



# REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

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Persian Gulf

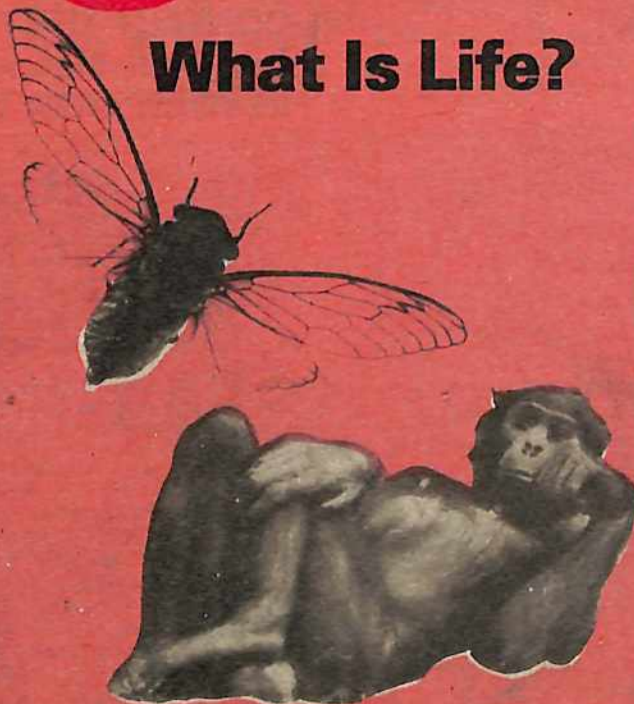
## Dead End for An Out-moded Empire

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This statement was issued by the Stop the U.S. War Machine Action Network:

## Statement of Unity of the Stop the U.S. War Machine Action Network

Today a massive U.S. military machine is poised for war in the Persian Gulf. The lives of tens of thousands, Arabs and Americans, and many others hang in the balance; the fate of millions could be at stake if chemical and/or nuclear warfare is let loose.

We have been told by the government that the U.S. forces are in the Gulf to stop Iraqi aggression. Yet why then did the U.S. condone Iraq's aggression against Iran? We have been told that one country must not be allowed to invade another—yet this is just what the U.S. did in Panama less than a year ago. We have been told that international law must be defended—yet President Bush served in an administration that consistently ignored and flaunted international law in Central America. We have been told that the U.S. seeks a peaceful resolution of this crisis. Yet the U.S. has rejected numerous Iraqi offers to negotiate and even the whisper of compromise brings only new denunciations and troop deployments.

### HELL NO! WE WON'T GO!

America's deployment and war plans are about oil and power. We won't kill and die to protect an "American Way of Life" based on plundering the world's resources and poisoning the planet. We won't stand by and let blood be spilled for oil and global power politics! And we stand with our Arab brothers and sisters, whose lives are every bit as precious as ours, and their right to choose their own future free from imperial intervention.

### U.S. OUT OF THE GULF!

Saddam Hussein is a tyrant, but this is no justification for U.S. intervention. In fact, the U.S. and other big powers have created and nurtured Hussein and dozens like him around the globe; the U.S. never called Hussein a "Hitler" when his tyranny and aggression served U.S. purposes. Those same big powers have no right to now threaten war in the Gulf because their creation has crossed them. The peoples of the Middle East need to deal with oppressors like Hussein and exercise their right to self-determination. Getting the U.S. out is the best way to start.

Thousands have taken to the streets against U.S. intervention in the Gulf—but much more is needed. Our Network aims to mobilize the broadest, most determined opposition possible against the U.S. war moves. People from all walks of life will join and build this opposition in many ways and in many places. We will support all those who act against the U.S. actions in the Gulf. We will especially **SUPPORT G.I. RESISTANCE!** Those who courageously refuse to fight in a war for profit and power have already begun to boldly take their stand, and we pledge to stand with them.

**STOP THE U.S. WAR MACHINE, NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES!** means different things to different people. We hold diverse views on the politics and philosophies of struggle, change, and social solutions. What we unite on in this Action Network is that the U.S. is deadly serious about waging war in the Gulf and that only the world's people—not the governments—can stop this impending war, which will be a bloody and horrific wrong, no matter who sanctions it. We must resist, and our resistance must begin right now, before the bombs start to fall!

The Action Network is calling for people to sign and distribute this Statement of Unity

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

How do you want to be identified?: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact the Action Network at:  
Action Network, c/o Box 2139, New York, NY 10108 phone (212) 642-5228  
Funds are urgently needed. Make checks payable to Action Network.

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U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf/Committee to Defend  
Jeff Paterson

## Three Main Points

by **Bob Avakian**  
Chairman of  
the RCP, USA

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

- 1) The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation — here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.
- 2) Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.

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

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

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## Persian Gulf

# Dead End for An Outmoded Empire

The U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia got a big turkey on Thanksgiving—the Commander-in-Chief, George Bush, made a personal appearance in the Saudi desert and spoke to the Marines on the front lines. He turned up the volume even higher on the bully threats against Iraq. One account in the *New York Times* said Bush struck “a deliberately more ominous tone toward Iraq. He came closer than he ever has before to a direct threat of war.”

The developments toward a U.S. war of aggression in the Persian Gulf continue to gather force. After Bush announced in early November that 200,000 more U.S. troops will be sent to the Gulf, Saddam Hussein countered with a decision to deploy 250,000 more Iraqi troops to bolster his forces in Kuwait and southern Iraq. The U.S. government is trying to get the UN to pass a new resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq. The foreign ministers of the five countries on the UN Security Council—the U.S., Soviet Union, Britain, France, and China—reportedly are already at work on the language of such a resolution. There is much talk of a “window of war” between now and March when the U.S. might very well launch an offensive attack in the Gulf. It would be more difficult for the U.S. to wage war after that period because of weather conditions and Ramadan, a time of religious observations for Moslems.

The U.S. rulers say that Saddam Hussein walked into a dead end when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The U.S. so far has managed to pull together an international coalition of big powers and reactionary regimes to bring down enormous pressure on Saddam. But by sending the huge military force into the Gulf, the U.S. has followed Saddam into that dead end, and it looks increasingly like there is no way out except through war. If there is such a war, there is no telling what kind of crisis it might cause throughout the U.S. empire.

## Bush's Justifications for War

Some ruling class critics of Bush complain that he is not doing a good job of explaining what the U.S. aims to accomplish in the Gulf, and that this is the reason why the administration is not able to build public support for making war on Iraq. But these critics really should be fair to their fellow imperialist mafioso. It's not surprising at all that Bush can't give a “clear and consistent” explanation. After

all, in order to get to the heart of what the U.S. is aiming to do, Bush would have to tell the truth and say: “We, a tiny ruling class who hold power in the U.S., are sending hundreds of thousands of soldiers—drawn overwhelmingly from the poor and oppressed—to the Middle East in order to gain control of a strategic oil-producing area of the world. We need this in order to keep our position as a global power strong and so we can reassert our domination over people here and around the world and our leadership among our allies. And we're willing to commit any crimes to achieve these aims—using American troops as cannonfodder, murdering millions of people, steamrolling over small countries.” Of course Bush can't say this! If he did, those among the people who—against their own class interests—support what the U.S. is doing in the Gulf or are still confused would immediately turn against the government. That's why he has to come up with all sorts of lying justifications for U.S. actions.

In the Saudi desert, Bush came up with another excuse for going to war against Iraq. He claimed that Iraq might develop nuclear weapons very soon (although many experts say it will be at least ten years before Iraq on its own could build nuclear warheads) and that Saddam Hussein has to be stopped right now because “he has never possessed a weapon that he didn't use.” Here's a short Q&A on the hypocrisy behind Bush's new war justification:

Who built up Saddam Hussein through the past ten years with all kinds of modern weapons, including chemical bombs and technology for building nuclear weapons? The U.S. and its big-power allies.

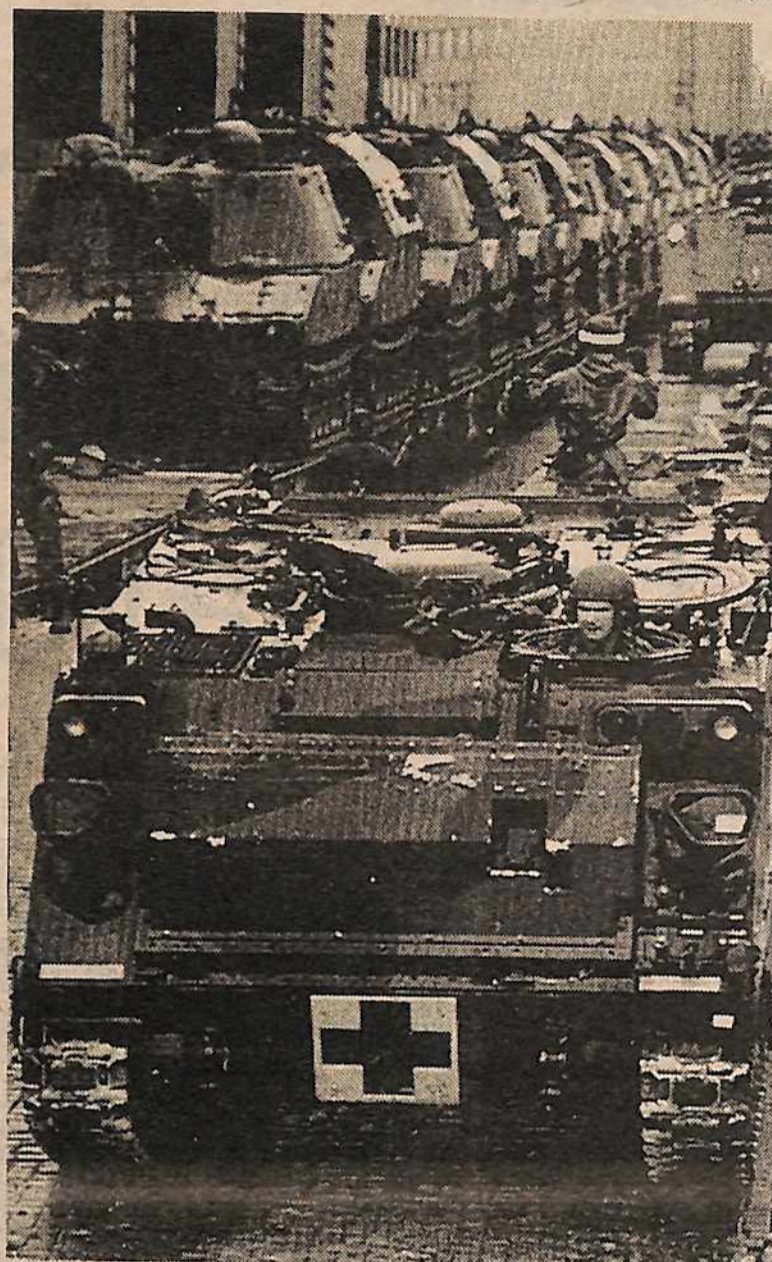
Who, along with its superpower rival, has held the world hostage over the past several decades with a nuclear arsenal destructive enough to wipe out human life and society? The United States.

Who has enabled the vicious oppressor states in Israel and South Africa to possess nuclear arms? The United States.

Which is the only country to use nuclear weapons in actual war? The U.S., which dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese cities at the end of World War 2.

