

SOUTH AFRICA:

“Whites Only” Vote Props Up De Klerk Regime

For Workers Revolution to Smash Neo-Apartheid!

The March 17 referendum of South Africa's white voters called by President F. W. De Klerk was no victory for “democracy”—the vast non-white majority could not even cast a ballot—but a means to consolidate a “reformed” apartheid regime to disguise the continuation of white-supremacist rule. De Klerk scored big against the diehard segregationist Conservative Party, former president P.W. Botha and the fascist Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), who all called for a “no” vote. Returns showed that 1.9 million whites, a 68.6 percent “yes” vote, supported the “reform process” and “negotiations” with the African National Congress led by Nelson Mandela.

This turnout was the result of a concerted campaign by South Africa's leading capitalists, the “Private Sector Initiative,” which blanketed the country with propaganda predicting dire consequences of a “no” vote. The leaders of De Klerk's National Party and the predominantly English-speaking Democratic Party joined hands with the Witwatersrand mining magnates and Johannesburg stockbrokers in warning of massive layoffs and the threat that South Africa's pariah status represented to continued profitability. Imperialist sanctions, so beloved by the liberals, were precisely designed to *perpetuate* the rule of South African capitalism by “reforming” it to make it more acceptable internationally.

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Afrapix

Black workers have the power to smash apartheid capitalism.

For a Black-Centered Workers Government!

Japan-Bashing and Racist Attacks



Rafu Shimpō

Japanese Community Center near Los Angeles, after being trashed for the second time in three months. Protectionist frenzy spawns racist attacks.

SAN FRANCISCO—After the chauvinist media blitz over the 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor in December and President Bush's fiasco at the “Sparkplug Summit” in Tokyo, we wrote: “The Bush visit spawned a vicious wave of protectionism, as the partner parties of American capitalism and their subservient labor lieutenants sought to deflect workers' anger away from the decaying economy and into racist Japan-bashing.... At a Ypsilanti, Michigan rally supposedly against GM layoffs, Congressman William Ford ‘jokingly’ called for beating up people who buy Japanese cars, and a union leaflet declared ‘when Japan threatens the security of American jobs we must go to war again’” (“Depression Elections,” *WV* No. 545, 21 February). This protectionist poison and war talk is now being acted out in a wave of racist attacks against Asian Americans.

In Fullerton, California last July 7, a gang of skinheads beat a Chinese American youth unconscious, screaming “Sieg Heil!” In New York City on August 18, Chinese street artist Lin Lin was shot to death after he and his wife were harassed and insulted. In Norwalk, Southern California, during October and November the Southeast Japanese Community Center was repeatedly vandalized, spray-painted with “Nips Go Home” and “Go Back to Asia.” This February the center was vandalized again. In Lompoc, California on December 8 a Japanese restaurant was bombed. And in Camarillo, Ventura County, north of Los Angeles, on February 25, with protectionist hysteria running at a fever pitch in L.A., a Japanese businessman was found stabbed to death in his garage—four days after reporting a racist death threat.

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L.A.: Busted for Defending Abortion Clinic

February 17, 1992

To the Editor:

"Justice" in America is a sham and a fraud. Case in point: the clinic defense just south of downtown Los Angeles earlier today. The mean-spirited Operation Rescue (OR) crew was there, harassing young minority women who wanted to use the clinic, and pushing, shoving, and hitting several of the clinic defenders. All this was reported to the police, who were there in large numbers and did nothing about it. Instead, the police arrested three of the clinic defenders! I myself and a young Latino were arrested on the basis of a totally false allegation by a woman OR supporter. This sick, pathetic woman hates herself so much she is willing to actively participate in the oppression of her own sex.

In my case, she accused me of pushing her, when the truth was just the opposite. Incredibly, the police carried out a "citizen's arrest" on her behalf, despite the fact that she was obviously unhurt, and had an equally blatant motive to falsely accuse me. The police didn't even bother

asking me my side of the story before arresting me! Just try getting the police to make a "citizen's arrest" for you under normal circumstances, and you'll see how hard (more likely impossible) it is. In this case, the LAPD practically rolled out the red carpet for the fascistic woman-hating religious fanatics.

The LAPD has not changed one bit since the Rodney King beating. The police moved to arrest three of the most militant (but peaceful) clinic defenders, in order to intimidate the rest and give the OR fascists, who were badly outnumbered, a shot in the arm. Two of us were assisting in the vital work of escorting women into the clinic, and protecting them from harassment on the street, and greatly resented being taken away from it. It is a sufficient commentary on this society that when a man takes the morally responsible stand of protecting women and their rights, he is rewarded for it—by being promptly clapped in jail. On the other hand, had I been out there screaming at women and shoving tracts in their faces, the cops would have patted me



WV Photo

Spartacists join in 1989 clinic defense in Los Angeles.

on the back for a job well done!

The next time the OR fanatics try to storm a clinic, they should be met by such a massive outpouring of workers

and black power that neither the cowardly OR bullies, nor their allies the police, will dare to show their faces.

Steve Hampton

Martha Phillips Remembered

13 February 1992

Dear Comrades,

My heartfelt sympathies to you and of course the family of Martha Phillips. Like many of you, I had known Martha and worked with her for many years. She preceded my departure from the SWP by one year. But her departure proved to be more significant: hers was a battle of ideas, a faction fight; mine a common, all too common, expulsion.

Possessed with a sharp mind and unflagging spirit, a contagious laughter, she drove on. When I spoke with her last year at the "Defend Iraq" contingent in S.F., she told me she was studying the Russian language. I knew then who was holding the red banner of Trotskyism in Leningrad on November 7, 1990. In many ways, she was home.

We will miss her. The Soviet workers will miss her especially. Marxism can be grounded in only one thing: internationalism. Martha Phillips was a Marxist!

G. Clark

* * *

17 February 1992

Dear Comrades and Friends,

I've known Martha Phillips since 1972. She was always so full of life I cannot imagine her dead. She burned bright. I remember her best saying something provocative, outrageous, funny and true, then a pause and a blink, then her loud, infectious, wrinkled-nose laughter.

For Martha, nothing was impossible and nothing could stop her. She always ran on high-octane revolutionary will, no matter how short she was on food, sleep or cash. She was single-minded in her determination for one thing: to be a leader in the Bolshevik party of world revolution. She did that for more than 20 years and was doing it best at the time of her death.

Martha makes me think of Rosa Luxemburg: diminutive, Jewish, multilingual, multi-talented, a forceful orator standing on a chair to be heard, passionate, setting aside personal interests at an early age to pursue the life of a communist leader. Like Luxemburg, Martha could make a whale of a mistake on occasion but in her life's work she soared with the eagles.

What a devastating loss. I can't believe she's gone. I am so sorry.

Ruth R.

* * *

26 February 1992

Dear Comrades of the ICL,

The memorial held 22 February 1992 in Oakland for Martha Phillips was very moving. We have followed with great interest the news of ICL supporters in the Soviet Union as the one ray of hope for a restoration of the Leninist-Trotskyist program and the preservation of the gains of October in the first workers state. We felt especially hopeful knowing Martha was there, such a fine, strong and resolute Marxist leader and human being. Her murder is nothing short of a tragic loss for the international working class at a strategic moment in history. And, as her comrades so eloquently expressed, it is a devastating personal loss for all those whose lives she touched. We are both so very sorry. We need to do something to advance the work Martha dedicated her life to. We enclose a \$500 donation to the Lenin-Trotsky Fund in Martha's memory. Please call on us to assist in any other way we can. The way Martha lived her life was an inspiration. Her death must not cause immobilizing despair.

Respectfully, with great sadness,
Bill and Kathy L.

* * *

20 February 1992

To the Comrades of the Trotskyist League:

We mourn with you the loss of Martha Phillips, a loss not only to yourselves as friends and comrades, but to the revolutionary movement internationally and to all humanity.

She now joins the long list of martyrs to a great cause.

Her spirit of dedication to the work for which she gave her life will live on in spite of the circumstances of her death and ignite the flame in others such as she.

With deepest regret and sympathy, we salute her and you.

Comradely,
Bill and Lillian Whitney

WORKERS VANGUARD

The Infamy of America's Concentration Camps

Fifty years ago, the U.S. government began a racist roundup of more than 100,000 Japanese Americans, who were driven from their homes, loaded onto trains and thrown into barbed-wire concentration camps where they languished until the end of World War II. This single act completely exposed the American bourgeoisie's lie that it was waging a "war for democracy." The Stalinist Communist Party echoed Roosevelt's war propaganda, smearing Japanese Americans as "enemy alien Fifth Columnists," and expelled its own members of Japanese descent. In contrast, the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, whose leaders were sent to federal prison for their stand against the imperialist war, forthrightly opposed the racist roundups.



TROTSKY

The indiscriminate and brutal witch-hunt being conducted against non-citizens born in countries at war with the United States is now being directed at naturalized citizens and native-born Americans whose ancestry is Japanese, German and Italian.

The move, having the character of a racial pogrom, was initiated Feb. 20 by an executive order from President Roosevelt, giving the War Department and the Army the power to arbitrarily remove any person, citizen as well as alien, from his home and exclude him from any area which the Army may designate as a military area.

The immediate purpose of this order is to permit the Army and the FBI to remove West Coast residents of Japanese descent—including 60,000 citizens and native-born persons—into as yet undesignated camps and interior sections....

Attorney General Biddle attempted to justify the order on the grounds that it was necessary for the "safety" of all persons of Japanese descent on the West Coast....

But instead of enforcing the law and protecting the rights of these citizens, the government is driving them from their homes, terrorizing them, and in actuality encouraging the racial discrimination that is being fanned on the West Coast....

Roosevelt's order—issued as a military precaution and ostensibly directed at but one special group of the population—establishes one of the most dangerous precedents for the usurpation of civil liberties the American people have ever faced.

—"Civil Rights Menaced by Anti-Alien Order," *Militant* (7 March 1942)



LENIN

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3 April 1992

Big Anti-Yeltsin March in Moscow

MOSCOW—Tens of thousands of people turned out here on March 17 for the largest protest against Russian president Boris Yeltsin since the imposition of draconian price rises at the start of the year. Estimates of the crowd ranged to over 200,000, as droves of people streamed out of the metro (subway) station at the end of the working day, heading toward Manezh Square near the Kremlin. Unlike the recent spate of anti-Yeltsin demonstrations, which have been overwhelmingly Slavic in composition, here one could see the true multinational face of Moscow's proletariat. The atmosphere was reminiscent of the November 7 Revolution Day march, when the nationalist tirades of the Stalinist "patriots" were swamped in an ocean of social protest.

Protesters came in hopes of finding an answer to Yeltsin's relentless drive to capitalist immiseration. In recent months, Soviet working people have been forced to get by on little more than bread, and now Yeltsin has even lifted all controls on the prices of bread and other staples. But the demonstration organizers, the Stalinist/nationalist "Toiling Russia" lash-up dominated by the Russian Communist Workers Party (RKR), offered the crowds little more than a circus of nationalist diversion. In spite of vague talk from the podium about reconstituting the Soviet Union and occasional references to socialism, the real purpose of the rally was to pressure the buffeted Yeltsin regime.

The demonstration was called to mark the anniversary of last year's referendum in which a majority voted for maintaining the Union, and to show popular support for an attempt to reconvene the

Tens of thousands demonstrated in Moscow, March 17, against Yeltsin's drive to destroy USSR and impose capitalist immiseration.



disbanded Soviet parliament. Moscow mayor Gavriil Popov initially threatened to ban the demonstration altogether, and the Soviet press was rife with talk of an even bloodier confrontation than that of February 23, when Popov and Yeltsin unleashed thousands of cops against Soviet Army Day marchers. In the face of strong opposition, Popov retracted the ban, but the reconvening of the Soviet parliament was declared illegal.

In the upshot, barely 10 percent of the 2,250 former deputies showed up,

among them erstwhile anti-Gorbachev Stalinist hardliner Yegor Ligachev and the "black colonel" Viktor Alksnis. Whisked off in buses to an outlying area, they met in the auditorium of the Voronovo State Farm, with electricity and lights cut off. This farcical gathering of has-beens refused to take even a symbolic stand against Yeltsin counterrevolution. A unanimous resolution, "On the Socio-Economic Situation," called for "privatization of large parts of state property on the basis of stockholding,"

and complained that "no program of reform is possible under the continuing development of centrifugal tendencies between the republics and regions."

On the eve of the stillborn "congress," the Russian nationalist newspaper *Dien* (15 March) published a "Declaration on the Founding of the United Opposition." The signatories ranged from the RKR and Roy Medvedev's Socialist Party of Labor to the "Coordinating Council of the Independent Civil Movement in Support of Entrepreneurialism" and such hoary outfits as the "Union of Cossacks" and the "Fund for the Restoration of the Shrine of Christ the Savior." The statement called for "salvation of the Fatherland...through joint action on the basis of civil peace" and warned against "confrontation between 'Whites' and 'Reds'." It concluded with an appeal for "Justice, Populism, Statehood, Patriotism."

The motley Stalinists and anti-Semitic Russian nationalists who put themselves forward as "Soviet patriots" do not even make a pretense of defending the socialized foundations of the Soviet degenerated workers state, but seek only a "strong state" under the old tsarist rubric of "Russia, One and Indivisible." Characteristically, the March 17 demonstration was publicized by its organizers as a *veche*, the word for a traditional Slavic communal assembly. The crowds were subjected to a revolting fare of Great Russian chauvinism and medieval obscurantism, ranging from a priest invoking the "holy ghost" to a tirade against the supposed sale of Moscow babies to American homosexuals. The podium featured monarchist television

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Spartacist Educational Conferences

New York

1 p.m.

**The Foundations of Communist Work Among Women
Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Speaker: Amy Rath, Editor, *Women and Revolution*

4 p.m.

**The Struggle for a Workers Party
Class, Race and the Bankruptcy of American Capitalism**

Speaker: Frank Hunter, SL Central Committee

Barnard College, 116th St. & Broadway
Barnard Hall, Room 304

(Take #1 IRT to 116th Street and walk north)

\$3 registration fee

For more information, or to obtain readings, call (212) 267-1025

Saturday, April 18

Berkeley

1 p.m.

**Not Race Against Race,
But Class Against Class
For Workers Revolution in America!**

Speaker: Don Alexander, SL Central Committee

3:30 p.m.

The Russian Revolutionary Movement from the Decembrists to the Origins of Bolshevism

Speaker: Joseph Seymour, SL Central Committee

University of California, Berkeley
Evans, Room 10

\$3 donation

For more information, or to obtain readings, call (510) 839-0851

Saturday, May 2

Chicago

10 a.m.

**Communism and the Fight for Black Liberation
Red and Black in Racist America**

Speaker: Brian Manning, Spartacist League

1:30 p.m.

