

Clinton's "war on drugs, crime" means racist war on minorities.



Sipa

## Clinton's Racist "Law and Order"

Millions of homeless wander the streets in often arctic temperatures, massive unemployment plagues the entire country, TB and other diseases of poverty ravage the inner cities. But from the White House to city hall, "crime" is the issue exercising this country's racist rulers. Clinton made it a centerpiece of his State of the Union address, pushing for more police and more prisons and joining in the cry for mandatory life sentences for "three-time losers."

Topping the Congressional agenda this session is a draconian omnibus crime bill backed by right-wing racists and black liberals alike. The Senate version—passed by a whopping 95-4 majority in November—would vastly extend the death penalty, flood the streets with 100,000 more cops, create sprawling "boot camps" for minority youth and make it a federal crime under the sinister

**Defend the Right to Bear Arms!  
No to Gun Control!**

RICO "anti-racketeering" law to even belong to a street gang.

Democrats and Republicans vie to outdo each other in the rhetoric of deadly repression against the country's predominantly black and Hispanic dispossessed. Liberal Democratic governor Cuomo thumps the table for "tough gun control, tough law enforcement, tough love." Gun control used to be the hobby horse of the liberals, while the Republican right pushed for stiffer sentences. Today, all wings of the bourgeoisie favor more cops, more jails and more stringent gun

control, as the *Wall Street Journal* (18 November 1993) headlines, "Gun Control Is Essential to U.S. Crime Control."

Meanwhile, from Clinton to Cuomo, the Democrats feverishly clamber aboard the bandwagon for "three strikes and you're out." Locking people up for life after a third felony conviction will mean a lot of senior citizens behind bars. This piece of barbarity is particularly stupid because after most anyone's finished their second stretch in the slammer they're pretty much over the hill when it comes to violent street crime.

The U.S. already leads the industrial world in the rate of incarceration, with 1 in 40 men between the ages of 14 and 34 behind bars. Almost one-quarter of black men in their twenties are imprisoned or otherwise under the thumb of the courts. The nation's death rows are crammed to capacity with over 2,500 inmates, mostly black and Hispanic. In response to a public outcry, New Jersey Republican governor Christine Whitman "pardons" a dog slated to be put away. But across the state line in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, Mumia Abu-Jamal—the victim of a racist frame-up and vendetta for his outspoken defense of black rights—remains on death row despite his decade-long battle for freedom and an outpouring of international support.

The racist outcry for "law and order" is echoed by the "leaders" of the black *continued on page 10*

### New Massacre in Somalia

### U.S. Killers Out Now!

As we go to press, the American colonial invasion force in Somalia has carried out another murderous atrocity. On January 31, U.S. Marines fired a mounted .50 calibre machine gun and rocket grenade launchers into a crowd of hundreds of Somalis in Mogadishu. At least 16 people lay dead in the blood-splattered street, including women and elderly, and many more were

seriously wounded, children among them. The crowd was waiting for food outside a distribution center.

This was mass murder! American claims that the troops fired in "self-defense" against snipers have been repudiated by every Somali witness. Even UN "peace-keeping forces" from Bangladesh stationed at the scene say they saw no snipers and denounce the Marines for firing "indiscriminately toward the crowd." As we declared from the outset, the real message of this imperialist "food relief" mission has been "Let 'em eat bullets!" *U.S. and UN colonialist butchers out of Somalia now!*



WV Photo

### A Proletarian-Centered Strategy to Fight Fascism

**Revolutionary Consciousness Is Key**

— SEE PAGES 5-8 —



05

# ESOP Scam to Bust Union Conditions

## Phony "Worker Ownership" at United Airlines

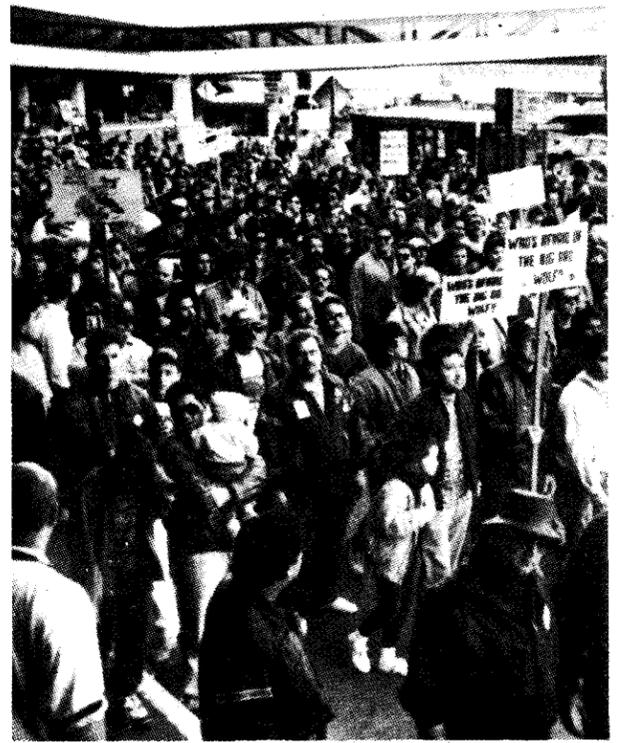
On January 26, International Association of Machinists members at United Airlines voted narrowly to accept an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) cooked up by IAM and Air Line Pilots Association union tops. It "trades" major givebacks for a 53 percent "employee interest" in company stock. The following day the leadership body of ALPA approved the plan, which will take effect if accepted by stockholders in April. If carried out, this ESOP scam will deal a crippling blow to the organization and livelihood of the workers at United Airlines and accelerate a union-busting drive throughout the industry.

Only two months ago, UAL's CEO Stephen Wolf—who stands to get a "golden parachute" of up to \$50 million in the deal—was threatening daily more catastrophic attacks on the unions, principally the IAM, which represents

28,000 mechanics, ramp service and flight-kitchen workers. Then in January, United IAM members were confronted with a take-it-or-leave-it vote on a proposal—by their own union bureaucrats—to voluntarily give the bosses almost everything they wanted, over \$5 billion in givebacks!

United, the nation's largest airline, is profitable and healthy, unlike the ailing carriers where union bureaucrats have already pushed through givebacks-for-stock deals to "prevent bankruptcy"—as at Northwest and TWA. Now United bosses say they can't "compete" with low-wage "upstart" airlines like Southwest. The truth is the bosses are relentlessly trying to drive down wages. Acting as their agents, the union "leaders," bound hand and foot to the Democratic Party, are telling workers they have no choice but to sacrifice union gains or

**United Airlines workers at San Francisco airport last November protesting union-busting layoffs.**



WV Photo

else face certain union-busting and layoffs. This is a lie!

The unions have the power to defeat the union-busters, but they need a class-struggle leadership to do it. When the French government declared mass layoffs through privatization at Air France, militant workers took over the runways, shut down the airports and won a victory, forcing the government to back down. What's needed here is a workers counteroffensive to smash the union-busting, wage-gouging drive. No givebacks! Organize the non-union carriers and contractors by using labor's power to shut down the airports! For a single industrial union of all airline workers, from ground crews to pilots!

### Union-busting, Clinton-style

The ESOP scheme at United is the latest step in a ruling-class offensive against transportation unions. The deregulation of the airlines and trucking was a move to break the unions, driving down wages and dramatically increasing exploitation. Teamsters truckers have been decimated, as the union has lost almost a million members. While increasingly shifting industrial production "offshore," American capitalists have driven down real wages at home by almost 20 percent over the past 20 years. Today U.S. industrial wages are substantially below those paid by American imperialism's chief rivals, Germany and Japan. In fact, some top business executives have expressed their determination to "get real wage levels down much closer to those of the Brazils and Koreas" (*New York Times*, 4 June 1987). Meanwhile, productivity per man-hour in the U.S. is surging as companies continue mass layoffs in the middle of the Clinton "recovery."

The Clinton administration has been energetically pushing plans for "worker-management cooperation" and intervened to broker the dirty deal at United. "Proposed UAL Buyout Is Seen as Model for Employee-Ownership Clinton Seeks," headlined the *Wall Street Journal* (17 December 1993). To sell this massive betrayal to the ranks, union officials promised workers a "controlling share" of the company's stock as a means to prevent the layoffs Wolf was threatening. This deal is a grotesque fraud:

- Pilots will take a pay cut of over 15 percent; IAM members will lose almost 10 percent across the board and forgo a raise scheduled for May. These givebacks, plus cuts in benefits, total \$3.5 billion, with another \$1.5 billion from "work rules changes." IAM members will give up the paid half-hour lunch first won for the graveyard shift in 1969 and extended to all shifts as a result of the 59-day strike by Machinists in 1979.

- The unions agree to the formation of an "airline within an airline," dubbed "U2," which will slash wages and benefits and speed up workers to "compete" with low-wage, mostly non-union outfits like Southwest Airlines—some of which

pay pilots half what they make at the "majors."

- The agreement will be locked in for 12 years. This includes not only a six-year no-strike pledge, but a "prohibition of IAM-represented employees from honoring lawful picket lines at the Company" (IAM District Lodge 141 *Messenger*, January 1994).

- Layoffs? Ken Thiede, head of IAM District 141, wrote to members that they had to sign this deal because "thousands of jobs were in jeopardy" and to prevent "stripping of assets" from United. But the jobs of 5,200 flight-kitchen workers are gone. The deal allows massive contracting out of maintenance work. And union officials have admitted that layoffs would be made if "necessary."

- The billions in givebacks will pay for 53 percent of company shares to be held by ESOP trusts on behalf of pilots, Machinists and non-union workers. This appears to be a "controlling interest," but it gives union members control over just about nothing. The 8,000 pilots get 24 percent of the shares and the 28,000 Machinists get less than 20 percent—totaling substantially less than half. And the deal was sold to Wall Street by specifically renouncing union control over the company. The two unions are to get only one seat each on the 12-member board of directors.

Even if the workers had 100 percent, it wouldn't make a fundamental difference. Workers have no control whatsoever over the capitalist market, which is inherently anarchic. At the first financial difficulty they would be at the mercy of the banks. Just look at the history of "employee-owned" companies like Weirton Steel, where whopping givebacks were accompanied by continuing layoffs—to the point where workers were picketing "their own" company. To "save jobs" by making one airline "more competitive" is to drive down the living standards of all. For starters, the ESOP givebacks at United will embolden American Airlines CEO Robert Crandall to step up his assault on the unions.

