

The Yablonski murder

Part II

Steel trust — govt conspiracy

Part III

Grand jury to destroy UMW

See pp. 2-3

The ABC of Nigeria

"Independence,"
the CIA and oil

See pp. 8-9

Black and white, unite and fight for a

WORKERS WORLD

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January 29, 1970

GIs put brass on trial: verdict guilty!



GIs tell of genocide

See story page 4

A soldier who was on helicopters that supplied soldiers and evacuated wounded from Hamburger Hill last May testifies at a trial of the Army at the University of Washington. More than 1,500 people heard 15 members of the American Servicemen's Union testify to life in the Army and in Army stockades. A jury of 12 servicemen from Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base found the Army guilty of "genocide and dehumanizing men." They asked the death penalty.

Government by assassination: part II

The Yablonski murder: steel trust - govt conspiracy

By Sam Marcy

Unless the most serious view of the Yablonski assassination is taken, the gravest consequences for the cause of American labor and the working people in general will ensue.

Because the American trade union bureaucracy has been universally discredited as an authentic, militant representative of the workers, this is no reason to permit the capitalist class to palm off a government plot to assassinate a labor leader as a mere clique struggle unconnected with the burning political issues of the day.

Certain progressive elements in this country made a mistake when they passed up the Kennedy assassination as a more or less accidental phenomenon and swallowed the official line on it, while some others really thought of it as signifying a vendetta in the ruling clique but without political significance. In reality the Kennedy assassination heralded an era of intensified use of naked violence by the ruling class both at home and abroad. These elements missed the point at that time. And they are missing it again now.

The most alarming aspect of the Yablonski assassination is not that the capitalist class has belittled its importance and relegated it to a tenth rate issue in the country. That they would try to do this should go without saying. Of the greatest importance, however, is that the official labor movement has had practically nothing to say about it, except in the most inane and innocuous way. True, certain columnists have dropped hints here and there about collusion between the Boyle faction and the big operators and a reference occasionally to the murder of King and Kennedy. But that is about all.

It is plain that the ruling class would like to bury the whole matter, shed crocodile tears for Yablonski and sanctimoniously bemoan "corruption in big labor." And there seems to be very little opposition to that from almost any source.

All the more necessary is it then to put the whole matter straight before the public, without any equivocation whatever.

CIA, FBI must have

known beforehand

The murder of Yablonski was a political assassination, carried out by the U.S. government through its basic instrumentalities such as the CIA and the FBI, its underlings, undercover agents and hired assassins. As such, it differs in no fundamental respect from the assassination of the Kennedys, of Martin Luther King, of Malcolm X and from the execution of the many Panther members, the latest victim being Fred Hampton.

As in each one of the above murders, scapegoats will be found. And whether guilty or not guilty of actually pulling the trigger, they will be used to cover up the trail of the real criminals and quiet the suspicions of those still unsatisfied. The FBI has now arrested Paul E. Gilly, Aubran W. Martin and Claude E. Vealey in Cleveland, Ohio and is apparently preparing a case against them. But no one should be fooled by this attempt to repeat the Oswald procedure. And no one's eyes should be diverted to the inner union fight exclusively, if it should turn out that the three men are connected to the Boyle machine.

To reduce the Yablonski assassination to the result of a mere factional feud between two groups fighting for power in the union is to tell a half-truth, to deceive the miners, to lie to the American labor movement in general and to the whole world. The federal government, and the FBI in particular, knew as early as last June of the bitter struggle in the miners' union for the control of the organization. Considering that Yablonski himself had broadly intimated that he feared for his life and that the virulent character and temper of the election struggle had gone beyond anything that had been previously envisioned for such a campaign, it would be utterly impossible for the CIA and the FBI not to know what was in the offing.

Govt's false "neutrality"

in face of death threats

Life magazine reported in its January 23 issue: "Yablonski, almost daily, charged Boyle with criminal behavior, while threats against Yablonski's life came so regularly that after the first few weeks they stopped being counted, much less reported...."

"We went to the Justice Department, too," Dr. Wells, a close associate of Yablonski, said. "All we wanted them to do was announce they were sending in observers. Hell, they didn't even have to do it. Just announcing it would have helped. John Mitchell didn't even return our calls."

One must also consider the gravity of the charges made by Yablonski. It is important to remember: (1) that Boyle withdrew from the union treasury \$1.5 million to pay 100 per cent of certain salaries upon retirement; (2) that Boyle withdrew about \$1 million to finance his own campaign; (3) that the union had in 1962 about \$30 million in investments which had mysteriously dwindled by 1968 to less than \$24 million; and (4) that Boyle was somehow involved in the UMWA convictions of conspiracy with large coal companies to squeeze out small ones.

The magnitude and seriousness of these charges could not possibly have escaped the attention of all the government agencies charged with investigating such things. Always on previous occasions these agencies had jumped into the fray with speed and alacrity and without any invitation at all when a union was involved.

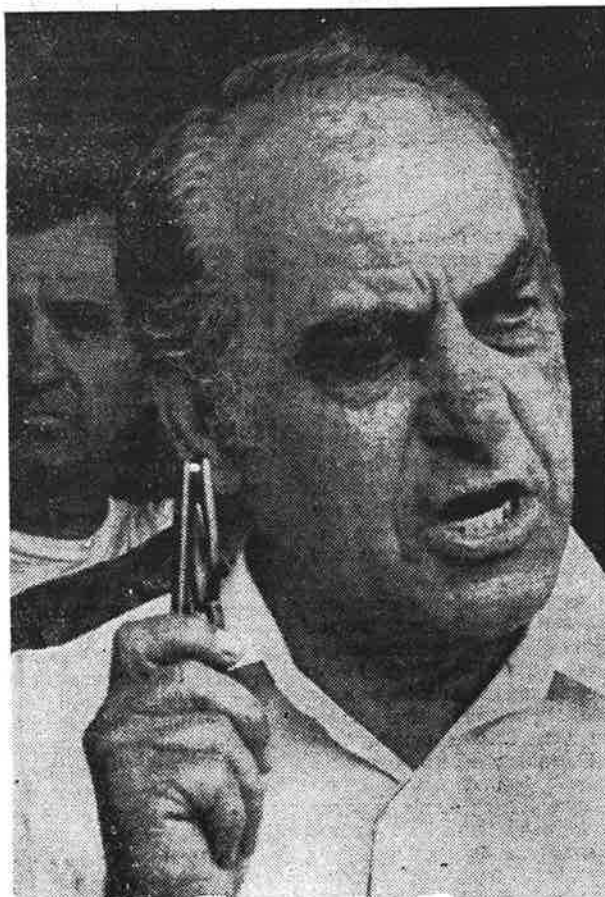
Only in this case have they suddenly put on a false face of neutrality and a pose of nonintervention. The truth of the matter lies in the fact that Yablonski, as we stated in our previous installment, transgressed the ruling class' prescribed limits of opposition within the established relationship between the UMWA and the mine operators, who are in turn controlled by the steel trusts.

The labor leadership's

crime of silence

It was at the behest of the steel trust that the government executed Yablonski. To put it in any other way is to hide the true significance of the murder. Yablonski was by no means a militant leader. He had actually been a part of the establishment. His crime at the moment was that in the struggle against the Boyle machine he threatened to upset the established equilibrium between capital and labor in a key, basic industry. And this could have repercussions throughout the whole country.

Therein lies the key to the murder of Yablonski. It was a preventive move in anticipation of bigger working class struggles ahead. The pro-



Joseph Yablonski

gressive, left papers in this country have failed to see the intimate connection between the Yablonski assassination and the pattern of all the previous political assassinations in this epoch of unbridled reaction and repression unleashed by the government.

The silence of the labor bureaucracy on the matter of the Yablonski assassination is as self-defeating as it is reprehensible. Right now all the top leaders of the AFL-CIO, and of other unions as well, are feigning neutrality and impartiality in the matter, if they talk about it at all.

But this is only their public posture. Privately they are all shaken up by it. For they cannot but recognize this as a warning to them by the establishment.

Certain columnists in the capitalist press are

interpreting the official silence of the labor leaders as part of a tactical approach by the Meany and Reuther forces to win the UMWA over to their respective sides. Cogent as this argument may appear to be, it is extraordinarily narrow and basically false. Certainly Meany and Reuther are competing with each other to win over the UMWA (which for a long time has been independent). But these leaders know only too well that the industrial-financial oligarchy of this country is in the process of unleashing a giant antilabor offensive, of which the assault upon the General Electric workers is merely a curtain-raiser.

They, more than most others, know the intimate relationship between the assassination and the critical situation in the country as a whole, with the war in Vietnam on the one side and the black liberation struggle on the other.

The inherent threat of many aspects of the struggle merging into a giant struggle of the workers—one working class struggle—against the capitalist class is what lies at the bottom of the Yablonski murder. It is the fear of this coming struggle that haunts the ruling class. The crime of the labor leadership is that knowing all this, they prefer to remain silent. And it is backwardness on the part of the radical press not to be able to see it and not to sound the alarm. Making vague hints about benefits accruing to the coal and steel companies from the assassination, as some of the left papers have done, is inadequate and misleading. Of course the coal barons and the steel tycoons stand to benefit from the assassination, and in fact have conspired about it. But this would have been impossible unless it were done with the consent of, and through, the government itself. This is so because of the enormous significance of the case. It only obscures the political character of the assassination to dwell merely on the corruption of the Boyle clique—and to make merely the charges we listed above. The fundamental issue in the assassination is the role of the capitalist class.

Govt investigation:

letting in the fox

Probably the worst aspect of the assassination is the manner in which Yablonski's opposition group—or what is left of it—is conducting its fight-back strategy. Every serious student of the trade union movement knows it is the weakest of unions which permits its lawyer to handle its general political and trade union affairs. This is exactly what Yablonski's heirs are doing. Permitting Joseph L. Rauh, Yablonski's lawyer, to continue the suit begun by Yablonski to cancel the election results is one thing; broadening his authority to conduct the general struggle of the miners against Boyle's clique, against the operators and the government, is something else again. And that is precisely what Rauh is set to do.

Every miner who knows anything about his union knows that the UMWA more than any other union within the framework of the labor establishment had put up a remarkable struggle against government intervention in the internal affairs of his union. And this in many ways signifies a greater degree of independence from the capitalist state structure. It is often forgotten by so-called labor experts of the bourgeoisie, but not by the ruling class, that the UMWA was the only union in the Executive Council of the AFL which voted against signing the non-Communist oath as required by the Taft-Hartley Law to get the so-called services of the National Labor Relations Board.

John L. Lewis and the UMWA took this principled stand as a demonstration of the union's independence from supervision by the capitalist state. The UMWA split with the AFL precisely on this issue. Joseph Rauh's strategy is a complete break with Lewis' strategy. In his effort to help the Yablonski faction get out of the crisis the UMWA finds itself in, he is employing methods which will drive the union deeper into crisis, if not ruin it altogether.

On January 15, Rauh called a news conference and roundly denounced Labor Secretary George Schulz for his icy indifference to the complaints or threats against Yablonski during the election campaign and then called upon the Labor Department, the Internal Revenue Service and the Justice Department for a full-scale investigation into the Yablonski assassination.

That was like asking the fox to look into what happened in the chicken coop. No one knows this better than Rauh himself. Asking the Justice Department to look into the matter is really asking President Nixon and Attorney General Mitchell to do it. Both Nixon and Mitchell regard Rauh (who is a leading figure in the Americans for Democratic Action) as

(Continued on page 13)

Govt to follow Malcolm X murder pattern

Government by assassination: part III

Grand jury investigation aim to destroy UMW

By Sam Marcy

With the announcement of the arrest on January 21 of three men in Cleveland, Ohio, who were charged with the murder of Yablonski, the U.S. government has made clear that it intends to pursue the assassination of the mine workers leader in the pattern and the spirit of the Malcolm X assassination.

There too the government arrested, tried and subsequently convicted two men for the assassination of the militant black leader. There too the killing was perpetrated in the course of a long and bitter factional dispute which threatened to break out into violence.

But as the world has learned since then, particularly in the light of subsequent assassinations, the suspects convicted in the Malcolm X case were, at most, hired gunmen and that the real assassination was carried out by the U.S. government. The government was anxious to murder Malcolm X because he appeared to be a serious danger to them at a time when the black masses were showing signs of impending struggles.

If Paul Gilly, Claude Vealey and Aubran Martin, the three men arrested in the Yablonski case, are tried and subsequently convicted, it will prove no more than that they are the hired gunmen in a conspiracy in which the government is the real culprit. It will have no more significance than the conviction of Earl Ray in the Martin Luther King case.

The sham concern and "speedy apprehension" shown by the FBI and the Pennsylvania State Police are calculated to bolster their image as protectors of the United Mine Workers interests, when their main purpose in reality is to cripple and dismember the organization.

Who hired the killers?

It is to be noted that the first real bit of evidence to emerge in the assassination, according to the January 25 issue of the New York Times, was not discovered by the FBI, nor the Pennsylvania State Police, nor the Cleveland authorities. The picture of frantic FBI and state authorities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky quickly coming up with evidence is a false one.

It is only Yablonski's own circle of family and friends that came up with any clue at all, and that, according to the Times' account, was a list of license numbers kept by Yablonski himself of "suspicious automobiles seen near his house." It was on the basis of this list that the FBI presumably was put on the trail to Cleveland.

But all this does not answer the one key question in the assassination. Who hired the killers? Who are the real conspirators? The promises of the authorities to find the people who supplied the money for the so-called contract killing are not calculated to shed light on the assassination, but rather to reveal that portion of the evidence which will be sufficient to throw the onus on the union and leave the coal barons and the steel trusts, at whose behest the assassination was really carried out, scot free.

(The venal Boyle bureaucracy, whatever its share of the guilt, is not at all the target at which the government agents are aiming. The target is the union itself, comprised as it is of tens of thousands of tough, intractable mine workers who have fought the government before and are capable of doing it again.)

Grand jury: anti-union "battering ram"

What is completely overlooked is the significance of the federal grand jury that is being summoned in Cleveland to look into the assassina-

tion. It now appears that this grand jury will also delve into what officials of the government have, according to the New York Times, described as "broadening aspects of the investigation." It should also be noted that the jury will call persons not only from Ohio and Pennsylvania, but from "several other states."