## Compulsion for War

As Bush and the U.S. rulers continue to press for war, they are coming up against difficulties. There are reports in the press that there are divisions within the reaction-



U.S. armored personnel carriers and tanks, formerly stationed in Europe, being transported to Saudi Arabia last week.

ary Saudi ruling class over whether it is in their best interests to have a U.S.-initiated war against Iraq. Some Saudi rulers are worried that the widespread antiwar sentiment in the U.S. will eat away at the Bush administration's ability and will to fight and that the Saudi regime will be left very exposed. Although the Soviet Union has joined the international team ganging up on Iraq, the Soviets are also trying to push their own interests in the Middle East and have not yet given full endorsement to a U.S. offensive against Iraq.

Here in this country, polls in the major press say that there is little support for a U.S. war in the Gulf, even in “Middle America.” Protests against U.S. intervention in the Middle East have taken place from Hawaii to the East Coast, including a march of 15,000 in New York City in October. With Jeff Paterson setting an inspiring example, resistance in the military is growing. The protests and acts of resistance need to continue and become even more widespread.

But people also need to be aware that there are strong compulsions working on the U.S. rulers and Iraq and pushing them to war. Saddam Hussein faced huge economic problems after the end of Iraq's war with Iran, and these problems are a major reason why he invaded Kuwait. Although war with the U.S. could mean vast destruction for Iraq, Saddam also knows that his grip on power will be in danger if he backs down now.

On the other side, the U.S. needs a decisive “victory” in the Gulf and firm control of the Gulf oil resources in order to regain the position of undisputed top imperialist power in the world. The U.S. wants to make it clear to the other powers that only it has the military power capable

of reaching out quickly to far-flung places and putting down challenges to the “world order.” Bush and his class cannot afford to look weak by backing down or settling for less than a clear “victory”—they don't want to have their allies think that the U.S. can't be “tough” and fight a war because of domestic opposition.

The situation calls for even more determined mass protests and resistance—RIGHT NOW—against the U.S. war machine by all those who think the U.S. aggression in the Gulf is madness and a crime. This is the only way to make sure that the powers-that-be will have hell to pay if Bush launches a war.

## Down With the “New World Order”

Bush says that the cooperation of the major powers in the efforts in the Gulf is bringing a “new world order” into being. What's so new about this world order? It's the same world order where a handful of imperialists monopolize the wealth and have the power of life and death over the vast majority of the people in the world. A world order dominated by parasites who coldly plan mass murder and destruction to protect their privileges and position. This is in an outmoded world order that needs to be overthrown and replaced with a truly new, revolutionary world.

This downpressing system brutalizes, attacks, and murders people every day. The brutal war that Bush and his class are preparing for in the Gulf makes their criminal nature even more clear. But their empire and their war machine may well get stuck in the desert sand traps and dead ends in the Gulf. And this may open up great opportunities to push the revolutionary movement forward. □

**U.S. Hands Off the Persian Gulf!  
U.S. Troops Out of the Middle East!**

**Hell No, We Won't Go!  
Fuck the U.S. and All Its Might,  
Revolutionary War Is the One We'll Fight!**

# Jeff Paterson: ABOUT FACE! To the War Machine Part 2

By Jack Gardener

In Part 1 of the interview with Jeff Paterson which appeared in this paper last week, RW contributing writer Jack Gardener asked Jeff about what happened at the airfield when he refused to board a military plane for Saudi Arabia and the kind of support he has gotten. Gardener had hoped to talk to Jeff face to face when he came to the San Francisco Bay Area to participate in a teach-in and meet veterans and other GI resisters. But the Marines suddenly cancelled Jeff's leave and confined him to Hawaii, so Gardener interviewed Jeff over the phone. In this concluding part, Jeff talks about how his views changed after he joined the military and what he feels is required to stop the U.S. war machine in the Persian Gulf.

RW: What circumstances led you to join the Marines four years ago?

JP: It was a combination of all kinds of things, like everybody. It was a combination of coming out of a small town, difficulty in finding employment opportunities...laying irrigation pipe for the rest of your life. And actually kind of believing that you'd be serving your country by going out there and being patriotic, and then you'd come back and everybody would go, "Ah, he's a great person." Being respectable, getting some discipline in your life, and all this other bullshit.

RW: Well, then what happened in your life and in the world to change your thinking?

JP: The first time I started waking up was right after school, artillery school. I guess, at first you go through boot camp, you start seeing what they're doing—going down in the hole, bayoneting baby dolls and trying to stab the ones with the red stars and avoid stepping on the ones that don't have the red stars...kind of like a selective killing machine. Even then I thought, "That's bullshit," but I just wrote it off as kind of extreme. But, well, I guess the Marine Corps is kind of extreme.

Then, I got out of boot camp, went over to Okinawa, Japan. You see how the military has this attitude toward the people living there, really condescending—like, "We're Americans, we won the war and you're just lucky that we let you live here." Little kids would come up to you and flash the peace sign, and guys would go, "Yeah, two bombs, two bombs." Real American humor. And, at that time, you're either gonna go one way or the other. You're gonna go, "Okay, this is my privileged position, I'm an American and we did win the war." Or you're going to say, "This is bullshit, these guys are a bunch of assholes."

Contributing writer Jack Gardener traveled to Panama after the December 1989 U.S. invasion. He talked to victims of the invasion, visited refugee camps and mass grave sites, interviewed U.S. officials and soldiers, and uncovered evidence of U.S. atrocities. This journey is chronicled in a four-part series that began in RW #548. More recently he has covered the intense struggles of the Central American immigrants in L.A.'s Pico-Union barrio who are fighting against police barricades and an INS concentration camp. Gardener is a participant in the 1990-91 "Yo! The World Is Being Turned Upside Down!" tour of revolutionary journalists.



Jeff Paterson speaks to demonstrators.

From there it only got worse. You go to South Korea, and the entire situation with condescending attitudes increases, it comes out much sharper. I was wandering around Seoul, Korea, and after you wander around and you wander outside the main metropolitan area you start hearing these bombs going off—pow, pow, pow. And you start to wonder—we have 55,000 troops upholding this? What is our exact role there—like protecting them from the North as if the North is going to invade tomorrow and all that bullshit? And going through the whole propaganda thing at the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea), and having them instill this fear that the North is massing on the border....

And then you go to the Philippines. I was there during the last major coup (attempt) against Aquino. We were sent in to guard "American interests and American lives" in the hotel district, the financial district. It's bullshit. Even that, supposedly "protecting" these people—what it comes down to is just another extension of this foreign policy that put this entire scenario in place.

RW: I was in Panama six weeks after the U.S. invasion, and one of the things that really pissed me off was that so many of the GIs acted like the people were just dirt, especially the women. Was there any controversy about that, does everybody go for that?

JP: No, everybody doesn't go for it, but it's

so much easier just to shut up and go along with it, because that's the official position. That's command level, what's approved of. If you're gonna speak out against it you're going up against the brass. And all your buddies are like—you know, "I don't want to be uncool." What they're doing is just protecting the privileged position they've been given. And when you get to Korea or the Philippines, all the contradictions are still there but in much sharper form...

My job is Field Artillery Fire Direction

Controlman, like a cannon director. You're going over to these countries and you're just blowing away empty firing ranges, shooting over schools, shooting somebody's house. When I was in South Korea, we shot this guy's house and he goes to his government and the government says, "Well, these guys make mistakes and that's just the way it goes. Your house is made out of cardboard anyways"...(The U.S. military) gave him two boxes of MREs—field rations. And I guess he was expected to rebuild that wall of his house with these cardboard field rations. That's the way we dealt with that.

In the Philippines, when you shoot at the firing range, there's actually people that live in tunnels underneath the firing range. Between volleys, they pick up the shrapnel and collect it, and after they're actually done firing, they take the shrapnel and they sell it to buy food for their families. So they actually have to sometimes close the range because there's people poking their heads out of holes looking for the next explosion so they can collect the shrapnel.

When I came back to my station in Hawaii—and even overseas—I started reading about the situation in Central America, South Africa and U.S. corporate interests there. Because I started to realize that there was another side to U.S. foreign policy, there was another side to history. George Washington and Abraham Lincoln aren't the greatest liberators the world has ever seen. And that really intrigued me—realizing that everything you learn in high school, in that sense, is really bullshit propaganda.

That's the way it is. We're down there killing off people because they dare to oppose death-squad regimes or they dare to voice their opinion, and 5 percent of the nation can't control them. The vast majority of the nation is (oppressed) because of their skin color.

So that's where I was coming from. I got back to Hawaii and I saw that there's all kinds of concrete things people can do. Instead of saying, "This is the way it is and I better just shut up so I don't make any waves." On one level, I got out there and started going to demonstrations and all that good stuff. On another level, I knew damn well that if the military got wind of that—even though all this is protected under the First Amendment and technically it's not against regulations—they have dozens of other ways that they could have stopped me

## Support Jeff Paterson and All GI Resisters!

The U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf/Committee to Defend Jeff Paterson is calling for protest actions throughout the country on December 3 to support Jeff Paterson and all GI resisters. Jeff faces a court-martial at Kaneohe Marine Corps Air Station in Hawaii on December 3.

This is the first trial of a political antiwar resister who refused orders to the Gulf. Since Jeff publicly refused to go, at least 24 other GIs have declared their opposition to the U.S. military occupation of the Gulf. Three have spent time in the brig. A number have openly gone AWOL, and at least one resister has been forced on a plane to Saudi Arabia. More are stepping forward.

The U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf/Committee to Defend Jeff Paterson (a participant in the Stop the U.S. War Machine No Matter What It Takes! Action Network) can be contacted at:

c/o Eric A. Seitz  
820 Milliani St. Suite 714  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808)533-7434

from doing that. So I dedicated my off-duty time to doing this and just pretending to go along with everything they say while on duty. And that's what I've been doing for the last year and a half.

**RW:** And then the Persian Gulf hit and brought things to a head. . . . I don't know if you've heard this yet, but at Fort Lewis in Washington, a group of protesters marched on to the base and then blocked off the entrance, shutting it down for about half an hour. Apparently this is controversial in the movement in the Seattle area. Some people are saying it's too soon to take such "drastic action," that people should wait until the movement is bigger and gets to a higher level. I'd imagine some might be saying the same thing about what you did. What do you say to that?

**JP:** What it comes down to is, we can't wait for the war to begin. You can't wait for the body bags to come back and go, "Oh, great, the body bags are here, let's do something." If anybody really cares about it, they'll be working right now to stop the damn war. It usually comes down like, "Wait for the coalition to act." And in turn, everybody'll sit around, going around in circles, infighting about Bring the Troops Home Now, Bring the Troops Home Soon, or Bring the Troops Home Someday. All these bullshit-type arguments. And then it's an argument like Bring the Troops Home, Please, or something like that.

**RW:** I guess the thinking is something like—you wait until there's a bigger movement before you step out.

**JP:** Or you water down your message so "you get the largest amount of support, the broadest number of people." But in the end it comes down to you're going to make your message so watered down and so broad that nobody cares. Nobody's gonna go out of their way to uphold it. Certainly, nobody's going to take dedicated action. It's hard to get excited about Bring the Troops Home, Please.

**RW:** In one of your communiqués from the



At a fundraiser for Jeff's defense (left to right): Jim Albertini, Phil Berrigan, Brian Willson, and Jeff Paterson.

brig you speak directly to the question of "paying the price" for your action. I'll just read what you wrote, and maybe you can expand on it a little bit. "The truth will not set you free, but demands that you act upon it as a person of conscience. The price of living by one's principles and acting on ideals may seem high, but to do less is to recognize truth and ignore it. History has proven that the potential price to be paid in doing nothing is far greater." What's the history you are drawing on, and what do you see is the price of doing nothing?