### Bust the Union-busters!

In November, IAM members at San Francisco International, site of United's major maintenance base, rallied at the airport with chants of "Take the runways!" inspired by the Air France strikers. A week later, when flight attendants at American Airlines defied Crandall in a solid Thanksgiving week strike, Clinton intervened (at Crandall's request) to get them back to work before the strike spread. A joint strike by American and United workers, shutting down the airports, could have stopped the anti-union offensive right there. Over the following month, the Clinton administration worked overtime to push the ESOP deal through, enlisting New York investment banker Felix Rohatyn, notorious as the author of Wall Street's austerity program

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TROTSKY

### The Right to Bear Arms and Black Freedom

*The Civil War, the second American Revolution, was over the issue of slavery. Following Lincoln's 1862 Emancipation Proclamation, issued after long hesitation, the way was opened for the enlistment of black troops in the Union Army in fighting the slavocracy of the Confederate South. In early 1863, Frederick Douglass, the foremost black Abolitionist, issued his stirring appeal, "Men of Color, To Arms!"*



LENIN

declaring: "Who would be free themselves must strike the blow." Douglass also warned that the right to bear arms, recognized in the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, is a fundamental protection that those black rights, won by force of arms, not be taken away. As we have insisted, in this racist society, "gun control kills blacks."

Nothing can be more plain, nothing more certain than that the speediest and best possible way open to us to manhood, equal rights and elevation, is that we enter this service. For my own part, I hold that if the Government of the United States offered nothing more, as an inducement to colored men to enlist, than bare subsistence and arms, considering the moral effect of compliance upon ourselves, it would be the wisest and best thing for us to enlist. There is something ennobling in the possession of arms, and we of all other people in the world stand in need of their ennobling influence....

Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters U.S.; let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder, and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on the earth or under the earth which can deny that he has earned the right of citizenship in the United States. I say again, this is our chance, and woe betide us if we fail to embrace it....

This rebellion can be put down without your help. Slavery can be abolished by white men; but liberty so won for the black man, while it may leave him an object of pity, can never make him an object of respect....

Remember that the musket—the United States musket with its bayonet of steel—is better than all mere parchment guarantees of liberty. In your hands that musket means liberty; and should your constitutional right at the close of this war be denied, which, in the nature of things, it cannot be, your brethren are safe while you have a Constitution which proclaims your right to keep and bear arms.

—Frederick Douglass, "Address for the Promotion of Colored Enlistments" (July 1863)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# In Defense of Dr. Kevorkian

They have used the poor and the sick as human guinea pigs to test the effects of nuclear radiation. They sneer as thousands in the gay community and in the ghettos die painfully hideous deaths from AIDS. They condemn inner-city black children to death from diseases for which there are cures, or from malnutrition—i.e., starvation. In death row torture chambers, their executioners strap human beings into electric chairs and pull the switch or inject sodium penthal into their veins.

Now the same murderous, racist rulers of this country are waging a vendetta against Dr. Jack Kevorkian for the "crime" of assisting people, whose bodies are ravaged with incurable diseases, to end their pain. Since 1990, the 65-year-old Michigan doctor has assisted in 20 suicides. Kevorkian charges no fee and has one simple rule, "The patient must be mentally competent, the disease incurable" (London *Independent*, 11 November 1993). He conducts extensive videotaped interviews with those who come to him for help, repeatedly asking if they wish to go ahead. When this is assured, Kevorkian provides the means.

The media calls him "Dr. Death," in particular playing up stories that Kevorkian diminishes the Nazi Holocaust and advocates using death row prisoners for medical experiments. Kevorkian has vehemently denied the former, while allowing that he does believe in experimenting on and using the organs of condemned prisoners to save other lives. Of course, we find this repugnant because it accepts the state's legal murder machine and the view of death row prisoners as less than human. But such is not the vantage point of the bourgeois press, which readily accepts the state's "right" to kill. What they don't accept is the right of those who are tortured by incurable disease to end their misery. So they paint Kevorkian as a sinister ghoul who revels in death.

The family and friends of those Dr. Kevorkian has helped to die see him otherwise. As the fiancée of a man who committed suicide with Kevorkian's assistance told a reporter: "Jack is very aware of people's status, their suffering and dignity...if someone makes a decision to end a life of pain and suffering, I don't see what the big problem is" (*New York Times*, 29 October 1993). The majority of the population is in favor of the right to die for the terminally ill. This is hardly surprising. Most of us don't want to end our days dehumanized and ridden with pain.

The big problem is the state, priests and preachers, and the upper echelons of the medical establishment who ordain that they, and only they, have the "god-given right" to determine how you live and how you die. In February 1993, the Michigan legislature handed down a law, aimed at Kevorkian, making physician-assisted suicide a felony punishable by four years in prison. Last November, Kevorkian was thrown into county jail where for 18 days he went on a hunger strike, declaring "It's my life or this immoral law." He was released on the condition that he would no longer help people end their lives.

## "Pie in the Sky"—Hell on Earth

Expressing his "disgust, even contempt, that they would even think of perpetuating human misery by law," Kevorkian noted that the Michigan legislation is "the arbitrary codification of an edict, for the sole benefit of a barbaric religious clique" (*New York Times*, 22 February 1993). One of the key players in the vendetta against Kevorkian is the director of Michigan's "Right to Life" organization. The same religious fanatics who terrorize abortion clinics in the

name of "life" are a moving force to ensure that you die in agony in the name of "god."

Any veterinarian will put a fatally sick dog or cat out of its misery. The opposition to applying the same elementary humanitarianism to human beings is derived from the Christian concept of the human "soul," which only god can take. Unless, of course, the "soul" is one of a "criminal"—in which case often the same bible-thumping "pro-lifers" will

Coates/Detroit News



**Cops dragged Dr. Kevorkian off to jail last November, where he waged a hunger strike against law declaring assisted suicide a felony.**

campaign for your death. Allowances are also made for killing those who are "enemies" of America.

This sanctimonious hypocrisy was condemned by Joseph Fletcher in his book *Morals and Medicine* (New Jersey, 1954). Pointing to a committee of preachers who, in the aftermath of the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ordained that the mass extermination of civilians in a nuclear holocaust could be "just," Fletcher argued: "We are...willing to impose death but unwilling to permit it: we will justify humanly contrived death when it violates the human integrity of its victims, but we condemn it when it is an intelligent voluntary decision."

In the U.S., the Catholic church has been in the forefront, pouring sermons and above all money into fighting the right of the dying not to suffer any more. In 1991 they dug deep into their collection plates to defeat a right-to-die referendum in Washington. In 1992 the Catholic church campaigned against the "California Death with Dignity Act," which sought to give "a terminally ill, mentally competent adult the legal right to voluntarily request and receive physician aid-in-dying."

The priests and preachers simply provide the ideological overlay to the interests of the rich, propertied few. To maintain their rule, they try to enforce their control over all aspects of the lives of the rest of us, from birth to death. Those with the money and the power believe that all good things exist only for them. It's like the old joke where a British "noblewoman" experiencing her first orgasm squeals in delight, "Ooh, this is much too good for the lower classes!" In the case of life and death, the bourgeoisie has the bucks to buy the best medical care there is and, if that fails, the connections to check out when they want to. But allowing the "lower classes" similar leeway might lead the exploited and oppressed to believe that they have the power to shape their own future—not only how they die, but more importantly how they live.

In their book *The Right to Die* (Hemlock Society Press, 1986), the Hemlock

Society's recently deceased founder, Derek Humphry, and his wife, Ann Wickett, point to the case of a quadriplegic woman who had asked that she stop being force-fed: "If Elizabeth Bouvia had been wealthy—and had shrewdly used the independence money brings—she would have been able to decide her medical treatment herself. For instance, multimillionaire Howard Hughes used his wealth to make physicians and nurses his servants as he fol-

ual takes time, and it is lucrative."

The ruling class, the church and the medical establishment argue that giving fatally ill patients the right to die is the first step down a slippery slope to the Nazi-style genocide against the weak, the poor, the disabled, the old. What mind-numbing hypocrisy coming from a government which fed radioactive iron to pregnant women and experimented on black men infected with syphilis, denying them treatment in order to observe the suffering they went through! Where was the outcry from the American Medical Association over these truly Nazi-style "experiments" carried out by their profession?

In the U.S.—the only industrialized country outside of South Africa which has no national health care program—human life has always taken a back seat to profit. For unionized workers, the aged, immigrants, Clinton's new "health" care scam will only make things worse and be of dubious value to poor children and other welfare clients. To cut costs and also improve health care, as Clinton proposes, is a deadly contradiction.

In 1975, the case of 21-year-old Karen Ann Quinlan gave heightened public attention to the issue of the right to die. Completely comatose, Quinlan was maintained by a respirator and intravenous food tubes. After several court battles, her father finally prevailed in having the hospital turn off the respirator. Quinlan existed in a vegetative state for ten more years. But her case prompted the passage of "living will" legislation—documents where people can indicate that if they are hopelessly ill they do not want their "life" artificially maintained—in the majority of states. Nonetheless "living wills" are not binding. Only durable power of attorney, where you appoint another person to serve as your representative, allows the choice of having life-support systems removed.

The legal decision over who dies should not rest in the hands of this capitalist government. We believe that mentally competent people afflicted with painful, incurable diseases have the right to determine for themselves if and when they want to die and they also have the right to whatever medical assistance they need to do that. With that right, people could turn to their own doctors for help as opposed to having to spend their dying days looking for a Dr. Kevorkian.

In his speech "On Socialist Man," Isaac Deutscher noted:

"May I remind you that Trotsky, for instance, speaks of three basic tragedies—hunger, sex and death—besetting man. Hunger is the enemy that Marxism and the modern labor movement have taken on. In doing so they have naturally been inclined to ignore or belittle man's other predicaments. But is it not true that hunger or, more broadly, social inequality and oppression, have hugely complicated and intensified for innumerable human beings the torments of sex and death as well?"

"In fighting against social inequality and oppression we fight also for the mitigation of those blows that nature inflicts on us...."

"Yes, socialist man will still be pursued by sex and death; but we are convinced that he will be better equipped than we are to cope even with these."

A rational socialist society might in fact be able to ease the third tragedy, i.e., death. When the wealth, tremendous resources and medical technology of this society are put to the service of the many, not the profits of the few, we will be able to build a society where human life, human worth and human dignity count. But that will take a socialist revolution to bring down the decaying system of capitalism which sells human life for dollars. In the here and now, we defend Dr. Kevorkian's fight for human beings to die with dignity. ■

lowed his eccentric lifestyle, even unto his death in an air ambulance."

## Wealth Care U.S.A.

Many doctors do comply with the wishes of terminally ill patients to be put out of their misery. But they are forced to do it secretly. Twenty-nine states have laws against physician-assisted suicide and even where such do not exist one can be hauled up on murder charges (which were initially leveled at Kevorkian but thrown out of court). Doctors who provide their patients with the option of dying with some dignity are faced not only with the wrath of "god" and the state, but also the AMA. The medical establishment has long opposed any right-to-die initiatives.

