

## Opportunists On May Day

# A Pathetic But Revealing Offensive

Two recent items in the press, both recording the activities of the Revolutionary May Day Brigade in Beckley, West Virginia, are worthy of mention. The first, a news story, opens with the allegedly typical reaction of Beckley "residents" to the Brigade:

"To a lot of folks in Raleigh County, it seemed bad enough the communist demonstrators were there at all. Worse still were their red flags. But when they taunted Old Glory, the matrons could stand no more. They waded in, umbrellas flying... They were joined by old men throwing punches and young ones grabbing red flags from the badly outnumbered demonstrators..."

An essentially similiar description appears in the second article which notes that events in Beckley saw the "RCPers getting into fistfights with townspeople until 18 of them were arrested. This

move (i.e.—the arrests—*RW*) was supported by a large section of the community."

There is an explanation for both of these news items. The first, a UPI release which appeared in dozens of newspapers around the country, is a complete lie. As reported in the March 21st issue of the *RW*, the "folks in Raleigh County" who, offended at denunciations of "Old Glory" and could "stand no more", were *not* little old ladies, little old men or generally enraged typical citizens. They were, instead, an organized gang of typical reactionary dopes, KKKers and cops—the latter of which proved themselves as such when they "waded in" to a Brigade rally, flashed their badges and busted people.

But the second news item can also be explained—it is from a recent issue of

*The Call*, the newspaper of the Communist Party Marxist Leninist (CPML).

*The Call's* article, entitled "RCP antics earn them fistfights and garbage," is part of a round of puny attacks on Revolutionary May Day from quarters other than directly bourgeois (although even this could be disputed). CPML has developed an unoriginal portrayal of the activity of the Brigades and has written a faint echo of what the bourgeoisie has been saying about May Day for months. In this effort, the CPML has been joined by a whole host of groups and grouplets who have also launched an offensive in print against May Day 1980 and who, while also calling themselves communists, have on this question alone revealed that they are not only offended at the idea of revolution, but they are mortally terrified of it. Articles attacking May Day have

appeared in the newspapers of the Communist Workers Party (CWP), the Communist Party USA Marxist-Leninist (CPUSAML), the Bolshevik Union, and others. In addition, *The Guardian*, "Independent Radical Newsweekly," has enlisted in the struggle against May Day 1980, and is deserving of special attention.

Now then, space does not permit response to each and every utterance leveled against May Day from "the Left." It's not necessary anyhow, because all these articles cite similar examples and draw essentially the same conclusions—namely, that the activity of the RCP and, in particular, that of the Revolutionary May Day Brigades, is the work of a small band of maniacal "ultra-leftists" who are running around, discrediting the respectable

Continued on page 26

## Social-Chauvinists Do the Splits

# How to Support/Oppose the Draft

The emergence of the widespread mass movement against the draft has sent the patriots of the Communist Party (ML) and the Menshevik Minutemen of the so-called Revolutionary Workers Headquarters (often referred to as simply "The Mensheviks"—the sniveling band of apologists for U.S. imperialism that were thrown out of the RCP for opportunist antics deserving of their namesakes in Russia in Lenin's time) scrambling into action. Their mission: to see to it that the anti-draft movement does not threaten the military and political preparations of the U.S. imperialists for the coming war with the Soviet Union.

The CP(ML) and their social-chauvinist allies have become complete apologists for the U.S. ruling class. They are naked defenders of U.S. war preparations against the Soviet Union. They make clear their bitter opposition to any movement which might weaken even in the slightest degree, U.S. preparations for the 3rd World War. And all of this is only dressed up in the thinnest and most perfunctory "left" terminology—more often, in fact, lapsing into ravings which rival the most rabid right-wing politicians and columnists.

In brief, the CP(ML) and the whole trend they represent are consciously playing the part of agents for U.S. imperialism. This is as much as admitted in the pages of *The Call* itself. Carl Davidson, one of the moldy opportunists whose retarded prose the CP(ML) tries to pass off as "theoretical" warns in a signed article in the March 24th *Call* that "the anti-draft movement could be turned into a pawn for those whose real aim is to weaken the U.S. for the sake of strengthening the Soviet military buildup." Does the CP(ML) distinguish those who "wish to weaken the U.S." in order to further the evil designs of the Kremlin from those who wish to weaken the U.S. imperialists in order to create more favorable conditions for revolutionary struggle—who not only wish to weaken them, but to overthrow them? Of course not. It no longer occurs to them that it is possible to be something other than a tool of one or another imperialist superpower.