The ominous significance of this is bound to escape even an attentive reader who is vitally interested in union affairs. By the "broadening aspects of the investigation" stretching into many states is really meant a full-fledged fishing expedition into the internal affairs of the United Mine Workers of America. This is a veiled threat not only to call every militant unionist in the UMW, but to compel them to reveal everything about the union that the coal barons and the government could publicly use as a battering ram to break up the union.

Both factions at govt's mercy

What the government wants in this case above everything else is not to cleanse the union of corruption, but to rid it of every spark of militancy.

culprit.

But a grand jury investigation is for the purpose of discrediting and disqualifying the whole union. As of now, it is leading up to the most massive sort of government intervention into a labor organization witnessed to date and has already completely paralyzed the functioning of the union.

Both factions within the union are at the complete mercy of the federal government. Both are now forced to work with the cops while the energies of the rank and file are being channeled in the wrong direction.

"Rauh goes Boyle one better"

By inviting the government to take a hand in the investigation of the assassination, the Yablonski forces under the leadership of Rauh, who speaks for them as their attorney, have now become the captives of the government. They expect the government to do the job for them (presumably reviving the progressive traditions and practices of the union), a job which only the miners themselves can do—and have done magnificently in the past, not by dependence on the government, but in opposition to it.

Executioners for the coal barons



MARTIN



VEALEY



GILLY

By charging the three suspected killers with conspiracy, in which the FBI contends that the accused men had started to plan the murders in Cleveland last July 19, the FBI also intimates that it had clues dating back to that time. Now, according to press reports, the FBI seems to have obtained material from one of the suspected killers, who may have confessed. But it should be plain that the date of July 19 is something that the FBI had known about many, many weeks before the assassination of Yablonski.

It was in July, according to Yablonski's attorney, Joseph Rauh, that he began filing the first of more than a hundred complaints with the Department of Labor which alleged not only fraud, but violence, intimidation and threats against Yablonski's union collaborators.

Thus the cardinal element in this case is not the question of who pulled the trigger that killed the Yablonskis, but who are the men behind those who did. And the FBI and all the government agencies connected with what they call "law enforcement" had ample notice and knowledge of what was going on as long ago as the middle of last July.

Convening a grand jury, with broad powers to roam over many states and drag anybody and everybody from the UMW to give testimony, is not for the purpose of finding out anything about the assassination. The federal government knew all about it before it ever happened, and it is the primary

In inviting government intervention, the Yablonski forces have gone "one better" than the Boyle forces, whom they accuse of collusion with the coal barons. But the representative of the coal barons is none other than the capitalist government that carried out the assassination in the first place.

The Yablonski assassination is the answer of the U.S. ruling class to the growing unrest in the ranks of American labor in the face of galloping inflation with its shrinking pay envelopes and mounting cost of living. It is meant as a warning to the labor hierarchy that dominates the trade union movement not to step out of line, not to transgress certain limits, and to maintain the artificial equilibrium that exists between capital and labor.

But the class struggle of the workers against intensified capitalist exploitation under the impetus of imperialist war is bound to come to the surface. The case-hardened trade union bureaucracy, which reigns over the multimillion-member labor movement, is stunned by the assassination and left literally speechless. Not one word has come out of them which would be of help either to the miners' union or to their own organizations. They appear to be completely paralyzed.

This only means that the delayed reaction from the ranks of the workers will break out spontaneously, will sweep over the barriers of encrusted trade union officialdom, and will come crashing down on the heads of the bureaucracy to inaugurate a new era of working class struggle.

January 25, 1970

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50¢

Order from Workers World, 46 West 21 Street, New York, N.Y. 10010.

GIs find brass guilty as charged

By D. Stacey

January 21—GIs from Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base held a trial of the brass and its war in Vietnam before an audience of 1,500 at the University of Washington tonight. A jury of twelve active-duty soldiers found the military "guilty" on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity and violations of soldiers' rights.

Fifteen GI witnesses, most of whom had been in Vietnam, told of observing atrocities like the massacre at My Lai. They also spoke of the full support given the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam by the peasants.

Ninety per cent of the GIs who participated in the trial are members of the American Servicemen's Union, as were nearly all the 100 soldiers and airmen in the audience. The men had come to the trial despite attempts at intimidation by the brass. The trial was organized by the Shelter Half coffee house in Tacoma in cooperation with students at the University of Washington in Seattle.

One of the soldiers to testify, Dennis Leonard, is an American Indian who participated in the Indian occupation of Alcatraz Island. He told how he had entered the Army "ready to do anything," but refused to go to Vietnam after seeing Army training films glorifying the Indian wars. "America grew on genocide," he told the jury, and described how he realized that the Vietnamese were being treated in the same way as the Indians.

Leonard explained that after refusing to go to Vietnam, he was sentenced to six months in the Presidio stockade, where he was beaten by the guards. Leonard has been an active ASU organizer at Fort Lewis, signing up his whole platoon in the union.

Another ASU member, Tyrone Riddle, told how the black GIs are getting together and standing up to the brass. Referring to a meeting of the brothers that had been broken up by the brass, Riddle got tremendous applause when he quoted the Panther slogan, "You can jail a revolutionary but you can't jail the revolution."

A tape recording made by Pvt. Wade Carson, who had been put on restriction to keep him from attending the trial, was played. He had been very active in organizing the large number of GI participants in the trial. Carson has since been charged with Article 134—attempting to cause disaffection—and held in the stockade for distributing The Bond and Fed-Up, the respective newspapers of the national office and the local chapter of the ASU.

All the soldiers testifying stressed their sympathy for the Vietnamese people and the National Liberation Front. One Vietnam vet told of having witnessed elections for the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG). Seeing how the NLF carried out its tax collection and elections con-

vinced him that they had the full support of the people.

The high point of the trial came when a young man with a beard came up to the stage from the audience surrounded by a defense guard of 25 ASU members. He was asked his name. "Bruce McLean." Affiliation? "U.S. Army." Status? He raised a clenched fist and said, "I am AWOL."

The audience went wild and cheered and clapped for five minutes. When things had died down, McLean explained why he had gone AWOL. Because of his opposition to the Vietnam war, he had applied for conscientious objector status. According to military law, he could not be transferred while a decision on his CO appeal was pending.

But the army tried to shanghai him anyway. In the middle of the night he was awakened, told he was being transferred and taken to the airport. When he found out that he was being sent to Vietnam, Bruce locked himself in an airport bathroom and escaped out the back window.

Bruce McLean ended his testimony by declaring, "I support the NLF!" Then, while the crowd was wildly cheering, he was whisked off the stage by his "military escort" and driven away before the many Army Intelligence pigs in the audience could do a thing.

Bruce's story was corroborated by another witness, Don Sherman, who worked in the Overseas Replacement Center. He told how the Army had cut illegal orders to send Bruce McLean to Vietnam.

A veteran of Hamburger Hill described how the Marines had had their own "truce" with the NLF. There just wasn't any shooting going on. When one gung-ho lieutenant tried to get the men into combat, the Marines put a price on his head, and the brass had to transfer him to another company.

A psychiatrist who had been with the Green Berets in Vietnam, Dr. Peter Bourne, reported that the My Lai massacre was not an isolated atrocity. He had talked to many soldiers who had witnessed or participated in similar slaughters. He had reported some of these crimes himself, but the Army did nothing. In one case, he was told, "We can't do anything because the Major is getting the Silver Star."

Among civilian witnesses at the trial were Fred Gardner of the GI coffee houses and a union representative from the grape strike who accused the Army of strikebreaking (the Defense Department now buys five times more grapes than before the strike). Terry Cannon of the Oakland Seven acted as prosecutor.

The brass were dealt a final blow by John Lewis, National Field Organizer of the ASU. Lewis went into the class nature of the brass, the "businessmen in uniform" who send young workers to die in defense of the profits of U.S. imperialism. The NLF is fighting the U.S. ruling class, he emphasized, which is the GI's enemy too. Lewis read a statement from a black GI who deserted in Vietnam to fight with the NLF.

After elaborating on the Union's demands, the ASU organizer pledged that union brothers will never go into the ghettos to kill their class brothers or into the factories to break strikes.

The jury of twelve servicemen needed little time to reach their verdict of "guilty" on all counts. And they didn't equivocate on the sentence either.

The GIs sentenced the Army to death. They they went back to their bases to organize their buddies and carry out the sentence.

Civilians!

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The Potemkin lives

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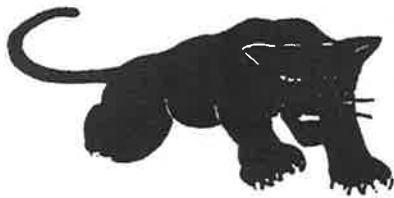
The paper is named after a ship in the Tsar's Baltic Fleet where the men, in 1905, mutinied against insufferable conditions and took over command of the vessel.

Solidarity with the New York Panther 21



Above photos show a portion of the militant demonstration held Jan. 26 to demand the freedom of the Panther 21 and to protest the exorbitant bail (\$100,000 each) they are being held on. The several hundred demonstrators marched from in

front of 100 Centre St. around the corner to the Tombs and then to Foley Sq. for a rally. For about 2 hours the demonstrators chanted militantly and held aloft banners calling for freedom for the 21 who have been in jail since April.



FREE THE PANTHER 21

The New York Panther 21 were arrested last April 2 on phony charges of conspiring to blow up department stores, subways and the Bronx Botanical Gardens. In the hysteria whipped up against the Panthers, bail was set at \$100,000 each; over two million dollars ransom for all the defendants. After ten months in jail, during which their appeals for reduction in

bail were refused again and again by racist judges, the Panther 21 are scheduled to go on trial February 2. The Black Panther Party is calling for a demonstration at the court, 100 Centre Street, as the trial opens February 2 at 9 a.m., in support of the 21 against this racist frame-up. Be there!

By EMILY TARASOV

Last month David Hilliard, the Chief of Staff of the Black Panther Party, appearing on CBS' Face the Nation, parried the question of a hostile reporter who was reciting the tremendous blood toll taken on the Panthers by the Nixon Administration in order to force Hilliard into an admission of defeat. "We're satisfied," declared the Panther leader, "that they can never exterminate the Black Panther Party.... In order to do that they would have to commit genocide.... Our Party is manifested in the people."

When asked how the Panthers can feel they "really represent the masses of black people" with only 5,000 or 10,000 members, Hilliard shot back, "Because the ideas spelled out in our ten-point program and platform represent the basic needs and desires of the people.... This is a survey, what we asked for, things that were promised to us over 400 years ago."

BPP for the people

Of course the cynical bourgeois reporters were not at all convinced by Hilliard's reply, but even if they had been swayed by this simple and irrefutable logic, the last thing in the world a trusted network interviewer would do would be to admit before a mass audience of millions that a revolutionary party of black liberation truly represents the needs, desires and aspirations of the black people.

It took the Wall Street Journal, that conservative organ of the bankers and bosses, to admit point blank that every word that Hilliard said about the Panthers representing the black people was true — true not only in the objective historic sense of representing their interests, but in the subjective, immediate sense of representing their thoughts, desires and will to struggle which exists right now.

A sampling of opinion in the black communities of four metropolitan areas "indicates a clear majority of blacks strongly support both the goals and methods of the Black Panthers. An even larger percentage believes, moreover, that police officials are determined to crush the party by arresting or killing its key officials."

William Davis, a 31-year-old door-to-door television salesman in Chicago said, "Everyone in the black community is talking about the Panthers now—



Black Panther Party Free Breakfast for Children Program.

even people who never paid attention to them before."

The interviews conducted in San Francisco, New York, Cleveland and Chicago—cities where the repression of black militants has been most open and violent—ran the gamut of the black community from clerks and construction workers to poverty program workers, college presidents and businessmen. The majority of those interviewed understood that the social programs of the Panthers, their free breakfast, medical and clothing programs and their war against drugs, must be fought for and protected with guns, for it is with guns that their enemies attempt to destroy them.

"The Panthers are obviously effective or everybody (that is, the ruling class—Ed.) wouldn't be so afraid of them. They are starting to represent more and more the majority of the black people." This is the statement of a wealthy black businessman, quoted in the Wall Street Journal on January 13, in an article warning that the Panthers do, in fact, represent the black community!

At first this appears to be a strange thesis for the Wall Street Journal to be proving—unless they know it to be true. It is important to remember, however, that the Wall Street Journal is not a propaganda sheet of the ruling class; rather, it is a fact sheet providing for the bankers and industrialists a daily summary of the economic and political realities around the world. The Wall Street Journal is telling the ruling class that the Black Panther

Party is still posing a revolutionary threat to the capitalist system and that the ruling class, therefore, has bungled the job of exterminating them. The Nazi tactics of pre-dawn murders and raids have not produced the desired effects. Instead of destroying the Panthers, these tactics have coalesced the black community around the Panthers.

Charles Hurst, President of Malcolm X Jr. College, part of the Chicago junior college system, said that he respects the Panthers because "they have made none of the compromises my generation made." He said the Panthers won't settle for having a few blacks succeed in a white-oriented society but demand equality of economic opportunity and justice for black people.

Reynold Major, a 33-year-old state narcotics rehabilitation officer in New York City said, "I believe that when a cop goes to the Panther headquarters he goes with one thing in mind—to annihilate them."

"A lot of police just don't like colored people, period," said J. Johnson, a 49-year-old Cleveland construction worker. "And any time they kill a colored guy they don't worry about it. They know they can get justifiable homicide. Why are black men never shot in the leg? It's always in the head, to kill a guy." Mr. Hurst's (the college president) assessment of the situation was almost identical.

Mr. Johnson also agreed with the Panthers' call to keep a gun as protection. "Everybody should have a gun in his house (or) some bad policeman can just break down your door. You need a gun to protect your family."

Read—

Martin Sostre in Court 50¢

Edited by Bob McCubbin

This pamphlet contains Martin Sostre's testimony and his comments to the courtroom spectators during his frame-up trial in Buffalo, N.Y. in March 1968.

