaganda the world has ever seen," his "Letter to Comrades." Lenin's letter took on and devastated the by-now familiar—but still influential—arguments of Kamenev and Zinoviev from a dozen different angles and in the process deepened the political and military thinking guiding the insurrection.

# The 1917 October Revolution

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key points, including the Soviet headquarters at the Smolny Institute.

## The Red Guard

But the Party and the masses were also moving. Since very early on in the revolution, the masses had been organizing themselves into Red Guards—organizations of proletarians which took on self-defense and some policing responsibilities in their factories and neighborhoods. In October the Bolsheviks had moved to transform these Red Guards into the backbone of a proletarian army. Their strongest base was in the Vyborg District (a district being something on the order of a large proletarian neighborhood—like Harlem or L.A.'s Pico-Union in the United States).

On October 21, in the face of what was shaping up to be a massive reactionary demonstration the next day, the Vyborg District Red Guard ordered some factory units to go on full alert. On the 23rd, the Vyborg Red Guard staff sent a secret order to all units to maintain themselves in full fighting readiness and to stay at the factories. A book about the Red Guard recounts the following:

"A worker at the Vulkan Factory, F. A. Ugarov, wrote that after the 'Day of the Soviet' [an October 21 demonstration called in support of the Soviets], the mood of the workers was intensified.... An order from the staff of the Red Guard was received to prepare the Red Guard for action. The bolts of rifles clicked. In the yard of the factory they fitted the trucks with sheet armor and mounted machine guns. The factory ceased to be a factory and became an armed camp."

Another worker recalled that in the last days before the revolution some armed workers did not leave the factory but slept there instead, with their guns, turning the factory cafeteria into a barracks. In fact at a number of plants in Vyborg the Red Guard went on "barracks status." This was a very important measure of making the qualitative leap from an organization of armed workers into an *army*.

## Winning the Troops

Lenin relied overwhelmingly on the masses of proletarians, organized into Red Guard units; but he also wanted to win over or neutralize as many government troops as possible before the uprising.

The Bolsheviks had politically organized among the troops since the very beginning of World War I. This was extremely dangerous underground work. It included encouraging fraternization between the Russian soldiers and those of the hostile imperialist powers; agitating to reveal the true class interests of the majority of soldiers (peasants) in the army; distributing the Bolshevik newspaper aimed at soldiers; and developing Bolshevik cells where possible. The government punished civilian Bolshevik organizers by sending them off to the front to die. But this often boomeranged, when the Bolsheviks so drafted organized new revolutionaries on the very front lines of the war!

As the war went on, the Russian army suffered severe defeats. Slowly it began to disintegrate as a unified and disciplined fighting force. This took a leap during and after the February revolution, when political turmoil throughout society erupted within the army itself. Since then the

Provisional Government had fought to restore discipline and again send the army off against the Germans; the Bolsheviks sought to increasingly widen the gulf between the majority of soldiers and the government and to develop support for the revolution.

Agitation and organization among the troops grew crucial as the insurrection approached. In early October the Petrograd Soviet had formed the Military Revolutionary Committee, or MRC, to serve as a command center for the proletarian forces. On October 21 the MRC began to dispatch commissars to the garrison units. In what amounted to a direct challenge to the army command, these commissars called on the troops to obey only those orders approved by the MRC. Such an initiative could help win the neutrality and even support of at least some of the troops in event of an uprising—though it could not and would not prevent the use of loyal and reliable troops for preemptive strikes against the masses and their leaders.

The barracks went into an uproar, debate and struggle greeted the arriving commissars in almost every unit and went on virtually nonstop. As demand for these commissars/agitators grew, the MRC pressed into service every force it could find: early arrivals for the Congress of Soviets, Bolshevik cadres just sprung from jail, radical rank-and-file troops all streamed into the barracks. The political struggle waged among the troops could not in itself substitute for the need to defeat the government army in battle, militarily. But it could and did render some of the government forces unreliable and ripe for further Bolshevik agitation, and actually won some key units to participate in the insurrection on the side of the Bolsheviks.