CP(ML) Chairman Mike Klonsky, for example, explains in a signed article in the Feb. 18 issue of *The Call* that "as for China's new relationship with the U.S. (as a U.S. running dog—*RW*), it has been brought about by necessity. China is not in a position to take on both superpowers equally at the same time, nor is any one else." Klonsky clearly sees the only alternative to "taking on both superpowers at the same time" as capitulating to one or the other. This capitulation "brought about by necessity" is very convenient for the CP(ML), providing them with an excuse to seek cover under the wing of the U.S. ruling class. But the RCP, for example, has not capitulated and will not—and yet we do not "take on both superpowers equally at the same time" either. While exposing the fact that both superpowers are still equally the main enemies of the people of the world, our Party concentrates our main fire where it belongs—at the U.S. imperialists, the superpower it is our responsibility to lead the working class and the masses of people in overthrowing.

Davidson's article, at first glance, appears to be no more than a clumsy and unconvincing exposition of the most backward conceivable position on the theme of its title: "Why Oppose the

Draft? (And How to Go About It)." But a closer look reveals that the article isn't quite as clumsy as it seems—or rather, it is intentionally clumsy and unconvincing. For the fact of the matter is, the CP(ML) does not really oppose the draft at all, and the real purpose of Davidson's piece is to make people wonder if the draft should not actually be enthusiastically supported.

Indeed, in the very same issue as Davidson's article, the following letter supporting the draft appeared in *The Call's* "Letters" column:

"I have been reading your paper for some time now and have come to rely on it for solid analysis of world and national events. I am a World War II veteran and work at Boeing in Seattle.

"I do have one criticism, however, of a recent article in the February 11th issue. The column on 'Women and Revolution' by Ellen Blum seems to oppose the draft. While this position may have been good in the past, we should take the world's new reality seriously.

"Isn't there a tendency in the article

not to grasp the serious danger to peace posed by the now fascist Soviet Union? I remember in the 1940s how the hated Trotskyites took a similar position toward the Nazis and, under a sneaky 'left' cover, opposed the United Front against Hitler."

Following this letter, there's a note: "For more on this question, please see Carl Davidson's article on Page 10 in this issue." This pro-draft letter (clearly either written or commissioned by *The Call* staff) is obviously designed to encourage the reader to "keep an open mind" while reading Davidson's piece—which itself argues for the draft while keeping up a bare pretense of "opposition."

Davidson's article pretends to survey the history of the "perspective of the working class" on the draft. In particular, he singles out the American Civil War as a case in point:

"The draft instituted by Congress was blatantly discriminatory in favor of the

Continued on page 14

## International May Day Message from Jamaican Revolutionaries

When the Masses Unite, All Reactionaries Will Tremble

We came to the U.S. already hating the oppression of our people in Jamaica by U.S. imperialism. We came looking for genuine revolutionaries to unite with, in common struggle, to get rid of U.S. imperialism. We found the RCP and we found Revolutionary May Day. We were always told how strong the U.S. is supposed to be and how everybody in the U.S. loves this empire. But we have seen through building for May Day that thousands here in the U.S. are longing to do the system in. May Day 1980—millions of people around the world will march, taking history into their hands. And millions are watching to see if workers in the U.S. will now march side by side with workers of the rest of the world.

We will be marching with you and we hope to see May Day in Jamaica.

The RCP has a weapon to fight this system and that is Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought. We as members of the Youth Forces for National Liberation (YFNL) are preparing for revolution in Jamaica. To win our liberation the tentacles of imperialism must be chopped off in our country. We have fought first British and now U.S. imperialism. While people all over the Caribbean are fighting now against U.S. imperialism, Soviet imperialists are peeping through the back door. We cannot trade a black dog for a monkey. We strongly support the RCP in the battle for Revolutionary May Day. We believe May Day will be a sparking light to shine the path to revolution in the U.S., which can only inspire further millions the world over in struggle for our liberation.