**Dialectical Materialism and the Soviet Union
For Proletarian Political Revolution to Defend the Gains of October!**

Speaker: Y. Rad, Trotskyist League of Canada

University of Chicago
Kent Lecture Hall

Main Quad—Enter from 58th Street and Ellis Ave.

\$3 registration fee

For more information, or to obtain readings, call (312) 663-0715

Saturday, May 16

Bankruptcy of Stalinism Leads to New Balkan Wars

East Europe: Nationalism and Counterrevolution



Radial Press

Refugees make their way through rubble of Vukovar, Yugoslavia.

Anti-Soviet nationalism was the main driving force for capitalist counterrevolution in the northern tier of East Europe. The Stalinist bureaucracy was totally shattered and its remnants subjected to a "red" purge. In Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the German Fourth Reich, former Communist officials are being persecuted by the victorious counter-revolutionary regimes. The erstwhile Stalinists in these countries and also Poland have transformed themselves into "born again" social democrats, trying to act as a loyal opposition within the renascent bourgeois order.

PART TWO OF TWO

In the Balkan countries, however, the Stalinist bureaucracies at first tried to save their regimes by clothing them in the colors of Western social democracy. But as the counterrevolutionary tide has swept on, even into the Soviet Union, and seeing no other option, the bankrupt Balkan Stalinists are seeking to ride the crest by placing themselves at the head of reactionary nationalist forces. Leading apparatchiks of the old regime like Iliescu and Milosevic are now striving to build a "Greater Romania" and "Greater Serbia" respectively. In Bulgaria the erstwhile Stalinist party remains a strong force in opposition, pushing anti-Turkish chauvinism. In Albania, the "reformed" Stalinist heirs of Enver Hoxha, at the end of their rope, have now been booted out by rabid anti-Communists.

Why has capitalist counterrevolution run a different course in the Balkans than in the rest of East Europe?

Divided Germany was the military and political front line in the Cold War between Western imperialism and the Soviet degenerated workers state. As long as the Kremlin leaders were committed to preserving the fruits of the Red Army's victory over the Nazi Wehrmacht—at the cost of 20 million Soviet lives—control over East Germany and therefore over Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary was strategically vital for

Moscow. The Balkans were less strategically important for the Kremlin, and so the local Stalinist regimes could have greater leeway. The pro-imperialist, ultranationalist and downright demented policies of the megalomaniacal Ceausescu in Romania would have been inconceivable in Poland or Czechoslovakia in the 1970s-'80s. Albeit in radically different ways, the Balkan Stalinist regimes were nationalistic to a degree that their counterparts in the northern tier of the Warsaw Pact could not be.

Tito's Yugoslavia pioneered "national Communism" when it broke with Stalin's Kremlin in 1948. Such a break was possible because, unlike the rest of East Europe, the Yugoslav Communist Partisans had won power through their heroic struggle against the German and Italian occupying armies, the clerical-fascist Croatian Ustasha and the Serbian royalist Chetniks. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was forged in the name of the "unity and brotherhood" of all its peoples.

However, as a unifying ideology Tito's pan-Yugoslav nationalism did not survive the passing of the Partisan generation. Tito's other innovation, "market socialism," and the country's economic orientation to capitalist West Europe led to the fracturing of the Yugoslav bureaucracy along national lines, especially between the wealthier Slovene and Croatian republics and the more backward south. This nationalist fracturing culminated in the destruction of Yugoslavia in a territorial war between Serbia and Croatia in which an estimated 10,000 have been killed.

If Tito's Communist Partisans won enormous popular support and authority in Yugoslavia, the Romanian Stalinist party both entered and emerged from World War II as the smallest and weakest of any East European country. It had only a thousand members in 1944. The Romanian Stalinists later sought popular legitimacy by embracing traditional Romanian nationalism especially when Moscow's control over its

Balkan allies eased off.

In the late 1960s, the new Bucharest strongman, Nicolae Ceausescu, flaunted his "independence" in foreign affairs, for example, by being the only Warsaw Pact country to maintain friendly diplomatic relations with Zionist Israel. Internally, *Il Conducator*, who also dubbed himself "the savior of the nation" and "the genius of the Carpathians," intensified the oppression of the Hungarian community in Transylvania, starved and froze the population to pay off Romania's foreign debt, and outlawed abortion so that the Romanian people would procreate in ever greater numbers. This most brutal and grotesquely totalitarian regime was the "free world's" favorite East European government in the 1970s-'80s.

While the Romanian Stalinists appealed to nationalism by demonstrating their independence of Moscow, the Bulgarian Stalinists played on the long-standing pro-Russian and anti-Turkish sentiments of this Balkan Slavic people. Symbolically, the Communist regime never removed the statue of Tsar Alexander II from central Sofia. Membership in the Warsaw Pact against NATO was presented as a continuation of Bulgaria's traditional alliance with Russia against Turkey.

As the authority of the Kremlin weakened in the mid-1980s, the Zhivkov regime sought to strengthen its nationalist credentials by a campaign to forcibly "Bulgarianize" the country's one and a half million ethnic Turks, hundreds of thousands of whom were driven from their homes into Turkey. In July 1989 the Partisan Defense Committee, legal defense arm of the Spartacist League/U.S., sent a letter to the Bulgarian government protesting its atrocious treatment of the Turkish national minority:

"The Bolsheviks won the allegiance of the Turkic-speaking nationalities of Central Asia by demonstrating the superiority of the Soviet system in practice—at the same time respecting the cultural differences of the many nationalities brutally oppressed in the tsarist prison house of peoples.... In mockery of this tradition you forcibly expel thousands into the hands of the reactionary Özal govern-



New York Times Map

Collapse of Stalinism paved bloody road to fratricidal nationalist strife in the Balkans.

ment.... Decades of Stalinist betrayals have imperiled the defense of Bulgaria and all the deformed workers states from capitalist counterrevolution."

—WV No. 481, 7 July 1989

A few months later Zhivkov was overthrown by a palace coup which did indeed open the road to counterrevolution.

Stalinism in the Balkans, in its terminal degeneration, has made common cause with the most reactionary nationalist—and even outright fascist—forces. Hence the *political struggle* against Stalinist nationalism, for a return to the proletarian internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky, is *central* to defeating capitalist counterrevolution in the Balkans and preventing communalist bloodbaths from Moldavia to Macedonia.

Beleaguered Iliescu Pushes for a "Greater Romania"

The totalitarian nature of the Ceausescu regime did not allow the emergence of a pro-Western, anti-Communist opposition such as existed in other East European countries. A coterie of Bucharest out-bureaucrats, including Ion Iliescu and Silviu Brucan, had been conspiring for some time, and when the populace rose up against the hated despot in December 1989, they stepped into the breach, acting in cahoots with the top generals. Ceausescu and his wife were quickly and secretly executed, the Communist Party was outlawed and a new National Salvation Front proclaimed as the embodiment of the victorious "revolution."

The core of the new Salvation Front was the old Stalinist bureaucracy. But sensing the strong winds blowing in from the West, Iliescu & Co. stated their intent to transform Romania into a market economy, albeit with "a considerable social component." Still the Front presented itself as a left alternative to the outright counterrevolutionary parties feebly resurrected from the prewar Romania of King Carol.

The improvement in living standards from the wasteland created by Ceausescu combined with the Salvation Front's promises of a painless transition to a market economy produced a landslide victory for Iliescu and his cohorts in the May 1990 elections. Frustrated at the result, right-wing mobs—drawn heavily from university students—staged riots in Bucharest aiming to topple the government. At this point Iliescu as president appealed to the coal miners of the Jiu Valley to defend "democracy." The miners duly came to the capital and trashed the petty-bourgeois rightist punks. Spokesmen for Western imperialism screamed "red terror" at this effective display of working-class muscle on behalf of a government of erstwhile Communists.

But, in fact, the Front was also flirting with white terror, especially against



Imperial War Museum, London

Communist-led Yugoslav Partisans, May 1944. National conflicts were overcome by Tito's anti-Nazi struggle which overthrew capitalism.

national and ethnic minorities. Iliescu & Co. maintained relations with the ultranationalist newspaper *Romania Mare* (Greater Romania) edited by a couple of notorious Ceausescu hacks. One of them, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, penned a eulogy to the fallen dictator: "All Romanians are waiting for you to come back, To rid the country of thieves... To make the Gypsies work, And discipline the Hungarians." The Salvation Front government did nothing to prevent a campaign of murderous attacks on the Gypsy population, which numbers two million, the largest in East Europe. Spokesmen for the Gypsy community say their situation is worse than under Ceausescu.

Despite claims by both Romanian rightists and some Western media that Iliescu & Co. were still really Communists, they did as promised and carried out market-oriented economic "reforms" in agreement with the world bankers' cartel, the IMF. During 1990, industrial production plummeted by over 30 percent as "unprofitable" enterprises were closed down. The Romanian working class—which on occasion had defied even Ceausescu—resisted as best they could in the absence of revolutionary leadership. During the first half of 1990 alone 300 million man-hours were lost due to strikes and worker protests. These forced the government to increase money wages while output was falling sharply, thus fueling hyperinflation. Popular support for the Salvation Front eroded rapidly as working-class anger built up to an explosion point.

The explosion came last September when the Jiu Valley miners, led by old-line Stalinists, once again descended on Bucharest, this time not to defend the Salvation Front but to call on its leaders to resign. Iliescu sacrificed his prime minister Petre Roman, a rival within the

Salvation Front, who was especially identified with "free market" immiseration. Although the miners withdrew after promises that things would change for the better, their march through the capital seriously damaged Iliescu's authority. Facing increasing opposition on all fronts, Iliescu has attempted to place himself at the head of the movement for a Greater Romania by unifying with the "independent" Soviet republic of Mol-



Der Spiegel

January 1990: Bulgarian nationalists in chauvinist demonstration demand expulsion of Turks.

davia and demanding the "return" of territory which has been part of the Ukraine for half a century.

The Moldavian Cockpit

Previously under Ottoman rule, in 1812 eastern Moldavia was annexed by tsarist Russia. After World War I, the victorious Western imperialists sponsored the creation of a Greater Romania by adding to its territory Transylvania, which had been part of Hungary, and eastern Moldavia, which the fledgling Soviet Russian workers state was forced to give up in the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Twenty years later, a clause in the 1940 Hitler-Stalin pact gave Moldavia to the USSR. However, Romania got the territory back the following year when General Antonescu joined Hitler in launching Operation Barbarossa. The Russian population of Moldavia retains grim memories of their suffering at the hands of the fascist Romanian occupiers.

When the Red Army defeated the Nazi Wehrmacht and its jackals, Moldavia was incorporated as a republic of the Soviet Union. There was no attempt at forced Russification (unlike the Ukraine under Stalin), and Romanian remained the predominant language and culture. Over time the Moldavian SSR became increasingly nationally mixed. Today, 65 percent of the population is of Romanian background. Most of the rest are about equally divided between Russians and Ukrainians. There is also a

small population of Christian Turks, the Gagauz. As elsewhere in East Europe, the nationalities are by no means neatly concentrated into distinct regions. Thus only half the inhabitants of the Moldavian capital of Kishinev are ethnic Romanians.

As the rule of the Kremlin bureaucracy was weakening under Gorbachev, in 1990 anti-Communist nationalists took power in the Moldavian republic. They declared their independence of the USSR and proclaimed unity with Romania as their ultimate goal. Thereupon, the Russians and Ukrainians in eastern Moldavia seceded to form their own Soviet Socialist Republic of Transnistria marked by a giant statue of Lenin in their "capital" of Tiraspol. The Turkic Gagauz likewise set up their own Soviet republic. Sporadic violence between the Moldavian nationalist regime and the rebellious Slavic and Turkic communities has escalated sharply since last August, when Yeltsin's countercoup fractured the Soviet state.

In December, Romanian president Iliescu declared that unification with Moldavia—including *all* its historic territory—is inevitable. In a bizarre touch, the leaders of the "Transnistria Republic" called on the descendants of those fabled tsarist warriors—the Don Cossacks—to help them. Neo-cossack *hetman* Yuri Grigoryev answered the call, proclaiming: "If there are threats to the lives of Slavs anywhere on the territory

of the former Soviet Union, naturally we must go and protect them." The presence of latter-day Cossacks, with their prodigious mustaches and red-striped trousers, may give a comic-opera tone to the conflict in Moldavia. However, the underlying situation is anything but funny. All of the contending parties are doing their best to draw in their big brothers from across the borders. The Moldavian cause can become a deadly flash point for resurgent Romanian, Russian and Ukrainian nationalism.

Bulgaria: Economic Collapse and Anti-Turkish Hysteria

Todor Zhivkov once wrote to Nikita Khrushchev suggesting that Bulgaria gradually merge into the USSR. His country came as close as it could without actually becoming a Soviet republic. The Bulgarian economy was integrated into the Soviet five-year plans in a way that clearly benefited the relatively backward Balkan country. "Our computer industry was deliberately created for the Soviet market," the head of a Sofia research institute pointed out last year. "Inside Comecon, we were a great power. For 15 years, the Cold War was good for us" (*Wall Street Journal*, 30 April 1991). The Cold War also ensured that the powerful Soviet Army would protect Bulgaria, a member of the Warsaw Pact, against its traditional enemy Turkey, now acting as the eastern flank of NATO.

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In Honor of Our Slain Comrade Martha Phillips

With this issue of WV we conclude our tribute to our esteemed comrade, Martha Ann Phillips, who was murdered on February 9 in Moscow. These selections from comrades' remembrances of Martha have been excerpted and edited for publication. We want to thank all the other comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. and International Communist League whose spoken and written tributes to Martha have not been printed for reasons of space. We want to thank also the many friends who have sent letters of condolence, a few of which appear on page 2.

Liz Gordon: I first met Martha when some Spartacist comrades from New York went down to meet several contacts who were leftist members of the SWP in Washington, D.C. What I remember from that trip to Washington is the strong impression Martha made on me. She talked to me about everything from having once lived in New York seeking a career on the stage to being in Madison and joining the SWP. I liked her enormously for her honesty and openness as well as her intelligence. I was especially moved by her calmly indignant account of her struggles as the mother of a handicapped child to wrest from the various heartless bureaucracies a recognition of Lael's problems and to get help for him.

Martha and I were friends from our first meeting, though mostly by long distance. She was tremendously warm-hearted and made friends throughout the party at all times in her life. Spending an evening with Martha was always a warm experience and also an exciting political time. Martha was political down to her fingertips, and though her convictions were deeply, passionately held she was usually very clear in her thinking and articulate in expression. I especially valued her insights into the question of women's oppression and her interest in and knowledge of the history of the Trotskyist movement. As a party leader, educator and spokesman, and as a thoughtful partisan of women's liberation, Martha was a role model for many female comrades, but she also numbered many senior comrades of the male persuasion among her most cherished friends and drinking buddies.