Letters from Prison \$1

This pamphlet contains a compilation of Martin Sostre's correspondence from Erie County Jail, Buffalo, N.Y. where he was confined prior to his trial. Also published are some letters from Green Haven Prison, Stormville, N.Y. where Sostre spent 13 months in solitary confinement.

Available from the Martin Sostre Defense Committee,

P.O. Box 382, Ellicott Station, Buffalo, New York 14205

From Martin Gonzales Sostre:

A message to the Young Lords

The Young Lords Organization
1680 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10029

Attn: Felipe Luciano

Companeros,

We are enclosing a check in the amount of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) to help you finance your Breakfast for Children Program and other revolutionary strug-

gles. The check is being sent at the request of Martin Sostre, Wallkill Prison, whose wish it was that instead of receiving a food package this month at Wallkill, the equivalent money be sent on to the Young Lords Organization with his message to you:

"The Young Lords are the revolutionary detonators of the Barrio. Their revolutionary activities have raised the level of awareness not only of the people of the Barrio, but of all other oppressed peoples as well. Their latest revolutionary action on 111th Street—four blocks from where I was raised, 114th Street between Park and Madison—has dealt the reactionary forces of oppression in the Barrio a severe blow:

(1) They exposed the vicious reactionary nature of the First Spanish Methodist Church which, though supported by the people of the Barrio, not only refused to open its doors to the people so that food, medicare and clothing—life-sustaining essentials—be given to our children, but employed the establishment's pigs to brutalize the people of the Barrio when they demanded that the church practice the humanistic tenets that Christ exemplified in his feeding and clothing the poor, and healing the sick!

(2) They exposed the Batistiano Cuban refugee gusano (worm) minister who fled Cuba after the overthrow of Batista either because he committed crimes against the Cuban people under Batista and faced jail or paredon (firing squad); and/or because he couldn't continue to live off the people like a parasite since now that exploitation has been eliminated in Cuba, everyone has to work; and/or because he is opposed

to the principles of the Cuban Revolution and identifies himself with the racist-colonialist regime of the United States.

"Being a Boricua myself, I resent the imposition of that Cuban traitor upon the people of the Barrio by our oppressors, and without the people's consent. That Cuban worm has been subjecting our people to reactionary propaganda for too long. He not only is the enemy of the brave Cuban people that defeated, at Playa Giron, the attempt by the U.S. to overthrow their revolution, but the enemy of Puerto Rican people as well—since the Cuban people are our main ally in the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico from U.S. colonialism.

"The Young Lords have pulled the religious cloak off that reactionary Cubano gusano. The entire Barrio and all revolutionary allies must rally around the Young Lords and support them in this important battle.

"As for the worm, he cannot remain in the Barrio after what he did to our people. He has as much business being a minister in our Barrio as Rudolph Hess has being a rabbi in a Jewish Synagogue. Oust that worm from the Barrio!

"All Power to the People!

Your companero,
Martin Sostre"

Free Martin Sostre!
Free Geraldine Robinson!
Free All Political Prisoners!

In struggle,
Mrs. Jeanette Fusco Merrill, Secty.
Martin Sostre Defense Committee

Listen, Rockefeller!

(Martin Sostre's letter to Rockefeller is reprinted from Sostre's BLACK NEWS.)

Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller
Executive Chamber
Albany, New York

January 12, 1970

Sir:

So that in my next lawsuit against the State you will not be able to feign ignorance of your own racist policies instituted in your own racist concentration camps and enforced by your own racist agents, I am hereby fully apprising you of the following facts:

Although prisoners are freely permitted to receive white racist, Zionist, and right-wing reactionary books, newspapers, and magazines at Wallkill Prison, and such literature is ordered and received by the prison library for prisoner use, prisoners are not allowed to receive liberal, anti-racist, and progressive literature. Your racist right-wing agents who run Wallkill concentration camp are as zealous in banning, obstructing, and destroying all political literature that opposes their ingrained white racist ideology as was the Gestapo in their book-burning of anti-Nazi writings.

Despite it long ago having been judicially settled that religious and political literature are constitutionally protected by the First Amendment, your racist wardens Mason and McKendrick "threw away" an entire year's subscription of Muhammad Speaks newspapers which your sadistic agent Follette withheld from me at Green Haven while I was being tortured in solitary confinement

for 12 months. The grounds given for this unlawful deprivation of my personal property was that: "Since our records show that you are not a Muslim, we decided that you couldn't have them." Moreover, the following newspapers and magazines are unlawfully being withheld from me: Workers World, Buffalo Challenger, Guardian, Claridad, Los Angeles Herald Dispatch, Black Panther Newspaper, Liberator, Ramparts. Additionally, numerous books such as the writings of Mao Tse Tung and his Quotations ordered by me were returned to the publisher without any explanation.

In short, your outlaw agents have arbitrarily set themselves up as political and religious censors despite the protection of religious and political literature by the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

Your Attorney General, in my last lawsuit in Federal Court, could not even invoke "prison security"—the outdated Shibboleth no longer valid under the Civil Rights Act—as justification for Follette's rabid censorship of all black and progressive literature. For example: All the July 1969 issues of Negro Digest received by prisoners at Green Haven concentration camp had the anti-racist story, To Be A Man, by Ann Allen Shockley cut out of the book by Follette's censors. Your attorney general tried to justify Follette's acts on the ground that censorship regulations "are more strict in a maximum security prison than in a minimum security prison." At the next trial, it will be interesting to see him reconcile his previous position with the vicious racist censorship of religious, black and progressive literature at Wallkill concentration camp which is proclaimed to

be minimum security.

There was a time when your goons could, with impunity, frame dissenters, as Geraldine Robinson, the innocent mother of five small children, and I were; torture them, as you tortured me for 12 months in your solitary confinement dungeon; and murder them, as Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were murdered, and as other black victims are being murdered, secretly buried and listed as having "escaped," and shot for protesting against subjection to penal slavery—as was done in your other Rockefeller concentration camps in Arkansas. But you will find that such methods of repression, rather than silencing dissent, is awakening, uniting and making more rebellious against you the oppressed peoples of the world. You will not get away with these atrocities for your overthrow is being hastened by your own acts.

We are determined to make the destruction of the Afro-Asian Bookstore, the only revolutionary black bookstore in Buffalo, and the framing of Geraldine Robinson and me, the most expensive of your many crimes perpetrated against black people in your long history of criminal oppression of nonwhite peoples.

— Martin Sostre, 9273

cc: Judge Constance Baker Motley, U.S. District Court, New York, New York; Rabinowitz, Boudin and Standard, 30 East 42nd Street, New York, New York 10017; Attorney Joan Franklin c/o NAACP, 1790 Broadway, New York, New York 10019; Commissioner Paul D. McGinnis, Dept. of Correction, Albany, New York; Mr. Edward Merrill, 213 Chaddock Ave., Buffalo, N.Y. 14207

Congratulations from WW

Dear Brother Martin,

We have seen the first issue of Black News. It is overwhelming. Its very existence is proof that the liberation struggle cannot be put behind bars. The racist ruling class has framed you, sentenced you to 41 years, held you in solitary confinement for over a year. What does it take to break a man, they wonder.

Black News is your answer -- a newspaper that speaks to every oppressed person, stoking the fires of defiance and struggle against tyranny. No matter how difficult the conditions may be for someone struggling on the outside, he cannot help but thrill at the knowledge that here is a newspaper written by a fighter in jail and he has no fear.

There are thousands of newspapers published in this country that grind out ruling class propaganda every day. Their editors are well-fed, the owners make substantial profits, and their budgets and circulation run into the millions. Black News must compete with this propaganda machine.

Which will have the greater influence on the course of human events? You have not a shred of doubt on this score, Brother Martin, and your revolutionary confidence turns your prison cell into a fortress and Black News into a universal cry for freedom.

Yours in the struggle,

The Staff of Workers World

BLACK NEWS

A community news service for the Black and Puerto Rican communities. Edited by Martin Sostre, currently serving a 41-year sentence in Wallkill Prison.

12 issues — \$3.00

Order from:
Martin Sostre Defense Committee
P.O. Box 382
Ellicott Station
Buffalo, New York 14205

"You can jail a revolutionary but you can't jail the revolution."



Walter Vandermeer—'mourned' by the capitalist press; murdered by the capitalist system. He died two weeks after his twelfth birthday: the youngest person ever reported dead from an overdose of heroin here.

By KENNY LAPIDES

Walter Vandermeer was born on December 1, 1957. Twelve years and two weeks later, he was found dead in a Harlem tenement—"the youngest person ever to be reported dead of an overdose of heroin here."

Walter Vandermeer, as the youngest victim of the drug traffic conspiracy here, received widespread recognition from the system which killed him. His death was sensational news over the radio and TV and in the press. After three weeks of intensive investigation, the January 12 edition of the New York Times had a page-long obituary that was both moving and apparently sympathetic. In its account of the last months of Walter Vandermeer's life, the Times brought to light many of the facts leading

not included in this obituary, and in fact the most important thing is left out--capitalism!

Who killed Walter Vandermeer? Who supplies the heroin? Who organizes and protects its distribution? And finally, who is responsible for the misery and desperation which make heroin and death appear to be the only alternatives to an impossible existence?

Why must a child walk the streets in winter begging coins, starving on a diet of cupcakes and Coca-Cola when millionaires who never work can throw away thousands and even feed their poodles steak? Why was Walter Vandermeer's family evicted from their tiny, overcrowded and broken-down tenement apartment in November (the month before he died), when the rich can hold on to two or three large (and vacant!) houses or flats with no trouble at all? What justification is there for a system which cannot give an oppressed people the means by which to live and then shoots them down when they rebel?

Rulers' liberalism covers up murder

Had Walter Vandermeer lived, and overcome the hopelessness and the heroin and taken up the gun in the revolutionary struggle to eliminate the horrors which he himself had known under colonialism, would the criminal U.S. ruling class have meted out a fate any different than what they set for Martin Sostre, or Malcolm X or Fred Hampton? Their crocodile tears over Walter Vandermeer's death from heroin are only intended to conceal their own responsibility for the slow death-by-poisoning of thousands and tens of thousands of oppressed youth who succumb to the veritable flood of drugs which the ruling class permits to be channeled into every black, Puerto Rican or any poor neighborhood.

"I can go to my window any morning," Lelyveld quotes a resident of 117th Street where Walter Vandermeer lived and died, "and see a man hand somebody some money and get his little package in return." The fact that the police regularly manage not to see the same thing convinces the residents that they are indifferent, at best. The truth is, as Lelyveld knows, that the police do not act out of personal interest or "indifference"; the police always act as they are instructed to act, and in this case they are instructed not to interfere with the drug traffic. Just as they are instructed to arrest, brutalize and assassinate members of the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords Organization, groups which have tried to eliminate the drug menace from their communities.

It is this capitalist system, protected by its capitalist government representing the capitalist class, which is guilty of killing Walter Vandermeer—"the youngest person ever to be reported dead of an overdose of heroin here."

Imperialists poison oppressed peoples

(We should recall the Opium War waged by the English imperialists against China in the nineteenth century. The English capitalists were exporting vast amounts of opium into China illegally from India, over which they ruled at that time. The Chinese government had to go to war to try to stop the imperialists from promoting opium addiction in China. The English Navy was used to force the Chinese to accept the opium trade, at tremendous profit and advantage to the imperialists.)

It is true, perhaps, that the medical reason for Walter Vandermeer's death was heroin, just as it is for untold numbers of other oppressed people here. It is a fact that every week in New York a child not yet 16 years old dies by heroin. Just as it is a fact that every week children from the oppressed black and Puerto Rican nations die of lead poisoning, or die by starvation or from rat bites. There is no end to the kinds of deaths that can be entered on a medical report. But there is only one murderer, and that is the capitalist-colonialist system and its agents.

It is the capitalist system which is responsible for the colonial imprisonment and oppression of the black and Puerto Rican nations. And it is the capitalist system which provides the weapons to maintain the cruel colonial oppression. The U.S. ruling class, in its truly desperate endeavor to maintain the chains of slavery over its victims, has resorted to every method of deception and physical terror it could muster. And having need for further methods of suppression and demoralization, the U.S. rulers have deliberately and systematically introduced poison--in the form of heroin--into the life-blood of the oppressed peoples.

Just as the U.S. imperialists have used poison gas in Vietnam, bacteria to spread plague, and chemicals to destroy plant life and food supplies and to poison the waters, so too they use the poison of heroin to break the spirit and destroy the body of those who would rebel right here.

Expanding Empire

by Vincent Copeland

The Global War Drive of
Big Business
And The Forces That Will
Stop It

50 cents

WORKERS WORLD PRESS
46 West 21 Street
New York, N.Y. 10010

A counter-obituary for a heroin user

Walter Vandermeer, age 12

Cause of death: U.S. imperialism

up to and surrounding his death.

"In those (last) months," the Times' obituary relates, "he slept at home only sporadically and attended school for a total of two and a half days."

"Walter would be out late at night hawking newspapers in bars or begging for coins at the corner of Eighth Avenue. In the daytime, when most children were in school, he would station himself near a radiator in a grocery store for warmth until chased or borrow a couch to catch up on the sleep he had missed."

Hunger, heroin and death

"His diet was made up of Yankee Doodle cupcakes, Coca-Cola and, when he had the change, fish 'n' chips."

"It was a life of frightening emptiness and real dangers. The only regular thing about it was a daily struggle for survival."

"Walter didn't do too bad," a junkie on the block remarked when he was dead.

"He didn't do too good," retorted a black youth, full of bitterness over what heroin has done to Harlem. "He won't see his 13th birthday."

The author of the Times' obituary, Joseph Lelyveld, is an experienced reporter who knows how to inject poisonous reactionary hatred into his stories when he wishes to discredit anything or anyone progressive or revolutionary. Here, for its own purposes and with its own subtle disregard for the whole truth, the ruling class media narrates a tender and even poignant story of death amidst extreme poverty and desperation.

Bosses' press protects capitalism

Pathetic episodes from his life, reminiscences by his friends and relatives, the ironies and contradictions of his frantic existence, the social and economic conditions of the block, everything seems to be included to explain Walter Vandermeer's death. It even appears that Lelyveld himself is concerned "over what heroin has done to Harlem."