"In no way should the taking of 'independent historical action' by the advanced section of workers in this country, even if it is relatively small at this time, be underestimated or downgraded... With the development, and especially full ripening, of the situation, with millions awakening for the first time, the thousands who rally now around the revolutionary banner of the international proletariat become millions, ultimately tens of millions... and the thousands and tens of thousands who have been trained in 'normal' times become the leaders of millions and tens of millions."

Bob Avakian  
Chairman of the RCP Central Committee

After Revolutionary May Day Brigade members were arrested in Atlanta, they were taken to the Atlanta City jail. The following is a letter from a woman they met there.

Some people who say they are revolutionaries have told me revolution is impossible for the foreseeable future. I've met some of these people because I've always been a person who speaks out. The government hates me but I don't love them too much either. These revolutionaries with nervous breakdowns should get out of the way and start living in the real world. The October League (CPML—*RW*), has never impressed me because I hate groups that use Black people and treat all people in a condescending way. If they don't think poor Blacks and whites are going to make revolution, why don't they come into these jails and talk to the people and learn about people's lives. Why don't they go to the projects and schools too. I was very impressed by your group, you don't water down revolution, I like that. I'm not ready to join yet but I am a supporter. I'm a rebel, maybe I'm a communist too, though I still think there is a God. In a way I'm glad you people got sent to jail—there's so many people who need to be made aware. Right on to May Day, I'll be there in or out of jail.

A woman prisoner in Atlanta City jail

P.S. Bob Avakian may just be the leader we need. I want to read his program for revolution and get more about that revolutionary science.



## Opportunists

Continued from page 10

"communists." May Day activists, the line goes, are isolated from the masses of people and have "substituted the revolutionary consciousness of communists for consistent mass work," as *The Guardian* recently put it. According to *The Call*, "to the RCP leaders, the masses of Americans are beyond hope. Acting out of their own despair to organize the U.S. working class, the RCP has resorted to isolated acts, with the leaders using the rank and file supporters as cannon fodder," etc., etc.

For anyone who knows what the CPML wants to "organize the U.S. working class" to do in the coming war, *The Call's* new definition of the term "cannon fodder" is particularly hilarious. But beyond this, *The Call*, *The Guardian*, et. al., have revealed something more. While attacks on revolution in general from these and other groups are nothing new, what is new is the inadvertent concession to revolutionary May Day contained especially within the lightweight diatribes of both *The Call* and *The Guardian*. For instance, the *Call* article concludes:

"The topper to all this madness should be May 1, when the RCP will try to divert attention from the May Day

programs going on around the country by staging their own 'general strike'." A thousand comedians out of work and the CPML is cracking jokes. It has apparently escaped the brains of *The Call's* editors that in order for attention to be diverted from the "May Day programs going on around the country" (presumably a euphemism for the presently unannounced CPML May 1st events), attention must first be called to such events. In any case, *The Call's* reference to a "general strike" reminds us of something Lenin once noted. He pointed out that attributing an obviously stupid argument to one's opponent is a method used by none to clever people—and none to Marxist either. Such a shoe easily fits on the foot of the CPML, but nevertheless, this "general strike" remark reveals a clue for us.

Anyone who bothers to read anything the RCP has said about May Day 1980 knows that the point of this historic occasion is to rally an advanced section of the working class under an openly revolutionary banner. We have said time and again that thousands, not millions, but thousands of workers will be out on May Day and that this will have a decisive impact on the political complexion and the class struggle of this country. May Day is not intended to be a "general strike," and the CPML knows it. And since we can safely assume that the contradiction lies not in the CPML mastery of basic arithmetic,

it is clear that they have invented this "general strike" business for a reason.

First of all, it is a rather transparent attempt to set up a straw dog. On May 2nd, when no such "general strike" has materialized, it's not hard to imagine what the *Call* will print. But more importantly, that the CPML would raise such a ridiculous point, indicates that its opportunist weather vane is in good working condition. Despite protestations to the opposite, the CPML is well aware—in fact gravely concerned—exactly that Revolutionary May Day is having a profound impact on many workers—some of whom have undoubtedly laid into CPML members on the question—and more, that May Day is having a heavy impact throughout society in general.