Martha may have had more friends in the party than anyone else. The comrades in the center responsible for making up the weekly courier package for Moscow were sometimes embarrassed on behalf of other comrades there at the number of letters being forwarded to Martha from all points on the globe. Typically there would be personal mail for Martha from the Bay Area and New York and maybe from Tokyo or Paris, and also from her family in Denver.

Warm heart notwithstanding, Martha was tough, as legions of our opponents well know to their discomfort. One of my favorite stories about her involves our intervention into the Leninist Faction convention held in the Midwest. Martha was the one on the phones. At one point



she called Jim and said they were getting a lot of Spartabaiting and demands to know if they had carnal knowledge of the SL. Jim gave her some good advice and she gulped and agreed. Then she got up at the meeting and proposed: "If you want to know about the Spartacist League, I move that we invite Jim Robertson to this convention to answer all our questions about the politics of the SL!" The motion did not carry but the proposal must have impressed some people, and we did finally win over several additional supporters.

I also remember Martha at the November 27 Labor/Black Mobilization in 1982. She was on the front lines. Comrades will recall how the individual initiative of comrades was key to taking advantage of the situation we had created which had brought out so many black unionists and youth who really wanted to stop the Klan and were prepared to try to do it. Having prepared as best we could by arranging for marshals in advance and pulling in a lot more on the spot, especially groups of experienced union guys who had worked together in a disciplined fashion in their own struggles, there was still a big role for spontaneity. As the mass of people spread out behind the barricades many-deep behind the line of marshals, there was one section of the line where a lot of big and determined-looking guys had congregated, by people looking around them and just finding that section of the line that looked like the participants meant business. Martha, a small woman, was not a marshal but she looked at the demo and saw where the hot spot was shaping up to be. She asked for and got permission from some appropriate party authority on the spot to get herself a piece of the action. Looking at the line of protesters, and maybe especially at that part of it, someone in authority over the cops decided it would not be the better part of valor to try and march the Klansmen past the reception that was waiting for them. The rest is history, and Martha was right there.

That she left the Bay Area and went off to take up the challenge of fighting to reimplement Trotskyism in the Soviet Union was typical of Martha's courage. With the determination that had led her to follow her allegiance to Trotskyism through a factional struggle inside the SWP and inside the Leninist Faction, Martha chose to rip up her personal life by volunteering to move thousands of miles away to a foreign city facing hard times and possible big struggles. She was not daunted by the huge obstacles of finding work to support herself while mastering a foreign

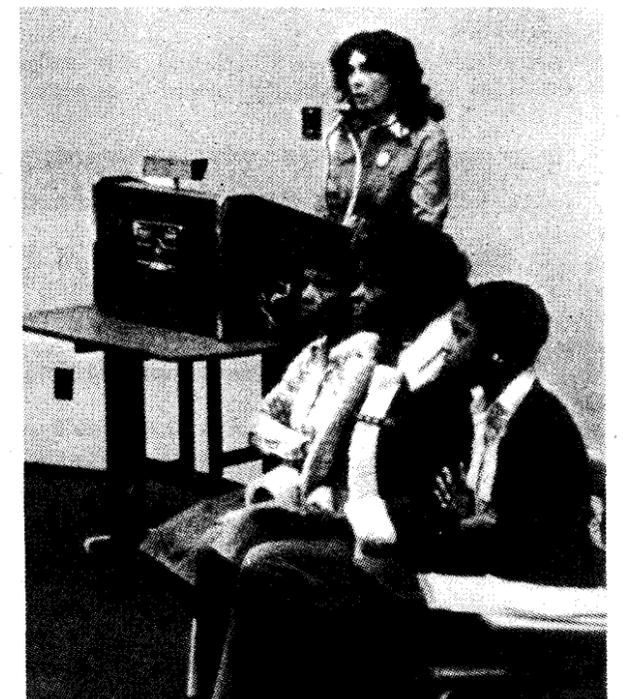
language, the loneliness and isolation, the magnitude of the political tasks at hand.

Martha's stories about the practical obstacles to functioning in Moscow were quite entertaining. But she was not starry-eyed. During an afternoon we spent together when she passed through New York on her way there the last time, she was eloquent about the pervasive social backwardness on the woman question in the USSR, about the constant slights and the incomprehension of the idea of a woman being a political leader. This had to be fought against constantly even among our own contacts. She also spoke about her uneasiness as a Jewish woman at a time of rising anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

Martha enjoyed her students and wrote about them in her letters home. In a letter written January 22, Martha described discussions in her classes: "Today at school talked to two classes about what their impressions were of life here now. It was interesting to see the shift in opinions. These are the kids at the special school who are pretty privileged. There were a couple of hard anti-communists but the bulk of kids (they're 15 years old) thought things were getting worse and several thought there would be big demonstrations here soon. Several told stories of people protesting in their neighborhoods at milk stores or bakeries and how it forced the stores on the spot to lower prices or how they hauled out the bread that was being hoarded in the back and put it on sale."

I very much appreciated the comments Martha sent in for the discussion at the last party plenum, which centered on "revolutionary optimism" and the need to combine a clear-eyed view of all the bad things going on with the understanding that the counterrevolutionaries had not yet had the confidence to directly confront the working class and push through the consequences of their unchallenged victory over the halfhearted "coup." Her observations have had a real impact on our discussions, and we have also been inspired by her example, along with that of the other comrades who have faced the hardships and the dangers of conducting this crucial work in the Soviet Union. As our senior cadre in Moscow, Martha was functioning as our organizer there, although everyone knew that organizing was not her strong suit. She also took real pride in having managed to master enough Russian to be a translator in a pinch. In her January 22 letter to me she said, "The main thing here is endurance—or, as Trotsky put it, tenacity."

Loretta F.: Some personal reflections on Martha: I met Martha in 1978. I was 18 years old and part of a group that was being recruited to the Spartacus Youth League. She helped tremendously in that recruitment and the consolidation of this group, and led the fights against the petty-bourgeois, male-chauvinist nationalists—it was quite a bitter fight and she provided such a tremendous inspiration and leadership to all of this group. It was predominantly



Oakland, California, December 1975: Martha at Partisan Defense Committee forum where relatives of victims of racist police terror spoke.



Our new Russian-language Spartacist Bulletin No. 3, "Leninist Party—Tribune of the People," is dedicated to Martha Phillips.

Chicana, but I remember feeling very close to her even at that time. I was 18. I had a very young daughter, she was not even a year old, and I was on welfare. And Martha was uniquely able to teach me to fight against the humiliation of the so-called public assistance program. She taught me to be a communist.

And by force of example, she inspired the young women in that recruitment period, leading politically in those fights for a communist program. Martha over the years worked with many youth comrades, and I remember a few times pissing her off, and just seeing the look of disappointment on her face really made the lessons sink in even more, that you had to try even harder to learn. I know that many, many comrades wanted to be like Martha, and I among them always identified very closely with her.

She always fought with the young women in the SYL. She taught us how to fight, not only against our political opponents, but also, importantly, against the very real effects of internalized oppression.

Many of us have entered non-traditional jobs and apprenticeships, and Martha gave us the benefit of her hard knowledge being in the trade that she was. And I would say that if there were a journeyman in our program, Martha was a master of the craft of revolution. And she taught us as apprentices, and I think she did a damn good job. Because Martha lived as a communist, she understood keenly the difficulty for women and minority comrades. And she personally often prodded me to speak of my life experience as a Chicana farm worker.

She was very perceptive and she had a talent for encouraging youth comrades to come forward and take on more responsibility. I remember over the years she'd say to me, with the fire of challenge in her eyes, "Loretta, well, Loretta, someday you're going to lead the workers. I know this."

And when I returned from Nicaragua in 1985, she told me that she liked my written report [see "Defend Nicaragua! Crush the Contras!", *Young Spartacus* No. 134, March 1986] and that it had made her cry. She encouraged me



WV Photo
May 1983: With demonstrators protesting appearance of Cold Warrior Jeane Kirkpatrick at Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco.

to write more. And I felt so honored by that. There were many, many sides to Martha. Overall her revolutionary will, her love for life, her family and comrades, her intellectual appetite, her wonderful piquant sense of humor, her sweet compassion and just hatred of capitalism.

And so I can only say now, I always thought of Martha as Rosa Luxemburg. I remember many meetings, hearing her speak, watching her give forums, and I thought, she's our Rosa. And she is the rose of our International.

Debbie H.: I wanted to share with you a few personal and political memories about Martha that I will always cherish.

In 1988, when we organized to stop the KKK from marching in Philadelphia, Martha and I worked together at some of the campuses to bring students out for this mobilization. A little frustrated that there were so many students who we wanted to talk to but who were just sitting there eating, Martha said: "Let's just stand on a chair and get their attention." Having a little trouble putting this good idea into practice, I said, "OK, you go first." Martha took a breath, got right up there and gave such a powerful speech, there was no need for a second. She told those students all about the civil rights movement, about how students from this and other campuses went down South

Spartacist



Moscow, December 1991: Martha Phillips and an official of the Lenin Museum display Partisan Defense Committee and Prometheus Research Library protest letters against closing of the museum.

30 years ago as courageous fighters for black liberation and how now they had the same responsibility to fight against the fascist scum who were threatening to march in Philadelphia. Martha was a wonderful speaker, a powerful agitator.

In September I spent two weeks with comrades in the Soviet Union and I got to spend a good deal of time with Martha. The pace of work for comrades was very high, and the strains many.

One night when we were coming from a restaurant in Moscow, she told me about the time when she was on a train coming back, from Leningrad, I think. There were mainly Soviet soldiers in this car on the train and they were all singing. Well, it went around that each person had to sing a song themselves. When it came to Martha's turn, all she could remember was: "That's Why the Lady Is a Tramp"! So of course she sang it, and at the end of each chorus, the soldiers chimed in as best they could, "That's why the lady is a tramp"! This is when she told me about her theater background, how good she was at it and how much she loved it. She said that giving up the theater was the hardest decision of her life at the time.

The children Martha taught in Moscow were very lucky. She would tell them stories about the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, life in America from a communist point of view. She put together a little picture album of her family and of her relationship with Jeff. She knew how important it was for these children to see pictures of an integrated relationship. One day she asked the children what they thought about the education system, and it almost started a civil war in her classroom...between the children of the bureaucrats and the children of workers. Then they started asking her questions, like what she thought of the coup! After answering carefully, she decided that maybe she shouldn't encourage them to ask just anything they want! Martha was one of the best teachers within our party for new comrades. She was wonderful at explaining political history and program, very patient and clear. She should have lived to a ripe old age teaching the youth of future generations.

San J.: I remember when I first met Martha. I was 17 or 18 and was in Santa Fe, New Mexico. It was summertime. I wanted to join the youth organization but was told to hold off until I got back from working in a construction brigade of the Cuban Communist youth. I found out that a member of the Spartacists named Martha Phillips was in Denver at her parents' house recuperating from an operation. I went to see her there. Martha had me read "Genesis of Pabloism" [*Spartacist* No. 21, Fall 1972], which I couldn't understand much of at the time, and then we talked about it. She was patient and serious, and explained to me the importance of the revolutionary party and its history. I remember that I went away thinking that this was a real revolutionary—that I wanted to be like her, and that I would be proud to be in an organization with people like her, one that really meant business about the revolution.

Years later I got to know her well in Oakland, and I always felt like we understood each other pretty well. As time went by we became friends.

A comrade told me many years ago that there are two indispensable prerequisites for being a revolutionary: the capacity for outrage against oppression, and a sense of humor. Martha had these two capacities in very full measure.

I remember during her election campaign the union bureaucrats in the Oakland phone local were actually scared to death that we might succeed in getting the members to endorse her, since she was a real ball of fire

and was making life hell for some of their colleagues in the UAW and ILWU bureaucracy. I remember the impact of how she spoke about the racist murder of Patrick Mason [in Orange County] during that campaign.

I will miss the way Martha laughed, the fire in her eyes when she went up against some social-traitor or hammered home a principle of communism, and the way she liked to tell all kinds of stories and anecdotes with her flair for the dramatic. She had a special passion for the heritage of Cannon, which she tried to impart to the youth.

The last time I saw her was more than a year ago, but it seems like it was just yesterday. She was telling stories about her work in the Soviet Union. I asked her when she was going back. "As soon as I can!" she said. She went back; she stood up to the anti-Semites and counterrevolutionary gangsters, and died doing the work she wanted to do, with the energy and talent we all admired.

Janet J.: Martha never had an easy life. Before Martha's death I talked with a contact who said that he had personal problems that he needed to resolve before he joined the organization. I gave him a few examples of comrades who did their work well in spite of personal difficulties and then I thought of Martha. I couldn't in my poor Spanish even begin to summarize what kind of comrade Martha was and the extent of the "personal problems" she had had which she never allowed to stand in her way.

Having worked with Martha for over ten years I have many memories which in these past days have been filling my mind—one memory crowding out another. Martha and I came into my house once, when our sons were about nine years old, and we found my son had left a note saying he had gone out. I was upset because I had left him alone and now he wasn't there. Martha read the note in tears because her son couldn't write her a note and she didn't know if he would ever be able to. So we just stood there and hugged each other.

So many images of Martha are so clear for me: Martha rushing off to UC Berkeley anti-apartheid demonstrations, trying to do all by herself what our students and much

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WV Photo
San Francisco, 19 April 1980: Martha was press liaison for April 19 Committee Against Nazis (ANCAN) which stopped fascists from "celebrating" Hitler's birthday.

"Where Does the Money Come From?"

by Martha Phillips

On 18 October 1991, Martha tape-recorded this political report and fund-raising appeal on behalf of the Spartacist League Lenin-Trotsky Fund, which has raised thousands of dollars to help finance the International Communist League's production and distribution of Trotskyist literature in the Soviet Union. Even five and a half months later, Martha's report remains an informative and powerful presentation about this vital work.

Greetings, comrades, from Trotskyists in the Soviet Union. It's Friday night at the end of a very long week here in Moscow. I'm sitting here as usual with wine, cigarettes and tape recorder. My only regret is that I can't be with you tonight, especially to share in what I hope would be some liquor, food, and especially to be able to talk with you and to help raise money for the Lenin-Trotsky Fund. It's very important work that you're doing. It represents internationalism at the highest level, not the fraud of international greetings at fake congresses, but internationalism as Lenin taught us, that is, the internationalism of building a world party of socialist revolution, which today means a fight to reforge the Fourth International.

In our daily work here in front of factories, in Red Square, defending the Lenin Museum, often workers will ask us, "well, where do you get the money to put out this material?" And we explain to them very simply that we are an international workers organization. That is, comrades like you sitting in the room tonight put out often their only bit of surplus, because they care very deeply about the survival of the land of the October Revolution and are looking to fight along with us against Yeltsin-Bush counterrevolution.