**JP:** Some of the parallels between Nazi Germany and right now is this: If there had been a dedicated opposition to Hitler when he was coming up through the ranks—instead of saying, "Maybe we should wait until later or something else happens before we actually oppose this guy." If there was a dedicated opposition, there would never

have been a Hitler. It comes down to overcoming all these rationalizations about how "some people might be upset by these actions, my parents might be upset because they just don't understand." It comes down to if you don't stand for anything, you're never going to stand anywhere. It comes down to whose side are you on and what are you going to do with your life.

**RW:** Another thing you wrote was "Only by being inept activists can we expect the system we need to change to look upon us without disdain." What is your attitude toward attacks on you by the system?

**JP:** When I went into this I didn't have any illusions about what they were going to do to me. . . . It's a great compliment when the system starts taking notice and starts moving against you, because that's when you're being effective. And if we all sit

around and go on retreats and pray, the government's not going to care, it's not going to act against you, because you're not doing anything, you're not making any difference at all.

**RW:** Something else that really stands out is the way you put down national chauvinism, something that the military surely spends a lot of time brainwashing all the troops with—not that they didn't get the same shit before—but it's even heavier in the military. Do you view yourself as a citizen of the globe rather than of the U.S.?

**JP:** Absolutely, there's no question about that. This whole patriotism—the entire flag law is all about that, too, dictating that this is the acceptable position and you must respect this symbol of our great country and all this other garbage. That's what they pushed on people growing up in school—you have to salute the flag. That way, you become so nationalist that something happens two feet on the other side of the border, it's "not your problem." If your government had anything to do with it, then "they had good reason"—to protect your way of life, to protect your privilege. So if you're going to start thinking about sympathizing with other peoples, you have to throw away all that nationalism. You have to throw away the blinders that go with it.

**RW:** Here we are on the brink of a U.S. war that could murder many thousands—perhaps millions—of people and that you've put your life on the line to resist. And yet, you really seem pretty optimistic. In a communique you write: "We may well be standing at the threshold of a new era." What kind of world do you envision when you say that?

**JP:** It doesn't take a lot of imagination to see a world with people relating to each other on the basis of justice and equality, without any exploitation, especially without the blatant exploitation that exists between America and the colonial countries now. That's the kind of world I'd like to see. That's actually possible, and everybody should be working for it. □

## Invasion Comparison

One of the main Persian Gulf themes of George Bush has been to compare Iraq's Saddam Hussein to Adolf Hitler. For example, Bush told a Vermont crowd in October: "I'm reading a book, and it's a book of history, a great, big thick history about World War 2, and there's a parallel between what Hitler did to Poland and what Saddam Hussein has done to Kuwait." But if Hussein is "a Hitler," what does that make Bush and the U.S. ruling class who are responsible for the murder of thousands in Panama during the invasion a year ago—not to speak of millions killed by the U.S. in Vietnam and all around the world?

An estimated 300 Kuwaitis—mostly members of the armed forces—may have been killed when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August. At least that is the figure given by a former top official of the Kuwaiti government—the government booted out by the invasion and supported by the United States. The official also claims that after the initial invasion, Iraqi troops continued to carry out three to four executions a day. But even if we accept these figures, the total number doesn't approach the carnage created by the December 20, 1989 Yankee assault on Panama.

The U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM—headquarters for all U.S. Western Hemisphere military operations south of Mexico) in Panama admits that the invasion killed 515 Panamanians. SOUTHCOM says that 202 of the Panamanians were civilians. Another 262 were wearing civilian clothes but, according to the U.S., might have been members of the Panamanian military, Noriega's Dignity Battalions or some other resistance force. The U.S.-installed government in Panama gives the figure of 570 as the number killed by U.S. troops, of which only 68 can be proved to have been members of the military. The official figures by both the U.S. and Panamanian governments exceed the body count in Kuwait, and the number of civilian deaths acknowledged by the two governments is many times greater than in Kuwait.

But even these figures are very small compared to the actual death and destruction rained down on Panama by

the U.S. blitzkrieg. The U.S. attack destroyed a whole neighborhood of mainly poor and working people, El Chorillo, in Panama City. So far, 14 mass graves have been identified—sites where U.S. troops dumped bodies during the early days of the invasion. Several privately financed exhumations have taken place, and reports as to how many bodies have been discovered so far vary from less than 150 to nearly 600 (questions have been raised about the latter figure, which was cited in *Central America Report* and reported in *RW* #579). But the vast majority of the mass graves have yet to be exhumed. Some Panamanians report having seen U.S. troops throw corpses into the sea. Other dead were buried privately by relatives or friends who

refused to report the dead for fear of reprisal (since the U.S. and the regime they installed in Panama assumed all who died in civilian clothes to be members of Noriega's Dignity Battalions or military).

Some human rights organizations in Panama and in the region estimate that from 3,000 to 7,000 Panamanians were killed by the invasion or are still missing.

And that's just Panama. What about Central America overall, where the U.S. has financed, trained, supplied and, in many cases, directly led repressive forces in the murder of over 120,000 people in the past ten years? What about Vietnam, where at least a million Vietnamese were murdered by the U.S. and U.S.-led forces? And what about all the other in-

vasions, "counter-insurgency" and death-squad operations around the world—too many to mention here?

We also need to look at what all this murder and destruction serves. As much as he might wish to be more, Saddam Hussein is really a medium-sized oppressor dependent on the Great Powers. He is the creation of U.S. and other powers and served their interests for many years. But Bush and other leaders of the big powers, like Hitler before them, are driven by imperialist compulsion for domination—not just of this or that region, but of the entire world.

If Bush really wants to find a "parallel" to Hitler, he ought to look in the mirror.

J.G.



Panamanians investigating U.S. atrocities exhuming a mass grave last summer.

# "Fear Nothing, Be Down for the Whole Thing" Hits Atlanta



Carl Dix

Special to the RW

The Fear Nothing, Be Down for the Whole Thing tour hit Atlanta, Saturday, November 17. Almost 100 people crowded into a hotel ballroom to hear RCP national spokesperson Carl Dix, notorious flag-burner Joey Johnson, and fierce revolutionary sister Sasha. This was a program that dissed the powers and offered a vision of a world without exploitation and oppression—and what it's going to take to get there.

In the weeks leading up to the event RCYB youth had gone out to the projects to build the tour, and homeless people took up the task of passing out fliers on downtown street corners. But the fight to bring the tour to Atlanta really sharpened up on Sunday, October 28 when the RCYB led the people in taking on a secret Ku Klux Klan rally on the steps of the Georgia capitol. The only publicity for the Kluckers' rally had been a two-inch article in the newspaper a couple of days before. The powers had hoped their vicious pointmen would be able to hold their rally without facing the fierce opposition that usually greets them in Atlanta.

No demonstration to oppose the KKK rally had been organized. But the RCYB discussed their obligation to walk point and decided to go up in the face of the Klan, even though some of the youth around the Brigade were forbidden to go to the demonstration by their parents.

Three RCYB members took their red flag right up to the police barricades—there were at least 100 cops there to protect 20 robed Klansmen. The youth chanted "Fuck their system, Fuck the Klan. Revolution is our plan."

There isn't a lot of foot traffic around the Capitol, but people driving by began to park their cars and join the RCYB's counterdemonstration. Some homeless people who had been watching also joined. Within an hour, 60 to 70 people were standing with the RCYB against the KKK. There were Black and white students, tourists, members of ACT-UP, Refuse & Resist! activists, homeless people, and ghetto youth. Three women in African dress who were in town for a Black educators conference hugged the RCYB members in appreciation for their leading role.

The enemy decided to strike back and try and prevent the "Fear Nothing, Be Down For the Whole Thing" program. On

**"I'm glad this kind of thing is getting out in the open—these kinds of leaders and this kind of tour. I'm glad it's getting out. Channeling some of this energy that is getting misdirected. Violence on each other and hoping for some kind of Black Capitalism to take the heat off. So I was really glad that he got into some of that stuff."**

Black student

**"I enjoyed hearing men talk about equality with women, and to me, when I hear a man talk about equality between men and women, and constantly says "Men and Women," with men's names first, I don't believe him. . . . I heard him a number of times refer to "Sisters and Brothers," and I really appreciated that."**

Middle-class white woman

**"I loved their speeches, really. And I love to hear Sasha speak because she says she's down with it and everything. . . . Like they talk about, everything will change and get better and better if we keep fighting—the world will change and we'll put the high-price people on the bottom and us on the top. I'm gonna take some of their words back to my school, to the teachers and students, and tell them how it went on. Because some people want to join, some people don't—we sit around, talk, and see how you could get a whole lot of people together to change the world, and if we do that I believe we will change it. Other people like the president talk about how it's bad to burn the flag, but it needs to be burnt, and we put up another one. I was glad to join the RCYB because I think we oughta be fightin' back. Cause all they want to do is put us in jail and lock us up. They always wanna be against us."**

Young Black proletarian woman

**"I saw that the so-called "flaws in the system" was a wrong way of looking at it. The flaw is the system! And seeing the RCYB and the RCP in the RW newspaper going out and going up in the face of these reactionaries, and going out in support of revolution, really encouraged me to go out and do it in my own school, which made me some kind of an outcast. But if you're going to be a revolutionary you're going to be going up against a lot of shit in this country. At least that's the way it is now, until we can change more people's consciousness. But it convinced me to go out in school and tell people that what they thought was Communism was just Capitalism dressed in Marxist clothes, like Bob Avakian says. Just the fact that I was going out there and doing something made me feel that I was doing something concrete, rather than going out and just talking about revolution. I am trying to be a part of making it. I thought it was real important to come here not just because I wanted to see Carl speak, but also to show people that even in the most backward places people can and will be won over to a revolutionary stand. So people in L.A. and New York, people that maybe have lost all hope that revolution will win any support in the South will see that it is possible. I'm getting recruited into the RCYB right now."**

**"I thought Carl Dix made some really important points about how if the gangs would stop fighting each other and get together and fight the system, a lot of their anger would be directed in a more powerful direction. If that happens, the system is dead."**

White youth from the rural South



Sasha

November 14 the YWCA of Metropolitan Atlanta tacked a letter to the door of Revolution Books Outlet saying that someone had "shown some demonstrated concern" to the United Way (the Y's major source of funds) about the content of the speech and that the YWCA would therefore not honor their contract to rent their Phyllis Wheatly facility to the Fear Nothing tour. The YWCA was fully aware of the content when the original agreement was signed November 2 and had even reiterated the agreement the morning of the letter when they agreed to rent their hall to the tour for a dress rehearsal on the 16th. While lawyers and tour supporters expressed their support for the tour and their outrage at the cancellation to the YWCA, plans were made to switch the program to a hotel ballroom.

Switching the hall at the last minute and shuttling people from one place to another caused an unavoidable delay in beginning the program. But the people used it well—crowding around the Revolution Books table, buying the *RW*, *Cold Truth*, *Liberating Truth*, and *Women Are Not Incubators*, and reading and debating them. This was especially notable among students from the

Atlanta University Center, an important Black university complex.