Not to be outdone, *The Guardian* makes a similar concession: "In some cases, workers respond positively to the RCP actions. But in the absence of previous educational work, in most cases, they do not." While we hope to god that this is not a signal of the *Guardian* staff's intention to launch a campaign to "educate" the workers with the economist and reformist drivel of their "radical newsweekly", something we wouldn't even wish on the backward, this comment indicates that *The Guardian* too has been forced to admit that May Day has already had a significant impact.

The word is out, and increasing

numbers of revolutionary-minded and progressive people, individuals and organizations which *The Guardian* attempts to influence, have already indicated their support for May Day. *The Guardian* knows that even among its own readers, there are many people who "hate this shit" and are refusing to be dragged backward, but instead have, or will, cast their lot with the working class and its Party, possibly beginning on May 1st, 1980. And for those who wish to squeeze into the vanishing niche with *The Guardian*, a practical alternative has been offered—such people can attend the recently announced May Day cocktail party sponsored by the *Guardian* staff. If *The Guardian's* advertising is truthful, attendance at this event includes the chance to shake hands with *Guardian* staff members—but at least the sponsors have had the foresight to recognize the rather dubious nature of such a privilege, and have thus also advertised an open bar beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The CPML, *The Guardian* and others have thrown a pebble at May Day in the pages of their newspapers. And like the regular bourgeois press, what lies behind their rantings—however pathetic—is not the failure of May Day 1980, but its already realized successes and more, its revolutionary potential. □

## Iran

Continued from page 6

Carter." Well, this "nation of zealots"—that is, millions upon millions of politically aroused people who are determined to uproot imperialism, especially the American variety, from their country for good—do seem to understand a bit about imperialist "statecraft" after all....

In the White House and the marble halls of Congress, the gloom was over more than just Iran. They were worried about the future of their whole worldwide empire and their ability in the years ahead to defend and expand the "free world" (as they love to call the countries that are the preserves of the Western imperialists). Over the last month, their hopes of resolving the "hostage crisis" with the aid of pro-U.S. members of the Iranian government like Bani-Sadr and Ghotbzadeh have met with failure due to the uncompromising stand of the Iranian masses. When their attempts to make a deal that would leave the Shah resting comfortably under U.S. protection in Egypt failed, the U.S. pulled out a double-barreled shotgun, aimed at both Iran and their own allies.

Over the last week, their efforts were mainly concentrated on leaning on their allies in Western Europe and Japan, on getting them to back up the U.S.'s economic sanctions against Iran. On top of this, the U.S. made a new call for them to step up their military spending; new pressures were exerted to get them to go along with the U.S.-led boycott of the Summer Olympics in Moscow; and a new and serious round of U.S.-orchestrated negotiations between Israel and Egypt, aimed at shoring up that shaky alliance, were in progress. From all this it is clear that the events unfolding in Iran and elsewhere in the world today can only be understood in the light of how they mainly fit into the overall preparations for the approaching showdown, between the equally imperialist rivals in the U.S. and the Soviet Union—not as isolated incidents in and of themselves.

The Chancellor of West Germany, Helmut Schmidt, compared the present international situation to that in 1914, when the assassination of an Austrian prince triggered a world war between rival imperialist blocs. And none other than that never-say-die champion of imperialism and reaction, Richard M. Nixon, claimed that the U.S. was "already" involved in World War 3 in his newly published book, *The Real War*.

### Whipping U.S. Allies Into Line

And what do these international thieves place at the top of their list in preparing for war? At this point, tightening up the bloc of imperialist and

reactionary countries led by the U.S. and drumming up public opinion in these countries to "defend" the bloc's interests militarily. *Business Week* made no bones about how the bourgeoisie views the situation today, and while referring to Afghanistan, the points made here clearly apply to any "trouble spot" for the U.S. in the world: "There is a lull before the storm in the U.S.-Soviet confrontation over Afghanistan... Washington's strategy is much less neat (than the Soviets'). In fact President Carter faces the possible collapse of his basic initiatives in answering Russian aggression if they do not fall into place soon. There is an even grimmer threat; a failure to achieve an effective strategy could harm the Atlantic alliance.... The Soviet moves into Afghanistan and the initiatives already taken by Carter have put powerful forces into motion. It is unlikely that the two superpowers can go back to their earlier relationship of detente."