To be continued



V.I. Lenin



A political agitator speaks to a meeting of Russian soldiers at the war front, 1917.

# The Railroad of Louise Woodward

On November 1, 1997, an outrageous verdict was reached in the murder trial of 19-year-old Louise Woodward. Louise was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole for 15 years.

This case was vindictive from the beginning—starting from the state's decision to indict this young woman for murder—after an 8-month-old baby, Matthew Eappen, went into a coma while in her care and then died five days later. The prosecution speculated that Louise had slammed Matthew's head into a hard object—and said that this amounted to deliberate murder. The parents of Matthew were put on the stand to call Louise "child abuser," "monster" and "murderer," and to suggest that only

Louise's punishment could ease their suffering and loss.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the tables were then turned, and the mother of Matthew Eappen was put "on trial." The defense team suggested Matthew's death should be blamed on Deborah Eappen—because she had gone back to her job as an ophthalmologist three days a week, leaving the baby in the care of Louise, an *au pair* nanny from Britain. Predictably, there was no suggestion that the father, Sunil Eappen, had been neglectful by continuing his career. At the same time, the mass media ran ongoing commentary that fanned all kinds of fears about babysitters and daycare.

Many women are outraged at the open



Louise Woodward in court after the verdict.

promotion of the idea that working women are (somehow) betraying and endangering their children by leaving the home and returning to work. And many have pointed out that these defense arguments and media speculations amount to an attack on the right of all women to work and be treated as equals within marriage.

The greatest outrage came as the trial ended and the verdict arrived. Louise Woodward was found guilty of second degree murder—meaning that she was found to have intended to kill. Mandatory sentencing requires that she receive a punishment of life in prison—and that she serve at least 15 years before being considered for parole.

The case was based on questionable circumstantial evidence. There was no solid evidence that Louise had intended to kill this baby or even that she caused his death. An expert defense witness at the trial testified that x-rays showed that Matthew had skull fractures that were several weeks old, and argued that relatively minor events could have triggered fatal internal bleeding in his head.

When Louise first found Matthew in a coma on February 4, she reportedly told 911 that she may have been "a little rough"

with him. But she has steadfastly denied hurting him and testified at the trial, "I'd never hurt Mattie and I never did hurt Mattie and I don't know what happened to him."

Even jurors reported after the verdict that they believed that there was no convincing evidence of intention to kill. And yet, the prosecution railroad successfully pressed on for a conviction.

What justifies locking this young woman away for at least 15 years? Can anyone honestly believe that she represents a threat to society?

No, the motive driving this verdict and sentencing is the cold, mean-spirited philosophy of punishment and vengeance that has gripped the U.S. legal system. Unjust mandatory sentences like this are used constantly to railroad hundreds of thousands of youth into prison for long stretches—for relatively minor acts like drug possession.

The blatant injustice of this case has led to protests in Massachusetts where the trial was held and in Britain where Woodward's family lives. There have been demands that the judge set aside this verdict and free Louise. As we go to press, there has not yet been a final decision. □



Protesters outside the courthouse denounce the verdict, November 3.

## High Court OKs Anti-Affirmative 209

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campus newspaper saying, "We are demonstrating tangibly that 209 will narrow the door. (UC Berkeley) Chancellor Berdahl is not listening to us. 209 will have a disastrous impact on the community of color. Our brothers and sisters won't have a chance to be here to speak. We're here for the future of our brothers and sisters." Another student said, "I'm glad people aren't apathetic to sexism and racism on this campus."

The fact that many students at UC Berkeley have resisted 209 from its inception is important. To be admitted to Berkeley, students have to have an almost perfect grade point average, score high on tests that measure skills only taught in elite schools, come up with tens of thousands of dollars in admission costs and do many hours of homework each night. Part of the program behind banning affirmative action is to transform schools like Berkeley into more efficient producers of tomorrow's corporate and technical elite in service of capitalism and imperialism. The class schedule at Boalt Hall Law School at UC Berkeley is filled with classes in international business law, foreign trade contracts and other skills that facilitate the exploitation of the workers in the U.S. and the

people of the third world.