The crowd was diverse—college and high school students, professors, proletarians, movement activists, proletarian youth, unrepentant women, pro-choice activists, homeless people, and Iranian immigrants. Earlier in the day there had been a demonstration against U.S. intervention in the Gulf at Fort Benning. And some people drove 100 miles from the demonstration to attend the program. People listened very intently when the speeches began, taking them very much to heart. And even the chants were taken very seriously. For example, one Black woman readily raised her fist and chanted "I'm willing to die for the people" but hesitated and gave much more thought to "I'm willing to die for all-the-way revolution."

Most of the proletarians and students and many of the others stayed for the reception and crowded around Carl, Joey, or Sasha. At one point, five or six young Black women got into intense debate and discussion with Sasha, after which one joined the RCYB and three others decided to run with the Brigade.



Joey Johnson

Special to the RW

## Our Ideology Is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

### Hatred for Oppression – It's Not Just a Personal Thing

by Bob Avakian

Recently I have been reading reports about building for the speaking tour by Carl Dix, and something that really hit me was the comments by a couple of basic youth about why they joined up with the Brigade. In slightly different words but to the same effect they talked about the question of revenge, particularly revenge for what the police do, because they themselves have been brutalized by the police, they have seen family or friends murdered by police, have seen the police rampage through their neighborhoods with no respect for the people. And these youth themselves have been grappling with the question of how this desire for revenge relates to revolution.

Well, first of all, hatred for the oppressor is not only righteous, it is absolutely necessary, and without it you can't even think about getting out from under oppression. Besides that, the way you are treated by the system and how the system's enforcers do you—this is not just a personal thing. How you are treated by the police, by the welfare agencies, by the judges, by the school administrators... and on and on... all this is a product of how the system operates. This is a system that exploits, oppresses, and degrades whole groups of people. In fact, such exploitation, oppression, and degradation is what this system is all about and how this system keeps itself in effect.

Hatred for how this comes down on you can be and should be a basis, a starting point, for moving to revolution to get rid of this whole system. But moving to such a revolutionary position also means moving beyond just the desire for revenge, beyond just thinking about how you yourself can get out from under oppression—it means making a leap to where you are out for nothing less than to wipe out and tear up the roots of oppression not just in one place, one country or region, and not just for one group or nation, but worldwide and for humanity over-all. This is the stand of the international proletariat and its ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

In reading a report describing how one young brother talked about the cold-blooded murder of a friend by the police, a lot of images came to my mind—images of other vicious murders by police I had known about or heard about but also images of horrendous brutality carried out by enforcers of the same system in many different parts of the world. One image in particular that stuck in my mind was something I have written about before, at the beginning of the book *Democracy: Can't We Do Better Than That?*:

"In... Guatemala, numerous accounts in recent years have described scene after scene where government troops enter a village and, after executing everyone of fighting age, proceed to brutally murder old people, rape and kill women, and then take the small children and infants and bash their heads open."

Think about it: the government troops in Guatemala carrying out these sick and beast-like acts are not just the "cousins" of the police in the USA. In fact they are run by the same powers-that-be, by the rulers of the imperialistic USA who are responsible not only for scenes like this in Guatemala but for the same kinds of monstrous things all over the world. And, on the other side, the people who are the victims of such atrocities, all over the world, are *our* people: we share the same condition of exploitation and oppression and the same mission of rising up to put an end to all this.

If people could sit down and talk with other people from all the different places in the country they're in—and if they could sit down and talk with people from all over the world—they would come to see that the masses of people share the same basic conditions everywhere. And, in fact, there is a way in which people can do that: It is the role of the vanguard forces of the proletarian revolution—which in the USA means the RCP, USA—to be the means through which oppressed people "sit down and talk with each other," in effect. That is, it is through the work of their vanguard (and in this the Party's newspaper and other publications are crucial) that the masses of people come to know the situation of people like themselves not just in a particular country but worldwide. They come to see that they have a common problem—the imperialist system and all relations of exploitation and oppression—and a common solution: proletarian revolution to uproot all such systems and all such relations, worldwide.

In conclusion, let me go back to the point I started with: the question of revenge and its relations to revolution. I believe the following can serve as a basic summary of the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on this question:

"What we need is not simply to strike back against the oppressor, not simply to get some revenge, but much more than that to rise up all the way, carry through and make revolution."

*Bullets*, p. 23

"If we didn't have the burning desire to get rid of all this and bury it once and for all, then we would have no right to call ourselves revolutionaries, and we would never be able to lead anybody in making revolution. But that spirit will never make a revolution by itself. It has to be tempered with revolutionary theory and a scientific method to be able to deal with the complexities of what a revolution is about and to be able to bring forward the force that can actually make a revolution, and that is the masses of people in their millions."

*Bullets*, p. 191

"It is only the international proletariat that needs no excuses or apologies, in some form or other, for exploitation, the oppression of women and of nations and national minorities, war, and a thousand other monstrosities; it is *only the class-conscious revolutionary proletariat* that insists that all these things can and will be eliminated from the earth. When this outlook and this leadership is combined with the anger and burning desire of the masses of oppressed to put an end to all this—then an unconquerable force is forged."

*Reflections, Sketches, and Provocations*, p. 133

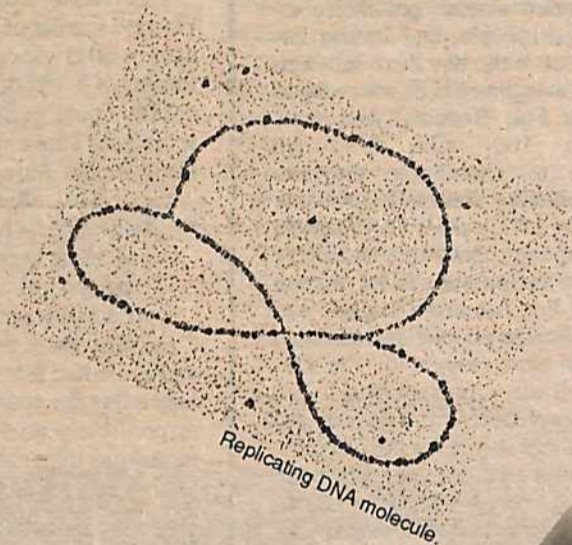
## Science for the Revolution #1

# What Is It

*This week the RW presents a new feature: "Science for the Revolution." This will be a series of articles on scientific questions which are important to the basic people in their struggle to make revolution and transform the world. The author of this series — A.S.K. — is a contributing writer to the Revolutionary Worker with experience in the struggle for scientific experimentation as well as the revolutionary struggle. The RW would like to hear from our readers — especially the sisters and brothers in the prisons — on how they like these science articles, what they didn't understand, and what questions they would like us to explore in future issues.*



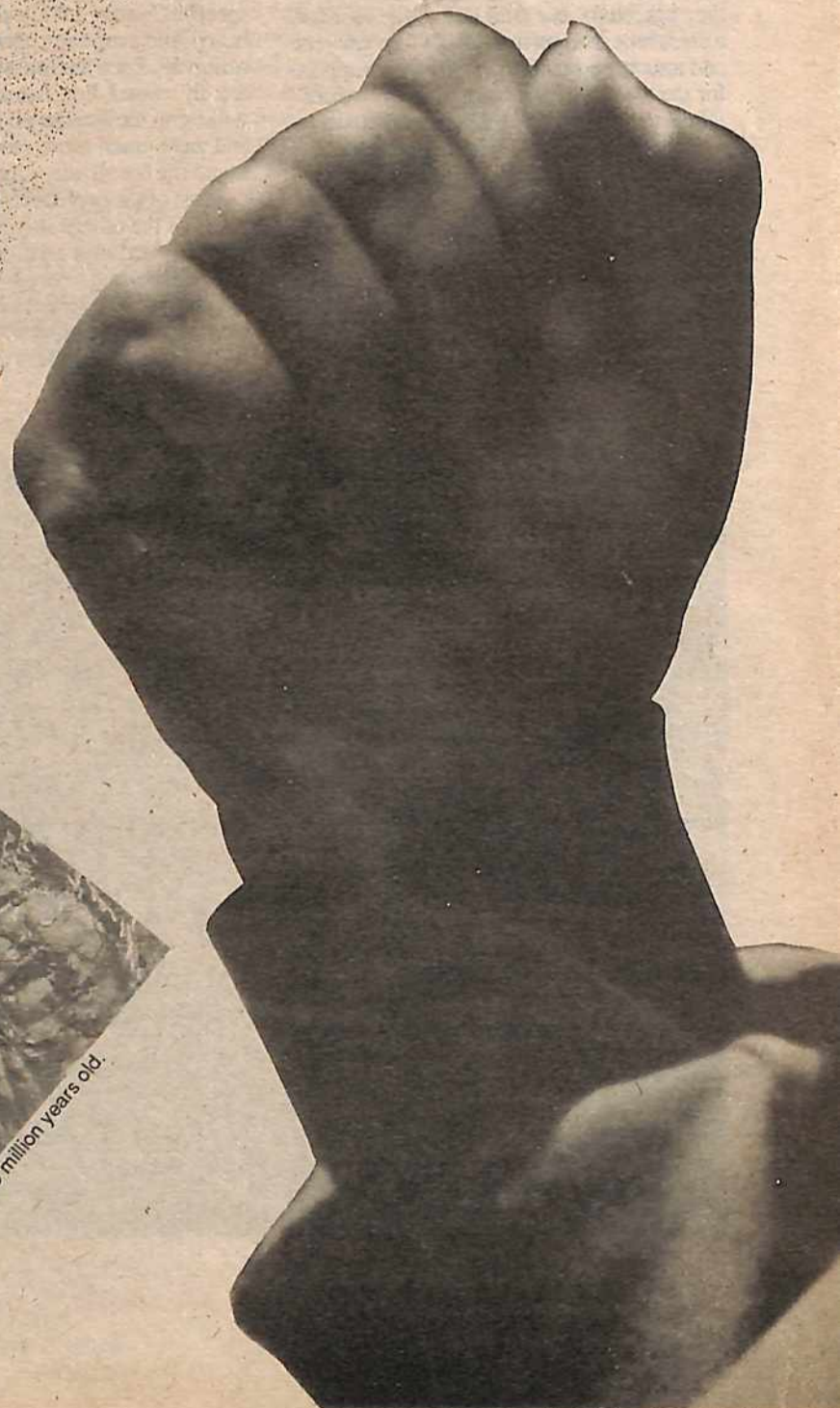
The Great Nebula in the constellation Orion.



Replicating DNA molecule.

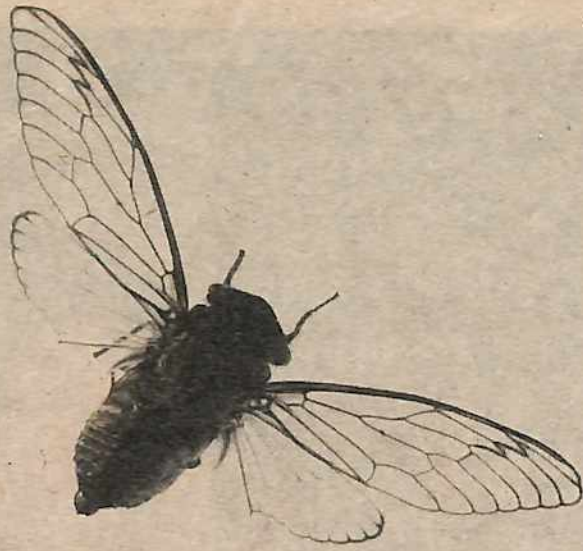


Trilobite fossil, about 530 million years old.