The California Medical Association opposed the 1992 "California Death with Dignity Act," which was narrowly defeated. In an article in the *California Physician* (January 1988), Dr. Alan Shewmon stated baldly: "Legalized active euthanasia poses a much greater threat to the medical profession than... national health insurance"! Shewmon simply articulates the interests of organized medicine in this country—to safeguard medicine for profit. He goes on to add that "advances in pain management and the experiences of the hospice movement make clear that terminal pain is primarily a pseudo-issue used by euthanasia advocates to win public support. Their real motivation is a belief in absolute personal autonomy."

The idea that the patient should have any "autonomy" from what the "doctor says" is anathema to the medical establishment, who consider this an invasion of their turf and, above all, a threat to their profits. As Kevorkian put it, doctors operate a "cryptic totalitarian state." Paraphrasing Kevorkian, an article in the *London Independent* (11 November 1993) continued, "they tell them the options for dealing with a fatal illness, but they do not say 'whatever we do, you're going to die anyway'; and it is widely perceived by dying patients and their families that they lie for a simple reason: the dying of an individ-

# International Support for Labor/Black Mobilization

The call by the Partisan Defense Committee to stop the KKK provocation against the Martin Luther King holiday in Springfield, Illinois on January 16 received an outpouring of support from a broad range of labor unionists around the country and anti-fascists groups around the world. We reprint below several of the international statements which were received.

## From Edinburgh, Scotland

As one of the "Bradford 12," arrested, charged and imprisoned by the racist British state in 1981 for defending our Asian community against fascist attacks, and tried and acquitted in 1982, I extend my solidarity and greetings to all those engaged in struggle against the KKK. The threat of fascism looms over the former USSR as well as in the former Yugoslavia, where "ethnic cleansing" has become the vocabulary of many right-wing and fascist organisations. Similarly, the threat posed by the KKK on Martin Luther King holiday needs to be challenged by all working people. It is by developing effective local and international solidarity that the threat of the KKK can be defeated, and not by relying on the state.

All out to stop the KKK!

Tarlochan Gata-Aura

## Bund der Antifaschisten (League of Anti-Fascists), Leipzig

We, members of the League of Anti-Fascists in Leipzig, Germany, stand side by side with you in the fight against racism, anti-Semitism, against all those who present a deadly threat to anybody who looks different, has differing views or an alternative way of life.

Right-wing terror is on the rise! Here in Germany it is mainly directed against foreigners, especially—but by no means only—against refugees from countries of the Third World, also against leftists, gays and Jews. And, as in your country, the police are usually blind in the right eye. It even happens that policemen stand by and look on while right-wing skinheads throw firebombs at a refugee hostel. And many people—decent people in everyday life—just turn away and pretend not to see anything.

In 1945, after the power of Hitler had been crushed by the Allied armies, most Germans claimed not to have known about concentration camps and the Holocaust. We, the League of Anti-Fascists, regard it as an important part of our work to make people understand the danger of fascism and win them for the common fight against it, so that any new kind of stormtroopers may be "crushed in the egg before they rise to power."

We wish you success in your campaign to stop the Ku Klux Klan, to stop the fascists.

May all anti-fascist forces all over the world stand together in this fight and may their struggle be victorious!

Prof. Dr. Ernst Springer,  
Chairman, League of  
Anti-Fascists—Leipzig

## Comité de Défense des Libertés et des Droits de L'Homme en France et dans le Monde (Committee for Defense of Liberties and the Rights of Man in France and the World), Paris

In the name of the Committee for Defense of Liberties and the Rights of

Man in France and the World, whose president is Georges Marchais, we want to extend our support to the rally which you are organizing in Springfield on January 16, to respond to the provocation of the Ku Klux Klan.

The day chosen as well as the place for the demonstration planned by this organization [the KKK] could not be more revealing of its deep-seated intentions. It attacks everything which can symbolize the democratic and progressive advances in the USA in all fields: civil liberties, civil rights, social gains.

We fully share your viewpoint that to oppose the Klan is not a matter of attacking the right of free speech since what's involved is a criminal organization.

Moreover, we think, as the laws of our country stipulate, that racism is not an opinion but an offense.

In these times, when the worsening of the crisis constitutes fertile ground for the development throughout the world of the most backward ideas and of fascist organizations which have made these ideas their stock in trade, your initiative—which seeks to broadly mobilize all people of good will in your country who are committed to the rights of man—is very precious in contributing to uniting progressive people everywhere who want to oppose violence and hatred and to act in favor of social progress.

With our warmest salutations, dear friends.



January 16: Black workers, students braved arctic weather to confront KKK in Springfield.

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With our warmest salutations, dear friends.

For the Committee,  
Roland WLOS

## Spartacist Group Japan, Japanese Section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), Tokyo

Brothers and Sisters:

We send you our support and solidarity from Tokyo, Japan. Your demonstration today, to stop the KKK from publicly spreading its racist poison, will also

be a victory for the Japanese workers movement. We have publicized your demonstration and have received support from labor and minority organizations.

In Japan, minority Burakumin, Korean, Chinese, Ainu aboriginal people and recently arrived immigrant laborers from Asian and African countries are brutally oppressed and segregated from the mainstream of Japanese social life. The racist Japanese government has stepped up their campaign to arrest and deport so-called "illegals." Rightist gangs in Japan have stepped up their activity. Swastikas have been posted in public parks in

racist violence must be stopped.  
All out to stop the KKK!

## Partito della Rifondazione Comunista (Party of Refounding Communism), Lodi Federation, Milano

Communists of Lodi express their strongest indignation over the demonstration called by the Ku Klux Klan for January 16 in Springfield and over the authorization of it by the authorities.

The struggle by black Americans and by the working class against racism, a struggle in which Martin Luther King was one of the most coherent exponents, is part of the struggle of oppressed people against imperialism and neocolonialism.

The U.S. administration, although always proclaiming its defense of human rights, has continually given free rein to racist organizations just as it has always supported governments which continue to oppress peoples.

It is the same in relation to racist South Africa as it is for Israel which occupies Palestine, for Turkey which drowns in

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# Young Spartacus

Springfield, Illinois

## A Proletarian-Centered Strategy to Fight Fascism

Revolutionary Consciousness Is Key

Over the Martin Luther King holiday weekend, the Ku Klux Klan staged racist provocations in eight state capitals. Wherever these fascists reared their heads, they were outnumbered by anti-racist protesters. But the anti-Klan protest in Springfield, Illinois was different because here, uniquely, in response to a call by the Partisan Defense Committee, a struggle was waged to mobilize the social power of labor to defend all intended victims of KKK terror. Over 500 people braved arctic cold to stop the KKK on January 16. (The previous issue of Workers Vanguard features full coverage of the Springfield demonstration.) We reprint here a presentation by comrade Al Nelson, slightly edited for publication, to a meeting of the Bay Area membership of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club on the political significance of the Springfield labor/black mobilization.

It's been a little over five years since the Philadelphia labor/black mobilization prevented the Nazi skinheads from carrying out a provocation on November 5, 1988. Since that time, we've acquired a number of new members, whose only knowledge of that mobilization and other previous party actions comes mainly from a couple of videos and possibly prowling through the bound volumes of WV. Looking at a video, you can come away with the impression that the whole process is pretty seamless: you issue a call, unions endorse, leaflets are mass distributed, several thousand people show up, and the Klan and Nazis are routed.

The reality is much more complex and difficult, involving very intense political struggle on three or four or five fronts simultaneously—with the capitalist state, both federal and local; with the reactionary top labor bureaucracy; with the reformist opponents, inside and outside of the labor movement; with the churches, the Anti-Defamation League, the ostensibly revolutionary organizations and their particular competing coalitions; with the bourgeois press, and so on. The struggles become

more furious the closer you get to the day of the demonstration itself, with the last 12 to 24 hours being the time of the really dirty tricks. In Philadelphia, for instance, after being constantly jerked around by the police, we had comrades camping in tents overnight at the site down by Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. At midnight they heard clanking noises and discovered the cops cutting up our area with barricades. Our general counsel roared down there, yelled at the cops, then woke up the head of the Parks Department—I think it was about 2 o'clock in the morning—screamed at him, and they removed the barricades. But this was just hours before we were to do our actual setup.

Then on the day itself it shifts over to a semi-military situation which involves the relationship of forces between demonstrators, cops and the fascists—which itself has many, many variations that can only be partially anticipated and requires a great deal of tactical flexibility and judgment with steady communications from the site to the party center. In any case, you never know what actu-

ally is going to show up until the day itself.

There have been, since 1979, about six or seven of these. There have been tactical errors, small and large, partial collapse of key cadre, and on at least one occasion a very serious political distortion taking place within the demonstration and the preparation itself. After each one the Political Bureau usually has a post-mortem, attempting with our customary brutal honesty to assess and characterize the particular shortcomings. My own personal final checklist is kind of a mental scorecard of all the previous screw-ups—great and small—to at least minimize the chances of committing the same mistakes again.

In this way the party as a whole has acquired considerable experience in these labor/black mobilizations since November 1979 in Detroit, the first one of these that we did. In that demonstration, the PB passed a motion on Wednesday, the demo was Saturday—try that one on! We got out 85,000 leaflets. That was when another hard core, a really hard core, of black workers and youth,

showed up. I think there were about 500 there. The "youth," by the way, was a euphemism for gang members—there were some tough characters out there. At that time the Klan said they were going to celebrate the killings in Greensboro which had taken place just about two weeks before that. Then, in Detroit, the black Democratic mayor, Coleman Young, viciously violence-baited the demonstration on the 11 o'clock news the night before the demo was to take place, and we worked the phones all night calling major endorsers all over the country and calling Washington, using the Justice Department as a wedge against the city of Detroit.

### A Strategy and Tactics Inherited from the Bolsheviks

We didn't invent either the principles or the tactics that we use in these actions. Rather they are concrete applications of the experience of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party through the Russian Revolution, and particularly of comrade Leon Trotsky whose writings provide us with a broad Marxist analysis of fasc-

cism, under what conditions it arises, its class base, and the tactics required to mobilize the working class to smash it. I urge the comrades to read or reread the collections of these writings on fascism. There's two volumes in particular—*The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* and also *Whither France?*—as a basic course. When you read some of these articles you will see that many of the basic tactics derive from the Bolshevik defense of Kerensky's government from General Kornilov in order to more systematically prepare for the overthrow of Kerensky himself and with him the provisional government. So a lot of the tactics we use come from that.

We are really talking about the party question in action, the subjective factor necessary for the political mobilization of the proletariat in its own defense, the relationship between the leadership, the party and the class. Therefore, there's a lot more involved in

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Early support from Illinois unionists was key to building labor/black mobilization against the Ku Klux Klan.