I'd like to begin by stressing the critical point, which of course we have said numerous times now in our material. The point is this, that while the working people of the Soviet Union, indeed the workers of the world, have suffered an unparalleled disaster with the pathetic coup of what is called here the "GKChP" (State Emergency Committee) and the counter-coup of Yeltsin, while the Stalinists' bureaucratic misrule has caused the first workers state to lie in tatters, while the state power has been fractured, we stress here—and workers very much agree—the outcome is not yet definitively decided.

I'll give you an example. Forty days after the three people were killed defending the Yeltsin "White House," the Yeltsin-Popov regime called a commemoration in front of the "White House" on the Moscow River. There was quite a lot of hoopla about it. They built it very heavily, but interestingly enough less than a thousand people came out; this was only 40 days after the coup. This was an extremely small turnout which represented mainly the officials, representing a significant defeat as well as a shift in public opinion. Already here the mood has changed quite dramatically.

In addition, the day-to-day life of Muscovites, which is what I'm most familiar with living here in the city, has become day by day considerably worse. I'll give you an example. I work as a teacher in a Soviet school and two days ago I was sitting in the school cafeteria, and for the first time since the first day of classes, the breakfast for children included one piece of cheese for each child. The sound of a hundred children throughout the cafeteria screaming "cheese, cheese" said more to me than a hundred articles in the bourgeois press about what the real situation here is, which is that day by day it becomes harder and harder to find food.

I was talking with the director of the school, an old Stalinist who lived through the siege of Moscow, as well as some other people who lived through World War II here in the city, and the opinion of most people who actually lived through that period is that the economic situation at the current moment is worse than in the middle of World War II (other than in, of course, Leningrad, where there was a blockade). In the first year of the War, there were a number of people who were hungry, but fairly soon after that they instituted a rationing system. And people were able to get meat; they were able to get food, and it was done on an equal basis. Today, the inequality is horrible and striking. It strikes of course first the old and sick and the weak. There are families who are already hungry. Most people either have stockpiles of a certain amount or have their connections through a complicated system of ordering, but the reality is that every day the situation deteriorates.

Just another example from my own experience. Yesterday, for example, all water was turned off at the school, which meant that there was no food for the children, there were no toilets. Let me tell you it was fairly difficult to teach children who had not eaten or been able to go to the bathroom. This is only one small example of what life is like here at the moment.

So the initial wave is receding of illusions in the Yeltsin

"democrats," which of course was significantly less than has been ballyhooed about by these traitorous people, called "leftists" in the West, who were on the Yeltsin barricades. Even within that context—the petty-bourgeois core that makes up the center of Moscow—the mood has already shifted against Yeltsin and the "democrats." They keep attempting to make moves against the working class. Meanwhile, of course, there's the purge within the army, how extensive it is we simply do not know.

But in addition, the actual selling off of the means of production of the Soviet Union is proceeding. But no one is willing to pour the kind of money into this country that was able to buy the votes for the D-mark referendum in the former East Germany. So the reality is that the economic situation constantly shows the population that the "democrats" simply cannot solve the problems. We've already seen reports in the city of Perm that there have been significant demonstrations.

And the key question, of course, is leadership. What's left of the old Communist Party are the fractured remnants of the so-called "patriots." These are the people that are on a regular basis mobilizing in front of the Lenin Museum here in Moscow. This milieu is extremely contradictory. On the one hand as you stand there and sell Trotskyist literature, you could be surrounded at any one time by the most virulent anti-Semites who scream "Jew" at you, who

the capitalist West—the pogroms in Germany, the Romanian miners, the situation for black people in America. No one else has the capacity—because no one else has the program—to provide this material. So that the most advanced layers of the population are beginning to seriously consider Trotskyism.

I would like to talk a little about the woman question here, because I feel it rather acutely as I see women standing in the lines. We understand from the newspapers and from friends in Leningrad that there have already been scares where no bread, once again, has been on the shelves. We hear that at times people have to stand in line for as long as two hours for bread. And, of course, bread is not just the symbol—it's the main thing which people eat on a daily basis to keep going and continue with their work.

So we need to have the money to continue to print our leaflets, to put out the second issue of our bulletin, to send this material to all parts of the Soviet Union, to make trips to follow up on groups which look to be beginning to seriously study Trotsky and Lenin. And that's the question which we have to put to you this evening. I apologize for the fact that no doubt I sound a bit tired and my sentences are not terribly good. But I hope you understand that the key question here is that we desperately need the ability to continue to do this work, because there is an opening for Trotskyism for the first time since the decisive defeat



Moscow, November 1991: At demonstration to keep Lenin Museum from being closed down by counterrevolution.

talk about Trotsky being a Jew, talk about Zionism in Israel—not of course from the standpoint of the defense of the rights of the Palestinians, but from the most revolting kind of anti-Semitism. On the other hand, there are women, there are workers who stand there with hand-painted signs defending Lenin, defending the gains of October, opposed to privatization. And these people are extremely receptive to the materials that we need the help of all the comrades around the world to be able to continue to put out. The situation here is quite interesting, because while in front of the museum you see mainly Russians, very rarely do you see national minorities, who actually make up a significant part of the working class in Moscow. People who are very receptive are the women workers, Jewish workers and national minorities.

I'd like to stress that every few days when we go and pick up our mail at the post office box, there are letters from all over the Soviet Union requesting literature, requesting information, requesting answers to their questions. There are people who are writing us asking to understand what Trotskyism is about and looking for a leadership. The key question here is whether in time we will be able to forge a Trotskyist nucleus, so that when struggles break, which are inevitable, a significant section of people will be able to provide some leadership.

It is well known that when we stand before the Lenin Museum we raise placards against anti-Semitism, that we explicitly say that we are Trotskyists. And at the same time that a large section of the "patriot" milieu are reduplicating the most simplistic kind of economism, we are the ones championing all of the key issues the Soviet working class so desperately needs answers to. What we offer is a worldview. What we offer is exactly the information that is not being provided, on what is going on in

of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union.

We have a real opportunity here. And it's important to see that, despite the fact that Yeltsin called for strikes, even at the time of the most enormous propaganda barrage at the time of the coup, the workers nevertheless did not respond with the strikes. We expect that there very well may be some demonstrations around the time of November 7.

But most importantly, what we are looking to do now is train the cadres. On a day-to-day level it's extremely difficult because we have many, many more people who want to meet with us than we can possibly meet. People who might join our organization have enormous problems. For the most part they are working people. They have families. They have children. They have jobs; they have responsibilities. The women have to spend enormous numbers of hours waiting in lines.

But as Trotsky pointed out in *The History of the Russian Revolution*, despite the fact that in the early days after February, the dispersed Bolshevik Party had few in the way of organizers, agitators and so on, what the Bolsheviks had was the program that the masses of workers had to come to if they were to solve the situation, and this is precisely what the program of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) provides today.

As I say to people when they ask us, "how many people do you really have?" our standard answer is "well, less than Lenin did at the time of Zimmerwald, but we have a very powerful program." And what we also have, comrades, is friends and comrades around the world who are fighting today along with us so that Trotskyism can be reformed in the Soviet Union—so that at the moment of greatest danger in the land of the October Revolution, once again the Trotskyists remain at their posts. We need your help to do that. ■



WV Photo
Campaigning at supermarket during 1983 campaign for Oakland city council.

**You Can't Fight Reagan with Democrats—
 For Mass Strike Action to Bring Down Reagan!**

Build a Workers Party!



Vote Spartacist Martha Phillips Councilmember At Large

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younger members were unable to do. Martha impatiently shifting in her chair during a mediocre external class and then trying to re-give the whole class under the guise of making a few comments during the discussion. Martha being dressed up in an elegant navy blue suit for her election campaign—looking somewhat like a little girl wearing her mother's clothes—then seeing the transformation that took place as she gave a politically hard and impassioned speech. Martha calling a joint East Bay-West Bay youth exec at her house where she, sick with a cold and wearing a ratty bathrobe, tried by the force of her will to correct all of our political and organizational problems.

One of the things I enjoyed most about being around Martha was her curiosity and intense interest in the history of the international communist movement. Martha was never too busy or preoccupied to hear about a new book one was reading or some fairly minor, but fascinating, detail one had come across.

I remember more than once when a bunch of comrades hung around in George's office while he told "Martha stories" and we laughed until tears ran down our faces—what stands out in my mind most about this was that Martha laughed the hardest.

Martha's dream was to work in a situation like the one in which she worked for this past period, and when she found herself there she lived up to it. Her last months were her finest and we cannot hope for more than that for a revolutionary.

Gene H.: I worked with Martha briefly in the Soviet Union. She struggled, often in isolation, under some of the worst physical, social and political conditions any member of our International, with the exception of probably the Sri Lanka comrades, had ever had to put up with. She lived in a tiny squalid dorm room with terrible lighting, a desk that was too low to be able to sit at with a chair, and too high to be able to sit and work at with a pillow. A toilet bowl that was cracked and stained and continuously flowing with water. A bed that was already uncomfortably lumpy, which she added to with huge boxes of literature that kept arriving mysteriously in the middle of the night. And the lights, the elevators, the hot water, the heating, were constantly failing. Then there were the long food lines and the pre-dawn and late-night trips to the central telegraph office to wait for six hours, very often with a total failure of communications, to make urgent communications about political developments that were taking place.

In the meantime she was surrounded by her fellow students who she described as George Bush clones, Ivy League snobs, joint-venture aspirants, spooks in training and anti-communist creeps. And yet at the same time, she wrote in one of her letters, life is hard but I'd stay longer if I could.

At the same time, with all of her political activity, she ended up getting top grades, so that she could come back and continue under those conditions to fight for our program.

And she was at the same time constantly abused and frustrated in her social and political interactions. Because she was a Communist, Trotskyist, a woman and a Jew. And she worked under these conditions. And it was bad, but it was not surprising that she had to deal with these problems with non-political people, but she even had to deal with these things with people who were supposed to be political, and who were supposed to be our contacts. People who would just mumble things, because she was "just" a woman, right, she was supposed to be stupid. You don't know how enraging that is. And even sympathetic friends, people who cared for her, were

patronizing when she started to talk politics.

So she was a woman and she was not to be taken seriously and that's a hard fact of life politically in the Soviet Union. And yet when she got on the podium in front of the Moscow Workers Conference, they listened.

While some of us were at the independent miners conference in Donetsk, Martha was trying to single-handedly get into the Kremlin, where there was a Russian trade-union conference going on. She showed up the first day. This is just typical of Martha. She shows up the first day, so some soldier guard shows up and says, "what do you want, you can't go in." So she says, "special circumstances." She held out her publication, the first Spartacist Bulletin in Russian. "Oh, Spartacist, yes, well, come back tomorrow." So she came back the next day, there was a plainclothes guy, "oh yes, Spartacist, you still can't come in. But I'll take one of those." She says, "that'll be 50 kopeks." So the guy reaches in his pocket to take out 50 kopeks. Next thing there's a line of the trade unionists arriving and she's selling on the Troitsky Bridge, entering the Kremlin, she's selling our Russian Spartacist Bulletin to the trade unionists as they arrive.

Don Alexander: Martha is dead—murdered. It can't be, not our comrade Martha Phillips, who fervently believed in the communist future of humanity. Martha died a Trotskyist, a revolutionary internationalist fighter for the emancipation of the oppressed and exploited worldwide. She died fulfilling the internationalist duty of defending the gains of the Russian Revolution, and helping to forge a Soviet section of a new Fourth International.

Martha had many outstanding qualities as a revolutionist. Her revolutionary devotion, determination, will and unflagging enthusiasm will continue to inspire us communists and the revolutionary youth of today and tomorrow. As I recall, one of Martha's favorite Trotsky quotes was the one from *The Lessons of October* that stressed the party, the party, and once again the party as the indispensable instrument for the working-class conquest of power. Martha took very seriously the lessons of the Bolshevik-led 1917 workers revolution, and it was no accident that she went to the Soviet Union. That she learned Russian and decided to move to the Soviet Union to assist in building up the forces for a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party is testimony to her, and to our Trotskyist program and party

that produce good communists like her.

Martha was a comrade, a friend, and a wonderful human being. I particularly appreciated the extra step she would often take in pushing and prodding comrades to get out there and fight for the communist program despite whatever doubts one might have about one's personal capacity. When I was a contact, Martha asked me at a public forum to speak. I was scared to death because I'd never spoken publicly. She asked me several times and I told her—no, no, and no. She relented; my heartbeat slowed. Years later I told her that she was right: if you have something to say, then say it or it might not get said. She understood the crucial necessity of recruiting, training and educating black and Latin revolutionaries in building a multiracial Leninist vanguard party.

Martha was full of revolutionary initiative. One small example of this was her role in the Labor Black League. In early 1990, I raised with her the idea of my going to Germany to get a piece of the action in our fight for the revolutionary reunification of Germany. A day or two later she phoned me and said that she had talked this over with some comrades who liked the idea. Before I knew it we were talking to LBLers, and Karen and I were soon in Germany running around like chickens with our heads cut off [see "Black American Trotskyist on Speaking Tour of Germany," WV No. 508, 10 August 1990]. Martha pushed for that tour.

I got to know Martha over a long period of time in Detroit and the Bay Area. She hated oppression and injustice to the marrow of her bones, and I shall always miss her. Nothing was dearer to her than that the international soviet shall be the human race. We will best remember and honor her by continuing to wage a resolute and consistent fight for the revolutionary Trotskyist program that is embodied in the ICL. In the course of the final struggle to overthrow the world bourgeoisie and its brutal system, which breeds endless oppression, torment and misery, millions of class-conscious working people and their allies of all races and nationalities will come forward. We can confidently predict that Jewish communists—men and women—will once again play a great role in burying this hellish capitalist system. We know and understand this, and so do the bloody exploiters.

I want to dedicate the last stanza of a Richard Wright poem to the memory of comrade Martha Phillips, a poem whose vision she shared. It's called "I've Seen Black Hands":

I am black and I have seen black hands, millions
 and millions of them—
 Reaching hesitantly out of days of slow death for the
 goods they had made, but the bosses warned that
 the goods were private and did not belong to them,
 And the black hands struck desperately out in
 defence of life and there was blood, but the
 enraged bosses decreed that this too was wrong,
 And the black hands felt the cold steel bars of the
 prison they had made, in despair tested their
 strength and found that they could neither bend nor
 break them,
 And the black hands lifted palms in mute and futile
 supplication to the sodden faces of mobs wild in
 the revelries of sadism,
 And the black hands strained and clawed and
 struggled in vain at the noose that tightened about
 the black throat,
 And the black hands waved and beat fearfully at
 the tall flames that cooked and charred the
 black flesh...