And yet, if the class truth be told, which Lelyveld or the New York Times is incapable of, everything is

*"Just as the U.S. imperialists
have used poison gas in Vietnam
...so too they use the poison
of heroin to break the spirit
and destroy the body of those
who would rebel right here."*

The ABC of Nigeria

By FRED GOLDSTEIN

The collapse of the secessionist cause in Nigeria and the crisis which has ensued have left many progressive-minded people in this country in the same dilemma that they have been in since the war began. They face a conflict between a healthy and progressive concern for the fate of suffering Africans in the Eastern Region on the one hand and an equally healthy and progressive suspicion of the war-makers in Washington who have also consistently expressed "sympathy" for the starving "Biafrans."

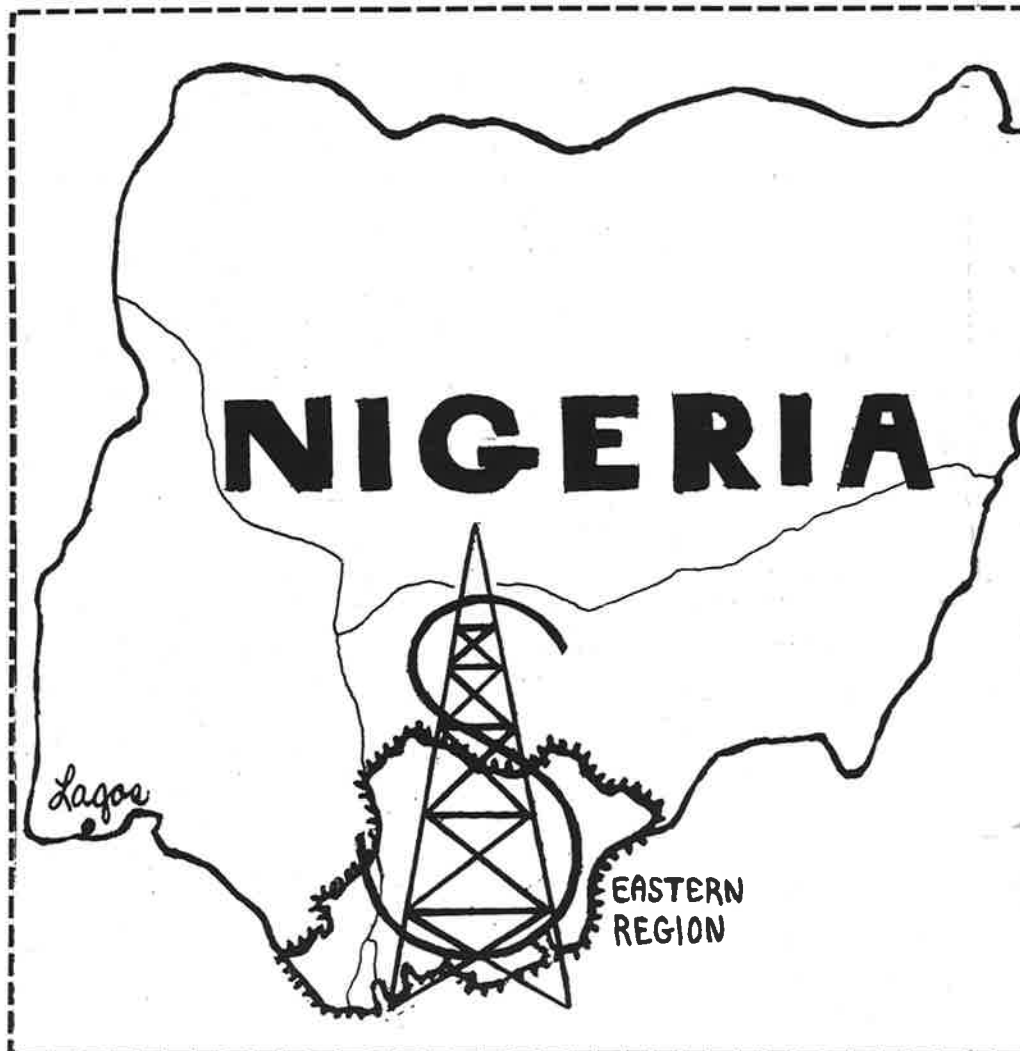
It has been extremely puzzling and distasteful for sympathizers with the oppressed people, especially idealistic young people motivated by genuine sympathy, to wind up on the same side as the prosecutors of the Vietnam war and the My Lai massacre. The only way out of this dilemma, the only way to disentangle oneself from an undesired and unsought-for bloc with Johnson and Nixon, is to take a Marxist view of the matter.

Breaking up the federation

The cardinal point which must always be borne in mind is that the main

struggle in the world today, be it in Asia, Africa or Latin America, is between U.S. imperialism and the oppressed people in the colonial and neo-colonial countries. This proves nothing, of course, about any particular struggle, but directly establishes that U.S. imperialism is the chief suspect in a war of secession such as the one in Nigeria, based on its murderous record in Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, the Congo, etc.

Nigeria is the largest country in Africa by far, with a population close to 60 million, and it is endowed with great natural resources suitable for exploitation by modern industry, not only oil, but tin, iron ore and many others. Any viable nation of that size, even though it may be economically dependent on imperialism for a great deal, also constitutes a potential political threat to imperialism. Furthermore, a nation of 60 million people has the kind of leverage to withstand the more extreme measures of extortion by Western corporations which smaller nations do not have. As a principal investor in Nigeria, and all of Africa, it is in the deepest interest of U.S. big business to undermine the political and economic strength of Nigeria.



Nigeria is a political entity in which various tribes and nationalities were artificially welded together to suit the interests of British imperialism over a period of close to two centuries. When the British retreated in 1963, leaving a legacy of division and rivalry, the Nigerian people themselves decided to try to hold the country together on a federated basis in which tribal and national rights were granted and were to be preserved under a

central government. Given these circumstances, the U.S. felt the most effective method of weakening Nigeria was to break up the federation under the banner of "independence" for Biafra.

Secession an old U.S. trick

This is nothing new for U.S. imperialism. After World War II, when the Dutch power collapsed and Indonesia became a state, it was one of

Nigeria, "independence," CIA and oil

The following article by Joel and Pam Meyers is reprinted from the January 1969 issue of the Partisan, magazine of Youth Against War & Fascism. Joel Meyers is currently serving a 3 1/2-year prison sentence for draft resistance. (See letter on page 10.)

Nigeria is the ninth largest oil producing country in the world today. Its production is 560,000 barrels a day. This is expected to double before the end of 1970. Various international oil companies have a combined total of 800 million dollars invested in Nigeria.

Sixty per cent of Nigeria's oil output comes from the Eastern region. At the time of the secession of Biafra the oil companies had a choice of paying royalties on oil produced in Biafra either to the secessionists or to the Federal government in Lagos. Before the secession, all of these royalties went to Lagos. Since no government in the world had then recognized Biafra as a sovereign independent country, normal diplomatic legality would call for the revenues to continue to go to Lagos.

However, the June 5, 1967 New York Times reported from Nigeria: "Oil men here are anxiously awaiting the decision of their home offices on which way the money will go."

On July 8, 1967, the New York Times ran another article by Lloyd Garrison: "Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu said in an interview today that he had won assurances from oil companies that taxes and revenue from operations in the eastern region would be paid to his government."

That very week the Shell British Petroleum Development Company, the largest in Nigeria, paid \$700,000 to the secessionists—as a "token" roy-

alty—reluctantly, at a time when Britain was "very short of oil due to the Middle East crisis." (N.Y. Times, July 12, 1967.) Behind these events, a meeting had taken place between Francis Nwokedi, special Biafran envoy to the United States, and twenty representatives of U.S., British, French, Dutch and Italian oil companies operating in Nigeria. At this meeting, reported as early as the June 23, 1967 Wall Street Journal, "Mr. Nwokedi said that Biafra would be willing to suspend for 'up to a year' new amendments to the Nigerian oil act passed by the central government last January and would be willing to discuss these new provisions with the oil companies. Those provisions boosted tax payments ... and drew fire from the oil companies when they were passed."

Oil companies pro-Biafra

A re-negotiation of Nigeria's tax laws can mean as much as \$100,000 a day to the oil monopolies. Not only Shell, which controls 85% of Nigeria's oil output, but also the bulk of the American oil companies opted with their money for Biafra.

"What the oil companies have done is entirely to our satisfaction," said Col. Ojukwu—reported the July 8, 1967 New York Times. Among the U.S. oil companies operating in Nigeria are Mobil Oil Co., Phillips Petroleum, Standard Oil of California, Texaco, Tenneco and Gulf.

The June 5, 1967 Times article mentioned above pointed out that of the 2,000 Americans in Eastern Nigeria, mostly oil officials and their families, 700 dependents were being evacuated. This exodus was coordinated by none other than the Mobil Oil Co. It is interesting to note how Lloyd Garrison,

the author of the article (whose high mobility in the area was no doubt due to his connection with the oil companies and their control of air transportation) wrote, "Most of those leaving tended to identify with the secessionist cause."

The fact is that in spite of Shell's contribution to Biafra it has been losing influence with the secessionist administration. Displacing it have been the American and French oil companies. On April 20, 1968 Business Week reported that "U.S. oil companies aren't suffering too badly as a result of the war, most of them were still exploring or just getting in production when the fighting erupted." This might cast some light on why the British imperialists and those of the U.S. are taking opposite sides in the conflict. The new American companies see the secessionist movement as a tool in their struggle to replace the well-entrenched British interests which played a powerful role from the beginning in the development of the Lagos government. Apparently Shell sought to buy security for a \$700,000 contribution to the U.S.-dominated Biafra plot. While they allowed the secessionists to accept Shell's offer, the U.S. oil interests showed Shell no mercy. Shell was forced to cease all operations in rebel territory.

French wanted in too

Another buzzard seeking to replace the British are the French oil interests. The federal military government showed copies of a document given Francis Nwokedi, attorney for Biafra, in negotiations with Baron du Roure and J. P. Mallet, French bankers, and the Rothschild Bank in France. The document ceded to the French trusts mining rights in columbite ore, uranium, coal,

tin concentrates, natural oil and gold ore.

When this disclosure was made, the French banks, of course, denied any involvement. But what cannot be denied is that the French government, according to the Nov. 18, 1968 Newsweek, "has poured more than a thousand tons—chiefly ammunition, automatic weapons and mortars—into Biafra. Biafran soldiers are trained in the use of the weapons by a small band of mercenaries, most of whom are French veterans of the anti-Algerian and Congo wars." Newsweek theorizes that "DeGaulle may also have hopes of extending French influence into an area that has long been a British sphere of interest...."

U.S. smuggled arms

Less open but no less significant is the aid and assistance given the secessionist cause by the U.S. government which here is a tool of U.S. oil interests. Official U.S. policy has been one of neutrality. In public and on the books the U.S. government claims to supply no arms to either side in the Nigerian conflict.

However, as early as Oct. 9, 1966, half a year before the secession, a gun-running, four-engine DC-4 took off from Rotterdam with a 7-ton load of submachine guns. Its destination was Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This was supposed to be a secret flight.

The only reason that it was reported in a Nov. 14, 1966 N.Y. Times article was that this mystery plane happened to crash in Cameroon. The pilot was a German-born American, Captain Henry Wharton. His mission, according to the New York Times article, "was to turn over the arms to the Ibo dominated government of the Eastern

NIGERIAN STATISTICS

10th largest oil-producing country in the world

6th in tin

1st in peanut production

It contains 1/7th of the world's cocoa

Other natural resources include:

rubber
palm oil
cotton
timber
coal
iron ore
fish

Nigeria exports:

crude petroleum
peanuts
cocoa
palm kernels and oil
crude rubber
tin

Principal trade partners:

United States
Britain
Japan

U.S. oil companies in Nigeria:

Mobil Oil
Phillips Petroleum
Standard of California
Texaco
Tenneco

the largest states in the world (with, at that time, 90 million people) and one of the richest in natural resources. Because the country was composed of islands, Washington felt that the situation was perfect for breaking up Indonesia by getting an "independence" movement started on West Irian in 1958 under a right-wing nationalist, Mohammed Hatta. The plot failed and the CIA was caught red-handed when one of its planes crashed and its pilots

Region."

"From the conspiratorial climate pervading Nigerian politics these days," the article continues, "many people believe that American officials were heavily involved, though the United States has protested its innocence." What a joke! "Nefarious" American oil interests as well as the United States are being accused of secretly backing a plot by Nigeria's Ibos to secede."

In other words, a possible conspiracy among the oil companies and the U.S. government to split Nigeria along tribal and regional lines was already being publicly discussed. More importantly, a clandestine arms airlift was already underway.

"The Peace Corps, with a budget of 2.5 million dollars for Nigeria, has 760 volunteers here — many of them in the Eastern Region." This is the largest single Peace Corps operation in the world.

This intervention of the United States is open. But there is a tremendous amount of "aid," knowledge of which is not available to the public. The Lagos government has pointed out repeatedly that the United States had "failed to prevent" arms sales to the secessionist regime while it "hindered legitimate purchases by the Nigerian government." (New York Times, August 24, 1967.) According to the same article, "The Nigerian press and some trade unions attacked the United States last month for allowing Easterners to acquire American-made B-26 fighter bombers of WW II vintage."

The January 8, 1968 Newsweek claims, with a straight face, that "Just where Biafra has acquired the cash to finance such purchases is a mystery." The "purchases" refer to "a considerable arsenal of modern weaponry, including new planes, radar-controlled anti-aircraft guns, and even ground-to-air heat-seeking missiles" recently airlifted in. This claim of ignorance on the part of Newsweek only means that U.S. "aid" to the secessionists is supposed to be clan-

were captured.

The imperialists made a similar attempt to dismember the Congo by detaching mineral-rich Katanga. Ojukwu was no more interested in self-determination for the Ibos than Tshombe was in the independence of Katanga, or Hatta was in the independence of West Irian. On the contrary, all three were trying to lead their prospective peoples into a weaker position in relation to imperialism, that is, to a stage of total captivity and the greatest possible dependence upon the U.S. corporate master class.