Labor/black mobilizations against the Klan (clockwise from top left): Detroit, November 1979; Washington, D.C., November 1982; Atlanta, January 1989; Philadelphia, November 1988.



## Springfield...

(continued from page 5)

these actions than just playing a number game. There's absolutely no doubt in my mind that with milder weather we would have had a turnout of 1,500 minimum, despite the logistical difficulty of mobilizing main forces and a command center in Chicago, and then traveling three hours to Springfield. Larger forces turned out in Austin, Texas—2,000 demonstrators against 33 Klansmen, much better odds than in Columbus where it was several hundred to 40, and in Denver where it was reported by the cops it was 95 to 30, roughly.

I wish that 2,000 had also turned out in all the other states where the Klan had their rallies. But there's another important criteria. Of all the protests that weekend, which action rendered the proletariat more conscious of its social power and historical tasks? In 1939, when the Red Army went into eastern Poland following the Stalin-Hitler pact, capitalist private property was abolished, since Stalinism was a parasitic caste based on collectivized, state-owned property relations. Trotsky said that while the transformation of property relations was progressive and defensible, the primary political question for us, the Fourth Inter-

nationalists, was whether these transformations of property relations resulted in raising the consciousness and organization of the proletariat. Given the bureaucratic military methods used by Stalin, the answer in 1939 was negative; Stalinism remained a reactionary obstacle to revolutionary consciousness. Did the Springfield mobilization raise the consciousness of the proletariat and increase their awareness of their potential social power? The answer to that has to be an emphatic "yes."

### Revolutionary Leadership Is the Key

This mobilization went very, very deep into the Chicago and Illinois-area labor movement and had a political impact far beyond the numerical size of that hard core that left their homes that morning in temperatures of -10 or -12 degrees and a windchill factor of -30 to -40. (That's what it was at 7 o'clock in the morning in Springfield. The figure in the last issue of *Workers Vanguard* of 16 degrees below zero with windchill factor, that was the *high*, that was when it warmed up and started to snow.) This mobilization caused reverberations and polarizations in the Chicago and Illinois labor movement, among black politicians, students, the whole social spectrum. And what the workers in the unions saw were people who knew what they

were doing, who fought like hell in the courts and in the streets and never yielded an inch until we were absolutely forced to by the police power of the capitalist state.

This reminded me of a similar point that comrade Cannon made in his *History of American Trotskyism*, in the chapter on the great Minneapolis strike. He said, following a section describing the first strike in May:

"When they saw the performances in the May strike in Minneapolis, that same sentiment was expressed again: 'These Trotskyists mean business. When they undertake anything, they go through with it.'"

That caught my eye, but here's a more important point:

"There was no essential difference, in fact I don't think there was any serious difference at all between the strikers in Minneapolis and the workers involved in a hundred other strikes throughout the land in that period. Nearly all the strikes were fought with the greatest militancy by the workers. The difference was in the leadership and the policy. In practically all the other strikes the militancy of the rank and file workers was restrained from the top. The leaders were overawed by the government, the newspapers, the clergy and one thing and another. They tried to shift the conflict from the streets and the picket lines to the conference chambers. In Minneapolis the militancy was not restrained but organized and directed from the top."

And he continues later:

"The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn. Our people were prepared for that since they were political people, inspired by political conceptions. The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups."

That is, all the accoutrements of Roosevelt's New Deal.

Coming from an entirely different situation, that characterized what we did

in Chicago and other mobilizations. We had no illusions in the capitalist courts either, even though we have generally been successful in previous mobilizations and related libel suits. Some party leaders were concerned that our earlier successes in the courts might blunt some comrades' understanding of the basic lessons contained in Lenin's *State and Revolution*. Well, we lost this one in three different courts, fast!

But we also managed to impress a lot of people with the aggressiveness and tenacity of our efforts. We went through Federal District Court in Chicago and then later that same day in Springfield and then the following day in the Federal Court of Appeals back in Chicago—all in about 30 hours. Cook County Commissioner Danny Davis said at one point, "Boy, you guys work fast!" Our lawyers carried the legal fight, and other comrades kept the press and our main endorsers informed at every step. But we did lose in the courts, and based on that concluded that we had no choice but to comply with the restrictions placed on us by the Illinois state authorities.

Restricting our command center to the north steps created a vulnerable and dangerous situation, and placed a heavy burden on our leadership and security setup, the union marshals with its party core. Our main guy in charge of security had about seven or eight captains, and then each of them had a squad of union marshals working with them. We promised those who supported our call a disciplined, militant and democratic demonstration. Our purpose was not to mobilize to fight the cops but to stop the Klan.

Trotsky taught us that there are often differences between the existing state and its police, and the fascist bands. Cops and Klan may go hand in hand, as the slogan says, but they are not the same. And bearing in mind the Bolshevik approach to the Kerensky-Kornilov situation, we prefer to have a different tactical approach to each. If the relationship of forces is overwhelming, say 5,000 demonstrators to those purported 285 cops they had in Springfield (holding aside speculations as to what was hidden inside and how many BATF [Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms] forces were there), the cops might not be so eager to act as bodyguards for the fascists. Given an opening in any situation that we are in, in any of these mobilizations, we will and have stopped the fascists.

### Labor and Blacks Show the Way

This demonstration had a polarizing impact on the labor movement. Two Chicago ATU locals played a pivotal role in the fight for this mobilization and during the demonstration itself, providing many of the critical union marshals. Local 308 endorsed this demonstration and chartered a bus to get ATU members there. ATU International Vice President Jackie Breckenridge was an early endorser and active fighter for the demonstration.

The WV article refers to the heavy intervention against our mobilization by the state AFL-CIO. It really pissed a lot of the labor guys off, younger local presidents who perceived the fascist danger and wanted to mobilize against it. They said to us, "Look, we can't do anything more; they're really leaning on us. But we're not going to pull our endorsement, and we feel sure that some of our guys are going to be out there." That was just about the uniform response. Others, like the multistate Region 4 Rubber Workers endorsement, came in after the AFL-CIO sent out its "stay away" message to all the area locals. It was an act of defiance.

Another comrade made a useful point in a Chicago local meeting before the mobilization: For a whole layer in the labor movement, like this middle layer of union officers, we gave them a lesson in how to mobilize the power of labor. Even though they were willing, they had

## It Costs \$\$\$ to Stop the Klan

The labor/black mobilization to stop the KKK in Springfield on the Martin Luther King holiday cost lots of money. Leaflets, posters, buses, communications and equipment cost thousands—and the bills are still coming in. We need your help. Get your union,

church group, student club and friends to help defray the costs. Contributions should be made payable to the Partisan Defense Committee and earmarked "Stop the KKK." Send checks to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680-2867.

never done this before, having come into office in a prolonged period of near-zero class struggle. What they were good at was sending out faxes and sitting on dead strikes. The labor component of this mobilization was heavily black, and many of these labor guys drew on and were motivated by their previous experiences in the civil rights movement, often in the South.

This mobilization went deeper into the black population than anything we have ever done before, reflecting also the changed political climate we have been talking about since last year. In America the biggest impact of the collapse of the USSR is on the most vulnerable layers in society, which means that black people are being hit really hard, not just economically but with Clinton's "war on crime" and the "end of welfare as we know it" and all that. Even the black Democratic politicians in Chicago, who in 40 percent black Chicago were an important part of the old patronage machine under the former mayor Richard Daley—Harold Washington, for instance, was a product of that—realize that in this new Democratic Party they mean nothing, they're out.

A liberal writer, Joan Didion, in her article "Eye on the Prize" (published in the *New York Review of Books*, 24 September 1992) which I urge comrades to read, observed that Clinton's public insult of Jesse Jackson over the "Sister Souljah" incident had in a substantial way been calculated for four years. It was a conscious effort to go for the white racist vote, the so-called Reagan Democrats, in order to reverse the Dukakis disaster of 1988 where Bush played very effectively the race card, the Willy Horton ploy.

The role played in this mobilization by black Democrats, especially by Cook County Commissioner Danny Davis but also the other black politicians, both in Chicago and in the state legislature, was really unusual. Davis himself came to the first press conference—which was not hostile, by the way. In Chicago the press was not hostile; in Springfield it was all being orchestrated out of the Secretary of State's office. At that press conference, when there was a little hint of hostility, he just stepped forward and said, "If the Klan isn't stopped in Springfield on Sunday, they'll be in Chicago on Monday. And I fully support the efforts of the Partisan Defense Committee." That carried a lot of authority. He and others didn't flinch in the face of the red-baiting and violence-baiting and "stay away" campaign that was coming out of Springfield. If anything, their support increased, and Davis led a car caravan down from Chicago.

Historically speaking, we are a tiny vanguard formation, but yet we had such a great impact. Imagine what larger forces could do. These Democrats who want to struggle have a very big contradiction: black people need a party that will fight for their interests. It is currently abundantly clear that that cannot happen within the Democratic Party. If a workers party with some social weight existed, some of the more serious of these black Democrats would very likely come over to such a party. And in fact in this instance, this microcosm of that equation, that's what happened. In this one- or two-week period, they did join forces with this small vanguard formation.

In reality the whole Chicago operation pivoted on our slender industrial presence. Imagine the greater impact on the

whole area if we had groups of supporters playing a similar role in a number of other industrial unions. When the UAW presidents slacked off, for instance, we didn't have the capacity to substitute for their efforts. If we had groups of supporters, we would have been on the inside and would have been able to form an ad hoc committee or carry the ball just as independents working within the union. With recruitment, we can make that a reality.

## Fake Leftists Lack Confidence in the Working Class

If our mobilization taught the workers something about the class nature and role of the state and increased their consciousness of the role of leadership and organization and mobilizing the social power of the working class, how does the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL)—along with Progressive Labor (PL) and the International Socialist Organization (ISO)—stack up in this regard? The RWL treated this mobilization with contempt *because* of its labor-centered basis. These people are basically 'petty-bourgeois radicals with a micro-thin veneer of Trotskyism. Fundamentally they personify Lenin's observation that the source of all opportunism is an underestimation of the revolutionary capacity of the working class. The old New Left, because of its overwhelming petty-bourgeois social composition, was hostile to the working class. The RWL's "founder-leaders" brought with them this fundamental alien class bias and world outlook, which also explains their grotesque anti-working-class defense of scabbing. They live in some Alice in Wonderland world where the BATF and FBI fight "fascism" in Waco.