Last month over 50 students, alumni and other area law school students were arrested in protests demanding diversity in enrollment at Boalt. In one protest, some white students symbolically gave up their seats in class to Black students who do not attend Boalt. The students have put forward the slogans, "Educate Don't Segregate," "Protect Diversity at Boalt Hall," and "It's not a University without Diversity." And there have been continuing, ongoing protests in California before and since the passage of Proposition 209. On April 28, 70 student protesters were viciously pepper-sprayed in the Administration Building at UC Berkeley while protesting 209. In mid and late October, thousands of people participated in "Save the Dream" rallies and marches organized by Jesse Jackson, along with unions, student groups, civil rights organizations and others. Protests have also hit at the next ugly, racist proposition being prepared for the California ballot—the "English Only" initiative that would ban or severely restrict bilingual education.

Meanwhile, in Houston, Texas, a proposition to ban affirmative action was defeated at the polls. That ballot measure had the same content as California's Proposition 209, but the ballot wording did

include the fact that it would ban affirmative action. The defeat of this initiative was, as Angelo Ancheta from the Asian Law Caucus told the *RW*, "a nice break in the momentum" of attacks on affirmative action.

In the face of attacks on affirmative action, revolutionaries have posed the question "what kind of a society do you want to see?" This is a here and now question. In the year since the passage of Proposition 209, real changes have taken place that are aimed at enforcing and promoting inequality.

Each attack on equality has brought forward resistance, and that resistance needs to become stronger. Folks who have been "in

the middle" on this battle, or confused by the demagogic rhetoric about "reverse discrimination" need to take a look at the whites-only reality that is the result of attacks on affirmative action.

Attacks on affirmative action are part of a bigger war on the people that is coming down from the system. While school doors and job opportunities are slammed shut, the prisons and graveyards are being filled with youth for whom the system has no future. The battle for equality, including resisting and beating back attacks on affirmative action and fighting to extend these programs is a vital part of the fight against the system's war on the people. □

The following excerpt is taken from a special pull-out section on affirmative action in *RW* #824:

Powerful centers of the U.S. ruling class are moving to discredit and dismantle affirmative action.

From a revolutionary perspective it is clear that affirmative action programs have never come close to actually overcoming discrimination in the U.S. But what does it mean, given that reality, for the system to launch a frontal attack on affirmative action—and to accompany this attack with code words about "reverse discrimination"? What is the meaning of someone like Jesse Helms—the Senator from North Carolina who defended Jim Crow segregation—spearheading an attack on affirmative action?!

The attack on affirmative action is an attempt to "close the book" on social reforms aimed at correcting inequality and injustice in U.S. society. The attack on affirmative action is a deliberate move to inflame divisions among the people. It is nothing less than a plan to justify inequality—to reinforce and intensify white supremacy and male supremacy in this society.

In many places the power structure has already moved to destroy programs that open up school admissions, hiring and government contracts to people who face discrimination—women, Black people, Latino people, Asian people and Native American people.

To build support for their moves, the rulers are working to convince millions of people that affirmative action is unjust, unfair, unnecessary, and unproductive. The system is spreading poison and confusion—trying to convince every jobless white guy and every white student who doesn't get into college that they lost out because some "unqualified minority or woman" was unfairly given "their" seat at the table.

Such arguments are designed to disguise the real injustice: that the capitalist/imperialist system—and the monopoly capitalist class and their political representatives who run this system—are stifling the lives and hopes of millions of people. The attack on affirmative action is an attempt to defend existing inequality.

The issue here is really what kind of society do you want to live in: Do you want a society stamped from top to bottom by systematic discrimination against Black people and other oppressed nationalities? Do you want a society where women are kept in a second class status? Do you want a society where the power structure drives many sections of the people down while the monopoly capitalists profit from these inequalities and injustices?

It is in the interest of the great majority of people not only to stop the ruling class from "closing the book," but to throw the book wide open and ask: How can we get rid of this whole rotten capitalist-imperialist setup and build a just, new society—where we can really end male domination and white supremacy, and where the common people work in common for the common good?



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