U.S. napalms children

Naturally, under conditions of dependence, the U.S. government sees the virtue of "independence" and "self-determination" — words which when uttered by the Nixons and Johnsons are code words for slavery and exploitation of the oppressed people. It must never be forgotten that the U.S. also claims to be fighting to protect the "independence" and "self-determination" of Vietnam.

The particular length to which Washington has gone in Nigeria also flows directly from the cardinal fact of the global struggle between U.S. imperialism and the oppressed people. Precisely because of the growing scope and momentum of this struggle, the U.S. is subject to the loss of its captured loot and stolen resources at any moment anywhere on the globe. This fear among the capitalists intensifies their normal lust for conquest and drives them on a frantic search for key resources such as oil which is basic to modern industry and therefore to profits.

The rights of nations, indeed, the lives of whole peoples, mean nothing to the oil magnates in the face of the drive to lay their hands on black gold. It is no coincidence that Nigerian oil exploration was begun in earnest by the Western imperialists following the Suez War of 1956 and that the secession of "Biafra" coincided with the beginning of the Mideast War of 1967.

The protracted U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam has made millions of American people distrustful, if not openly hostile, to Washington. It has become more necessary than ever for the government to conceal its hand from the masses at home. The U.S. government found it quite convenient to mask its intervention in Nigeria under the cover of helping children, particularly after having acquired a notorious reputation for napalming children in Vietnam!

War lost, try blackmail

Of course, Washington had not the slightest interest in feeding children, but was occupied in flying in guns, ammunition and other necessities of war. After all, warfare is quite an expensive undertaking. Two and a half years of a full mobilization would be enough to sap a modern industrial nation, let alone a small, underdeveloped territory. It should be clear from that fact alone that the imperialists were supplying the goods and paying the bills for bombers, radar, anti-aircraft, etc., to Ojukwu.

During the war the U.S. remained officially neutral, but such ruling class luminaries as Mrs. Pat Nixon were leading the "humanitarian" struggle to "save Biafra." But the hypocrisy of

the U.S. was even more glaring after the war was over.

While raising a hue and cry about possible mass starvation in the Eastern Region because of alleged callousness by the central government in Lagos, the U.S. refused to send supplies to Lagos and insisted, and still insists two weeks after the war has ended, upon distributing "aid" directly through agencies friendly to imperialism.

Anyone who controls the food supply in a starving region has absolute power. The U.S. refuses to recognize the sovereignty of the central government, which includes the basic right to feed its population. For Lagos to shift this function to the U.S. is to cede a significant part of its sovereignty. But it is precisely to protect this sovereignty and against this type of imperialist intervention for which the war was fought. The U.S. having lost the military war is shifting its tactics to a war of blackmail, with the lives of hungry people hanging in the balance! That is how much Nixon and U.S. big business care for starving Africans.

If the U.S. did not care one iota for the fate of Africans, neither did Ojukwu's other "allies" — fascist South Africa, Portugal, France and Italy. With such "friends" the Ibo people hardly need any enemies.

On the other side, the USSR gave its support to Lagos. The revisionist leaders were not motivated by, nor did they act in the spirit of, proletarian internationalism, but rather by an attempt to keep U.S. imperialism from strengthening its hold on Africa. Nevertheless, Soviet aid was instrumental in

(Continued on page 11)



Nigerians celebrate the end of the war and of Biafra secession.

destine.

Behind the relief program

The New York Times describes two legs of the supplies-to-Biafra effort. On November 5, 1967, it describes the operation in Lisbon, in fascist, colonialist Portugal. "The fleet of aircraft flying from Lisbon to Biafra and Angola (II) was assembled...through the purchase of twelve Super Constellations, two DC-6B's and two DC-4's." Of the Super Constellations, one was bought from Air France, the other eleven from International Aerodyne Corp. from North Hollywood, Calif., and Miami, Florida. Seven other Super Constellations of "undisclosed" ownership are also flying with the airlift.

Another leg of the airlift effort is said by the September 25, 1968 New York Times to be so massive as to have transformed the Portuguese-ruled island of Sao Tome into "one of the busiest airports along the coast of Africa."

This is but a small part of the Biafra operation. To get an idea of the expenses involved, consider that one single contract signed by the Eastern Regional Government months before the secession cost \$250,000. This contract, signed with Ruder and Finn, Inc. of New York, a public relations outfit, represents only a tiny fraction of the pro-Biafra propaganda offensive.

Another thing that costs money is mercenaries. In addition to the Cuban gusano pilots mentioned above, Biafra money has hired hundreds of white racist mercenaries from South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, France, West Germany, England and the U.S. In fact, the Biafra Fourth Division is composed entirely of mercenaries. On Nov. 19, the New York Times reported that the ouster of Colonel Steiner, a French-speaking German gunman, "cast doubt on the future effectiveness of Biafra's best unit, the Fourth Commando Division." This gang was expanded around a nucleus of 150 soldiers trained and led personally by Steiner.

The money that "keeps Biafra alive" comes from the oil trusts, from the CIA, and similar circles. Underlining this is the fact that the U.S. government has begun to openly contribute money to Biafra. Until now the government has carefully restricted its policy to urging peace in the posture of an innocent bystander while secretly instigating and financing the secession. Now the Johnson administration has made its support official, to the tune of \$20 million, according to the New York Times of Dec. 15, 1968. The same article mentioned that this brings Biafra aid up to a total of \$42 million.

But is it possible that the oil trusts, the CIA, Johnson, fascist mercenaries and other scum are suddenly united in a humanitarian cause?? Could it be that while imperialism fattens itself on starvation in India, Brazil, Mississippi and New York, it has suddenly become conscience-stricken, and even while they burn food surpluses in the U.S., are moving selflessly to save the Ibos from starvation and genocide?

YAWF joins forces with Rockaway subway strike

By PAM MEYERS

The trouble started with the increase in the subway fare from 20 to 30 cents. People all over the city were furious at the gall of a state-appointed body "taxing" the people of the city for the "privilege" of riding the subways. But for Rockaway, through some phony zoning law, the increase meant double trouble. The people who have to come into New York City to make a living are forced to pay a double and sometimes triple fare. That means \$1.20 to \$1.80 per day for a service that should be free.

Youth Against War & Fascism, which had initiated a "Don't Pay the Fare" campaign, got many phone calls from all over the city asking for help. One was from a girl from Rockaway, Audrey Schulman. She had been almost single-handedly passing out leaflets and getting up petitions against the double fare. Even this small action had gotten many results and good reactions from the people.

The liberal politicians saw this and

other such incidents and decided they would have to head off any militant reaction to the fare, so they called a "community" meeting. YAWF went with Audrey and her young militant friends. Supposedly the meeting was for the people of Rockaway to speak out at, but of course the politicians tried to do all the talking. State Senator Santucci was first and he went into a tirade about "law and order." Santucci shut up amidst boos from the 1,000 people.

The rest of the councilmen and assemblymen were trickier and were able to speak a little longer. But when a newly announced candidate for governor, Ettinger, got up, it was the last straw.

"Abolish the fare"

The people demanded that speakers be called from the audience. Most who got up gave their own experiences with the double fare and how they had fought it. Some were people who had been



Riders are helped over turnstiles in YAWF's "Don't Pay the Fare!" campaign.

arrested for going under or over the turnstiles. Some brought up the point that cops, who make \$10,000 a year, ride for free, but arrest anyone else who tries to do the same.

However, the young militants couldn't get the floor. So we decided to speak anyway, to give the anger and frustration of the crowd a channel. We went up to the front with signs — "Don't

Pay the Fare," "Abolish the Double Fare," "Support the Fare Strike" — and after a scuffle, were finally given the microphone.

Audrey Schulman started out by saying, "The only way to abolish the fare is not to pay it!" She told how all over the city people had been going "over, under, around and through" the

(Continued on page 15)

Letter from prison on Nigerian war

The following letter was written by Joel Meyers in Federal Prison, Danbury, Connecticut, to Myron Jefka, a leading member of Youth Against War & Fascism. Joel is serving a 3 1/2-year sentence for draft resistance. (See article on Biafra, page 8.)

Joel Meyers 23429
Pembroke Station
Danbury, Conn. 06810
January 14, 1970

Dear Myron,

Just got finished watching the news. Most of it was on "Biafra" — that is, the eastern region of Nigeria. If there was any doubt as to which side U.S. imperialism was on, it should be erased by the unanimous objectivity against Nigeria in the RCA-CBS-ABC-NEW line. A parade of priests, moralists, politicians and spies were talking about the necessity of U.S.-U.N. interference to stave off otherwise inevitable mass starvation. "Millions may die within the week!" "Again, and again und immer noch einmal!" Not a single pro-Nigerian voice could be heard.

Also, of course, nothing about the oil companies.

Of course, it was largely a struggle between U.S. and British imperialism. But many other implications are tied to Nigerian sovereignty; many of these transcend the inter-imperialist rivalry.

On the superficial level, this is immediately apparent in international stands taken by leadership on both sides. Strikingly, Ojukwu and the secessionists (which did not include all Ibos) were almost unique in all Africa to support Israel. Time Magazine in 1965 coined the description of the Ibo Tribes as "The Jews of Africa." Lagos supported the Arabs, of course, and this would not be so remarkable in Africa. But Nigeria was also almost unique in its support of the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia. (Nasser considered the Nigerian conflict important enough to contribute U.A.R. Migs and pilots to Lagos.)

The Soviet Union strongly backed Lagos.... The Organization of African Unity almost unanimously supported Lagos. Tanzania was the only independent exception.



Joel Meyers speaking in New York City.

"Biafra" got most of its arms (including heat-seeking guided missiles) from France, with the U.S. feeding its army, led by a Foreign Legion type patchwork of mercenaries such as Col. Steiner and his Nazis. The Catholic Church threw in plenty of money and created "charity" fronts to channel food to the "Biafra" army.

Not to mention the fact that Nwokede, Ojukwu's foreign minister, came to Wall Street and offered rich financial concessions to oil companies "if 'Biafra' should win!" This took place almost before the ink had dried on "Biafra's" independence announcement. U.S. involvement in secessionist activities goes back at least as far as 1966, when a secret U.S. arms-bearing plane was shot down over the Cameroons. The weapons were designated for Port Harcourt Ibos then only preparing a private army. The pilot of the plane, captured alive, turned out to be operative Henry Wharton of the C.I.A.

The kernel of the overall political significance of the struggle concerned, on a deeper level, the right of the largest African state to remain sovereign, and not be split up by the establishment of a U.S. beach head.

Dana Schmidt wrote in the Sunday Times once (see Pam's and my article in the Partisan) that Washington would like to see such a split, because, in my paraphrase, two small dependent countries are easier to boss around than one rich one. Evidence of that is the recent threat against all foreign oil companies by Lagos reported in the Christian Science Monitor.

Once again, U.S. greed has disturbed the imperialist peace of a colonial bee hive.

For us, who as U.S. citizens must oppose U.S. imperialism, it is clear why we should support Lagos in this struggle.

But, this may not be clear to a person who must first oppose British imperialism. It is easier for a well intentioned anti-imperialist Briton to make the mistake of supporting "Biafran" secession, because the British imperialists opposed it as a U.S. coup to oust them. Here, the well-intentioned Briton would be doing the wrong thing for correct reasons.

Over all, it would be wrong, precisely because the sovereignty of an oppressed nation, Nigeria, is at stake.

It is similar to the defense of Ethiopia against Italy. The character of the Ethiopian government, reactionary then and ever more so now, was irrelevant. The question was to safeguard the sov-

ereignty of that nation, not to require reforms of it first. The safeguarding of an oppressed nation's sovereignty must be unconditional.

Of course, it is perfectly proper to demand that British as well as U.S. oil companies get out of Africa. But if this demand is made of the Lagos government as a precondition to support in defense of its independence, all talk of self-determination becomes so much hypocrisy. The Nigerians themselves will decide on the timing of action in this direction. Anti-imperialists should focus all their pressure on the oil companies.

Actually, this is the strongest opposition they could give to "their own" imperialists.

It might be analogous to place the setting in W.W.II. A German anti-imperialist's duty was to oppose German imperialism first. But this cause is also served by supporting Indian independence from British imperialism.

Communists and socialists are against the imperialism of their own country first. But they are also for the defeat of all imperialism. Lenin said that in an imperialist war, a Communist is for the defeat of his own country's imperialists but not for the victory of any other nation's imperialists either.

These stands are unconditional!

The only pro-"Biafra" argument that has any appeal even to humane instincts is the one about starvation and tribal warfare deaths. If all these starvation figures were true, the entire Ibo population would be dead many times over. They are obviously greatly exaggerated.

I cannot deny the possibility in Nigeria, still victimized and oppressed by imperialism, of starvation. But why single out Nigeria in this respect, blaming its government. U.S.-led world imperialism is nakedly responsible for this result of its plunder all over the world, especially Asia, Africa and Latin America. The focus on Nigeria is a result of U.S. propaganda.

Furthermore, Ojukwu refused many food-relief flights into "Biafra," under a variety of pretexts. He and the secessionist leadership cannot self-righteously lay blame at Lagos' door.

In the U.S. Civil War, the real issue was chattel slavery. For that reason, proletarian leaders of that day supported Lincoln and opposed the secessionists, whatever objection to excesses and mass murders committed by Mr. Lincoln's army (like during Sherman's march to the sea) they may have had.

In Nigeria, the sovereignty and unified integrity of Africa's largest country was challenged when U.S. oil companies instigated a secessionist movement in that country's eastern region. In spite of world-wide backing in imperialist circles, this movement was defeated by the Nigerian government. The U.S. lost this round in its try for a new beach-head in Africa.

Nigeria, the world's tenth largest producer of oil, producer of the highest quality oil in the world, has stood up to the challenge and retains its eastern region which accounts for 60% of its oil production.

As to reforming or changing the leadership of the government, that is the business of the 55 million people who live there.

Yours in the U.F.L.,

Joel

Cry "shut down the polluters!"

Masses pour it on (the table) at Cleveland pollution hearing

By BETSY DAVIS

CLEVELAND, Jan. 21 — At the same time that Cleveland firemen were pouring vast quantities of water into downtown sewers to dispel "strange and gaseous odors," over 2,000 people attended hearings of the Ohio Air Pollution Control Board on standards for dust and sulphur dioxide in most of industrial Ohio.