# Life?



by A.S.K.

**W**hy is this question important? Human beings all over the world ascribe special value to life. In all cultures we celebrate life and mourn death. The slander that, in some cultures or some parts of the world, "life is cheap" is never true. Everywhere we value more that which is alive than lifeless inanimate objects—or at least most of us would claim to do so. We are aware that we are alive, and most of us want to stay that way as long as possible—although many of us would give our lives for the sake of others under certain conditions. We look around us and reflect on what, if anything, distinguishes us from everything else around, or on what we have in common with other forms of life. We argue about where life came from and whether there is life after death, wonder about whether there is life in other parts of the universe, and whether life will continue to exist on this planet. Most of us agree that all life is not of equal social value. Most of us value human life above that of plants or other animals—at the same time that more and more of us recognize that the future survival and quality of life of human beings is closely tied up with that of other life-forms on this planet. Human beings kill life all the time. Whether it is right or wrong to kill various plants or animals is a question of human social priorities. And there are—and will be—class conflicts between people over such questions. These conflicts are shaped by the nature of bourgeois relations dominating the world, pitting the interests of the few against the interests of humanity as a whole. For instance, there is a world of difference between killing plants and animals for food and destroying life in the oceans or in the rainforests for the get-rich-quick schemes of oil and logging companies.

The most important thing to realize is that people in different social positions, in different social classes, tend to have very different priorities when it comes to *human* life as well. We see this everyday. The rich and powerful don't value the lives of the poor and oppressed very much. They use them for work, or for war. But these individual lives of the poor are pretty much expendable from the powers' point of view. For instance the powers-that-be in the U.S. look at the youth in the ghettos and barrios as worthless and dangerous, the dregs of society. Many of the ruling elite would just as soon see these youth wiped off the face of the earth. On the other hand we look at these very same youth and see ourselves and our future—we see the class of people that holds the potential for a radically different and better world.

So what about the killing of other human

beings? Some people say this is never justified. Others like us say that there is a world of difference between the oppressors and the oppressed on this question. A world of difference between the violence of the rapist and the violence of the woman who blows away the rapist. A world of difference between the army which says "let's go kill us some gooks or ragheads"—in the service of a system of exploitation—and the army which says "let's go free the people through revolutionary war."

Those who argue that all human life must be preserved at all times, no matter what, fail to recognize that in today's world such views allow a tremendous amount of suffering and dying to go on unchallenged, worldwide, and on a daily basis. This too is a fact of life.

And this must be understood around the question of the right to abortion as well. The so-called "pro-life" people who fight to make it impossible for women to get abortions say that "a fetus is life!" and should therefore not be killed. They are not only acting as if a fetus being alive were the same thing as it being a full human being, which it isn't. (See next "Science for the Revolution" column for more on this question.) They are also basically saying the life of a fetus has more social value than the life of a woman. They are saying, "The lives of women be damned!"

The question of what is life is very relevant these days as people struggle over the morality of abortion, issues of environmental destruction, different kinds of wars and the question of pacifism vs. revolutionary violence, and so on. We need to be thinking about life—about what it is and what it isn't—about what's precious about it on the one hand, but why even human life can't and shouldn't always be preserved on the other hand. The powers-that-be create a great deal of confusion and misinformation around this vital question as part of keeping the masses of people mentally shackled and oppressed overall. Most people are kept in the dark as to some of the basic scientific facts of life, the kinds of things which can be (and have been) studied and figured out, tested and proven in the real world. What follows is an attempt to help correct this situation.

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In considering all the different stuff on Earth, human beings usually draw a big distinction between what we say is "alive" and what is not. But what does that really mean? It is a fact that our own bodies and all the plants, animals, and even rocks and soils on Earth contain elements made long ago *inside stars*. So what really makes us, or any other living creature, or organism, different from a lump of coal?

The answer is not so obvious. A lump of coal doesn't get up and walk around, but plants don't either and yet they breathe! A river is home to many animals and plants and is itself a tremendous material force, carving out the land around it, but is the river itself a living organism?

The fact is that living things on Earth have a lot in common with non-living things and with all the stuff in the universe generally. Consider this: As it is, 99 percent of the known universe is made up of only two chemical elements: hydrogen and helium. Other really common chemical elements are produced inside the cores of stars when they start to burn out and collapse. The heat and pressure inside those stars is so great that thermonuclear reactions like those in a nuclear bomb take place: hydrogen atoms fuse into helium, helium fuses into carbon, carbon into oxygen, then neon, magnesium, silicon, sulfur, and so on, including nitrogen, calcium, iron. . .

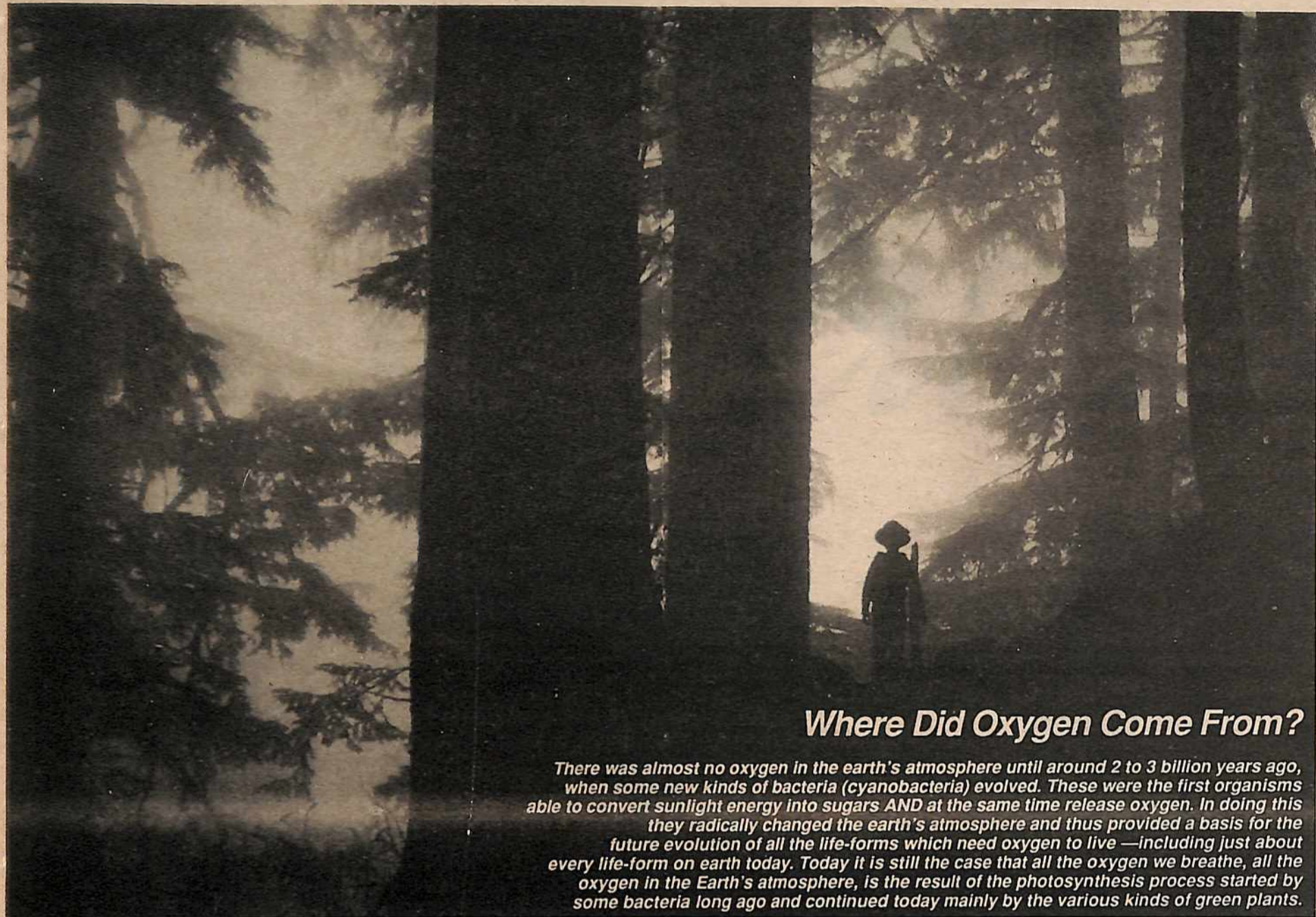
If some of these names seem familiar it is because many are very common elements *on Earth*. In fact it is now thought that all the chemical elements on Earth except for hydrogen and some helium were *originally produced billions of years ago inside stars*. Collapsing stars released these elements in space in the form of gases. And these gases eventually cooled down and condensed to form new stars and planets. This is a process that is still going on in other parts of the universe. And this is how our star, the Sun, and its nine orbiting planets—including the Earth—were formed.

On our planet, all living things are made up mostly of only *four main elements*: carbon, oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen. For instance, these four chemical elements make up 99 percent of the atoms in our own bodies. About one-fifth of our individual body weight is made up of carbon atoms. And every one of these carbon atoms was originally produced inside a star. So it really is true, as the astronomer Carl Sagan likes to say, that WE ARE MADE OF STARSTUFF! It is worth thinking about this, to appreciate the continuity and similarities between all the things on Earth, living and non-living, and all the rest of the matter in the universe.

Of course all the common everyday atoms on Earth are only basic building blocks. They are put together in many different ways. Different kinds of atoms combine to form basic units called molecules. For instance, a basic unit, or molecule, of water is made of two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen. And atoms can move around and trade places with other atoms in the same or in different molecules. This is what's called chemical reactions. A

Continued on page 10





## Where Did Oxygen Come From?

There was almost no oxygen in the earth's atmosphere until around 2 to 3 billion years ago, when some new kinds of bacteria (cyanobacteria) evolved. These were the first organisms able to convert sunlight energy into sugars AND at the same time release oxygen. In doing this they radically changed the earth's atmosphere and thus provided a basis for the future evolution of all the life-forms which need oxygen to live—including just about every life-form on earth today. Today it is still the case that all the oxygen we breathe, all the oxygen in the Earth's atmosphere, is the result of the photosynthesis process started by some bacteria long ago and continued today mainly by the various kinds of green plants.

## What Is Life?

Continued from page 9

lot of different combinations and a lot of different changes are always happening. Matter can take many different forms, which is why everything on Earth isn't just one big blob! Atoms are never still. The components of all matter, living or not, are always moving, changing, and interacting with each other.

But if all matter is always in motion, what, if anything, characterizes "living" matter? On our planet even the simplest living organisms are very complex—meaning that they have a lot of internal com-

ponents and levels of organization. Living organisms are typically made up of one or more living cells. Cells are tiny sub-units of life which are basically groupings of molecules enclosed by some kind of membrane and within which lots of chemical reactions take place. Some living organisms, such as bacteria or some microscopic pond organisms, have only one cell, while other organisms have a great many interconnected and interdependent cells. The average human body has TRILLIONS (that's millions of millions!) of interconnected living cells.

But complexity and cellular organization are not, in and of themselves, enough to define life. There are, however, a number of processes which, put together, seem to characterize all life as we know it and which serve to distinguish living things from non-living things.

They are:

1. The ability to grow, and to process ("metabolize") some outside energy source.
2. The ability to reproduce.
3. The ability to encompass and reproduce change over the generations.