I am black and I have seen black hands
 Raised in fists of revolt, side by side with the white
 fists of white workers,
 And some day—and it is only this which sustains me—
 Some day there shall be millions and millions of them,
 On some red day in a burst of fists on a new horizon! ■



WV Photo
Martha struggled to win comrades of Red Flag Union to Trotskyism. Here, speaking at RFU Conference in Los Angeles, June 1977.

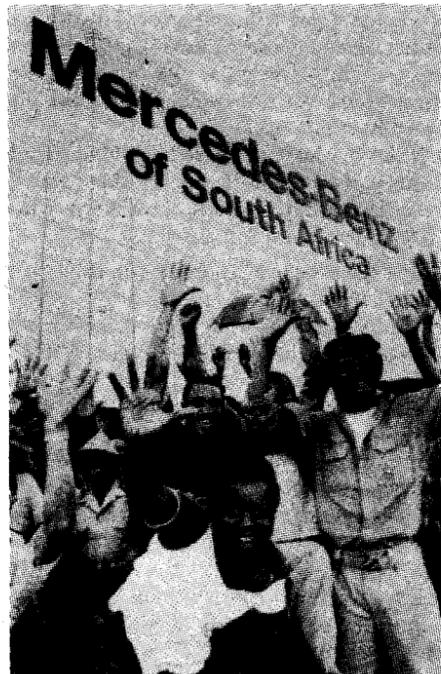
South Africa...

(continued from page 1)

In the flush of victory, De Klerk crowed, "Today we closed the book on apartheid." Hardly. The ANC initially opposed the De Klerk plebiscite, correctly denouncing it as a "racist referendum," but later switched tracks to vigorously back it and urge white supporters to "vote yes." The Johannesburg *Weekly Mail* (6 March) reported considerable discontent in the black unions over the ANC's "soft" referendum line, with "hard-left" elements around the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) supposedly pushing for mass protest against the referendum.

The day after the referendum, the ANC-linked Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) held a mass demonstration of thousands which marched through Cape Town against the government's cutback budget. "The hammer and sickle of the South African Communist party was much in evidence, and posters demanded 'jobs for all'" (*Financial Times*, 19 March). But their "protest" came safely after the vote. In reality, the COSATU/NUMSA/SACP "hardliners" are only pushing for a seat at the negotiating table, while the millions of black workers who make this industrial powerhouse run will at most sweep up a few crumbs off the floor.

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) warns that bar-



Der Spiegel
Strike of combative black auto workers at Mercedes-Benz was betrayed by reformist "Communists" of SACP.

gaining with the Randlords and their politicians over a deal to shape a "post-apartheid" capitalist South Africa is a cruel hoax, whether it's called "power-sharing" (De Klerk) or an "interim government" (Mandela). *Democracy for the oppressed can be achieved only through a working-class revolution that sweeps away the whole structure of white supremacy based on brutal superexploitation of the black proletariat.*

Reforms Cover Up "Economic Apartheid"

Having shored up his regime against the white right, De Klerk is now predictably moving against his negotiating partners in the ANC, in order to put a damper on the rising expectations of the impoverished black population. Before the vote, De Klerk had agreed to a multi-racial interim government named by CODESA (Congress for a Democratic South Africa), the multiparty grouping that formed last December. But on March 23, the Pretoria government unveiled its proposal for appointed "transitional councils" which would "advise" the present regime. Mandela thought he had a deal, but now that's off, and with it the promise of elections for a constituent assembly.

On De Klerk's right flank, the Conservative Party is unraveling as a split



Der Spiegel
Black township near Johannesburg. Phony "power-sharing" won't change hellish conditions faced by millions of blacks.

looms. The hardest-liners are aligned with the neo-Nazi AWB, which threatens to step up its terror drive. But for now they are isolated, and the apartheid right is contemplating the unpalatable prospect of establishing a Boer "bantustan" in the northern Transvaal. But saner heads know they can't get along without black labor. And meanwhile, police "hippos" are rumbling through the black townships, as the cops and shadowy (army-trained) terrorists linked to Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha leave a trail of hundreds of dead. As astute South African observer Alastair Sparks told ABC's *Nightline* (18 March), the acute danger to the regime now is a crisis of rising expectations among blacks.

In recent years, black labor has been the backbone of the anti-apartheid struggle. While the ANC stood on its Freedom Charter and talked of negotiating a "post-apartheid" democracy, combative sectors of the proletariat were raising the call for a "workers charter," proclaiming that "Socialism Means Freedom" (a banner at a National Union of Mineworkers conference), calling for a fight for workers power. Township youth waved the Soviet red flag as a symbol of defiance. Despite the best efforts of the SACP and COSATU leadership to keep a lid on the unions, a growing anger is palpable among the black population who feel cheated of their birthright.

Thus two years after the release of Nelson Mandela, which raised hopes of freedom for the black masses, there is another national "vote" in which no black person can participate. The elimination of the pass laws sparked the migration of tens of thousands of people who had been kept in semi-starvation conditions on the bantustans. But now in the urban shantytowns, millions still live on the edge, deprived of housing, deprived of jobs, deprived of any democratic rights—and

their future, for which precious blood has been spilled, is looking a lot like their past. The most class-conscious capitalist spokesmen worry about an explosive mass sentiment developing into a momentum toward revolution.

The conservative London *Economist* (29 February) recently wrote an unusually frank feature article on "Living Standards in South Africa," whose central message is: "Black South Africans' dreams of prosperity will prove far harder to satisfy than their hopes of political rights. Equality is years away." The system of "economic apartheid" was documented in the enormous and growing gaps between whites and blacks in almost every category (literacy, basic education, health services, housing, employment). The article argued it's impossible to find the millions of rands to even begin to close the gap. Their answer: "The biggest favour black politicians can do their supporters today is to warn them that, for many years ahead, liberty will still mean poverty."

The ANC and its SACP/COSATU allies have lied to the South African masses with their sugary promises of achieving "entitlement" and "redistribution" through negotiations. But lucid spokesmen for the ruling class, like the *Economist*, know full well that political reforms will not (and, from their class standpoint, must not) change the fundamentals of the apartheid system. While liberals and reformists try to paper over these basic facts, we Trotskyists tell the hard truths and draw revolutionary conclusions. Thus in our 1990 article, "South Africa and Permanent Revolution" (reprinted in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 8, July 1991), we wrote:

"But there will be no 'democratic' 'post-apartheid' capitalist state. How can you have 'majority rule' and expect that the

oppressed majority will tolerate a situation in which average white income (R13,242 per person) is ten times that of blacks (R1,393); in which more than seven million non-whites live in shacks while the backyard swimming pool is standard in white suburbs; in which infant mortality for whites (9 per 1,000 live births) is less than one-tenth that of blacks (94-124 per 1,000)? South African capitalism requires cheap labor—and therefore mass poverty and disenfranchisement—of blacks."

Our conclusion:

"There can be no end to the system of apartheid slavery short of socialist revolution. Superexploitation of black labor is the bedrock on which South African capitalism has been built, and with it the whole edifice of white supremacy. Anything even approaching a minimum of bourgeois democracy (such as 'one person, one vote') is incompatible with the continued existence of that social system. Fighting for the land which has been stolen from them, for the mines and factories which produce enormous wealth from their toil, South Africa's black masses sense this basic fact."

Break with ANC/SACP—For a Trotskyist Party!

On the left, some pseudo-socialist groups have hailed the whites-only referendum. In the U.S., the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Jack Barnes called it a "victory for anti-apartheid struggle" (*Militant*, 3 April). Already in 1985, Barnes swore fealty to the ANC as "the vanguard organization of the democratic revolution in South Africa." Today, this leads the SWP to quote favorably De Klerk's lying claim of "closing the book on apartheid"! In the name of a "democratic revolution," these Mandela/De Klerk "socialists" would lead blacks to support a refurbished neo-apartheid which promises liberty but will mean poverty and white-supremacist rule "for years ahead."

In South Africa, the racist referendum came amid growing dissatisfaction with the ANC's groveling before De Klerk. But while more militant nationalists boycotted the CODESA talks and denounced the white plebiscite, they and various left groups share the essentials of the ANC's (bourgeois) "democratic" program. One and all agree that the one and only demand today is for a constituent assembly. While decrying the imperialist campaign trumpeting the "death of Communism," the South African left has adapted to it, forswearing all talk of socialism as "utopian."

Thus during her recent tour in the United States, Mercia Andrews, a leader of the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA), stated flat out in response to the Spartacist League in New York that in South Africa "there is no chance for socialist revolution today. Bush and his cronies are taking the world by storm with his 'New World Order.' Capitalism is winning internationally on all sides." Her theme was that the working class in South Africa had suffered a partial defeat, and WOSA was cam-



Peters/Newsweek
Afrikaner fascist AWB at February hate rally. Apartheid hardliners are mounting terrorist offensive.

WOSA: Constituent Assembly Fetishism

In South Africa, the whole panoply of black nationalist organizations and left groups in their periphery have been sucked into the wake of the ANC/South African Communist Party's "popular front" with De Klerk. Last fall, various groups joined in an ANC-engineered conference for a short-lived "Patriotic Front." While the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and others boycotted the December CODESA confab in the Johannesburg World Trade Center, their real politics were barely distinguishable from Mandela's.

Thus in late January, at the opening of the apartheid parliament in Cape Town, the ANC staged a "people's parliament" rally demanding an interim government and elections to a constituent assembly to draw up a constitution. The PAC, meanwhile, called its own march, declaring "Down with Undemocratic CODESA," but adding, "Forward to a Democratic Constituent Assembly." Various smaller left groups, such as the tiny, virulently anti-Soviet International Socialists and the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA), have joined in asking the apartheid rulers to concede a constituent assembly.

WOSA attended the Patriotic Front conference, calling for a united front for a constituent assembly. "AZAPO, PAC and WOSA all support the call for a CA," according to their November 1991 pamphlet on "The Politics of Negotiations." But while they speak of a "popularly based constituent assembly built from below," a WOSA statement at the conference (26 October 1991) calls for "a genuine UNITED FRONT which will force the ruling classes to yield to the people's demand for a Constituent Assembly." This makes crystal clear that the aim is not to bring about a constituent assembly through revolution, but rather to pressure the bourgeoisie to grant it—thus guaranteeing in advance that their "CA" won't go beyond the bounds of bourgeois "democracy."

This question also dominated discussion during a recent North American tour by Mercia Andrews, the national organizer of WOSA. Andrews was hosted by the ostensible Trotskyists of Socialist Action, a sympathizing group of Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat." (WOSA attended the USec's 1991 world congress as an observer.) In city after city—New York, Boston, Chicago, the Bay Area—Andrews grew increasingly shrill as she was unable to answer the arguments of the Spartacist League. In Chicago, she denounced a black SL spokesman, decrying "those that want to tell us what to

do like some gods." In Toronto, our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada were even excluded from her talk organized by the "Democracy in South Africa Tour Committee"!

Spartacist speakers placed South African events in the international context of the counterrevolutionary offensive in East Europe and the Soviet Union,

Cape Town, January 24: Demonstrators calling for constituent assembly protest outside South African apartheid parliament.



emphasizing the need for a Bolshevik party to lead the fight for workers revolution in South Africa, and taking WOSA to task for tailing after the ANC and raising the constituent assembly as its maximum program. Andrews declared that to call for socialist revolution now is "utopian," and that "we've never said that CA is a revolutionary demand." "The idea that today we can talk about implementing a social revolution is to live on another planet," she said at the University of Illinois. In several cases, her purely democratic program didn't sit well with some South Africans attending. In New York, a reception the day after Andrews' talk turned into a full-fledged debate between Spartacist and the WOSA spokeswoman, mainly on the constituent assembly.

Andrews' sponsors seemed somewhat embarrassed by the rightist cast to the speaker's remarks. A report in *Socialist Action* (March 1992) said that "some people" objected "that the demand for a constituent assembly would not in and of itself create socialism in South Africa." In an accompanying article on the referendum, Socialist Action did not

even mention the words "constituent assembly." And in another article, SA leader Nat Weinstein apologetically said that "WOSA and others know that a genuine democratic revolution is impossible without the overthrow of the capitalist social, economic and political dictatorship."

Yet in a statement of its minority ten-

uniting the toiling masses behind the proletarian vanguard....

"Our call for a constituent assembly is one of a series of revolutionary democratic demands, raised in the context of a program for proletarian revolution, which can only be realized through the simultaneous or-prior overthrow of bonapartist dictatorships."

—"Why a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly?" WV No. 221, 15 December 1978

At the same time, we noted that "the demand for a constituent assembly in the mouths of various anti-revolutionary fakers can easily be given a very different meaning. A timid bourgeois opposition may seek a peaceful transition through negotiating a compromise with the old regime, which could result in a temporary legislative body going under the name of a constituent assembly."

As Trotsky wrote in his polemic against Karl Kautsky, *Terrorism and Communism* (1920), "Our party has never refused to lead the way for proletarian dictatorship through the gates of democracy." The Bolsheviks called for a constituent assembly during 1917, as the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois "democratic" parties refused to convene it for fear of unleashing agrarian revolution. But the Bolsheviks' watchword was "All power to the soviets!" as they fought for the working class to take power, leading the peasantry behind them. And when, after the soviets did take power in October, "All power to the Constituent Assembly" became the slogan of the counterrevolution, Trotsky noted: "The Constituent Assembly placed itself across the path of the revolutionary movement, and was swept aside."

The Bolsheviks fought intransigently against "parliamentary cretinism," the reformist disease that would lock the workers' struggles into the framework set by the organs of bourgeois rule. The equivalent in countries that lack even formal bourgeois "democracy" is "constituent assembly fetishism." And WOSA has a bad case of it. In seeking a niche in the "broad liberation movement," while criticizing the ANC for selling out the struggle they take on the program of the ANC. Instead of the Bolshevik party, WOSA makes the united front key; for soviets they substitute the constituent assembly; rather than workers revolution, they call for "democracy." Although widely considered to be "the Trotskyists" in South Africa, their program in fact is that of the Mensheviks.

Thus in a recent review article on "Trotsky and Trotskyisms" in the South African magazine, *Work in Progress* continued on page 12

paing for a constituent assembly in order to rebuild the mass movement (see "WOSA: Constituent Assembly Fetishism" above).

Spartacist speakers stressed that blows suffered by the working class in East Europe and the Soviet Union have indeed had a direct impact in South Africa. That is why the struggle against Yeltsin-led counterrevolution in Mos-

cow is vital to the fight on the Witwatersrand to smash apartheid. But this is no "objective process" that must be taken as a given. The fact is that the fake-lefts who tail after the ANC, saying that socialist revolution is impossible in South Africa, were on the counterrevolutionary side of the barricades in Moscow last summer. WOSA is linked to Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat,"

which wrote that "It was necessary to unhesitatingly oppose the coup and, on these grounds, to fight at Yeltsin's side" (*Inprecor*, 29 August 1991).