The hearings had to be moved from City Council chambers to the larger Public Music Hall after an angry protest from hundreds who couldn't get in.

Ted Dostal, a militant ex-steelworker active in the anti-war struggle and the movement to save black leader Ahmed Evans, got the only standing ovation of some 200 speakers when he called for workers' committees to enforce rigid pollution standards.

The outpouring of unionists, nurses, doctors, students, pensioners, scientists and even young children demanding more stringent controls than those proposed by the state was a shock to the Board, which has served the interests of the polluting industries for years. One member of the Board is an official of Proctor & Gamble, which has been under attack as one of the major sources of detergent pollution of Lake Erie.

Bucket of grit dumped on desk

The Board was so harassed by the public's participation in this public hearing that they adjourned the meetings with 200 speakers unheard from. They pleaded "fatigue" after facing two days of testimony from an enraged community that included one man dumping a bucket of iron dust from his roof on the startled Board members' desk.

The Cleveland area is so fantastically polluted by heavy industry that the Cuyahoga River in the center of town caught fire not too long ago and burned down several bridges! Experts told the hearing that the water pollution crisis has existed for twenty years and that

several areas of Cleveland have at least double the Board's lenient standards of air pollution.

Not all the testimony was from the public and anti-pollution forces, however. The representatives of big business, who usually dominate a hearing of this kind, had the nerve to try to defend their destruction of the environment and were booed by the audience. Among other claims, one representative of the Ohio Manufacturers Association suggested that polluted air may help increase the life span of some people! The representatives of the polluters called for more time to investigate ways to reduce pollution, urged the easing of public pressure on business and pleaded for "reasonableness" in applying pollution codes. This after a pollution crisis lasting twenty years!

Steelworkers get black lung

This writer is a nurse and has seen steelworkers suffering from black lung in Cleveland, a disease usually associated only with coal mining. It is the life and health of the workers that is most affected by this crime, although students and suburban homeowners are also up in arms. Testimony showed that the responsibility for these severe health hazards rests directly on U.S. Steel, Ford, the nation's major airlines and the big industries in general.

The people wanted to hear what could be done to take control over pollution out of the hands of the big corporations, and they finally got a program of action when Ted Dostal spoke. Beginning "Polluters and anti-polluters!" he said that pollution is like sin—everyone says he's against it. So why is it getting worse?

He listed the major polluters: the chemical companies that make napalm and defoliants, the tobacco companies, the oil companies, those who made Hiroshima and Nagasaki cauldrons of atomic radiation, and the steel, plastic, rubber and auto industries that

pollute the atmosphere. Why do they do it? Is it because they don't have moral responsibility?

Dostal pointed out that they have responsibility, all right — to their stockholders. Stopping pollution isn't profitable. The big businesses say that the cost of pollution control devices would drive companies out of the area. They used this argument against the GE strikers in Utica and in 1961 against the steelworkers in Youngstown who were demanding pollution controls.

How to solve the problem? He outlined the method advocated by Nixon and Ohio's governor: industry is subsidized and paid for all control devices on a 10 per cent cost plus basis. This makes pollution control "profitable"—at the expense of the workers, pensioners, etc. In other words, the government of big business wants to pay the polluters out of the workers' pockets—a way of making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Dostal urges workers shut down polluters

But depending on the monopolies to do the job is like letting the fox guard

the chicken coop. The Pollution Control Board is just another arm of the businesses that have caused the pollution. Dostal called for workers committees that would meet with student groups, medical and scientific authorities without the representatives of big business. These joint committees should decide on codes of pollution standards and police their enforcement.

Dostal reminded the audience that the coal miners shut down the mines to get a law covering medical help for workers with black lung and that a similar struggle by the workers in the polluting industries in Cleveland was the only way to get rid of pollution. This proposal was met with thunderous applause.

A delegation of 130 steel workers marched from a rally to the hearing wearing surgical masks. However, the early adjournment by the Board kept one union leader representing 35,000 men from speaking. He leaped to the stage as the hearing was being adjourned and promised that the workers would call on student support for a protest march on Columbus, the state capital.



Steelworkers march on pollution hearing wearing surgical masks. Workers joined students, health workers in militant attack on polluting companies.

Chicago rulers widen war against black youth —Nigeria

By JIM COATSWORTH

CHICAGO—The ruling class offensive here against the Black Panther Party is now developing into a general assault upon the entire black community. With everyone's eyes focused on the murders of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, the city government (taking the cue from their Republican bosses in Washington) evidently feels free to launch attacks on other representatives of the black community.

A formal declaration of war against the black nation here was already served by the mayor's office last summer. At that time Mayor Daley and his flunkies, State's Attorney Hanrahan, announced a crackdown on "gangs" in the Chicago area. This "crackdown" was to be led by the Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU) which, like Hanrahan and everything else in this corrupted city, was a special creation of the mayor's office. The drive against gangs was begun at a time when most of the white gangs in the city had either disbanded or joined the organized hoodlums under the direction and control of Daley and at a time when many of the so-called black and Latin "gangs" were becoming more political. It must have been obvious to the most backward white worker that the drive was aimed at the black community.

The murders of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, it seems, was only the

beginning. The Black P Stone Nation has recently come under severe attack by the ruling class. On the very day that Hampton and Clark were murdered, a leader of the P Stone Nation, Richard Sengali, was arrested for murder.

But one of the most vicious attacks came around Christmas, the time of "peace" and "goodwill" toward all men. The ruling class proved there is no "peace" even then by indicting a 13-year-old member of the Black P Stones for murder. The Cook County Jury, acting on the "recommendation" of Hanrahan, indicted James E. Cashaw and ordered that he stand trial as an adult. What this means is that a 13-year-old youth will, if convicted, be sent to the electric chair. A spokesman for the State's Attorney's office admitted that this procedure was "very rare" and stated that 13 was the youngest age a person could "legally" be tried as an adult. Indeed, "very rare!" But never too rare, never too young for the barbarity of capitalist justice.

The leader of the Black P Stone Nation, Jeff Fort, has been picked up and charged numerous times (one recent case was thrown out for lack of evidence). A few days ago he was picked up again with two other leaders of the P Stones and charged with "assault with a deadly weapon." All three are currently being held on

\$75,000 ransom in the Cook County lockup.

In one of the most blatant acts of police terror against the black community an entire class of black high school students were forced to stand against a gym class wall while the police trained machine guns on them. It was later learned that the police had been looking for "suspects" from the Black P Stone Nation whom they thought might have taken refuge in the school.

Whether any or all of the crimes that Black P Stone members allegedly committed are true or not should be irrelevant for serious revolutionaries. Crimes are committed daily against the black community by perpetrators who will never be tried by the capitalist courts. The Black P Stone members now under indictment are not being tried for any crimes they committed per se (after all, who is the ruling class, and particularly this one in Chicago, to preach to anyone about crime?), but rather for the crime of being political.

The attack has failed already. The black community became more united here after the murders of Hampton and Clark than probably anywhere else in the country. The ruling class offensive, no matter how severe or prolonged it may be, will only increase the will and determination of the black people to resist.

(Continued from page 9)

helping the Nigerian government stave off this gigantic U.S. land grab and was wholly progressive.

As for the Ibo people, they will never obtain any rights from Wall Street, and it is to be hoped that they can return to the fold, with full respect for their national rights, to help Nigeria consolidate its victory over imperialism and turn the tide in Africa once and for all against the Western monopolies.

ALBIZU CAMPOS and the PONCE MASSACRE

By Juan Antonio Corretjer

A chapter in the history of the Puerto Rican liberation struggle by the comrade-in-arms of Albizu Campos.

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(Continued from below)

In many struggles throughout labor history the UMW was in the forefront. But perhaps no class battle is looked back upon by the bosses with more bitterness than the founding of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). For it was the UMW which spearheaded the drive to create industrial unions to fight for the masses of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in place of the aristocratic and exclusive craft guilds of the American Federation of Labor.

Giant step: the CIO

With the passing of the National Recovery Act in 1933, workers were supposedly guaranteed the right to organize unions and bargain collectively with the bosses. But it soon became apparent that the workers only had rights if they fought for them — and fought hard, often with their lives.

The 1935 AFL convention voted down a proposal to launch a campaign for industrial organizing. But the labor leaders who had fought for industrial organization, prominent among them President Lewis of the UMW, had spoken for the aspirations of millions of workers. These leaders met on November 9, 1935 to set up the Committee for Industrial Organizations. At the founding meeting were Lewis and leaders of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, Textile Workers Union, Oil Field, Gas Well & Refinery Workers Union, and Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers Union.

In the early days of the CIO it was the mine workers, their organizers and leaders who not only provided the money, but also did much of the legwork involved in launching a massive campaign under the slogan, "Organize the unorganized."

The committee originally functioned inside the AFL to encourage mass production workers to organize. On August 4, 1936, however, the CIO unions were expelled from the AFL for refusing to "cease and desist" in their industrial union activities. The

(Continued on page 14)

The bosses never forget

The UMW was the backbone of the CIO

By NAOMI GOLDSTEIN

The assassination of United Mine Workers leader Joseph Yablonski has already faded out of the headlines in the bourgeois press. The ruling class is once again burying a political murder — an assassination with implications of great importance for every worker in the United States.

Yablonski was, just like UMW-head Boyle, a labor bureaucrat, a loyal oppositionist in the capitalist structure. His murder, however, coming on the heels of a growing militancy among rank-and-file miners (a militancy Yablonski aimed to use in the fight against the corrupt union leadership), was a stunning warning to all of labor — the capitalist bosses don't want even the tiniest crack to be opened up for the working class which has suffered from decades of reactionary leadership and dormant class-consciousness. Fearing the class battles ahead, the bosses, with the consent of the government, desperately moved to stave off the struggle by means of an assassination.

Miners the target

It is no mere accident that the murder involved a leader of the United Mine Workers Union. The ruling class is particularly aware, in this period of awakening class struggle, that the mine workers played a major role in the most crucial class battles of the past — militant organizing strikes, the founding of the CIO and the open defiance of the imperialist government during World War II.

Since the dawn of capitalist production, coal miners have occupied a strategic position. Coal was one of the foundations of capitalist technology. Coal mining has played a double role in history, however. In addition to the development of capitalist technology, the industry, of necessity, created a group of workers made militant by the back-breaking, low-paying work, made bitter and class-conscious by the grinding exploitation and terrifying danger in the mines. From the beginning of capitalism, miners all over the world have played a leading role in the struggles of the working class.

In the United States, battles between the miners and the bosses date back to the early years of the 1800's. There are many days of infamy written in labor history by the bosses' murderous attacks on militant miners.

Witchhunted miners organize

The year 1877 marked the culmination of a witch-hunt against the miners' union in Pennsylvania (the state where Yablonski was killed). In that year, 17 young miners were hung and two more executed in 1879. The coal bosses had them framed up as members of the "Molly Maguires."

After many years of struggling to form a miners'

union throughout the coal fields of Appalachia and the mines of the Mid-West, on January 25, 1890, two organizations, the National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers and the Knights of Labor, merged to form the United Mine Workers of America.

From the inception of the UMW, its history has been marked by violent battles and great militancy. The year 1919 saw a strike by miners in the face of severe government repression. (This was the year of the Palmer Raids. Labor was particularly oppressed by "liberal" President Wilson's decree that strikes were illegal during wartime. World War I had ended in fact, but no truce had yet been signed.) Leading the struggle was John L. Lewis who was to become president of the UMW in 1920.

To the bosses' hysterical cries that the strike was engineered by the Russian Bolsheviks, Lewis capitulated with patriotic protestations. Yet within the framework of his loyalty to the system of U.S. capitalism and his consistent anti-communism, Lewis proved to be the epitome of a bourgeois trade union militant — bourgeois in the sense that he never questioned the right of capitalist exploitation, but militant in that he based himself on the fighting spirit and strength of the working class. No example could so clearly prove this as his leadership of four miners' strikes during World War II.

Miners defy imperialist govt

Right after Pearl Harbor, the leaders of the AFL and CIO signed a no-strike agreement with the Roosevelt Administration. As the war progressed, it became evident to many workers that they had been taken — while wages were frozen, the bosses were making huge profits and carrying out a merciless speed-up to boot. Between 1941 and 1943 the cost of living rose 30 per cent. Wildcat strikes broke out sporadically in many industries.

Finally on May 1, 1943 every union softcoal mine in the country was shut down tight. In Detroit 1,000 delegates of the UAW voted to support both the UMW demands and the strike. Meanwhile, the ruling class and press was mounting a vicious witchhunt against the miners. The strike was called treasonous and John L. Lewis labeled an agent of Hitler. Roosevelt threatened to call out the troops to break the strike. The miners replied by saying that coal couldn't be mined with bayonets. The president then threatened to draft all miners in order to force them to work under military orders and make them subject to courts-martial for refusal.

These threats only angered the miners more. They staged four strikes in 1943 before the government and bosses were beaten into granting raises to the poverty stricken workers.

(Continued above)



1968: 78 miners killed in Mannington, W. Va.

From Spain to Sweden to U.S.

A miner under capitalism lives a life of struggle



Swedish miners on wildcat strike in Kiruna explode myth of class peace. Scandinavian "welfare" state exposed as state for the welfare of the bosses.

By P. MEISNER

The life of a mineworker almost anywhere in the capitalist world is considered perhaps the most oppressive of all. Not only are the miners grossly underpaid, but they must work under the most hazardous conditions, daily endangering their health as well as their very lives. Consequently, the most revolutionary class struggles in many of the Western imperialist nations have been those of the mineworkers. In the colonial countries, miners must work for much lower wages and under even worse conditions, whether they be Chilean copper miners, Bolivian tin miners, Congolese copper miners, Malayan tin miners, or South African coal miners.

The capitalist exploitation of mineworkers has become more ruthless as the world imperialist market system becomes more of a system of production anarchy. If, for example, aluminum prevails over tin in the world market, the imperialist owners of the tin mines shift the burden of lower profits onto the mineworkers in terms of layoffs, as well as lower real wages, as inflation eats away fixed wages.