By the way, there was an illustration at the demonstration in Springfield of the intersection of class and race with social reality and their different responses. We addressed the demonstration very seriously in the beginning regarding the danger of the setup engineered by the state and called for increased vigilance. When the Klan did appear on the east steps, about 200 of our demonstrators drifted over to the area directly in front of the Klan at Second and Capitol where there was a mixed crowd—it turned out—of RWL, PL, ISO, Klan supporters who came to hear the Klan speak, and undercover cops as well as a lot of uniformed police. Those that drifted away were mainly young and white. Those that remained in our perimeter, where we had the union marshals, were heavily black and union. They had a better grasp of social reality and knew better the danger of the situation for them. Black students we met in Albany, New York had a similar reaction to the confrontation last fall with the Klan in Auburn, New York. They told us they were glad the KKK was run out, but they also knew that the cops would not be so permissive toward any black youths who tried some of the same stunts some RWLers and white college kids got away with.

Lacking a proletarian revolutionary perspective, politics for the RWL is just a game of personal confrontation, with the cops or the Klan, that someday is going to get somebody seriously hurt. For them the struggle for leadership of the working class is meaningless. Despite the fragmented aspect of this demonstration, arranged and maneuvered by the state, the formidable com-

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# Police Pens and Liberal Stunts

The Springfield labor/black mobilization to stop the KKK was a test in action of the various socialist groups contending for leadership of radicalized youth and the working class. Applying Trotsky's tactic of the united front—building a strong and united opposition to the fascist threat within which all participating organizations have the fullest opportunity to present their particular views and program—the Partisan Defense Committee made a written proposal to the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) and its front group NWROC (National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition) to join forces with us against the KKK in Springfield.

Our letter to the RWL and NWROC of 4 January stated: "What's necessary is to link the justified outrage of the youth, the black community, and all the intended victims of the KKK to the organized power of labor to stop the fascists.... It is vital that all opponents of fascist terror come together as one powerful fist, united in action behind the slogan, 'All Out to Stop the Ku Klux Klan, January 16!'" Copies of this letter were sent to the RWL's national office and to local NWROC chapters, and were hand-delivered to their members around the country. These "militant" liberals who sometimes strike a pose of Trotskyism couldn't muster a reply to our straightforward approach for unity in action and open political debate.

On paper, NWROC spouts slogans like "No reliance on the cops, courts, Democrats or Republicans to stop the fascist marches!" But in Indianapolis and Columbus last fall, the RWL herded their supporters into "protest pens," behind chain-link fences with every entrance controlled by the police. Moreover, in searching for other forces to tailgate into Springfield, the RWL argued

## RWL Anti-Fascist "Strategy"



At anti-Klan demonstration in Columbus, Ohio last October, RWL led its supporters into cop-controlled holding pen.

that these police-controlled protests were a good thing! At a January 5 meeting of the Chicago Coalition Against the Klan, when all other organizations present agreed that they would not demonstrate inside a police pen, Luke from the Detroit NWROC argued that you should go into pens to get closest to the Klan, get in their face and "really confront" them! He went on to say it's OK for anti-fascist demonstrators to go through metal detectors and be frisked by the cops because no one would carry a knife or a gun anyway!

NWROC and the RWL have a big appetite for liberal company, but in

Columbus, Ohio on January 15 they swallowed something indigestible for any upstanding socialist. A cop group called "Police Officers for Equal Rights" was part of a coalition of organizations—including NWROC and the RWL!—which came together to oppose the Klan rally on Martin Luther King's birthday in Columbus. When the RWL's verbal protest over the cop presence found no echo in this liberal NAACP-dominated coalition, the RWL junked their paper principles, shut their mouths and *demonstrated with the cops!*

The RWL/NWROC is exposed through their own words and deeds as

cynical and politically corrupt. Behind their self-styled "militancy" is a programmatic void that leads straight to mainstream liberalism and even an alliance with the class enemy, the cops, who, whatever their race, serve as the armed fist of the capitalist state. And when they aren't directly appealing to the guard dogs of capital to regulate and "protect" anti-fascist protesters, they stupidly substitute their own small forces in struggle against the Nazis...with potentially disastrous results.

The January issue of the RWL's *Fighting Worker* admits to a particularly dim and losing adventure against a nest of Nazis in Hamtramck, Michigan. On New Year's Eve a small band of RWL and NWROC members set out on their own to "confront" the fascists at "Paycheck's Lounge," a bar known to be a center of fascist organizing. Outnumbered by dozens of "Sieg Heil"-saluting Nazi skinheads, the RWL was forced to beat a hasty retreat. This kind of *losing* adventure not only stupidly endangers the RWL's own supporters, but it emboldens the Nazi scum by handing them an easy victory against anti-fascist forces.

Behind a façade of Trotskyism, the RWL leadership is playing at politics with young militants as their pawns. Those who are serious about making a revolution should check out the Spartacus Youth Clubs. It is steadfastness of political program and resolution of purpose that have laid the basis for our success in the anti-fascist actions we have initiated and organized. Those principles include: no illusions in the state, an intransigent fight for the political independence of the working class, and confidence in its ability to fight on behalf of all the oppressed and in its own self-defense. To defeat the fascists once and for all means building a revolutionary party to overthrow the rule of the capitalist class which spawns the fascists and to bring the working people who create the wealth of this country to power. ■

## Springfield...

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position and disciplined character of our demonstration extended an umbrella of protection to the RWL as well. There would have been a hell of a lot more arrests if our strong force had not been present there.

### Genocide Is Not Debatable!

I was asked to address the point of "no free speech for fascists." That particular phrase or slogan poses the question incorrectly. Free speech is not an issue in these appearances by the Klan. The Klan (or the Nazis) is not a right-wing political organization like, for example, the John Birch Society, which holds and propagates conservative political views in print or public speeches and whose right to free speech we might defend in certain circumstances where a principle is being invoked. The Klan is a paramilitary *action* group whose public rallies are used to incite racist violence and to recruit to their ranks.

In this period, the state invariably acts to protect the Klan or Nazis while suppressing the ostensible rights of free speech and assembly of anti-Klan demonstrators. The liberals bow down to the trappings of bourgeois democracy, the social democrats and reformists capitulate to the liberals, and the centrists tail the reformists. Thus in most, if not all, of our mobilizations to stop the Klan, the liberals, typically the mayors and the churches, say "ignore the Klan and stay home," while the centrists and pop-front types, like the Marcyites (Workers World Party), have an explicit or de facto position of "ban the Klan"—usually holding a diversionary demonstration at some distance from the Klan site. The Socialist Workers Party in past years has carried this position to obscene lengths, conducting public "debates"—so-called—with Klansmen or Nazis to demonstrate to the bourgeois state that they are utterly toothless and completely stupid, "peaceful-legal" socialists.

### A New Political Period

Regarding the military aspect of these mobilizations, they have varied quite a bit in reality. While the political impact may be more important than the military aspect, if you blow it militarily, that could affect and diminish the political impact. In Detroit the Klan never showed up; in San Francisco they never showed up. In Philly they canceled out and then some skinheads tried to get through our line and were lucky to have been able to walk away because the cops were there. In D.C. a very small number of the promised 30 showed up and then were just literally trembling—you could see them in the newsreel shaking, and

they had their Klan outfits in a brown paper bag, and they were taken away. In Ann Arbor they showed up at another location and were run out of the area by the demonstrators, who chased them down the street. In Chicago the Nazis were on the other side of a cyclone fence from us. Still, they couldn't be heard because we just overpowered them, 3,000 people against their 30. In Atlanta the Klan marched protected by a tremendous phalanx of police, the vanguard of which were the special squads from the state prisons who are sent in to break up riots, real hard-core psycho killers; these are the ones that just go in to beat up and kill people.

In Washington, D.C. it was really a wonderful thing: we stopped the Klan. These guys didn't *dare* walk down that short hill to start their march; there were 5,000 people waiting for them. But what was different in Springfield from D.C. and these 5,000—which we characterized as a classical mass action of the intersection of the vanguard party and the labor and black masses—was a different political period with different polarization. At that time Reagan was in office; it was understood to be an indicator of the Reagan Republican administration that the Klan was given permission to march, as they had in 1925 when 45,000 hooded members paraded from the Capitol to the White House. By the way, the Klan demo was to be against immigration, and D.C. is 80 percent black, and that was a big factor.

A couple of comrades have said that in D.C. and other places there were "paper" endorsements for the mobilization. Yes and no. In most cases the endorsements didn't mean the union tops actively sought to turn out their members. But what it did provide was an official "okay," that it was all right to be out there. Union members treat their unions with a certain respect—not because of the hidebound bureaucrats that run them, but because that's the organization they are in. If the tops say "no," you have to have a little more going for you to say "well, to hell with them, I'm going to be out there anyhow"—which happens, if the perceived threat is great enough to defy the leadership. Whereas if the unions endorse, that means it's all right and there will be no problem; if you get arrested or something, you won't necessarily get fired because the union will probably stick up for you. That factor showed up in Philly where there was an extreme polarization, mainly against us, on the labor side. Opposing us was the Central Labor Council, which turned out to be run by an old Irishman in his eighties who had been in office since the 1950s, the ILGWU and the president of the Transport Workers Union who was a younger, rad-lib type who was an active anti-Spartacist. The turnout came mainly from the endorsing unions.

For the mobilization in November 1982 in Washington, Reagan was the president. In 1994 Clinton is the president. The world has changed dramatically: the Soviet Union is no more; there were expectations about the Democrats which are being fairly instantly dashed. The debates and the depth of the response in Chicago went a whole lot deeper than they did in D.C. in 1982 where it was against Reagan. But even then the Democrats—Marion Barry was the mayor of D.C.—stayed away. In most of these demonstrations the black Democrats have always been very hostile. In Philly, Wilson Goode was the mayor and he publicly opposed our mobilization. David Richardson, a black state assemblyman, withstood the political pressure and endorsed.

The country and the world have changed very dramatically, and therein lies the real significance of this Springfield mobilization. For a lot of the people that came out in Washington in 1982, that was an important event in their lives. When we later set up a local there, we found out that a lot of people kept their "Stop the Klan" placards, had them on their walls. It was a real, historic event. But as broad as that was, the response, the polarization, didn't go as deep because the society was different. It was easier to go against the Republicans. Now the thrust of it, objectively and perhaps consciously, is against the Democratic administration in Washington. There's a sense that this society is getting really bad and really dangerous.

The Klan's natural habitat is the rural and semirural areas, and they are being smart focusing on the state capitals because they are symbolic and that's where statues of Martin Luther King Jr. are, yet with the exception of Boston, every state capital is some Podunk town. We were successful in the early '80s in preventing fascist forays under the cover of the Reagan administration from establishing a substantial base in a number of urban centers. The area they are currently operating in, which these state capitals represent, is still the rural constituencies that tend to be more Republican compared to the big cities with their heavy black and labor constituencies which tend to be Democratic. Of course, every action we've initiated against the fascists in a major urban center has required a political fight against a Democratic Party mayor.