The talk of defeat in South Africa is likewise an excuse for obeisance to the popular front. In fact, the black unions have not been broken in struggle, not by the bosses or the state. Rather, they have been chained by the ANC/SACP, which prevent them from using their power for fear of upsetting the negotiations (as in the militant 1990 Mercedes-Benz strike). Meanwhile, the South African Communist Party has grown by the thousands over the last two years. For in spite of the sellout line of SACP leaders Joe Slovo and Chris Hani, South African blacks don't buy the "death of Communism."

The key to unlocking the possibility of revolutionary struggle in South Africa is a political fight to break the ANC stranglehold, the fight for a genuinely communist vanguard, a Leninist-Trotskyist party, that can mobilize the tremendous power of the black proletariat, uniting it with the Indian and coloured (mixed-race) masses and those whites (and there are many) who are pre-

pared to throw in their lot with those fighting for a society of genuine equality. But that will take a fundamental social revolution. The idea of a parliamentary road to black emancipation is absurd in this prison house of peoples, where over the last two years more than 4,000 people have been killed by government troops and a shadowy officially sponsored "third force."

As De Klerk seeks to give apartheid a facelift while keeping the non-white masses in terror, it is desperately necessary to form racially integrated workers defense guards to halt the bloody communalist warfare whipped up by the racist rulers. Such organs of struggle can grow into South African soviets, to organize the struggle to smash the racist capitalist state and become the basic unit of a new proletarian order that would send shock waves through black Africa and around the world. Not treacherous talk of "power sharing" under "reformed" apartheid, but a struggle to lead the oppressed masses in the factories and townships in the fight for a black-centered workers government—that is the task! ■



De Klerk-Mandel negotiations perpetuate neo-apartheid hoax.

East Europe...

(continued from page 5)

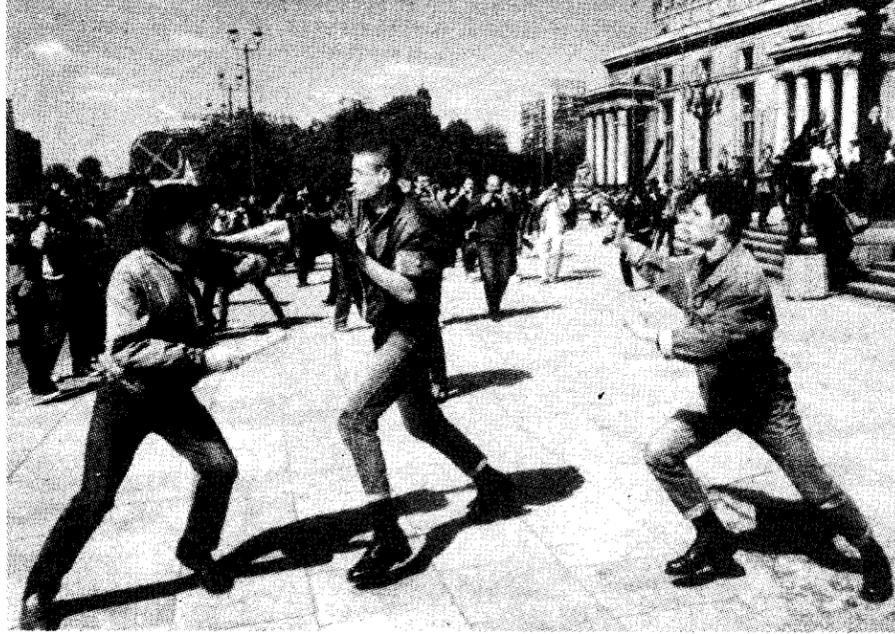
In the mid-1980s this most stable Stalinist regime in East Europe—in the face of economic stagnation—began acting in an aberrant, self-destructive way à la Romania's Ceausescu. In the name of a "Renaissance Process," a campaign of forcible assimilation was launched against the Turkish minority. Turks were ordered to "Bulgarianize" their names; their schools, newspapers, even Islamic mosques were closed. When in 1989 the Turkish communities staged mass protests against this national oppression, some 300,000 were forced to flee their homeland to Turkey.

A few months later the hardline pro-Moscow regimes in the DDR and Czechoslovakia fell. The Bulgarian Stalinists could see the writing on the wall—indeed, in blazing letters. In November 1989 Zhivkov was ousted by some "reform"-minded colleagues. They changed the party's name from Communist to Socialist and declared their goal was to transform Bulgaria into a Western-style "market economy." As in Romania, the erstwhile Stalinists won a freely contested parliamentary election in the spring of 1990 by promising to defend the interests of working people during the transition to a market economy. And likewise as in Romania, following the elections the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) government launched an austerity program designed by the IMF. National output fell 13 percent during 1990. Taking advantage of popular discontent and disillusionment, the right-wing opposition, grouped in a coalition called the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), organized protests and strikes.

Under the prodding of Bulgaria's Western creditors, in late 1990 the formerly Stalinist Socialists and the anti-Communist UDF formed a coalition government based on "free market" immiseration. The new finance minister announced a new austerity program that would be "really severe." It was. Bulgarian national output plummeted an incredible 20 percent last year! The uneasy alliance between the ex-CPers and anti-Communists broke down under the strain, and the Socialists and UDF squared off against one another in new parliamentary elections in October. Ironically, the elections produced a deadlock in which the balance of power in parliament was held by the Turkish party,

the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF).

After Zhivkov's ouster, the new Socialist regime restored the rights which the Turkish minority had before the "Bulgarianization" campaign. In response, 100,000 Turks returned to Bulgaria in expectation that life would now be better for them. However, the Socialists continued to appeal to anti-Turkish chauvinism, albeit in a more "civilized" manner. The attempt to introduce Turkish into the schools produced violent protests and school boycotts by Bulgarian chauvinists, in many cases organized by former Stalinists. Last spring the Socialist/UDF government "postponed"



Tomasz Tomaszewski

Polish neo-Nazis attack 1990 May Day demonstration in Warsaw.

allowing Turkish children to be educated in their own language. The Socialists also talked about banning the MRF, on the grounds that it violated the constitutional provision against ethnically based parties!

After the October elections, the Turkish leaders offered to support the UDF (from their standpoint the lesser evil) in return for ministerial posts. The Bulgarian rightists predictably rejected this proposal, but the Turkish petty-bourgeois nationalists supported the formation of a UDF government anyway. Since then the Socialists have abandoned any pretense of representing the interests of the working class and have instead attacked the militantly pro-capitalist government for supposedly acting as a tool of Turkish designs on Bulgaria. BSP firebrand

Rumen Volidecharov ranted, it is "only a matter of time before they [the Turks] declare independence, like in Yugoslavia." In the January presidential elections, the Socialist candidate denounced his UDF opponent as "a Turk with a fez in his heart" (London *Independent*, 20 January).

After five centuries of Ottoman rule, and with a militarily strong Turkey across the border, it is easy for demagogues to play on popular fears of Turkish domination. However, chauvinist attacks on the democratic and national rights of the Turkish community in Bulgaria are the surest way to provoke a war with Turkey.

While the erstwhile Stalinists have been pushing anti-Turkish chauvinism, the right-wing government's drive to restore capitalism is meeting with working-class resistance. Currently, 20,000 coal, uranium and lead-zinc miners have gone on strike to protest the regime's plans to close "unprofitable" mines. This is especially significant since the miners union had previously supported the anti-Communist UDF. To reverse the drive to capitalism, Bulgarian workers must return to the revolutionary internationalist traditions of the "Narrow Socialists" (Tesnyaki), who were among the founders of the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky.

The Tragic Course of Tito's Yugoslavia

During the 1950s and early '60s the "Yugoslav road to socialism" had considerable appeal for Western leftists. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia—born out of the heroic struggle of the Communist Partisans against the German and Italian fascist occupiers and their Balkan allies—claimed to stand for genuine national independence and "workers self-management." Furthermore, the Tito regime appeared to have successfully overcome the age-old Balkan blood feuds. Tito, whose father was a Croat and mother a Slovene, had led a partisan army largely composed of Serbs and Montenegrins. His chief lieutenants were Alexander Rankovic, a Serb, and Eduard Kardelj, a Slovene. Also in the postwar Yugoslav Communist leadership was Tito's old political mentor, Moshe Pijade, a Sephardic Jew.

Yet what the Titoists considered their uniquely valuable contribution to "building socialism"—self-administered enterprises linked through a market—contained the fatal seed of fratricidal nationalism. Yugoslavia is a country of extreme regional/national inequalities. The most efficient enterprises, manned by a relatively large skilled workforce and technical intelligentsia, were concentrated in the northernmost republics of Slovenia and Croatia, formerly part of the Habsburg Empire. The Yugoslav south—southern Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albanian-populated Kosovo—was relatively impoverished.

In the name of "self-management," the Slovene and Croatian bureaucracy

demanding that the profits and foreign exchange earned by their enterprises be retained in their republics, not redistributed by the Belgrade (read Serbian) bureaucracy to the poorer south. Long-time Croat party boss Vladimir Bakaric was the main advocate of economic decentralization. As long as Tito was alive, he acted as a strong check against nationalist disintegration. In the mid-1960s he ousted the regime's then number two man, Alexander Rankovic, who had built a network of fellow Serbs based on the federal political police. Five years later, Tito purged the nationalist leaders of the Croatian League of Communists.

However, Tito's bonapartist balancing actions in no way altered the underlying political and economic conditions which produced the fracturing of the Yugoslav bureaucracy along national lines. This fracturing accelerated greatly after Tito's death in 1980 and was personified by the principal antagonists in the recent war—Croatia's Franjo Tudjman and Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic.

Tudjman was the youngest general in the Partisan army and after the war continued to serve in the Yugoslav military. In the 1960s he became an aggressive spokesman for the strong nationalist currents in the Croatian bureaucracy. He was expelled from the League of Communists, imprisoned a couple of times, and subsequently became a history professor at the University of Zagreb. Tudjman became a notorious apologist for the genocidal Ustashi regime that he had fought in his youth. He now glorified these bestial clerical-fascists as "the expression of the historical aspirations of the Croatian nation for its independent state."

Milosevic, the son of a Serbian Orthodox priest, worked his way up the bureaucratic ladder as an economic technocrat, becoming head of the Belgrade central bank. In the mid-1980s he could see that strong nationalist winds were blowing throughout Yugoslavia, and took over the Serbian Communist Party on a program of "Greater Serbia." He consolidated his power by suppressing the Albanian majority of Kosovo—which had been the medieval heartland of Serbia—and doing away with their regional autonomy enshrined in Tito's 1974 constitution.

War Returns to the Balkans

Milosevic's drive for a Greater Serbia, riding roughshod over Tito's carefully balanced national arrangements, in turn emboldened the Croatian nationalists. When in 1990 anti-Communist separatists came to power in Croatia and also Slovenia, the stage was set for a new Balkan war. The installation of a government headed by a well-known Ustashi apologist naturally frightened the sizable Serbian community in Croatia, which took up arms when Tudjman sent his police and militia in to impose their authority. However, the Serbian rebellion was quickly controlled and manipulated by Milosevic in the interests of Serbian expansionism. During World War II, the Serbian regions of Croatia had been strongholds of Tito's Partisans. But now the Serbian militias identified themselves with the monarchist Chetniks, who had fought against the Com-

WOSA...

(continued from page 11)

(January/February 1992), the SACP's professional Trot-baiter Jeremy Cronin says WOSA "correctly" advocates a constituent assembly, while satirically inventing a "new Trotskyist faction," "Proletarian Opposition" (POSA), to attack WOSA from the left. This isn't hard to do, although as a dyed-in-the-wool reformist, Cronin has his "POSA" take an ultraleft line against a constituent assembly per se. Interestingly, he praises a pamphlet by Martin Legassick of the Congress Militant tendency (Grantites), for renouncing the view that democratic gains can only be secured by the working class overthrowing the bourgeois state ("not on the immediate agenda"). Instead, says Legassick, the working class must first "complete the bourgeois democratic revolution" and only later "begin socialist transformation."

Cronin notes, "That is not a million miles away from the central thrust of the SACP's latest manifesto." Exactly. He recognizes WOSA and Militant for what they are, basically pressure groups on the ANC/SACP who share their fundamental view that socialist revolution is "not on the agenda." But the real alternative to workers revolution is the continued domination

of Anglo American and the rest of the mining and banking conglomerates, whose fabulous wealth is based on a structure of white supremacy, now disguised by a façade of "democracy" where before these "verligte" ("enlightened") capitalists hid behind the apartheid regimes of the National Party.

As Trotsky wrote in his theses on permanent revolution:

"With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses....

"The dictatorship of the proletariat which has risen to power as the leader of the democratic revolution is inevitably and very quickly confronted with tasks, the fulfillment of which is bound up with deep inroads into the rights of bourgeois property. The democratic revolution grows over directly into the socialist revolution and thereby becomes a *permanent* revolution."

—Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution* (1930)

Written as a summary of the lessons of the victorious Russian Revolution of October 1917, and of the failure of the Chinese Revolution in 1927, these short paragraphs outline the fundamental perspectives of the South African revolution today. ■

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munists, often collaborating with the Italian fascist forces.

When the civilian Yugoslav Stalinist bureaucracy—whose core had been the League of Communists—totally fractured along national lines in 1990, the federal army was left as the only pan-Yugoslav institution with any power. Although the officer corps has always been predominantly Serbian, it was established policy for all Yugoslav nationalities to be represented in the highest command positions. Titoist sentiment remained relatively strong within the officer corps, and in late 1990, leading generals circulated an internal document in favor of preserving Yugoslavia as a “federal and socialist society.”

However, as the war in Croatia escalated in the summer, the army increasingly became an instrument of Serbian nationalism with a corresponding change in its own ethnic composition. Non-Serb officers resigned or were removed from their command. Conscripts—not only Slovenes and Croats but also Macedonians and Slavic Muslims from Bosnia—deserted en masse or refused to be sent to the battlefields of Croatia. At the same time, many of the army units fighting in Croatia were made up of Serbian nationalist volunteers. The effect of this fratricidal war on the army was symbolized by a Serb air force pilot with a Croatian wife. When he was ordered to bomb Croatia, his wife threatened to take their child and jump from the 14th-floor apart-

Military superiority on the Serbian side was partly offset by Western imperialist support for Croatia. The newly reunified Fourth Reich reasserted Germany's traditional protectorship of the Croats and Slovenes against the Serbs. The Kohl government bludgeoned its Common Market allies into recognizing the independence of the Zagreb and Ljubljana regimes and threatened international economic sanctions against Serbia. Diplomatically isolated, economically bankrupt, the war increasingly unpopular at home, Milosevic accepted an imperialist-brokered and policed cease-fire. The federal army agreed to withdraw from southern and eastern Croatia, and the Serbian irregulars would supposedly also withdraw or be disarmed. Their place would be taken by a UN “peacekeeping” force of 14,000 while the future status of the contested territories was being negotiated.