Swedish miners wildcat

But the miners are fighting back against their bosses, which may be private corporations or capitalist governments. Even in the so-called "welfare state" of Sweden, 5,000 iron ore miners in the Swedish Arctic have gone on a wildcat strike against wage cuts resulting from the reclassification of jobs. The strike has spread through the Swedish Lapland, north of the Arctic Circle, in the mining towns of Svapavaara, Kiruna, and Malmeberget, in spite of the opposition from the sellout Social Democratic union bureaucrats.

Basic demands of the Swedish miners include a \$3-an-hour minimum for underground work and \$2.60 for above-ground work; abolition of piecework rates; a uniform pay schedule for blue- and white-collar workers and special provisions for older workers compelled to switch to lower paying, above-ground jobs. The mineworkers are also angry at the higher rents being charged against miners than management personnel. And even the capitalist press in Sweden and abroad admit that mass sympathy exists in Sweden for the more than one-month-old wildcat strike. The December 27 issue of Business Week, an influential Wall Street

publication, stated:

"The Swedish public, usually hostile to wildcat strikes, has responded with a flood of donations to the strike fund. And the government, which could haul the strikers into court as violators of Swedish labor law, subject to fines, clearly indicated that it would do nothing of the sort."

Spanish miners strike against Franco

Among the most oppressed of all the world's miners are the coal miners. They face the most dangerous working conditions yet receive extremely low wages for industrial workers. More than 35,000 Asturian mineworkers went out on strike (illegal in Spain) last month against the miserable mine conditions and wages paid in the mines owned by the Spanish Government. The miners were demanding a new minimum pay level for miners' helpers, pensions, treatment of silicosis (a lung disease); and a larger Christmas bonus which the miners depend on as part of their income.

But the Franco government keeps threatening to close down certain "unprofitable" mines as a lever to refuse the miners' demands. However, the Spanish Government has admitted that increased production of coal in Spain is necessary to save the foreign currency that would be needed to replace Spanish coal with imported fuel. Spain already imports 300,000 tons of coal a year, mostly from the U.S.

Last October, 125,000 out of a total of 300,000 coal miners in Yorkshire, Wales, Scotland, and the Midlands closed down half of Great Britain's coal mines with a wildcat strike. And again, as in Sweden, the reactionary pro-Labor Party union leadership resisted the just demands of the British miners, including a 40-hour work week and an increase from the unbelievably low wage of \$33-a-week for surface mineworkers.

Demand for coal increasing

While the major capitalist producers of coal try to intimidate coal miners into submission by threatening mine shutdowns due to the "obsolescence" of coal as a source of energy, world demand for coal has actually been increasing. In fact, world production of coal went from 2,005 million short tons in 1958 to 2,253 million short tons in 1966.

In 1969, U.S. coal exports to Europe and Japan

were a record 55 million tons, worth about \$500 million to the U.S. balance of payments. Demand for coal in the U.S. in 1969 rose to 565 million tons, which was 18 million tons more than what was produced. The National Coal Association has estimated that demand for coal will be 650 million tons by 1975, which would include only 40 million tons for export.

Thus, the myth of nuclear energy, solar energy, or hydroelectric power soon replacing coal has been exploded even by capitalist economists. N.Y. Times economic reporter Robert Walker wrote on Jan. 18:

"It is estimated today, however, that demand for electricity will double in this country in the next decade, reaching more than 60 million kilowatts by 1980. At the same time, nuclear capacity is a little behind schedule and might fall further behind unless the builders of the nuclear plants can escape the full impact of cost inflation."

"Thus, coal has suddenly emerged as a growth industry, and judging by one recent speech an American executive gave in London, it is beginning to think like a growth industry."

Mechanization of mines,

more miners out of jobs

If the demand for electricity will be doubled by 1980 in the U.S., then it could increase five-fold on a world scale by that date. Therefore, the ruthless exploitation of miners throughout the capitalist world is carried out by the most cruel form of deception—by threatening tin miners with layoffs and wage cuts because tin is currently less "profitable" than aluminum, or similarly threatening the coal miners because nuclear and hydroelectric power will soon "replace" coal as sources for energy.

But the facts show that global industrialization has increased demand significantly for all mining products. However, the bitter inter-imperialist struggle for markets and profits bypasses the real human economic needs of the workers that create the wealth in the imperialist countries. And with the mechanization of more and more mines throughout the world, mine owners are throwing tens of thousands of miners out of jobs with no adequate job replacements. The world's mineworkers have plenty of cause for being the world's most revolutionary workers.

(Continued from page 2)

an ultra-liberal and an "extremist." And Rauh in turn regards them as antilabor and reactionary.

Only the miners can save the union

Could he possibly be serious? By asking a government investigation by the Nixon administration, whether it be through the so-called Labor Secretary, the Attorney General or the Treasury Secretary (under whose jurisdiction is the Internal Revenue Service), he is in reality asking for a greater stranglehold by the government over the union. And this would destroy whatever independence the union still has. Should all these government agencies descend upon the union like a flock of vultures upon their prey, the results would be entirely predictable.

It is no wonder that the vicious antilabor Senate McClellan Committee has suddenly taken an interest in the welfare of the miners' union—as though in response to Rauh's call.

Only the miners can save the miners' union. Only they can cleanse the union of corruption and undemocratic procedures and break the strangle-

hold of government control through which the coal barons and the steel tycoons dominate the lives of the miners.

But the miners alone cannot do it. No single group of workers, no matter how powerful, can fight the entire capitalist establishment and its terrorist apparatus—the CIA-FBI Complex. But the first and most important duty of every progressive trade union militant is to rouse the masses of the people to the enormity of the crime committed against the miners' union by the assassination and its significance for the whole working class. It is necessary to pinpoint the assassin.

It is necessary to show the intimate connection between the plight of the miners' union and the general ferment and upheaval in the country arising out of the Vietnam war, skyrocketing inflation, the lowering of the living standards of the masses of the workers and the conspiracy of the ruling class to unleash a general offensive against the workers—as evidenced by the General Electric strike. Above all it is necessary to show that the Yablonski assassination was carried out in the same pattern and by substantially the same forces which executed the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and others. Our first duty is to shed light on this.

January 19, 1970

—Yablonski: II

What the press

left out

Agnew in Indonesia

By DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

When Vice President Agnew visited Indonesia this month as part of his eleven-nation Asian tour, he had no complaints about the press coverage of his visit. Obviously the stories describing Agnew's gift of "moon rocks" to General Suharto and the pictures of the Agnews being entertained by Indonesian dancing girls on the island of Bali were all the news that was fit to print, according to Agnewsian standards of journalism.

The press generally reflects the views of different factions of U.S. imperialism, and on the question of Indonesia, unlike the Vietnam war, these factions have been united in suppressing the truth about what happened in that country. However, this newspaper, not having that problem, is free to tell our readers the facts about Agnew's trip to Indonesia and why the "self-censorship" he has coyly advocated has worked so well in the case of this Asian country.

The Agnews spent two days on the island of Bali in what the Vice President described as a "resort posture." The liberal New York Times, in reporting on this, did not remind its readers of the dispatches of their correspondent Philip Shabecoff, filed from Bali last August. In those articles, the Times reporter told how Bali, so intoxicatingly beautiful that it was once described as the "morning of the world," suffered more than any other part of Indonesia during the massacres that followed the fascist coup of October 1965.

One out of ten killed

Shabecoff put the number of dead in the slaughter at "at least 80,000." The Times of London several years ago estimated 200,000, or 10 percent of the island's population.

"Many people have gone mad on this island since the slaughter," one university professor told the Times reporter. The one hospital is overflowing with people who have just broken down, and others have been sent to Java. Presumably, the people who can afford this medical treatment are a small minority.

Bali was once a stronghold of progressive organizations. Now, "Some of the parties have reformed, but they seem to serve more as social clubs than as political opposition," wrote Shabecoff. "One of the reasons that there is little politics on Bali is that the armed forces have complete political control, as they do in the rest of Indonesia."

This is the island that Spiro Agnew chose for "rest and relaxation" on his Asian trip. He must have felt very much at home, since the glittering beaches of Bali are now being developed by American entrepreneurs as a major resort area for U.S. military and business personnel looking for "fun" in Asia. Shabecoff described what is happening in Bali as "an invasion of tourists," and wrote of the magnificent luxury hotels being built, the flourishing houses of prostitution, and the newly introduced gambling casinos that are threatening Bali's traditional culture.

"Purification" for profit

One hotelkeeper, undoubtedly overjoyed by the enormous sums of American money now being flung around in Bali, described the mass slaughters following the 1965 coup as

"an enormous purification." "People want nothing to do with politics anymore," he said. "They are afraid of it. I think this good for Bali."

But the New York Times must have a very short memory for not one word of this appeared in the articles describing Agnew's visit to Indonesia. They didn't even scold the Suharto regime for its "excesses," as the Times often does when it is embarrassed by the butchery of a U.S.-backed regime. However, most important for Americans to understand, the press here has hidden completely the fact that the U.S. was behind the coup and the slaughter. Washington worked closely with the right-wing generals and gave them material aid.

That is why Indonesia is now wide open to be exploited by U.S. corporations. The hotels on Bali, and the exploitation of the island's magnificent scenery and climate, are only a small part of this economic payoff. U.S. corporations, frustrated by the failure of their efforts to subjugate Vietnam, have been rubbing their hands over the vast oil and mineral wealth now being tapped in Indonesia. Ranking fifth in the world in natural resources, Indonesia also has rubber, lumber, spices, tea, and a variety of other crops that enriched the Dutch colonialists for 350 years.

But the most important natural resource of Indonesia is her people — 110 million strong and forced by the widespread chaos and dislocation of the slaughter and the preceding centuries of colonialism to work for starvation wages.

Labor is the source of all value in the capitalist world, and the ultimate source of profits for the bosses. U.S. capitalists are supremely aware of this, and it is the search for cheap labor to exploit, as well as natural resources, that has caused imperialism to subjugate whole nations and continents. Even under the normal conditions of imperialist exploitation, the life of the workers is impoverished and degraded. But in Indonesia there is an added twist.

Political prisoners in Indonesia today, and the Times admits to at least 80,000, are being used on rubber plantations as slave laborers. They are people who have received no trial, have no lawyers, and cannot confront their accusers. According to a report in the New Republic filed from Djakarta last spring, many of them are "dying like flies" of starvation and disease.

These are just a few of the facts that were crowded out of the news reports of Agnew's visit to Indonesia by stories of how charming the astronauts accompanying him were, descriptions of the leis hung around his neck, etc. The lesson to be drawn is clear. While the ultimate pacification of the press in the style of Goebbels may not have been accomplished yet, the capitalist press does serve the broad interests of the capitalist class. When that class is divided on an issue, there is the possibility that the truth can get printed. But where they are united in suppressing the facts, as they have been on the question of the Indonesian coup, the mass of the people are kept completely in the dark. It is the responsibility of the conscious anti-imperialists to get this information out and rouse the people on the question of Indonesia and similar issues, because we are the only force that is going to do it.

—UMW and CIO

(Continued from page 12)

CIO was launched with Lewis and the miners' union at its head, and ready to assault the citadel of U.S. corporate capitalism.

The Flint sit-down

The year 1937 is known in labor history as the year of the sit-down strike. Almost two million workers took part in sit-downs to win their demands. It was a fierce sit-down strike which finally established the CIO and broke the resistance of the giants of capitalist industry who had staunchly refused to recognize the workers' unions.

Many people have heard of the famous Flint sit-down of 1937 against General Motors. If the bosses' version of history were told it would be said that this strike was just a struggle between the United Auto Workers and GM. But in truth, this was a test of the new CIO. And forming the backbone of the CIO was the UMW. Mine workers had already been organized; they had gone through many violent struggles to win their union and in turn lent their experience to this great battle. In muscle, in money, in tactical advice and inspiration they contributed to this turning point in labor history. It was only after the victory in Flint that the ruling class was forced to recognize the workers' unions on a mass scale.

In 1936, 400,000 auto workers were averaging \$1,294 a year, or less than \$25 a week. The speed-up

was so bad that during a heatwave in July, hundreds of workers collapsed and died right on the assembly line from overwork.

December, 1936 had seen a whole wave of sit-down strikes at GM plants across the country. Lewis vainly called on GM to bargain with the workers. By January 1, 1937, 35,000 workers had struck seven GM plants but the bosses still refused national recognition of the union.

The huge GM plants in Flint were at the hub of the GM system and soon became the focal point of the struggle between the UAW and the newly formed CIO on the one hand, and the largest corporation in the capitalist world on the other.

GM first tried to get the workers out with an injunction. It was soon revealed, however, that Judge Edward Black who had signed the order owned 3,365 shares in GM, valued at \$219,000. Next the bosses organized a phony front called the Flint Alliance. This group of reactionaries and vigilantes claimed to be the true representative of the workers.

GM announced that it would bargain with both the Flint Alliance and the UAW. The union of course refused such a fraudulent offer. In reply to the Alliance's threats of violence against the sit-down

strikers, thousands of workers flowed into Flint to defend their union brothers. Among them were miners from Ohio who had been through many struggles like this one.

We have decided to stay in the plant

While President Alfred Sloan of GM was arrogantly refusing to bargain, a second injunction against the workers came down ordering the workers out of the plants by the next day, February 3. The workers' reply stands as an example of revolutionary tactics in defiance of the collusion between the government and the bosses. They addressed a telegram to Governor Murphy of Michigan:

"Unarmed as we are, the introduction of the militia, sheriffs or police with murderous weapons will mean a bloodbath of unarmed workers... The Police of the City of Flint belong to General Motors. The Sheriff of Genesee County belongs to General Motors. The judges of Genesee belong to General Motors... It remains to be seen whether the Governor of the State belongs to General Motors. Governor, we have decided to stay in the plant." The troops were not used.

On February 9, just as the National Guard was being mobilized, GM finally relented. An agreement signed February 11 provided that GM recognize the UAW in the 20 struck plants, that there would be no discrimination against union members, all workers would be rehired, court proceedings were dropped and a date was set for bargaining on wages, etc.

Miners lead labor

In this tremendous thrust forward in the labor movement, the United Mine Workers Union played a vital role. Militant mine workers had led many of the struggles for industrial organizing and the UMW had furnished a good deal of the money and organizers in the early years when the CIO was struggling to assert itself as the representative of the masses of workers.