### Building the Revolutionary Party

Given the broad political impact of this mobilization and the changed political climate in this country, the Springfield demonstration puts us in a very good position to be able to enhance our capacity and recruit additional forces, to the party, to the Labor Black Leagues and to the youth clubs, not just in Chi-

cago but all over the U.S. And the fact that so many of our party and youth members made it to Chicago on their own steam to assist with this mobilization says a whole lot about the commitment and morale of the Spartacist League/U.S.

There's a big political vacuum in this country, and our little organization in this instance filled it in a particular struggle. It really does anticipate what role a mass-based workers party would have. That was one key lesson of this mobilization. If this country has 230 million people, probably 50 million of them consider themselves racists. But normally they don't do anything about it, because most times there is nothing pushing them—until their lives are disturbed. And their lives are being disturbed now by a lot of things.

You should read the material in Trotsky's writings where he analyzes what social motion takes place when the petty bourgeoisie becomes frenzied. There are only two major classes in society, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie attaches its wagon to the bourgeoisie but then the economy sours and they start getting ruined. And if the proletariat is not able to demonstrate that they are the way out of ruination and despair through workers revolution, the loyalties of the petty bourgeoisie will shift, and then you have a mass base for the fascists, which Trotsky described as the party of white-hot reaction.

In this country the ruling class has been working on driving down the wages, increasing the rate of exploitation, using the black population as a scapegoat, using crime and welfare as a cover. There's a very bad potential here unless the working class mobilizes as a political social force. And the latitude that the Klan feels now, in very boldly organizing their demonstrations, is in the absence of the working class as even a force on the economic plane. Strikes have been statistically zero since around 1982. So this underscores for us the importance of this particular demonstration, but in the context of a very changed international and national situation.

The state and the cops in this mobilization were maximally malicious and repetitive liars and they were looking for trouble, all the way. And I don't know what the BATF was doing there—that's big time. How did they come to be in Springfield? There are splits in the government, and the BATF is scrambling to stay in the budget, but who called them in? Those Springfield cops clearly had never been taught a lesson by serious strikes. We keep saying in *Workers Vanguard* that we could really use a big, victorious strike. Well, this demonstration didn't have the kind of clout a big strike would, like if the Caterpillar guys in Peoria had won instead of being hung out to dry for months and months. But this demonstration, on a somewhat different scale, will have those kinds of reverberations or ripple effect.

It would have been more demonstrative if the weather had been better and the labor mass that was represented by that hard core had been there. But I think even with the smaller forces that turned out, we really shook up the political structure in Illinois and Chicago, which itself reflects the different national and international political context. It forced everyone to have to take a position. Even for the people in Decatur and Peoria that didn't show up, that we knew about, this effort of our little party made a big impact. That is just a fact. The impact of the Springfield mobilization may very well manifest itself the next strike around. We showed that something can be done, and the workers may think, those guys stood up against everything, and they did it because they had good leadership and good organization. Maybe with good leadership and good organization, we can win too. ■



Young Spartacus photos  
Champaign-Urbana students joined Springfield labor/black mobilization against the Klan.

# Black History Month Spartacist Forums

## PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE VICTORY PARTY

Celebrate the successful  
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protesters who confronted the Klan  
in Springfield, Illinois, January 16th!

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#### For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky

First class: Sat., Feb. 5, 3 p.m.

*The State and Revolution*

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**LOS ANGELES**



WV Photo

### Eyewitness Reports from Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the KKK in Springfield, Illinois

#### Spartacist League Forums

### Stop the KKK! For a Workers America!

Guest Speaker: Bernard Branche,  
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Chair: Mary Vaughn, Spartacist League

**Saturday, February 19, 7:30 p.m.**  
Regency Room, Blackstone Hotel  
636 S. Michigan (at Balbo)

**CHICAGO** For more information: (312) 663-0715

Speaker: Alison Spencer,  
SL Central Committee

**Thursday, February 10, 7:30 p.m.**  
Room 305, Emerson Hall  
Harvard University  
Cambridge

Speaker: Thomas Downing,  
Spartacist League

**Saturday, February 26, 2 p.m.**  
Room 201, Student Center  
Roxbury Community College  
(Columbus Ave., near Roxbury Crossing stop  
on the Orange Line)

**BOSTON** For more information: (617) 492-3928

### Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

Speakers: Carla Wilson,  
Spartacist League  
Frank Hicks, Partisan Defense  
Committee

**Tuesday, February 22, 7:30 p.m.**  
Room 702, Hamilton Hall  
Columbia University  
(IRT 1/9 trains to 116th & B'way.)

**NEW YORK CITY** For more information: (212) 267-1025

### "Stop the Klan, This is the Hour! Labor and Blacks Have Got the Power!"

Speakers: Skye White, UC Berkeley  
Spartacus Youth Club  
Jeff Higgins, Labor Black League  
for Social Defense

**Saturday, February 5, 3 p.m.**  
145 Dwinelle Hall, UC Berkeley  
For more information: (510) 839-0851

**BERKELEY**

Speaker: Skye White, UC Berkeley  
Spartacus Youth Club

**Wednesday, February 16, 4 p.m.**  
Room to be announced  
San Francisco State University

For more information: (415) 777-9367

**SAN FRANCISCO**

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### Anti-Racist Protesters Confront KKK

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Workers Local 1459

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St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor Street  
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**TORONTO**

**Friday, February 4, 12:30 p.m.**  
Room 211, S.U.B., UBC

**Friday, February 4, 7:30 p.m.**  
Room L4,  
Britannia Community Centre  
(Napier and Commercial)  
For more information: (604) 687-0353

**VANCOUVER**

## United...

(continued from page 2)

for New York City in the 1970s.

In the airlines, the unions are still strong—65 percent unionized, compared to less than 12 percent for industrial workers. "Deregulation had a special thrust at labor costs," said David A. Swierenga, chief economist of the bosses' Air Transport Association of America (quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*, 23 December 1993). "The fact that we are still dealing with labor cost differentials between older [air] carriers and upstarts means we have some unfinished business from deregulation." While the anti-labor offensive is identified with Reagan, the airline deregulation plan was implemented by the Democrat Carter, and the assault on the PATCO air traffic controllers was carried out according to a secret Carter administration plan. Now

the airline bosses are out to finish the job, with the active help of Clinton and the labor traitors.

Air transport is critical to the American ruling class, and airline workers have the power to *shut it down*. As Air France workers showed, that is the key to victory. Such a struggle would immediately confront the hostility of the Democratic Party and the capitalist state. The oppositional material circulated by an "Anti-ESOP Coalition" in San Francisco, while exposing some of the more scandalous details, offered no alternative. This is especially striking given the wide range of leftist groups with supporters in the industry. The Socialist Workers Party (*Militant*, 7 February) says it's necessary to "prepare ourselves for the bigger showdowns that are down the road"—that is, do nothing now. Committees of Correspondence supporter Malik Miah admits defeat: "In any battle with employers, it may be necessary to concede some issues." And *Workers World* calls

for "ESOP Vigilance Committees"—a kind of "workers control" of speedup and cutbacks!

The sharp class struggle necessary to win is anathema to these fake-socialist outfits—they have hitched their wagon to the wretched trade-union bureaucracy and the Democratic Party of union-busting, racism, exploitation and war. Yet despite more than a decade of labor defeats, the working class has the power to bring the capitalists to their knees. The key is leadership. With the unions continuing to give back one hard-won gain after another, it's little wonder that they can't organize the unorganized. Today ousting the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy is a life-or-death matter to save the unions as means of workers defense. As Leon Trotsky wrote in 1940: "The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the

instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

—"Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay"

The wealth and industrial resources of this country were created by the workers and belong by right to the workers. The working class must take power in its own hands, take back industry and reorganize it on the basis of society's needs, not profit. That's the only kind of "controlling interest" that's worth a damn.

When the smashing of PATCO opened the current era of union-busting, the AFL-CIO "labor statesmen"—especially IAM bureaucrats who had the power to shut down the airports—did nothing. In 1989 they betrayed the hugely popular Eastern strike. The working class needs a leadership that understands this is *class war* and how to win it. Break with the "company union," strikebreaking Democrats—we need a class-struggle workers party to fight for a workers government! ■

# Racist "Law and Order"...

(continued from page 1)

community. Even as they turned a blind eye to deadly KKK provocations in eight states, black liberals turned this year's official Martin Luther King Day celebrations into disgusting rallies against "black-on-black violence." In early January, Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition joined with the Congressional Black Caucus in sponsoring a three-day confab in Washington, D.C. to "stop the violence and save the children." Nation of Islam demagogue Louis Farrakhan pushed the same theme a few days later at a "black men only" rally in New York.

## Big Brother Is Watching

From radio talk shows to TV crime-buster shows to the front pages of the "respectable" dailies, there is an onslaught for more "law and order." A *Business Week* (13 December 1993) cover story declares crime to be "America's No. 1 problem," at an annual cost of \$425 billion. *U.S. News & World Report* (17 January) blares out "The Truth About Violent Crime," ratcheting the price tag up to \$675 billion. Now the cover of *Time* (7 February) screams, "Lock 'Em Up and Throw Away the Key!"

This public furor is a supreme example of media manipulation in the service of racist reaction. They made crime the issue in last fall's elections. Between January and November of 1993, the number of those polled who saw crime as the country's major problem skyrocketed from 1 percent to 16 percent, conveniently eclipsing concern over the economy, unemployment and health care. Yet the crime rate actually went down in the past two years, and the rate of violent crime has remained steady for nearly two decades.

Every tragedy is stage-managed to whip up support for the bourgeoisie's "anti-crime" crusade. The December funeral for 12-year-old kidnap and murder victim Polly Klaas in Petaluma, California was turned into a grotesque spectacle attended by California's governor Wilson, Senators Boxer and Feinstein and a horde of other politicians smelling blood and votes, replete with live performances by Joan Baez and Linda Ronstadt. The funeral was broadcast live in prime time on Bay Area TV.

On the East Coast, a psychotic shooting spree on the Long Island Rail Road on December 7 fed the same hysteria. Colin Ferguson, a Jamaican immigrant who snapped after leaving a relatively privileged life for the racist hellhole that is everyday life for blacks in America, opened fire on a commuter train out of New York's Penn Station. Appealing to "white flight" suburbanites' fears, "Slaughter on the 5:33" became the rallying cry for an all-out crusade for gun control.