The cease-fire is no more than that—a cessation of gunfire—and so far the gunfire hasn't ceased. In any case, the underlying nationalist conflict is totally unresolved. Tudjman has vowed that the “Republic of Croatia will have to find means to liberate every inch of Croatia's occupied territory” (London *Guardian*, 3 February). Yugoslavia's new defense minister Blagoje Adzic—an ardent Serb nationalist, whose entire family was massacred by the Ustasha—in turn has vowed to send his troops back into battle if Croatian forces try to enter the con-



Tomasz Tomaszewski

June 1990: Romanian miners, heeding government appeal, swept ultrarightists from the streets of Bucharest. In September 1991, miners returned to protest government's “market reforms.”

world that looks more and more like the disorder leading up to 1914.

For Revolutionary Internationalism!

The authentic communism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky is based on proletarian *internationalism*. The destruction of Yugoslavia by contending nationalist forces exemplifies the political bankruptcy of the Stalinist doctrine of “socialism in one country.” Here was a Stalinist regime which initially possessed enormous moral authority and internal élan. When Tito and his comrades spoke of the “unity and brotherhood” of Yugoslavia's peoples, they had the heartfelt support of the working masses from Slovenia to Macedonia. Yet the unity and brotherhood forged in the struggle against the German and Italian fascist occupiers and their local henchmen could not be maintained on the basis of “building socialism” in one relatively backward Balkan country.

Nowhere is the causal link between the pressure of the world capitalist economy and the rise of counterrevolutionary nationalism clearer than in Yugoslavia. Croatian nationalism raised its head, beginning in the late 1950s, over the retention of foreign-exchange earnings. During the '60s Yugoslavia exported its unemployed labor to West Europe, especially West Germany. The money they sent back to their families was a major source of the country's foreign exchange. The 1974-75 world capitalist depression forced Yugoslav workers to return home, and the Tito regime then sought to keep the economy afloat by mortgaging the country to the bankers

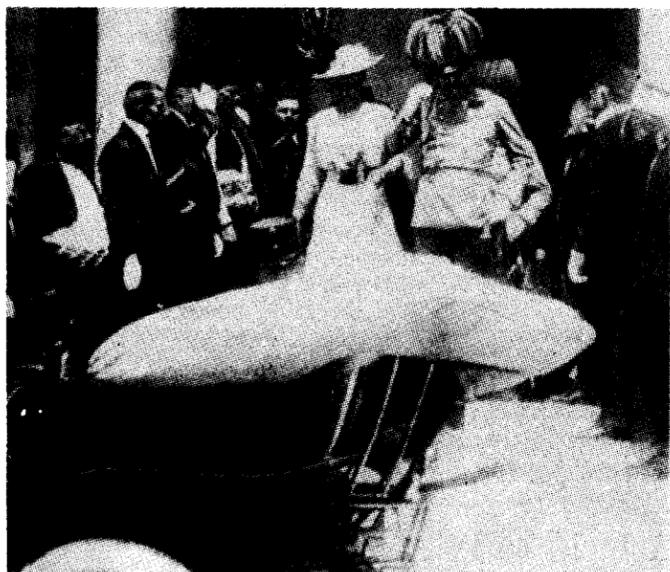
of Wall Street and Frankfurt. Throughout East Europe, IMF-dictated austerity programs of the 1980s formed the economic background for the disintegration of the Stalinist bureaucracies and growth of counterrevolutionary forces.

Trotsky maintained that the program of “building socialism” in an isolated workers state, such as Soviet Russia, must lead to collapse due to the impossibility of raising its level of production above that of the surrounding world capitalist economy:

“The problem of a socialist society cannot be abstracted from the problem of the productive forces, which at the present stage of human development are world-wide in their very essence. The separate state, having become too narrow for capitalism, is so much the less capable of becoming the arena of a finished socialist society. The backwardness of a revolutionary country, moreover, increases for it the danger of being thrown back to capitalism. In rejecting the perspective of an isolated socialist development, the Bolsheviks had in view, not a mechanically isolated problem of intervention, but the whole complex of questions bound up with the international economic basis of socialism.”

—*The History of the Russian Revolution* (1930)

The Bolsheviks were able to unify the multinational working people of the Russian tsarist empire—combatting and defeating the anti-Semitic terrorists of the Black Hundreds and other reactionary nationalist forces—because they had the perspective of world socialist revolution. Today, it is desperately necessary to build new Bolshevik (Leninist-Trotskyist) parties in the Soviet Union and East Europe to unite the workers against the counterrevolutionary inciters of fratricidal nationalism. ■



28 June 1914: Archduke Ferdinand and his wife, shortly before their assassination, the incident which touched off World War I.

ment unless he deserted. His mother said he could never enter her home again unless he carried out his orders.

Was the federal army defending the Yugoslav bureaucratically deformed workers state in fighting against the openly pro-capitalist Croatian separatists? No. The federal army had more than enough firepower to flatten Zagreb and overthrow the fascist Tudjman regime if the military command wanted to preserve the Yugoslav state. Instead the army subordinated itself to Serbian strongman Milosevic's program of territory grabbing. By the end of the year army units and Serbian irregulars had taken over a third of Croatia. Tens of thousands of Croatian villagers were driven from their homes and farms and Serbian refugees resettled in them. And Milosevic is no less committed to introducing capitalism than Tudjman (see “On the Yugoslav Civil War,” *WV* No. 540, 6 December 1991).

Correction

The article, “Solidarność Godfathers: Reagan and the Pope” (*WV* No. 546, 6 March) commented on the recent *Time* magazine cover story titled “Holy Alliance” by Watergate reporter Carl Bernstein. Our article incorrectly cited Bernstein as author of two “recently published puff pieces on Reagan CIA chief William Casey and Persian Gulf butcher Colin Powell.” Those books, *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA 1981-1987* and *The Commanders*, were written by Bob Woodward.

tested territories. The Serb-Croat war can flare up again at any time.

And this is only one of several looming wars in the Balkans. Bosnia—with its thoroughly mixed population of Slavic Muslims, Serbs and Croats—has all the preconditions to become the Lebanon of East Europe, especially after a referendum declaring independence last month. In the southernmost tier of the Balkans the Macedonian question has again come to the fore. Most of their neighbors don't even recognize Macedonians as a distinct nationality. Serbs consider them merely southern Serbs. Bulgarians have long claimed that Macedonians are Bulgarians who were annexed by Serbia after the Second Balkan War in 1913. And Greece declares that the only Macedonians are the Greek-speaking descendants of Alexander the Great's people!

Now Macedonia, too, has declared its independence. Bulgaria immediately, and thus far uniquely, recognized the Skopje regime, doubtless as a first step toward hoped-for unification. Greece, on the other hand, is up in arms that Macedonia might claim territory in northern Greece. Add to this already volatile mix the deeply oppressed Albanian population of Macedonia and neighboring Serb-ruled Kosovo. It was this explosive combination of contending local nationalisms and imperialist appetites which produced the Balkan Wars of 1910-1913. And the following year, the assassination of an Austrian archduke by a Serbian nationalist ignited the first imperialist world war. The collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe has produced, not a “New World Order,” but a

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Japan-Bashing...

(continued from page 1)

Across the country—L.A., Illinois, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Virginia, anywhere there are Asians—racist assaults ranging from verbal harassment to murder carry the message of a ruling class whose claim to global domination is mortally threatened by the economic success of “Japan Inc.” Racist pig Senator Ernest Hollings, Democrat of South Carolina, “joked” at a March 2 campaign rally: “You should draw a mushroom cloud and put underneath it, ‘Made in America’ by lazy and illiterate Americans and tested in Japan.” Such reveling in the horrifying, deliberate mass murder of some 200,000 men, women and children by the U.S. war criminals who atom-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki is not mere rhetoric: the people who run this country want to remind their rivals, current and potential, what they are capable of.

In late February, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights issued a massive 233-page report documenting the range and depth of racist attacks against Asians of all nationalities. Some of these assaults are anti-immigrant, like the recurrent attacks on Cambodians in Revere, Massachusetts in 1988. Some reflect the racist legacy of the U.S. dirty colonial war in Vietnam, like the murder of Chinese immigrant Jim Loo in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1989 by racist punks who thought he was Vietnamese. Some are the work of organized fascist terrorists, like the murder of Hung Truong, a Vietnamese teenager beaten to death by Nazi skinheads in Houston in August 1990. In Los Angeles, Ron Wakabayashi, executive director of the City Human Relations Commission, has assembled a thick sheaf of documents tracking the recent wave of anti-Asian chauvinism.

In California, the Japan-bashing campaign resonates deeply. Here during the last inter-imperialist war over one hundred thousand Japanese Americans were herded into concentration camps by the so-called “democratic” imperialists. Now America’s rulers are preparing for intensified inter-imperialist rivalries. Incited by the capitalist media, anti-Asian violence (not just against Japanese—“they all look alike” to the racist scum) rose sharply around the Pearl Harbor anniversary, and again around Bush’s trade-war trip to Japan. Ominously, Wakabayashi noted, these racist attacks have become more organized: “In the past 15 years, it has been chance encounters, more of a random nature. The pattern within the last three months has been much more targeted hits—homes, community centers, senior centers” (*Los Angeles Times*, 29 February).

Characteristic was the attack on the Norwalk community center, which trashed the interior, slashing judo mats and a kids’ bulletin board with a razor left embedded in the cork. Among dozens of other incidents, an elderly Japa-



National Archives

Some 120,000 Japanese Americans were thrown into concentration camps during World War II.

nese couple in the San Francisco Bay Area had a firebomb thrown at their house on December 2, a Japanese American-owned shop in Sacramento was shot up with a pellet gun on December 7, and a rash of death threats and petty vandalism spread around the state.

On February 9, according to the report later filed with Ventura County police, two white bikers came to the house of Japanese businessman Yasuo Kato in Camarillo. One of the men claimed he lost his job because of the Japanese and demanded money. Pushed outside by Kato, the man kicked the door and screamed, “I’m going to kill you, I’m going to get you, I know where you live!” Fifteen days later—and four days after police took his report—Kato was brutally stabbed to death in his garage, apparently ambushed while unloading groceries.

Ventura County Sheriff’s Department Commander Vincent W. France declared the next day: “There is nothing I would rather do than dispel that it was a racially motivated crime, but at this point we can’t eliminate anything.” The next day the cops announced they now suspected the murder was not a racist hate crime but a hit by the *yakuza*, Japanese gangsters, based solely on “experts” who claimed the stab wounds “resembled” *yakuza* style. Tokyo’s *Yomiuri Shimbun* claimed Kato had left big debts back in Japan, but later another newspaper contradicted this story. While the cops (and perhaps the Japanese government) want to bury the “hate crime” motive, it is all too chillingly plausible. Jimmy Tokeshi of the Japanese American Citizens League commented: “I think there is heightened anxiety [among Japanese Americans] with the news that this guy has been killed, regardless of what the actual motive was.”

Racist Protectionism Poison for Labor, Blacks

Japan-bashing was whipped up into a lynch mob frenzy over the Los Angeles

County Transportation Commission’s award of a rail car contract to a Japanese firm, Sumitomo. The racist mobilization culminated in a January 22 vote to reverse the award for the Green Line contract at a meeting described by Mas Fukai—an aide to County Supervisor Kenneth Hann and a Japanese American who spent three years in an Arizona concentration camp during World War II—as “probably one of the ugliest things I’ve ever seen.” L.A. City Council members Joel Wachs and Zev Yaroslansky were the anti-Japanese demagogues out front. “Never again, never again!” Yaroslansky incited the anti-Japanese crowd of mainly unemployed union members (*Pacific Citizen*, 31 January).

Previously a sixth-grade teacher had sent to a county supervisor her students’

Spartacist League denounces chauvinist protectionism. Jingoist union tops “protect” their masters’ profits by whipping up racist hatred for foreign workers.



WV Photo

drawings opposing the Sumitomo contract, depicting an Asian being kicked and slogans like “Down with Japan,” “Americans Yes! Japanese No!” and “Bomb, bomb, bomb.”

The gang of bureaucrats who are strangling the United Auto Workers played a key role in organizing this racist mob. After decades of sabotaging strikes while giving away their members’ wages, working conditions and jobs, these traitors to the working class seize on racist protectionism to deflect their members’ anger away from the real enemy, the U.S. capitalist class. *UAW Solidarity* (January-February) brags that UAW Region 6 Director Bruce Lee organized Locals 887 at Rockwell International and 645 at GM Van Nuys, which is closing down, to march on the Transit Commission. Far from “saving jobs,” protectionism is *poison* to class struggle, and nurtures the racist, reactionary scum who aim to pave the way to imperialist war over the body of the U.S. labor movement.

Black Democrats like L.A. mayor Tom Bradley and Jesse Jackson rushed to cry crocodile tears about the rise in anti-

Asian violence. In a February 13 speech, Bradley deplored the “genie of racism,” but he was himself one of the instigators of the drive to stop the Sumitomo contract! Jackson, in a Berkeley speech decrying the World War II “internment” camps, called to “invest American,” demanded “Japan must open up its market” and endorsed the NAACP’s call for blacks to boycott Japanese cars (*Asian Week*, 21 February). Both are front men for the racist, capitalist Democratic Party—the party which sells itself as more viciously protectionist and anti-Japanese than Bush, the party which set up the concentration camps and nuked Hiroshima and Nagasaki!

Meanwhile black Democratic mayors like ex-cop Bradley maintain capitalist order in impoverished big city ghettos with racist cop terror. If anti-Asian racist protectionism is poison for the labor movement, it is doubly suicidal for blacks.

Asians in America are particular targets of racism in part because they are perceived as a “successful” minority. In the same way that anti-Semitic bigotry in Europe during the Depression vituperated against “Jewish bankers,” racists whip up resentment of Japanese businessmen and professionals, or of Chinese and other Asian students at the elite UC Berkeley campus. In L.A., as in New York, black nationalists go after Korean shop owners.

One index is the case of Kristi Yamaguchi, the U.S. gold medalist for figure skating in this year’s winter Olympics (where she beat out Japan’s Midori Ito). Yamaguchi, who hails from Fremont, talks like a real California teen, and even wore an American flag costume for her freestyle performance after winning her medal. Even so, she has been denied the advertising contracts that such an American “sports hero” would normally command.

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Moscow...

(continued from page 3)

commentator Aleksandr Nevzorov and anti-Semitic "red general" and RKR Central Committee member Albert Makashov, who was declared to be the new "president" of the Soviet Union at the rally.