Let's look at each of these in turn:

### 1. Growth and Metabolism

All living things take in some kind of

energy source from the outside world and metabolize it. That means they burn it up and convert it into some new substances. This is how living things produce what they need to grow, develop and maintain their bodies. All living things also return some kind of waste product back to the outside environment.

It is obvious that people and animals "eat." But do plants "eat"? Yes, they do. Green plants "eat" by taking in sunlight energy (plus carbon dioxide gas and water) and converting it into the chemical energy of sugars and starches. This process is called photosynthesis. The sugars and starches produced go into making new leaves, fruits, seeds and so on. The plants also release to the outside world a "waste" metabolic by-product. Lucky for us, the "waste product" of green plants is the oxygen we need to breathe!

Animals, including people, get their energy source by eating plants—which have converted solar energy into chemical energy in the form of sugars and starches—and/or other animals which have in turn stored up some of that energy in their body tissues. All along the "food chain" the plants and animals use their "food" sources to grow, develop, and maintain their bodily functions. All living things go through this ongoing process of growth and metabolism. And in the course of this process they actively transform themselves and the outside world.

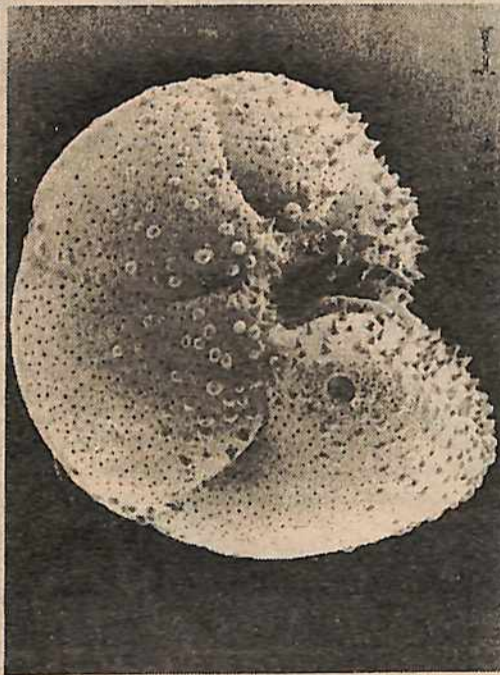
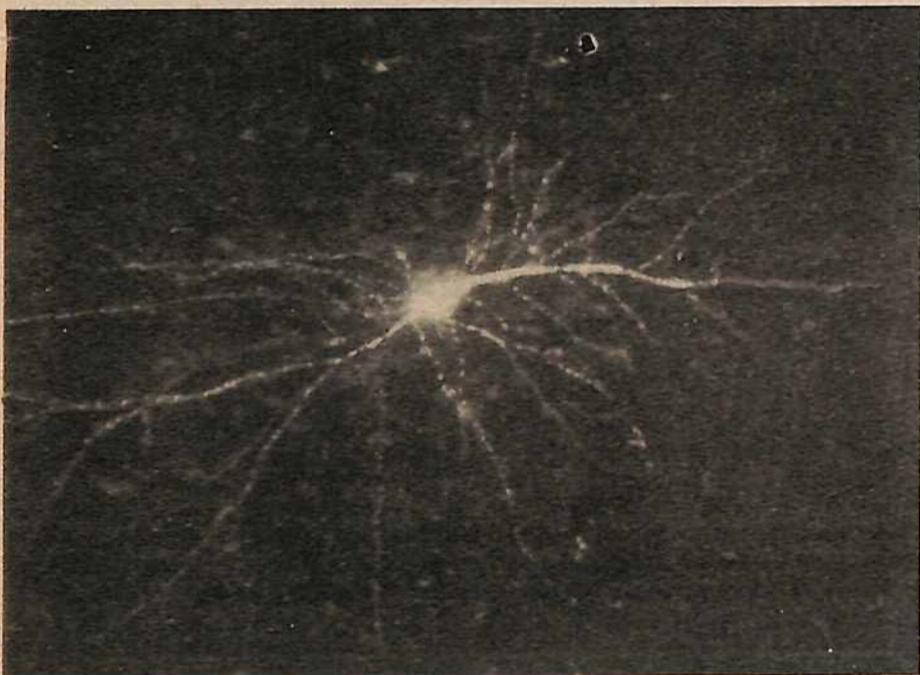
### 2. Reproduction

All the different kinds of living organisms reproduce. No living organism lives forever. And certainly not every individual living organism reproduces. (For example, not every individual animal has offspring.) But the ability to produce new generations of separate individuals is a feature of all the different kinds of living things.

There are many ways to do it: Some one-celled creatures just divide into two new cells. Some creatures can clone themselves, producing identical new individuals. Many kinds of plants and animals on earth have evolved sexual reproduction, combining different female egg cells and male sperm cells to produce seeds or eggs with their own unique identity and potential. Whichever way it's done, the ability to reproduce is a key feature of all living things.

### 3. A Way To Encompass and Reproduce Change Over the Generations

To encompass change means to take it in, incorporate it, as well as to make it happen. To reproduce change over the generations means to repeat it and pass it on to others.



Left: Human brain cell. Right: A one-celled marine animal.

## Life Has Different Levels of Organization

On Earth at least, living matter spans a lot of different levels of organization, and not all "life processes" take place at all levels. For instance, a one-celled organism such as a paramecium goes through all the processes described here. But in an organism whose body is made up of a lot of living cells, these cells are subordinate parts of the whole body and as long as they are part of that body they are not independently alive as distinct individual organisms. For example, each cell in a human body is alive as part of the whole living body and participates in many of the life processes of the body. These cells process energy, assume specialized functions such as of a liver cell or a sperm cell for instance, but these living sub-units don't fulfill all the criteria for living organisms on their own. For instance, sperm cells don't reproduce, even though they are living sub-units of whole organisms that do reproduce and they participate in the reproduction process.

The term "organism" refers to that level of life—of whole individual creatures—which meets all the criteria of life discussed here: the capacity for growth, metabolism, reproduction, and some sort of system through which hereditary characteristics can be passed on to other generations. Keep in mind however that while only individual organisms "reproduce" (not genes or any other sub-unit, and not populations or species or any larger entity), evolutionary change takes place over multiple generations at yet another level, that of species—or whole distinct "types"—of life. Individuals reproduce, species evolve.

Probably the biggest difference between living things and non-living things is the way they interact with the outside world. This has to do with the qualitatively different way living things change the outside world and are changed by it.

Take something non-living like a rock. It can be changed by the outside world—for instance, it can be worn down by wind and rain. It can also change the outside world—for instance, it could divert the water in a stream, or if thrown it could break the windshield of a car. And it could even passively record change over time—for instance it might be squashed into layers by pressures inside the earth or hold the fossil imprint of some long gone plant or animal. A river could carve out the land, switch from a trickling stream to a raging torrent after a big rain, or be pent up by a dam. A volcanic eruption could block sunlight with ash and consume millions of acres with burning lava. A tropical storm could spawn multiple tornadoes and cause weather changes in far distant regions—the storm could gain strength or eventually fizzle out. These are all examples of the very dynamic interplay which can take place between non-living matter and the surrounding environment. But not even the most dynamic of non-living systems has the ability that all living things have to bring forth and incorporate “new” features, and reproduce and spread these changes in an ongoing way over the generations.

The way it works is this: All living organisms, at least on this planet, have a genetic system, based primarily on collections of what are called DNA molecules contained within their cells. This DNA is like a chemical storehouse of information which programs a lot of the growth and development of an individual organism and determines many, though not all, of its basic features. It is the storehouse of information for those characteristics that are inheritable. It is passed on from generation to generation. And it contains the basic information which might make one egg cell develop into a dandelion while another developed into a rabbit or another into a human being.

Comparing the DNA in the cells of different species reveals a lot of similarities between all the different forms of life on earth and the fact that we all are descended from common ancestors (see box “An Ex-

ample of Evolution By Natural Selection”). These types of comparisons also reveal that we are most closely related to chimpanzees, for instance, having probably shared a common ancestor around 4 million years ago. A genetic system records past changes in the history of life and provides blueprints for the basic development of individual organisms. But it also provides raw material for change in relation to a constantly changing external world. Life evolves, and that is its most distinguishing characteristic.

Genetic programs get passed on from generation to generation. But while much of the information remains fairly constant, different individuals inherit somewhat different versions of the program, due to a certain amount of “reshuffling” of the genetic information which takes place primarily in the course of reproduction. Some of this chemical reshuffling sometimes leads to the emergence of new features in individuals. It also means that in any one locale, in any one population of living organisms there can be a great deal of variation between individuals—a lot of different “versions” of any one type of plant or animal—interacting with the outside world. As the different individuals with their different features interact with these continually changing external conditions, some will manage to leave more descendants than others. And in this way whatever internal genetic particularities they might have had (along with any features they might give rise to) will tend to become more common in the next generations.

This in a nutshell is what is meant by natural selection. Sometimes the changes are sufficient to give rise to a whole new type—or species—of plant or animal. It is through this mechanism of natural selection that life evolves on this planet. This means of recording and transmitting change over the generations is what has made possible the great diversity and variability of living forms on earth.

In a sense, the raw material of life is involved in an ongoing process of unconscious “experimentation.” There is no external hand guiding this from the outside. All living things on earth have an internal basis to make changes happen in interaction with the outside world over the generations. There is no end-point or