To the bourgeoisie, the demented random slaughter on the LIRR was of a piece with the mass explosion of multiracial outrage in Los Angeles two



Wayne State University Press  
Detroit blacks face cop invasion during 1967 ghetto revolt: capitalist rulers' racist "anti-crime" campaign was response to social unrest.

years ago over the acquittal of the racist cops who brutalized black motorist Rodney King. Here was the spectre of the heavily minority "underclass"—the "dysfunctional" elements of society, as Clinton calls them—overrunning the bastions of middle-class white privilege.

Particularly since the L.A. upheaval, the ruling class has sharply escalated its campaign to disarm the dispossessed in the guise of cracking down on drugs and street gangs. In fact, a lot of the random crime associated with drugs could be eliminated simply by decriminalizing drug use and taking the extortionate profit out of the trade. But the American rulers are driven by reactionary values to keep drugs illegal, and use the "war on drugs" as an excuse to crack down on minorities. They want to turn the ghettos into a free-fire zone for the cops. In late November, Clinton pushed through the Brady Bill, which imposes a five-day waiting period on handgun purchases and is a stalking horse for outright prohibition.

New Jersey Democratic Senator Bill Bradley is pushing for a punitive 30 percent tax on handguns, ammunition and so-called assault weapons, while California Senator Dianne Feinstein wants to ban outright semiautomatic firearms with magazines holding more than ten rounds and New York's Moynihan tries to tax hollow-point bullets out of people's reach. What all of these measures amount to is making it illegal or impossible for poor and working people to have guns, while the rich (and the cops) keep theirs.

In the wake of the LIRR shootings, "New Democrat" Clinton and Reagan Republican NYC mayor-elect Giuliani joined in calling for nationwide registration of gun owners. Liberal *New York Newsday* gossip columnist Liz Smith chimed in with a police-state call for "a three-month suspension of civil liberties, with cops free to body-auto-and-house search, confiscating illegal weapons in the United States."

This is a call to mete out to the population as a whole what the feds did to the survivalist Weaver family in Idaho and the integrated Branch Davidian

religious commune in Waco, Texas. In the name of "gun control," the feds murdered Randy Weaver's wife and son and incinerated 86 men, women and children in the Waco holocaust.

Clinton and Attorney General Reno are calling for the government to keep a dossier on all gun owners (roughly half of American households). The drive for registration and restricted gun ownership—especially the threatened ban on "assault weapons," which could encompass everything but revolvers and single-shot bolt-action rifles—is a program to criminalize several million people, many of whom will rightfully assume that when this state power asks to know everything about your guns it is because it wants to take them away.

More ominously, the Brady Act stipulates the creation of a national computer bank of data on gun buyers. Clinton's proposed national health care ID card, which may contain information ranging from sexual orientation to financial and other personal details, is so transparently intrusive that *Scientific American* (February 1994) warns of "Dr. Big Brother."

The National Rifle Association has joined in calling for a national database of gun owners, promoting the police-state regimentation it claims to oppose in defending the right to bear arms. For years the NRA has supported right-wing politicians and boosted cop power, offering itself up as the "shock troops" in the "war on crime" and pushing life imprisonment for three-time offenders.

## Cops, Criminals and Klansmen

For sheer hypocrisy, the hysteria against "high-capacity magazines," "assault weapons" and "maiming bullets" is astounding. To read the bourgeois press, you would think these weapons were expressly designed for and exclusively sold to street gangs and drug dealers. It is the military and police who set the trends in firearms.

The Ruger 9mm with its 15-round magazine used by Colin Ferguson provoked the wrath of Clinton, Cuomo and Sarah Brady's Handgun Control Inc. as some kind of new demon gun. Large-calibre semiautomatic pistols were first produced around the turn of the century, but the explosion in the domestic use of high-capacity handguns came straight out of the Vietnam War. The Illinois state police have been using semiauto 9mm pistols since 1967, and today they are used by the Secret Service, the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) as well as hundreds of police departments around the country, including NYC transit cops on crowded subways!

There has been a campaign waged against hollow-point bullets like the "Black Talon" round designed by Winchester. The company has buckled to the campaign by Clinton and Moynihan, withdrawing the ammunition from sale to the public—but not to cops. In fact, this cartridge was developed for use by the cops. In evaluating the Black Talon, the NRA's *American Rifleman* (Novem-

ber 1992) notes that "The FBI's testing regime has borne fruit in a new bullet designed for maximum penetration and expansion at moderate velocities."

Meanwhile, the bourgeois press, led by the *New York Times*, relies on the lack of knowledge about guns common among many of their urban readers to push anti-gun hysteria, falsely calling semiautomatic longarms "assault rifles" and even referring to revolvers as "automatic" weapons! Semiautomatic guns which require a trigger pull for every shot are routinely labeled "machine guns." In any case, for all the fuming about "assault weapons," they are used in only a tiny proportion of homicides.

The kill-crazy cops have all the guns they need, as well as "Blue Thunder" helicopter gunships, armored personnel carriers and plenty of other "riot control" weaponry. Criminals and drug gangs will always be able to get hold of weapons, especially since the CIA has long been the biggest drug-runner in the world. And it is common knowledge that local police departments as well as federal agencies are deeply interpenetrated with KKK and other right-wing paramilitaries, who often form the core of strike-breaking "private security" outfits. The Klan/Nazi group that gunned down five leftist civil rights workers and labor organizers in the 1979 Greensboro massacre were led to the murder site by an FBI informer and shown how to use and transport their semiautomatic weapons by a BATF agent.

Gun control leaves guns in the hands of cops, criminals and Klansmen while making the country's black, poor and



Charles/Ebony  
New York, 1964: Malcolm X guards his home and family against threatened assassination. New York City rushed through special ordinance to prevent him from carrying weapon.

working people defenseless in the face of racist terror and armed strikebreakers.

## Gun Control Kills Blacks

Behind all the lies and hypocrisy stands the vicious capitalist order, which imposes the most brutal conditions of oppression while seeking a total monopoly of the means of violence. We do not dismiss the very real fear which accompanies living in urban America. In fact it is the working people and the poor, above all blacks and Hispanics, who are most subjected to random street crime.

And self-defense is a lot easier if you're armed—as basketball star Charles Barkley says, he feels secure "as long as I have that 9-millimeter beside me." Millions of women who aren't 250-pound professional athletes like Barkley also understand that a firearm can be a great equalizer in violent confrontations. In the last decade, handgun sales to women have exploded, but bourgeois feminists like NOW ape the worst sexism, arguing that women won't know how to use them and shouldn't have them, because they're not "naturally violent" like men.

The gun-control fanatics have no intention of taking weapons away from

# WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Protests Against Racist Cop Terror

## Oakland, Berkeley

On January 27, the Spartacus Youth Club organized a speakout on the University of California-Berkeley campus to protest the ominous rise of racist police terror against blacks in nearby Oakland. They were protesting the cops' murder of Luke Grinage and his 62-year-old wheelchair-bound father, Raphael Grinage, gunned down shortly before Christmas, and of AFSCME union member Nathan Cosby, who was slain on January 6, as well as of black youths Baraka Hull and Jerrold Hall, earlier victims of cop terror in Oakland. The SYC seeks to win students to join in struggle against a society where cops kill blacks and other minorities at will, keeping the population in fear.

The Grinages were slain in their home by the police for the "crime" of refusing to surrender the family dog to an Animal Control squad. Rashidah Grinage, widow of Raphael and mother of murdered Luke Grinage, was unable to attend the speakout but sent her surviving son, Manuel, to read her statement to the demonstrators:

"As victims of the brutality and destruction of the Oakland Police Department, we are here to say, 'It must stop. We will have it no more.'... Why should we tolerate behavior from men in uniform that we would not tolerate from citizens?... If we are going to be a society which seeks to eradicate violence and crime, let us begin with society's institutions first. Let us never forget that the most horrendous acts of brutality, oppression and destruction throughout history have been committed by men in uniforms, carrying out official governmental policies.... The Grinage family thanks all of you who are here, to lend your support to this effort to obtain justice for all of us. Let's stay strong and determined."

Underlining this courageous woman's message to fight, speakers from the SYC and the Labor Black League for Social Defense pointed to the tremendous social power of the labor movement which must be mobilized in defense of black rights. When all the mainstream organizations said "ignore" the deadly Klan provocation in Springfield, Illinois on January 16, the conscious organization of labor and the black community showed how to defeat our enemies and defend ourselves through revolutionary action. As Don Collier from the Labor Black League stated:

"The Springfield mobilization brought to bear the united power of organized labor and blacks in struggle against the Klan.... This same leadership can and will organize the unorganized and unemployed, mobilize in social defense of the ghetto and barrio masses against racist cop terror, like we are seeing in Oakland, and defend the right of youth to an education."

A week earlier, on January 21 the Spartacist League and the Bay Area LBL attended a protest march of some 75 people in downtown Oakland, organized by the family of Nathan Cosby. The crowd of mostly young black friends and family marched from city hall to police headquarters, then on to the federal building. At the city hall rally, Cosby's widow addressed the crowd and Ben Visnick, president of the Oakland Education Association, made a statement of support.

Cosby, a black public school custodian and a popular member of AFSCME Local 257, was killed in cold blood by Oakland police on January 6. The cops put out their standard cover story that their victim had pointed a gun at the cops. In fact, an invasion force of some 20 cops, many in riot gear and armed with semi-automatic weapons, assassinated Cosby



WV Photo

January 21: Demonstrators in Oakland protest cop murder of Nathan Cosby.

with a shot in the head fired through his bedroom window during an early morning death-squad-style raid on his home.

Promoting dangerous illusions in state and federal capitalist authorities, the Oakland Board of Education has demanded the state attorney general and Bill ("Death Penalty") Clinton's top cop, Waco mass murderer Janet Reno, "investigate" Cosby's death. Speaking for the Labor Black League at the rally, Joe Sol called for the "integrated trade unions, from Nathan Cosby's AFSCME brothers and sisters, to transit and city workers, teachers and machinists" to "flex their muscle in defense of the black population." A labor protest strike against cop terror in Oakland would send a powerful message that these racist atrocities must stop!

To lead this fight requires a revolutionary party committed to mobilizing

labor in defense of all of the oppressed, sweeping away this racist capitalist society and its agents of bloody oppression—both those in blue uniforms and white sheets. The power is there to avenge the victims of the state's killing machine. For labor/black mobilizations against racist terror! Fight for socialist revolution!

### Correction

In our last issue, we wrote that when Nathan Cosby was gunned down by the cops, he had "grabbed his pistol and opened a bedroom window to escape." This story, given in press accounts, is unsubstantiated. The article mistakenly stated that black youth Baraka Hull was killed by BART cops in 1992. Hull was slain by Oakland cops last summer, while black teenager Jerrold Hall was shot by BART cops in 1992.

ruling-class types like *New York Times* CEO Sulzburger, who have no trouble getting permits to carry, and have private security guards and stretch limos to take them to their heavily fortified estates and penthouse suites. As was the case in the wake of the L.A. revolt, when "armed response" signs sprouted up in front of white suburban homes while black and Hispanic South-Central was put under a state of siege, the drum-beating for gun control over the LIRR shootings, didn't stop tens of thousands of suburbanites from jamming the gun stores to stock up on guns while they still can.