The response of the allies to the U.S. call to back up their trade embargo and reduce their diplomatic staffs in Tehran has been disappointing to their big brother imperialists. Some commentators have described the situation as "a crisis... the gulf that is open between the U.S. and its principal allies over the best way to deal with the turmoil in the Middle East." All the U.S. allies initially did was simply recall their ambassadors from Tehran for "consultation."

While issuing statements of general agreement with the U.S. position, Japan (which imports 10% of its oil from Iran and did \$6.9 billion in trade with Iran last year) and most of the Western European countries, particularly France (which itself is hoping to swing some big economic deals with the Iranian government) are complaining that removing Western presence and escalating pressure on Iran could only push it closer to the Soviet Union; and that overall, the U.S. measures would do little to resolve the crisis, but would send new jolts through their economies. But the U.S. bourgeoisie's response was typical of their "broader" outlook. "Look, you fools," you could almost hear them saying, "the whole world is up for grabs, not just Iran. And if you're worried about losing 10% of your oil that comes from Iran, why don't you worry instead about what happens if the U.S. military machine, which protects your worldwide investments, can no longer do so, or—horror of horrors—if we lose these areas to the Russians? And besides," they add, "if you don't fall into line now, we will cut off your oil with a naval blockade anyway."

To drive the point home, the U.S. unveiled a plan that called for the allies to increase their military spending by at least 3% a year; to stockpile enough

weaponry to fight a 30-day conventional war with the Soviet Union; to plan to call up reserves to replace U.S. soldiers in Europe who might be called to fight in the Middle East; to use Western European commercial aircraft to ferry American troops to the Middle East; and to expand their naval forces to reinforce the thinly stretched U.S. navy.

Overall, the imperialist rulers of the Western European countries and Japan do benefit from the division of spheres of influence in the world that was the result of the U.S.'s emergence as top-dog imperialist power after World War 2, and are fundamentally dependent on the military protection of U.S. imperialism. It is within this framework that these lesser powers pursue their own independent imperialist aims. They also are forced to deal with the sentiments of the masses of people in their countries that are increasingly opposed to imperialist war preparations. This makes it necessary for the governments of these countries to at least make a show of opposition to recent U.S. moves. But the fact that these countries are basically dependent on the U.S. provides the basis for the U.S. imperialists, despite temporary difficulties and conflicts, to pull these countries more tightly into its bloc, and it is this which is increasingly shaping events.

Last week, the U.S. Olympic Committee, with no less than Vice President Mondale in attendance, voted to support the call for a boycott of the Moscow Summer Olympics. Soon thereafter, the governments of Japan and West Germany announced that they too would ask the Olympic Committees in their countries to follow suit. And after the U.S. announced a mid-May deadline for positive action from Iran, after which it would face a naval blockade, West Germany announced that it was preparing to follow the U.S. lead and invoke trade sanctions, and would ask the other Western European countries to do the same at the Common Market meeting scheduled for April 21.

## Wrightsville

Continued from page 16

poison, joining in or at least not opposing the actions of the Sheriff and his thugs. The town is sharply divided between white and Black.

But the racist neanderthals dared not make a move on the march. The people had come prepared and the reactionaries were well aware of it. There are great storms gathering for the '80s across this country, even already reaching into remote corners like Wrightsville, Ga. "Wednesday night was beautiful," a young man proudly

recalled. In the barricades built across unpaved streets can be seen the dim outlines of the rebellions that will rock this country to its rotten foundation in the coming decade and the opportunity we may have to blast this decaying monster into history's trashbin. And even in this tiny rural town, agitation building for a major battle on the road to this—Revolutionary May Day 1980 is being carried out. May Day Buttons and Red Flags dotted the Saturday march in the town and afterwards a number of people gathered in a local bar to hear a tape of Bob Avakian's speech delivered on May Day last year, occasionally breaking in to cheers. □