What the "black colonel," the "red general" and their ilk want is a bonapartist regime to impose "civil peace" in the transition to capitalism. And the chief candidate for bonaparte is Yeltsin's vice president, Aleksandr Rutskoi, who is insistent on the need for a "period of strong and firm rule" to oversee a "regulated transition to a free market economy." Makashov gave the game away the day before the rally, when he conceded that "we can happily cooperate with Yeltsin." He added: "The congress will not reconstitute the old union. But it will provide legitimacy to the next, patriotic government of Russia, which will work to preserve what our ancestors built over millennia." Subsequently, a front-page article in the London *Financial Times* (26 March) was headlined: "Pressure mounts on Yeltsin to quit as premier."

For the multimillioned Soviet working people suffering under the whip of capitalist austerity, this most grotesque of popular fronts between Stalinists and Great Russian chauvinists is a dangerous and criminal diversion. The felt need to combat the counterrevolutionary onslaught was expressed in the receptivity on March 17 to the internationalist politics of the International Communist League. Over 31,500 copies of the ICL leaflet, "Form Workers and Soldiers Soviets to Stop Capitalist Restoration!" (see *WV* No. 546, 6 March), were snapped up by demonstrators, many taking bundles to give to coworkers, several volunteering on the spot to help distribute. While anti-Semitic and anti-communist insults were heard, they were all but drowned out by protesters who yelled, "Well done, internationalists!" in response to our calls to "Defend the Soviet Union! For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky!"

The RKR Stalinists can't stomach the positive response to our forthright appeals for internationalist working-class struggle to defeat Yeltsinite counterrevolution. In a sinister act of political thuggery, on March 22 a gang of anti-Semitic and Stalinist agitators assaulted our comrades during a sale at the regular weekly protest in defense of the Lenin Museum. These heirs of Stalin and the tsarist Black Hundreds will not silence the voice of authentic communism!

Indeed, the rump Stalinists may soon find themselves swept underfoot by their nationalist and outright fascist "allies." The only road to defending and regenerating the Soviet Union lies in returning to the internationalist program of October. More than ever, it is urgently necessary to cohere a multinational Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard nucleus committed to repulsing the counterrevolutionary tide through proletarian political revolution and restoring the red flag of internationalism to the Kremlin. ■

Free Abortion on Demand!...

(continued from page 16)

right to choose if, when, and under what circumstances" a woman will have children. We say: "Free Abortion on Demand!"

The reformist left's support to the not-very-liberal wing of their own ruling class puts women's rights in the back seat. This is called the popular front, the means by which the fake "socialists" work to contain the struggles of the working class within the bounds of racist Democratic capitalism, and it leads straight to defeat every time. Thus in Eastern Europe and the USSR they hail

East River Subway Tunnel Deathtrap

On March 23, an electrical fire in the Steinway subway tunnel under the East River sent 41 people, including six transit workers, to the hospital. The fire was so hot that 20 feet of rail melted. An alert motorman got his No. 7 train out of the tunnel before anyone was killed. It was just over a year ago that nearly 200 people were injured and two killed in the deadly Clark Street station fire because the fans that evacuate smoke from the tunnel had been out of service for years.

This time one of the crucial fans didn't work, and the other three were inadequate to do the job. Incredibly, the circuit breakers which can kill power to the third rail in the event of a short circuit and fire were disconnected in 1974 after repeatedly malfunctioning because they haven't been upgraded since they were installed in 1915!

anti-abortion, anti-woman forces as "liberators" and "democrats." They have cheered on every counterrevolutionary from Lech Walesa and Boris Yeltsin, who are smashing women's rights in the drive to restore capitalism, to the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran and the Afghan mullahs who kill teachers for educating young girls.

What these anti-communists won't say is that free abortion was a reality in the USSR after the successful 1917 workers revolution. Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, the Bolsheviks established the most progressive laws in human history, not just for women but for the working class and all the oppressed. Up until the Stalinist degeneration in 1923-24, the revolution sought to liberate women from the oppression of the institution of the family with 24-hour childcare and communal kitchens, and to integrate women into political life.

We call on those who hate this system and all it stands for to join our class-struggle contingent. The simple truth is that every fundamental gain ever wrested from the ruling class was won not through lobbying Congress but through mass struggle. In the '60s, with a generation of youth repulsed by U.S. imperialist atrocities in Indochina and stultifying sexual and cultural puritanism at home, more farsighted sectors of the bourgeoisie recognized the need to loosen up state control over personal matters and acceptable modes of dissent. But that was a brief and unusual moment in U.S. history, a period when the capitalist state was attempting to contain, co-opt and eventually destroy the mass civil rights movement and the burgeoning radicalization centered on opposition to the Vietnam War. This was when *Roe v. Wade* was decided. Now in the midst of economic decay the mailed fist of capitalism bears down.

Right now there's a burning need for a mobilization of the integrated, organized labor movement to defend abortion clinics. A disciplined defense guard composed of teamsters, longshoremen and transit workers would drive the Operation Rescue terrorists into the sewers where they belong. Our task is to build an integrated, revolutionary party that will serve as the tribune of the oppressed and lead the working class to victory. We need free, safe contraception and abortion, quality health care and education, jobs for all, and free 24-hour childcare to lay the *material basis* for women's equality. The workers must rule before women can be free!

Instead of fighting for what others deem possible, fight for what's necessary! Free abortion and contraception on demand! Women's liberation through socialist revolution!

Spartacist League/
Spartacus Youth Club
15 March 1992

In what can only be called attempted murder, the TA sent a train *back into the smoke-filled tunnel* with six track workers to fight the fire. They were not equipped with air packs (nor are they trained to be firefighters). They were overcome by "smoke so thick they couldn't make it." Finally, the fire department was called in and put out the fire.

The TA's idea of safety for riders and workers is to assign track workers to ride the No. 7 trains through the Steinway tunnel every rush hour, looking for fires! Even as they put hundreds of workers and riders at risk, the TA bosses continue to scapegoat motorman Robert Ray for last fall's Union Square derailment. The trains and buses in NYC won't be safe until the workers have the power, through elected union safety reps, to shut down unsafe working conditions on the spot.

Transit...

(continued from page 16)

the bosses' arbitrators. The bureaucratic "opposition" in Local 100, New Directions, is steering workers into this trap.

After the massive "no" vote, New Directions spokesman Cecile Clue rushed to assure the *New York Times* (19 March) that "no one wants a strike." Their strategy is to "send Hall back for more." But Hall, echoing his master, MTA chief Peter Stangl, has already said there is no more. As we go to press, the TA is preparing to revoke so-called Supplemental Health Benefits (optical, prescription, dental, death and major medical).

Transit workers are facing a determined offensive by Democratic Party Governor Cuomo, Mayor David Dinkins and the bloodsucking Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) to make city workers pay for decades of capitalist greed. Dinkins got elected with the votes of labor and minorities, but he promised his real masters, the financiers and bankers, before the election that organized labor "will take it from me."

Class-Struggle Leadership Key

At the TWU hall, following a march of 1,500 workers across the Brooklyn Bridge in February, car maintainer Mary Jo Marino, a member of the class-struggle Committee for a Fighting TWU (CFTWU), took the floor and addressed what needs to be done: "Sure we can vote no, but then what? The leadership has made it clear they want to ram this through, they even called the cops on our own members. We're up against Dinkins and the Democrats and you guys [TWU tops] are in their pockets. Pressure is not going to work, we need a leadership that wants to fight to win."

The CFTWU is circulating a petition calling for a *mass meeting at Madison Square Garden* "to take whatever action is necessary to defend our jobs, benefits and working conditions." Committee supporters told *Workers Vanguard* that scores of transit workers are taking the petition to their shops and crew rooms. A mass meeting of transit workers would have the authority to break the bureaucratic logjam and elect a strike committee to mobilize the union for battle against the TA and its capitalist masters.

Above all, you need a class-struggle leadership. And it sure won't be New Directions—let them try to explain why they *voted with Hall* last year to work without a contract. The New Directions crew serves as a safety valve for the Hall regime, funneling the anger of transit workers into sandboxes like their "Contract Action Committees."

New Directions even praises the *racist riots of Rikers Island prison guards* as a model for transit workers in battling the no-strike Taylor Law. But when transit workers strike, they'll be going up

against the state's hired thugs. Meanwhile, the killer cops who murdered Federico Pereira were just put back on the streets by a Queens judge.

A CFTWU leaflet put forward a program to win: "The key to unleashing our power is *breaking* from the gang of Democrats and their flunkies in the union leadership who are cracking the whip for the capitalists. We need full employment—30 hours work for 40 hours pay with full COLA! Create jobs with massive programs to rebuild housing, hospitals, schools, roads and bridges—and starting in New York with the signals, tunnel fans and filthy shops of the TA!"

Sonny Hall would have transit workers believe that 1980 shows you can't strike. Bullshit. During the TWU strike of 1966, union president Mike Quill refused to knuckle under to the bosses' slave-labor laws and was sent to jail—but *the union won*. NYC doesn't work without transit, and you can't replace over 30,000 skilled workers overnight. If the unions hang tough they can defeat reprisals—in 1966 the TWU forced the state to pass an amnesty bill.

The Taylor Law can be smashed on the picket lines, but only if there is a clear-sighted leadership with the backbone and fighting program to shut the city down tight. In '80, the bosses lost hundreds of millions of dollars, but *the strike folded after eleven days*, because it was *knifed in the back* by the John Lawe leadership—with the conniving help of the "Good Contract Committee," which actually had a majority on the exec board! Bowing before the Taylor Law fines, Lawe and his cohorts refused to appeal to the rest of city labor and caved in.

This spring CUNY students are once again taking to the streets to oppose the ruling class's attempt to completely gut higher education for poor, working-class and minority youth of New York with yet another huge tuition increase. All talk from City Hall and the state legislature about "sharing the pain" is capitalist crap—they just want the multiracial working class and the poor to eat it.

A transit strike that links up with the struggles of students and other city workers also working without contracts would be explosive in New York. Calling for free mass transit would get wide popular support, and a seriously fought strike against the cutback government could galvanize widespread discontent with both bankrupt parties. A transit strike could rapidly escalate into an all-out citywide general strike. Tokyo transit workers just showed their power by tying the city in knots.

It would also quickly expose all the Democratic Party-loyal labor fakers, from big mouth Teamster chief Barry Feinstein to 1199 hospital workers head Dennis Rivera. Feinstein throws his staged temper tantrums at Dinkins and Rivera calls demonstrations, but come election time they loyally turn out their members to vote Democratic, whether for "Governor Death Penalty" Clinton or the "flat tax" reactionary Jerry Brown.

Ripping up union contracts, looting the factories and letting the cities go to hell, the capitalists and their twin parties, Democrat and Republican, have siphoned off the wealth that American workers have created. Bush and the Democrats slaughtered over 100,000 Iraqis in the "defense" of Big Oil and their dreams of a "New World Order."

And with the loyal collaboration of the American labor traitors, they have financed counterrevolution from Nicaragua to Poland and the Soviet Union, where they're bringing back soup lines, homelessness and mass unemployment as they try to restore capitalist rule in the homeland of the October Revolution.

If they succeed in Moscow, they'll be emboldened in going after working people everywhere. American workers desperately need a leadership that fights for the independence of the working class from the bosses' parties and the bosses' state, forging a workers party steeled in the struggle for power. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

For Free Abortion on Demand!

- Down with "Squeal Rules"—Abortion Rights for Teens!
- For Free, Safe Contraceptives!
- Free 24-Hour Childcare!
- Billions for AIDS Research!
- For Free, Quality Education and Health Care for All!

We reprint here the call issued by the Bay Area Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club for a class-struggle contingent in the San Francisco abortion rights demonstration on March 29.

Legalized abortion dangles by a thread while the "right" to an abortion has long been out of reach for poor, mainly minority women. The current attacks on abortion rights spearhead an all-out campaign of social reaction aimed at regimenting and intimidating the American people. While fundamentalist bigots incant about the "souls" of fetuses, the Supreme Court pushes the "legal" murder of black men on death row. The ruling class sneers at the deadly AIDS epidemic as it ravages the ghettos and gay communities, and forbids the distribution of condoms to teenagers. They impose reactionary "squeal rules" when girls who end up "in trouble" need an abortion, while the simple and effective RU 486 abortion pill is kept out of this country.

We in the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club say that a fight for women's rights must be a fight against the capitalist system that breeds women's oppression. To perpetuate the private property system, women in class society are relegated to domestic servitude and



Spartacist contingent in March 29 San Francisco abortion rights demonstration.

straitjacketed by anti-sex legal codes. Teenagers in decaying capitalist America are told to abstain from sex, then marry and procreate—and to participate mutely in imperialist slaughter for the greater glory of the "New World Order."

This march is organized by the NOW

feminists and their "left" followers who embrace the capitalist system and toe the anti-communist line, pontificating about a "third party" in order to "put pressure" on mainstream Democrats like death penalty Dixiecrat Bill Clinton. For them women's lives are pawns in the scramble

for electoral votes. NOW & Co. actually want a reactionary decision in the Pennsylvania abortion law case in order to "force the abortion issue" in the upcoming elections! Conciliating bourgeois reaction, they speak delicately of "the

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New York Transit: Rip Up the Taylor Law!

You Voted It Down, Now Shut It Down!

In a massive repudiation of the bureaucratic misleaders of Transport Workers Union Local 100, NYC transit workers shot down a proposed contract by a whopping two-to-one margin. After working almost a year without a contract, and being locked out of their own union hall by the NYPD thugs called out by union president Sonny Hall, TWUers are furious.

Even the bureaucracy's mail ballot and threats that health benefits would stop couldn't save Hall's giveback deal—in some divisions the vote was over 90 percent against. Only among MABSTOA bus drivers and maintainers, checkers and his own staff, did a majority vote to accept the sellout of wages and health benefits—reflecting Hall's increasingly narrow base of support in this heavily black, Latino and Asian union.

Never before in the TWU has a contract approved by the union executive board been rejected. Throughout the system, everyone is asking: what next? There is only one way for transit workers to take back the givebacks in wages and health benefits, rip up drug testing and establish workers' control over safety: a solid strike that shuts down New York and inspires city workers, CUNY students and other workers and minorities to fight alongside them. Pull out Metro-North, LIRR and PATH! That's how to beat the Taylor Law!

After a dozen years of union-busting and givebacks, aided and abetted by the labor bureaucracy, workers throughout the country have seen their wages and working conditions go to hell. Currently, transit workers in Pittsburgh are on strike, walking out on March 16, snarling



March 3: Transit workers march against sellout contract, TWU tops called the cops.

the city's traffic. In Philly, the TWU hacks pushed through a contract at the last minute, derailing a strike. As in 1974-76, while they bleed the cities dry, Wall Street bankers have New York city workers in their sights.

TWU Local 100 is the most powerful municipal union in the country—transit

workers can shut down the finance center of American imperialism, and they've done it before. But the decisive question is leadership. With their union tops openly working for the TA, many transit workers figure the only thing they can do is put themselves in the hands of

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