The mine workers were starved, beaten and sometimes killed when they tried to organize themselves; they were reviled and baited when they initiated the struggle for industrial organizing; and they were called fascist agents when they struck during World War II. But in truth they had helped to write the most important chapter yet in labor history.



Victory for Wilm'ton defense: acquittal in murder frameup

By LARRY NICODEMUS

WILMINGTON -- Victories, particularly for Afro-Americans, are rare in the racist U.S. courts, but Thursday, January 15, brought a victory for the Brothers and Sisters of Wilmington, Delaware's Defense Committee for the Wilmington 8 and for the black community in general. After a week-long trial and ten hours of deliberation, the jury returned to the capacity-filled courtroom to announce a "not guilty" verdict in the 1st degree murder trial of 18-year-old Conrad Wiggins.

The Brothers and Sisters of Wilmington, Delaware's Defense Committee for the Wilmington 8 was organized some months ago for the defense of black political prisoners from Wilmington, particularly the eight young men who were framed-up, jailed and given long sentences during the National Guard occupation of Wilmington in 1968.

Conrad Wiggins, not one of the

eight, was framed-up on a phony murder charge after a white man who lived in the black community was shot and killed on October 20, 1969. The Brothers and Sisters of Wilmington distributed thousands of leaflets in the black community, exposing the frame-up and calling for support at the trial. An enlightened community and the support of many young black people who came to the court put a spotlight on the government's flimsy frame-up. The phony charges exposed to the light of day became so transparent that the ruling class felt it necessary, this time, to back down.

The shooting incident had brought forth a group of so-called "concerned citizens" who issued an agitated call to all citizens to assist in apprehending and convicting the criminal. That same day an "anonymous" \$1,000 reward had been offered.

Within a few days, on October 26, Conrad Wiggins was arrested, held

without bail, and indicted for 1st degree murder. Later, bail was set at \$30,000 and the trial was scheduled for January 6, 1970.

The trial began on a Tuesday and it took until Friday to choose the jury--all white except for one black man. The ruling class, knowing how weak their frame-up was and wanting to hurry the case through, began the actual trial on Saturday.

Government foiled

on eye-witness

The prosecution's case consisted of six witnesses: two cops, the wife and daughter of the man who was killed, a medical examiner, and a supposed eye-witness. The eye-witness was a young woman known in the community to be a prostitute, therefore very vulnerable to police pressure. She testified that she saw the flash when the gun was fired, although she couldn't see the gun, but that she could see Conrad's face. She was the key prosecution witness, but her testimony was shattered when the defense called two women who gave strong evidence placing the "eye-witness's" whereabouts far from the scene at the time of the shooting.

Further, in defense, several brothers that Conrad had been playing basketball with at the time of the shooting testified. Also, when he finished playing basketball, he had visited a family and several members of that family testified for him.

Supporters harassed

During the trial, the Defense Committee and supporters were harassed by the cops. One brother was arrested

on charges of "disorderly conduct"; two others were arrested for "loitering in a public place." While the loitering cases are still pending, the brother was given two months probation on the disorderly conduct charge.

In another case, Kabasia Olatungi, a leading member of the Brothers and Sisters of Wilmington and the wife of one of the Wilmington 8, was arrested outside the courthouse while talking with some supporters. Although she was acquitted in court the next morning, the du Pont controlled press mentioned her arrest again and again in all their reporting of the trial.

Press tries to steal victory

This kind of reporting by the du Pont press has continued since the trial. The ruling class, having been dealt a defeat, is trying to steal the victory away from the defense committee. They have tried to use Kabasia's arrest as proof that the defense committee is made up of nothing but violent troublemakers. In the January 20 edition of the Morning News, an editorial entitled "Wiggins' Acquittal Hurts the Revolution" went to great lengths to try to convince the people of Wilmington that the defense committee wanted Conrad convicted so they could have a martyr. This is not only contrary to the whole idea of a defense committee, but, as almost everyone knows, the black movement needs no martyrs. There have been thousands upon thousands of black victims of U.S. racism, many in Wilmington, including the Wilmington 8 around which the Brothers and Sisters of Wilmington, Delaware's Defense Committee for the Wilmington 8 was organized.

—Rockaway

(Continued from page 10)

exits and turnstiles refusing to pay the fare. Then she started talking about the subway fraud, how the money is all going to the banks and the subways get worse and worse while the banks get richer and richer. Bam! A liberal politician named Posner grabbed the microphone out of her hands. Plainclothes cops and politicians dragged her from the chair and tried to push her and her supporters away from the front. But it was too late. The audience was up in arms, and when a cop tried to arrest a young man protecting Audrey, the crowd gathered around chanting "Let him go."

The people had learned two things: the law and order of the politicians is a fraud. When a young woman starts to speak the truth, the politicians ignore all "legal" procedures and turn to immediate repression. And they learned that the people have power when they stand together.

It was decided among many of the people that the next week would be one of action at the subway stations.

Speeches in subway

On Monday night during the rush hour we distributed YAWF leaflets throughout the train we were taking to Rockaway. In every car we made speeches about why people shouldn't pay the fare and where their money really goes. We got off at the designated station with about 300 people and ran to the front, chanting "Don't Pay the Fare." We were met at the turnstiles by three cops, but we decided to go under anyway. The minute we did, everyone followed our example. Out of the 300 people, maybe four obvious right-wingers paid. The cops would make futile attempts to grab us, but we'd just walk out of their hands and continue chanting and helping people under the turnstiles.

The people didn't just go under and run out of the station; they stayed and supported us. When a cop arrested a young man from YAWF, the people moved in and chanted "Let him go!" and "He didn't do anything." When another train arrived, we had a lot more people helping us chant and aid the people coming under and over the turnstiles. As with the first, this trainload of people went through for free. Altogether three trains arrived with al-

most everyone going through for free. Then the cops decided to call for reinforcements. But by this time the rush hour was over and the twenty cops that arrived had nothing to do.

One heavy-set woman who had a hard time getting under the turnstile wrecked her nylons. Nylons cost more than the 30-cent fare she had saved, but she said she didn't care because it was the principle of the matter. She said that if through these actions the fare is abolished, she'd save a lot more than the cost of one pair of nylons.

How U.S. "gives up" Okinawa!



The above photograph shows striking Okinawan workers in a confrontation with strike-breaking U.S. troops. The Okinawan workers were on strike January 19 to 23 against their employer, the U.S. Army. As the above picture demonstrates, the U.S. Army is also the sovereign power in Okinawa.

Nearly 1,200 Okinawans employed at U.S. military bases (there are 120 U.S. military installations on the island) were summarily fired by the Pentagon because of budget cutbacks. The strike was called to protest the firings and to demand higher severance payments and longer advance

notice for workers being fired.

"Officials of the All-Okinawa Military Workers Union said 14 Okinawans had been injured, including two men who they said had been hit by an American military truck as they tried to stop it," reported the New York Times of January 20.

The Pentagon, by using troops to break the strike, showed once more their callous opposition to the rights of the Asian people, particularly the poor, exploited masses. And further, the U.S. rulers showed by their deeds that their talk of "partnership" and "home-rule" are meaningless words to cover over their continued imperialist domination.

Most of these people had never been on a demonstration before and in fact probably thought they hated all demonstrators because of the continual brainwashing by the capitalist press. Here we were with our buttons against the war and supporting the Black Panthers, yet the people completely supported us against the cops.

Tuesday night we hit a different station to confuse the cops. At the same time, at the same station we had hit the previous night, the father of one of the participants led the protest

and opened up a gate where everyone went through.

The struggle has caused a measurable rise in the consciousness of the people of New York. The people have glimpsed their potential power. And similar fare rises are happening all over the country, where the cities expect to tax the people for ever-increasing amounts. The effect will be to teach people the same lesson all over, and then the cities and their banker-bosses will really be in trouble.

AUSCHWITZ IN AMERICA

"Accomplices to the Crime," by Tom Murton and Joe Hyams.

Grove Press, 237 pages, \$7.50.

This truly shocking expose just published by Grove Press is about the Arkansas prison system of murder and torture for profit. Author Tom Murton was hired in 1967 by Arkansas Governor Winthrop Rockefeller to clean up the scandalous prison conditions which had just been exposed. The author was fired a year later by Rockefeller for trying to do his job when his reforms cut down on prison-farm profits and he clashed with the local ruling class.

Co-author Joe Hyams was the former West Coast Bureau Chief of the New York Herald Tribune.

The book begins with a close-up of the horrifying conditions at Tucker and Cummins prison farms. Extortion and terror were used against the inmates under the direction of the superintendents of the institutions, who had absolute power of life and death over the prisoners.

To get a job other than working 12-14 hours a day in the fields, to get enough food to survive, prisoners had to pay superintendent Bruton or inmate guards.

"LL-81 (code name for a prisoner) said that in March, 1964, Mr. Bruton told him he would be a free man on payment of \$200. He was allowed to call his uncle who brought a check for \$200, which was cashed; and he was told he would be free the following Saturday. He is still in the penitentiary."

Whipping legal in Arkansas

Those who didn't work hard enough or were rebellious were whipped by Bruton with a five-foot long, five-inch wide strap. Whipping is legal in Arkansas prisons. Bruton also designed an electric shock torture gadget known as the "Tucker telephone" to punish men.

The condemned men, all black, were never allowed out of their cells. Some had been literally buried alive for eight or more years in the same cell.

Prisoners in the Women's Reformatory at Cummins were also whipped. They sewed clothes for the matron and prison uniforms all day and sometimes had to work in the fields afterwards. Black women ate the scraps off the table after the whites ate and they were not allowed to talk to each other.

The state prison farm system was supposed to be self-sustaining and profitable. It was.

"FL-17 stated that superintendent Bruton's son, Ronnie, had come into the Black Angus cattle business rather suddenly when Tucker Prison Farm changed their cattle from Black Angus to Carolaise breed. Many newborn Angus calves were never put on the prison count...."

Paroled to slave labor

"LL-10 told an investigator that one of the members of the parole board was running a 'little Tucker' near Hughes, Arkansas, on a farm he owns. The parole board member would parole convicts and work them on his farm where, if they protested, they were beaten and sent back to prison."

One member of the penitentiary board got \$50,000 a year in premiums for insurance his company sold the prisons, some of it for non-existent farm machinery. In 1966 the prisons had made \$300,000 for the state and an untold amount for well connected individuals.

"Slavery was never abolished in Arkansas," the book

points out. Convict labor just replaced slave labor, and blacks were the victims either way.

"LL-98 said that since he had been at Tucker he has been beaten with a baseball bat, a trace chain, a rope with knots tied in it, a hoe handle, a shovel, a rubber hose with lead in one end, and a tractor fan belt."

When Murton took over at Tucker, it was in the wake of a scandal caused by revelations of these Nazi-like conditions. Later, he discovered the bodies of inmates who had been murdered and buried at the prisons.

Most of the book describes Murton's year-long efforts at reform at Tucker and later Cummins.

Although they realized that most improvements would probably be only temporary, several prisoners risked their lives to help expose what had taken place, including locating the graveyard of murdered men.

Murton abolished corporal punishment, reduced sentences in solitary confinement (which he called even more cruel than whipping). He let black death-row inmates (most of them victims of racist courts, he believed) out of their cells to mingle with the population, cut out many of the rackets like the buying of jobs and food, let prisoners form a band, and had teachers set up reading classes for the many men who could barely read or write.

Dances were even arranged by the inmates at Tucker with women prisoners from Cummins as the invited guests. Newspaper pictures of black and white inmates dancing together later caused the prison board to ban such dances.

In general, Murton made decent bourgeois reforms. He thought that was his job.

Murton fired, whipping praised

Those who profited from the prisoner and parolee slave-labor (including at least one state senator and other legislators), businessmen who had lucrative deals with the penitentiary, Governor Rockefeller, who wanted a show of reform but nothing that would hurt his cronies -- and who actually did less than his notorious predecessor Governor Faubus -- had Murton fired. A campaign was also mounted to discredit him. A former prisoner at Cummins, now a member of the fascist Minutemen, was invited to address the state legislature on the benefits of whipping prisoners. He called the jail "the finest atmosphere for rehabilitation of asocial inmates that has ever been developed in the world," and got a standing ovation.

When three bodies were found buried at Cummins, it was soon clear that many more men had been murdered. Murton got calls and notes from present and former inmates reporting murders and burials in prison.

"I can show you," wrote one man, "where a superintendent killed a man and buried him at Tucker. He beat the man until he couldn't get up, then he told him to get up and go work. When the man couldn't do it, the superintendent shot him. I helped bury the man...."

Some prisoners murdered in hospital

Another inmate testified, "the spinal meningitis epidemic of 1952 was a fraud. The prisoners were killed in hospital and the prison doctor wrote it up as meningitis."

And, "halfway between the old Seven Camp barn and the ditch is the grave where two colored men and a white man were buried after being killed."

A grand jury impaneled to hear about the corpses was more interested in punishing those who were digging up the bodies than those who had murdered and buried them. A state medical examiner told the jury that the men whose bodies were found had probably died of natural causes, and the jury was content with the explanation despite the fact that the skull of one corpse was crushed and the leg of another had been cut off so it could be stuffed into a box.

The facts are well documented and presented in "Accomplices to the Crime," and the information in the book is a stunning indictment of the prison system which should be widely publicized. Of course Murton is mistaken in emphasizing the supposed "uniqueness" of Arkansas. Every state from California to New York has had its prison scandals. More has been made public in Arkansas, but prisons are just dungeons for the oppressed in America and each state has its own murders and brutal wardens and corrupt systems.

Murton is also mistaken when he says that "the most effective reformer is the person within the power structure." He looks at things from the jailor-reformer angle, having been in charge of an army stockade and five other institutions before coming to Arkansas, and not from the point of view of the prisoner.

His own facts prove that the power structure is savage and corrupt all the way through and that what is needed is to free the prisoners and jail the jailors.

--ELLEN PIERCE



Far right: Torture instruments from Tucker Prison Farm — strap, chains and "Tucker Telephone" which gives prisoners electric shocks. Right: The skull and bones of a murdered inmate from an unmarked grave at Tucker.