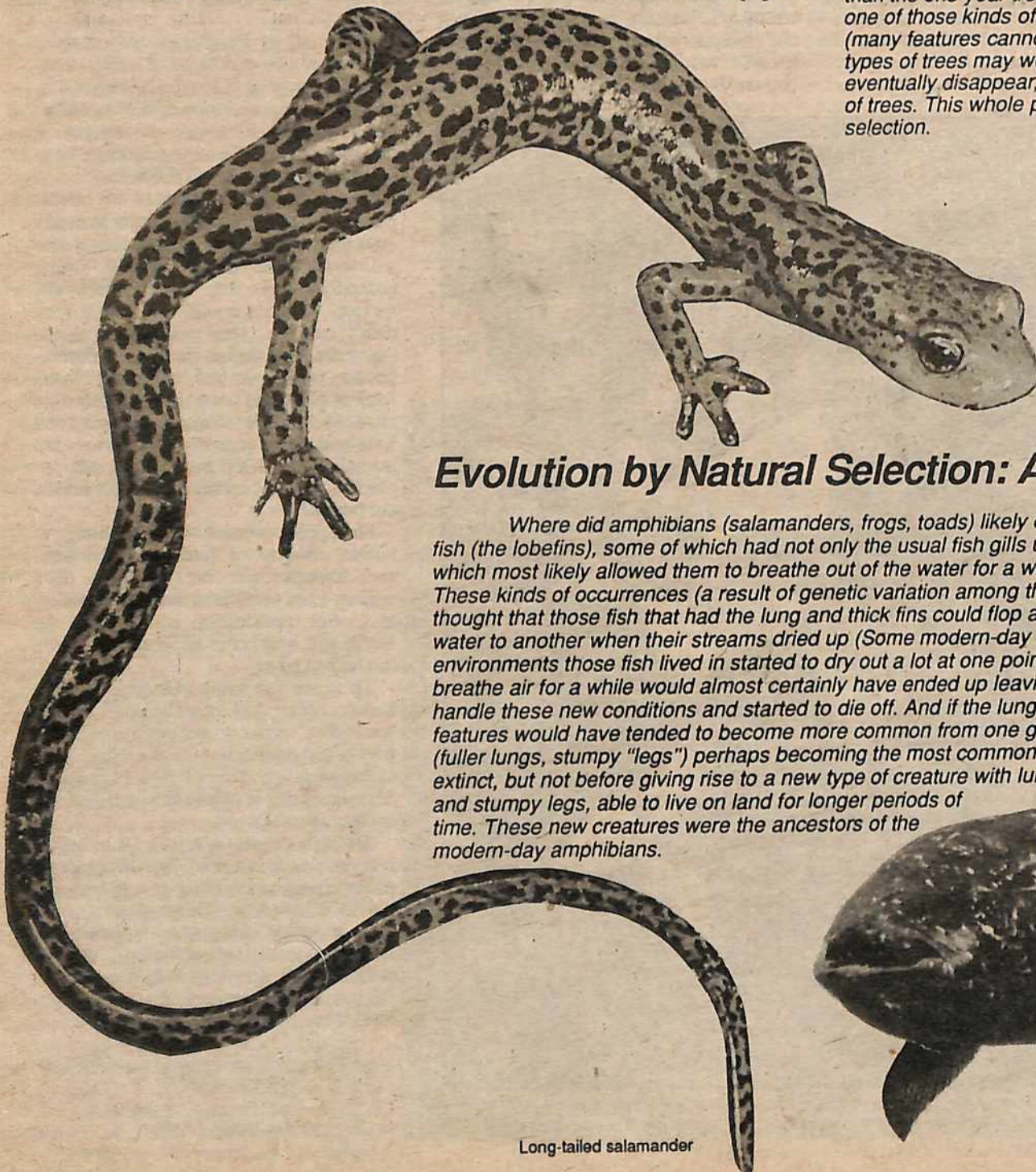
Continued on page 12



Coconut trees and sprouting coconuts

## An Example of Evolution by Natural Selection

Imagine a type (species) of tree which normally produces seeds every year. But maybe, due to a certain amount of variation in the genetic programs of these trees, a few of them can produce seeds only every two years. Now imagine some of the outside conditions change (like the climate), and it turns out that under the new conditions those few trees that spent less energy producing seeds only every two years actually end up in the long run leaving more descendants than the one-year trees. Now if this ability to produce seeds every two years is one of those kinds of features that can be passed on to the next generation (many features cannot be), then after a number of generations the two-year types of trees may well outnumber the one-year types. The one-year type might eventually disappear, or you might end up with two very distinct types (species) of trees. This whole process would be an example of evolution by natural selection.



Long-tailed salamander

## Evolution by Natural Selection: Another Example

Where did amphibians (salamanders, frogs, toads) likely come from? Millions of years ago, there was a kind of fish (the lobefins), some of which had not only the usual fish gills used for breathing underwater, but also a kind of “lung” which most likely allowed them to breathe out of the water for a while. Some of them also had extra thick and sturdy fins. These kinds of occurrences (a result of genetic variation among these fish) could easily have gone nowhere. But it is thought that those fish that had the lung and thick fins could flop around on land for a while to get from one source of water to another when their streams dried up (Some modern-day fish can still do that sort of thing). It is thought that the environments those fish lived in started to dry out a lot at one point. Those fish which could move across the land and breathe air for a while would almost certainly have ended up leaving more descendants than those fish who couldn't handle these new conditions and started to die off. And if the lung and thick fins were in fact inheritable features, these features would have tended to become more common from one generation to the next, with the most extreme versions (fuller lungs, stumpy “legs”) perhaps becoming the most common. In fact the lobe-fin fish themselves eventually became extinct, but not before giving rise to a new type of creature with lungs and stumpy legs, able to live on land for longer periods of time. These new creatures were the ancestors of the modern-day amphibians.



A coelacanth, a primitive fish with stout fins on its belly that allow it to walk on the ocean floor.

# What Is Life?

Continued from page 11

“goal” that living things are moving towards.

But what evolution does mean is that—in interaction with a changing outside world—living species can produce new and different life forms. Some will keep going and some will not. Depending on the conditions, change over the generations can sometimes be very limited, and sometimes it can be varied and extreme and relatively quickly give rise to whole new life forms.

Not everything gets preserved. Not everything gets passed on. And many changes are evolutionary dead-ends. But only living things have this ability to encompass change and reproduce it in an on-going way over the generations. Once again, life does, in fact, “evolve” and that, more than anything, is what makes it life.

Growth, metabolism, reproduction, and a means of incorporating and preserving change over the generations—we human beings share these characteristics with all other forms of life on this planet. In the course of our evolution we have also developed another, very powerful and very rapid, way of encompassing change and passing it on to future generations—a *social* means, not directly coded in our individual genetic systems but emerging at a whole other level, out of our experiences and interactions as a social species.

Other animals have evolved a bit of this ability. A young wolf is not born knowing how to hunt but must learn it from other wolves. A female chimpanzee must be taught by other chimpanzees how to care for a baby. Whales teach their young the complex “songs” of their species, and so on.

But to a qualitatively greater degree, human beings change the outside world (and get changed by it) in concert with others, through communication and social organization—learning, teaching, *struggling* in all sorts of ways. We can, over many generations, accumulate experience, record our history, adjust to changing conditions, figure out what practices we want to perpetuate or discard, or what new practices to initiate and develop. We can, through our collective social history and struggle, sum up the past, analyze the present, and make plans for the future. And in this we are unique on this planet.



Left: A few potato cells as seen under a microscope.

## All Living Things On Earth Are Related

*At the beginning of life on Earth, the chemical composition of the waters and atmosphere was such that tidbits of some organic chemicals could cluster together and surround themselves with membranes within which various chemical reactions could take place. These were the prototypes of the first living cells which could take in energy, grow, divide and eventually even transmit some kind of simple genetic program from one generation to the next. Today, the environmental conditions are very different, and new cells are not being formed from scratch in this way. This means that ALL of the cells alive today in all the living creatures are all descendants of those first living cells on the planet! Today there are all sorts of different life-forms on this planet, thanks to the historical evolution of living forms through the mechanism of natural selection. But we can all trace our ancestry back to those first cells, and we are all related.*

So this is what it boils down to: We know we have a lot in common with all the matter in the universe and even more in common with all the other forms of life on this planet. What makes us “special,” in a sense, is certainly not the fact of being alive (after all, there’s a lot of “life” all around us!), but the fact that we are currently the form of life on this planet which (for better

or for worse) has evolved the greatest ability to *collectively change the conditions of life, for ourselves and for the planet as a whole, through social means.*

And we are able to do this not because we breathe oxygen, pump blood through our veins, or suck our thumbs, and not even because we “think” with our individual brains. We are able to do this because we

live and struggle our whole lives in concert with other human beings, as part of human society. Being “alive” is not in itself what truly marks us as being human. Being part of human society is much more the heart of it.

Life in all its complexity and diversity can certainly be said to be beautiful, wonderful, and special. But a really deep understanding and appreciation of life, including human life, must include the realization that it is not possible nor even desirable to try to preserve all life, all the time.

Death is a necessary fact of life on this planet. For instance, most plants and animals produce more seeds and young than will ever make it to maturity, which generally insures that at least some will survive. Animals could not live if they didn’t feed on other animals or plants. Plants are nourished in part by the decomposition in the soils (the “recycling” in effect) of plant and animal matter that was once alive. In order to insure our health and well-being, we humans kill plants and animals for food, kill insect pests, take antibiotics to kill living bacteria which invade our bodies.

More controversial is the killing of human embryos or fetuses in abortions, even though these are still part of a woman’s body and even though the ability to control reproduction is crucial to the health and well-being of women who *are* full human beings.

There are also many instances in which human beings kill other human beings, sometimes wantonly, recklessly, exploitatively, and sometimes in the name of a higher social good to benefit all of society. Sometimes this is objectively justified and at other times it is not.

The fact of the matter is that human beings must often end life in order to preserve and enrich other life. Whether or not it’s right to do so is a question of what’s more important in any given situation; and is fundamentally a question of whether priorities and decisions *really are* in the interests of the great majority of people, and ultimately of all humanity.



“We are currently the form of life on this planet which (for better or for worse) has evolved the greatest ability to *collectively change the conditions of life, for ourselves and for the planet as a whole, through social means.*” Above: News of developments in the struggle is passed out during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, 1967.

**Next Time:** Science for the Revolution #2: “One Live Egg, One Live Sperm, One Live Cell, One Live Fetus, One Live Woman: Which Do We Value Most? Life Cannot, And Should Not, Always Be Preserved!”



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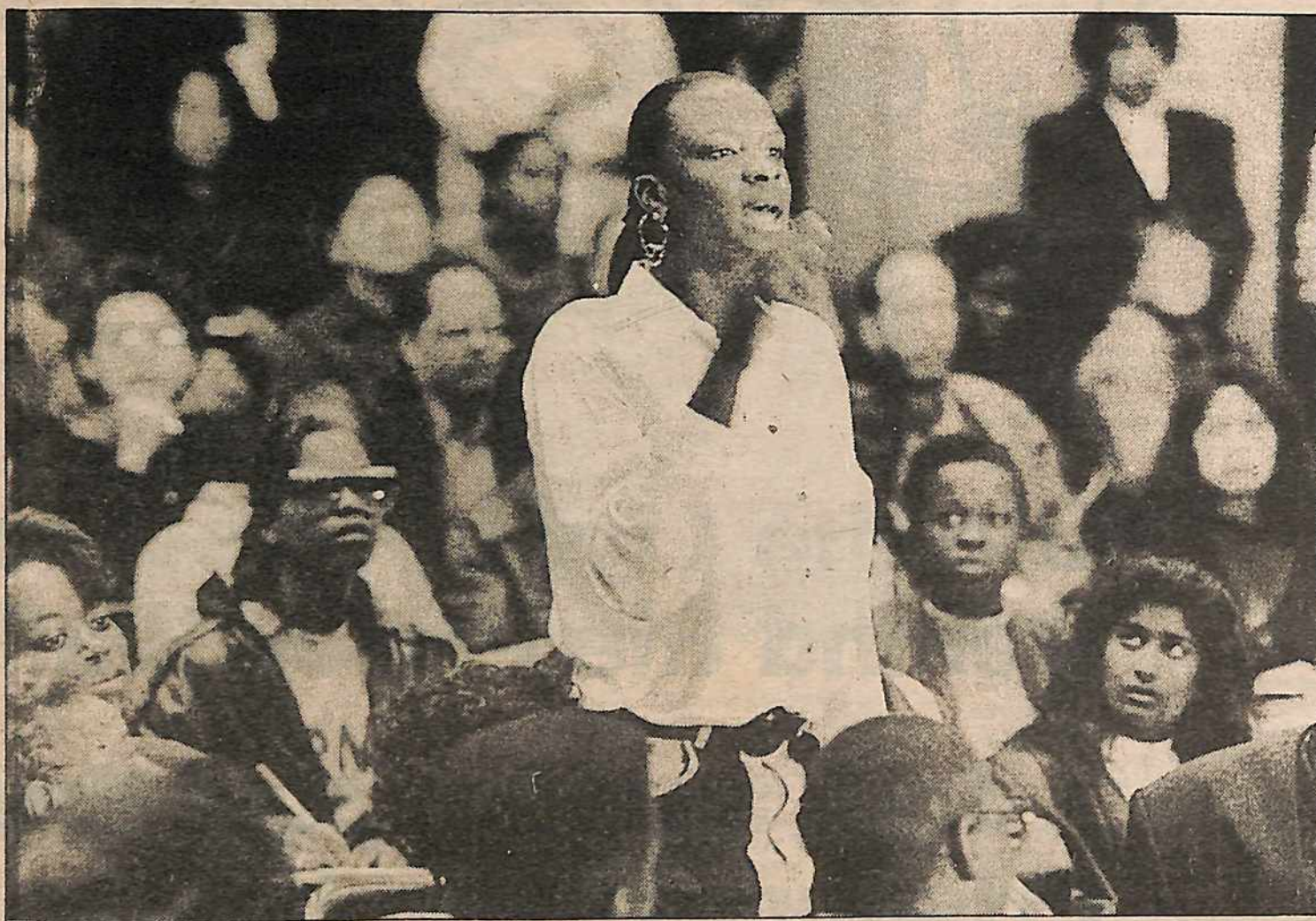
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# Chicago Students Fight Racism

*Black people constantly hear "Get an education—then you can be whatever you want to be." But recent events at Chicago's University of Illinois Circle Campus reveal some hard truths about racist Amerikkka.*

*Circle Campus is a major, four-year university near Chicago's Black proletarian west side. Walk north from the famous Maxwell Street flea market district, and you can see that the university built a fortress wall to keep the people out.*

*Some students of color have made it past that wall onto campus. But getting in doesn't mean they have escaped racist madness. Universities are said to be islands of "academic freedom" and liberal attitudes, but all-too-familiar racist shit oozes out here too!*



UIC students speak out at campus meeting.