In arguing for tighter gun laws—NYC already has the most stringent in the country—Giuliani insisted that firearms should only be in the hands of "decent New Yorkers, very legitimate people." What he means is *white* people! When black Brooklyn Domino Sugar worker Arthur Boone defended himself with a gun from two young street thugs who put a pistol to his head, he was hauled before a grand jury and charged with possession of an illegal weapon.

Gun control has *nothing* to do with fighting crime. After Clinton's State of the Union address, ABC-TV carried an unusually revealing story on the history of these national campaigns on crime and violence, pointing to "the violence of the '60s, the inner-city riots, the antiwar protests" as having "first put the federal government in the street crime fighting business in a major way." Robert Kennedy called inexpensive handguns "tools of the urban rioter." The 1968 Safe Streets Act and Gun Control Act, pushed by LBJ's attorney general Ramsey Clark (current favorite of reformists like Sam Marcy's Workers World Party), was followed by Nixon's "War on Crime."

Today, as Clinton and Jesse Jackson vituperate against "black-on-black" crime, pro-Democratic Party "leftists" tail right behind. The Communist Party proclaims, "Hand Guns Are Equal Opportunity Killers" (*People's Weekly World*, 18 December 1993). The social-democratic *In These Times* (27 December 1993) competes with *Time* and *Newsweek* with a cover story headlined, "Violent Crime: Real Causes, Real Solutions."

While the ruling class packs the prisons with "drug offenders," the very mention of decriminalization of drugs by Surgeon General Elders recently provoked howls from the White House on down. What is behind the bourgeoisie's crusade against guns and crime is the decay of American capitalism. A society of glaring inequality and rampant poverty and despair breeds random street crime—not to mention the large-scale extortion and violence of big business and its Murder Inc., the capitalist state. With the deindustrialization of wide swathes of the U.S. economy, the bourgeoisie no longer has need of a whole layer of the population, predominantly inner-city blacks. The ghettos have become ever more hellish concentrations of poverty, disease and crime because the rulers want to see this "surplus population" die.

The black middle-class "talented tenth" heads for the suburbs, while still facing pervasive discrimination. But the overwhelming mass of ghetto youth have been condemned to a future of no education, no jobs and no hope. And at the first sign of rage and rebellion, the ruling class cracks down with brute force and programs to disarm and imprison the population. It is no accident that one of the chief aims of the post-Civil War "Black Codes," aimed at disenfranchising the

black population, was to disarm the freed slaves who had fought for their liberty.

The Second Amendment guaranteeing the right of the people to arm themselves, which the gun-grabbers want to undo, was the result of the American Revolution and constitutes a vital defense against tyranny. Gun control has always been about strengthening the repressive power of the bourgeois state and disarming the working class and especially blacks. Bill Clinton carries out state-sanctioned terror bombings from Baghdad to Somalia to Waco and answers to no one for it. It will take a socialist revolution to disarm the blood-soaked capitalist class and put an end to their violent rule. ■

## Quake Relief...

(continued from page 12)

few vouchers have been forthcoming. Indeed, prior to the quake some 45,000 low-income city residents had been waiting at least four years to qualify for assistance.

With an estimated 80,000 housing units standing vacant in the city, including some 26,000 in the San Fernando Valley, the solution to the housing crisis is simple: the homeless should occupy the empty apartments!

The most dangerous and life-threatening conditions are now found concentrated in the hard-hit San Fernando Valley communities of Northridge, Panorama City, Van Nuys, Pacoima and adjacent areas. Today more than one-third of the Valley's 1.2 million people are Latino. Meanwhile, in heavily black South-Central L.A. collapsed unreinforced brick structures abound. Resi-

dents complained that four days after the quake no city building inspector had set foot south of the crumpled Santa Monica freeway, leaving many on the street fearful of returning to their homes.

After two years, the much-hyped "Rebuild L.A." scam has rebuilt nothing—only clearing away the rubble—without making a dent in the pervasive unemployment and poverty. The events of the past few years here make it abundantly clear that it will take a workers government to rebuild L.A. for its multiracial population. In seeking to build a revolutionary party that champions the interests of all the oppressed, we call upon labor to fight for full citizenship rights for immigrants and for a vast program of public works to provide decent housing, education and jobs for all. ■

## Flag...

(continued from page 12)

Mississippi, racist killer Byron De La Beckwith is again being tried for the 1963 murder of civil rights martyr Medgar Evers. As he sat scornfully in the courtroom during the testimony of Evers' widow, De La Beckwith wore the Confederate battle emblem in his lapel.

From the murder of Medgar Evers to the 1979 Greensboro massacre of union organizers and leftists, the bearers of this hated banner want to reverse the outcome of the Civil War. Especially in the South, the Klan are the bosses' enforcers of the open shop against the integrated labor movement. The social power of organized labor can bring down this Jim Crow banner and the racist capitalist system which spawns it. Tear down the flag of slavery! ■

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## L.A. Quake Relief Spurns Latinos, Blacks

LOS ANGELES—Nearly two weeks after the devastating 6.6 Northridge earthquake, thousands of largely Latino and black residents of metropolitan Los Angeles remain homeless, sick and hungry. As more than 20,000 people were dumped into the streets and parks, the woefully inadequate Red Cross shelters filled up as fast as they opened. It took four days for the government to finally erect a few tents. But haunted by the spectre of the multiracial 1992 L.A. upheaval, the state immediately dispatched over 2,600 National Guardsmen to "prevent looting." The LAPD went on a full mobilization, flooding entire areas with patrols.

Worried about a political backlash from California, mired in a deep recession and recently hit by a series of natural disasters, Clinton announced a federal emergency aid package. But the response of local, state and federal officials betrayed the deep-seated class and racial bias of this country's capitalist rulers. Once the authorities realized that the "earthquake refugees" were overwhelmingly Latino immigrants from Mexico and Central America, calls were heard to check quake victims' documents, withhold aid from "illegal aliens" and quickly shut down the tent cities. In a racist frenzy, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher and assemblyman Pat Nolan held a press conference pushing legislation that would not only deny aid to non-citizens but order summary deportations!

Intimidated by the bipartisan anti-immigrant offensive that pervades California politics, from Republican gover-

**Those made homeless by Los Angeles earthquake are overwhelmingly Latinos. Many from Mexico and Central America don't apply for assistance out of fear of deportation.**

nor Wilson to Democratic challenger Kathleen Brown, the vast majority of those without proof of citizenship have refused to register at Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) centers and Red Cross shelters or to seek refuge in the tents erected by the National Guard. Left to fend for themselves, this besieged population has borne the brunt of the deteriorating conditions in the aftermath of the quake. Braving the rain and plummeting temperatures for two weeks under sheets of plastic and tarpaulins, crowded into parks with overflowing portable toilets and contami-

nated water, hundreds of families are now experiencing serious health problems, especially among children.

When county officials announced the release of emergency food stamps, over 45,000 people appeared at welfare offices, often under the menacing glare of the LAPD, which was put on tactical alert. County officials immediately screamed "welfare fraud," objecting that hungry people not directly affected by the quake might get food stamps. So on January 29, county officials ordered a three-day waiting period in order to carry out computer background checks

to "weed out" the undeserving!

Meanwhile, as aftershocks continue, landlords have used the pretext of quake damage to oust tenants and raise rents. Despite a 12 percent vacancy rate, even before this many poor Latino families had to share apartments because of the exorbitant rents. The *Los Angeles Times* (30 January) reports that "the typical poor household in Los Angeles spends 77 percent of its income on rent." Though the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has a program for emergency housing subsidies, *continued on page 11*



Diaz/L.A. Times

## Super Bowl Protest

# Down with the Flag of Slavery!

Atlanta, Georgia, dubbed the "city too busy to hate" and the showcase city of the supposed New South, hosted the Super Bowl in the Georgia Dome on January 30. In a gross insult to black America, the game was played under the Georgia state flag, which incorporates the Confederate banner of slavery and resurgent racist terror. Sportswriter Wallace Matthews wrote in *New York Newsday* (27 January):

"It is a flag that was wrapped around the bodies of lynching victims as a horrendous calling card. Twenty-eight of the 44 starting players on that field will be black. Sixty-five percent of NFL players are black. Raising that flag over the Georgia Dome is like raising a swastika over a synagogue."

About 150 protesters were outside the heavily policed and barricaded Georgia Dome before kickoff. Organized by black Democratic state representative Tyrone Brooks and state senator Ralph David Abernathy III, there were partic-

ipants from the NAACP, SCLC and Rainbow Coalition. Los Angeles Congressman Maxine Waters and Jesse Jackson both put in an appearance. The Spartacist League joined the protest with signs reading: "Tear Down the Flag of Slavery!", "Mobilize Labor/Blacks to Fight Racist Terror!" and "Confederate Flag Means Lynching, KKK Terror, Jim Crow Discrimination! Bring it Down!"

Inside, an integrated group of 60 reporters walked out of the press box before the national anthem and presentation of the color guard which included the stars and bars. Many of the remainder wore black armbands.

Opposition to the flag echoed among the football players. Particularly outspoken was reserve Buffalo Bills linebacker Richard Harvey, a black who grew up in Mississippi, who said the players should not play beneath the flag, and called on the big-name players of both races to act. Harvey's brave sentiments



WV Photo

**Spartacists join January 30 protest in Atlanta against flying Confederate flag, symbol of lynch-mob terror, over Super Bowl.**

should have been backed by organized action by the NFL Players Association. Such an action would have likely achieved the desired result and breathed new life into the besieged players union.

Newly elected black mayor Bill Campbell and former mayor Andrew Young urged the National Football League to ignore protests against the flag. Their line was to sweep the homeless off the streets so as not to offend the elite who attend the Super Bowl—and let the flag of slavery fly. They were following the lead of Governor Zell Miller who junked his earlier ostensible opposition to the flag to get re-elected. Meanwhile, Abernathy

& Co. appealed to Mr. Death Penalty Clinton, whose troops shoot down black Africans in Somalia, to "do the right thing" and avoid embarrassment by getting the flag changed in time for the 1996 Olympics.

In eight U.S. capitals earlier this month, the KKK flew the slaveholders' flag in their provocations against the Martin Luther King holiday. The Confederate banner was added to the Georgia flag in 1956 in racist defiance of the 1954 Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* decision calling for desegregating the schools. Today in Jackson, *continued on page 11*