Photo: James F. Quinn

## Oxy College 250 Students Sit In Against Racist Censorship

The week before Thanksgiving, students at a small liberal arts college in Los Angeles took over the campus administration building for four days. The protest began when the college authorities—at the urging of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)—abruptly cancelled a student-organized and funded free concert. The concert planned to feature a Latino rap group as well as a demonstration and display by local graffiti artists.

Occidental College is a private school of 1,650 students. Its manicured grounds and immaculate stucco buildings, and the neighboring middle-class homes, contrast with the nearby barrio of Highland Park. The administration talks a lot about "cultural diversity" and making the college part of the community, and enrollment of people of color has actually increased during the

last four years. But students of color still experience discrimination in their dealings with the school, including around cultural events.

The concert was supported by the associated students and a broad range of student groups who saw this as an opportunity for cultural diversity and breaking down the walls between the campus and the surrounding community. But, one of the protest leaders observed, the school won't allow the students to define the community they are part of. With the concert less than a week away, the LAPD called the college and told them they felt the security for the event was inadequate because flyers had gone out to high schools with "rival gang factions." The administration dutifully cancelled the event.

Students were incensed at the blatant



Photo: James F. Quinn

Students occupy Chancellor's office.

### Reading, Writing, 'Rithmetic— and Racism

Since school opened in the fall, gangs of white male students have threatened and harassed Black and Latino students, especially women. Since early October there have been at least eight or nine incidents of racist harassment or graffiti. The Ku Klux Klan faxed in ugly literature to the campus newspaper, calling on the student journalists to campaign against any increase of Black and Latino enrollment. Last spring, a penis cut from a dead body was left hanging on the door of a Black woman with a note signed "The KKK."

Anger has been building over these outrages. On Friday, November 16, the UIC administration sponsored a "town meeting" to try to chill things out. Their plan backfired.

About 300 students came, mainly Black women. And they wanted results. One after another, furious women spoke about the climate of intimidation they live under every day. One said "All this administration knows how to do is to make a committee, to make a committee, to make a committee. We're not talking anymore. Students want action now!" The crowd pointed out that University Chancellor Stukel hadn't even bothered to come.

One student explained that official inaction actually supports abusers and helps isolate the abused: "It wasn't too long ago in this country when a Black woman could be raped by a white man and he would not be accused, tried, nothing. The victims of these attacks feel alone, feel like they're going to be blamed."

Students denounced the racist and sexist practices throughout the campus. "These incidents are only a manifestation of what has always existed and pervaded UIC," said one graduate student. Speakers pointed to hard facts, like that 60 percent of Black students leave before getting their degrees. As such points were made, the crowd shouted support, saying "Right on!" and "Tell it!"

The campus director of housing said the administration hadn't done anything after two recent attacks on Black women by groups of white men, because "Something broke down in our reporting mechanism." The crowd responded to these lame dodges

with boos. One uptight administration apologist was mocked and ridiculed until he sat down.

### The Breaking Point

The people could only stand so much official bullshit. After two hours, a representative of the UIC Coalition of Latin American Students presented a platform of demands and the president of the Black Student Union called for students to go to the Chancellor's office. There was a walk-out.

A very diverse group of 40 students gathered. Black, Latino, Palestinian, and white youth made a fast and loud march. Many had "No Peace for Racists" stickers on their jackets. Students chanted "We want Stukel! We want answers!" and "Fight the Power! Seize the Power!"

The administration building is designed to prevent student take-overs. Elevators stop two floors short of the Chancellor's office and the stairwells are locked.

One member of the RCYB wrote to the RW: "Security and physical plant workers isolated everybody and shut down the elevators but agreed to take a delegation of six students up to the Chancellor's office. Six students went, and promptly opened the stairwell doors for the rest of us. The reunited group headed straight for Stukel's office, occupying it and putting up 'No Peace for Racists' stickers everywhere. People broke open the ledger books to see how much money was going to fund the 'minority' student programs, while other students called Stukel and the media on his office phone. A fancy box of chocolate candies from Stukel's desk got passed around as students drew up a list of demands. Cops strolled in and out of the room, taking names, pulling student leaders aside, telling them to be 'reasonable.'"

Among the students, struggle broke out around the demands. Some wanted to demand more police protection and more "answers" from the administration. Others thought that both police and the administration were part of the problem and that the answers are found in solidarity among students on the basis of fighting white and male supremacy.

The sit-in forced the Chancellor to show up. After several hours, Stukel agreed that there would be no reprisals for the takeover

and agreed to meet students the following Monday with some response on their demands.

When Monday came, many more students showed up, attracted by Friday's events. Again the administration thought they would run a "town meeting" that would show how glorious their committees are. Instead, students took over. They presented demands and gave the administration a deadline for an official plan of action. Community leaders, local politicians, and professional reformers rushed in to negotiate with the administration and a few students.

Meanwhile the majority of the students held a sit-in. Student leaders from various groups spoke, including the Women's Center, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance and the Palestinian students on campus. Some students sang songs of resistance, others of compromise. One activist questioned why youth needed to rely on outside community "experts," saying this was keeping the masses of students from pushing the struggle forward.

One Black alum called for the formation of a Black self-defense league, opposed the call for more police and supported the idea of forming a No Peace for Racists Club at UIC. A young Black nationalist walked in on the negotiations, and came back to report to the sit-in. "You can't negotiate with the oppressor and not sell out," he said. Others agreed.

Finally the negotiators announced they had agreed to a date to have a meeting. One student told our RCYB correspondent, "Even if they agree to all the demands, the same stuff is going to go on."

The negotiations temporarily got the administration out of a tight spot. But there is also a strengthened resolve among students to pursue this issue to the end. A multinational coalition has been formed in the course of this struggle. And there is active struggle to put the focus squarely onto this male-dominated, white-supremacist system. One Black woman said, "We're sick and tired of being sick and tired!"

### Racist Connections of a Racist System

These brave and bold actions by the students need to be supported by everyone who hates this racist shit. The University is not separate from the broader society. And

the struggle on campus is connected by a thousand links to events that are happening across Chicago.

Police have used the "war on drugs" as an excuse, to stage massive raids, evictions, searches and arrests in Chicago public housing (see "The Chicago Lockdown," special section in RW No. 582). "Operation Clean Sweep" has left nearly 30 buildings "locked down" like prisons. Every resident seven years and up is forced to carry ID. Armed guards are stationed at checkpoints like an occupying army, brutalizing tenants. Using the Chicago Housing Authority as a national model, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp is trying to institute this police-state setup across the country.

To justify such things nationally, ghetto youth are labeled "crazed drug dealers" and "animals." This is the same hysteria and racist propaganda that has stirred up the wave of racist attacks on campus. There are a thousand links because the same racist system is behind all the outrages.

RCP chairman, Bob Avakian, says:

"We must work to build the unity of all oppressed people—of all races and nationalities, men in unity with women—on the basis of equality; but at the same time, especially in these days, we must be very clear about this:

"Women are subjected all their lives to male-supremacist outrages. Black people suffer oppression, as Black people, everywhere they turn in this society. For women to have gut feelings against men, for Black people to have gut feelings against whites, is not at all the same thing as the other way around. This is a *male-supremacist, white-supremacist system* we live under. Men who are chauvinists, whites who are racists, have this whole system behind them, and in turn they help prop up this system, with all its brutal oppression. Our fire must be aimed at this male chauvinism and white racism—and the system they serve.

"If we ignored these basic truths, we would not be able to overcome real divisions and build the real unity we need—*revolutionary unity.*" □

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*We want to thank A.K. from the RCYB in Chicago, whose correspondence made this article possible.*

mentorship of the concert and the racist portrayal of all Black and Latino youth as gang members. Some of the Occidental students themselves came from those so-called "dangerous" high schools. Students were also pissed at the hypocrisy they faced. They had worked for a month with an administration representative who had approved all their arrangements, including for security—who then told them they had inadequate security! The authorities' view of "student empowerment" is that the students can do what they want—as long as it doesn't challenge the present social order. And under this setup, students of color are expected to become homogenized and forget the old 'hood. And attempts to use the university as a resource for the basic people in the community is not allowed.

On Thursday, November 15 about 250

students rallied and sat down in the administration building, demanding that they be given a voice that counts and condemning the racism, institutionalized and otherwise, that had expressed itself in the cancellation of the concert. The protesters left at closing time on Thursday, but showed up again on Friday, determined to stay. The school authorities tried to choke them out by shutting off the ventilation system. The students didn't know what was going to happen, but they didn't back down. In fact, according to a spokesperson for the occupiers, the school's actions only increased the unity of those inside and won more support from students and faculty outside. The school backed off. By Saturday, the atmosphere had changed from tense to festive, as 40 students remained inside the building, 40 more camped outside, and

many others busied themselves with support work, gathering food, bedding, music, sound equipment, doing press work, typing, and faxing. The protest was very multinational, and many were students in their first year. They felt good about the unity they had developed, and eagerly debated everything in the world. The question of U.S. intervention in the Middle East was on a lot of students' minds—one woman student stated that if Bush launched a war, there would be a "student uprising" to put an end to it.

By Monday, the administration was anxious to negotiate. The occupiers had expressed their determination to stay through the holiday if necessary. The students agreed to hold a forum to discuss all the questions raised—from financial aid to divestment. The concert has not been re-

scheduled but the students have promised to renew their protests if they are not given a real voice.

The questions of censorship and racism were controversial among the students. During the protest, some students were actually saying that they didn't want to focus on the question of racism because it might alienate some students. This was after scores of white students had stood shoulder-to-shoulder with students of color on Friday.

As one student at another school commented, the Occidental protest "took Los Angeles by surprise." This is a campus that is usually described as "sleepy" or "peaceful," but the students at "Oxy" have shown that their campus will not be a peaceful place for racists and art police. □

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