

Smash the Bloody Junta—For a Workers and Peasants Government!

Yankee Imperialists Hands Off Haiti!

**Down With the Starvation Blockade!
Stop Racist Seizure of Haitian Refugees!**

Late last week President Clinton brandished a rhetorical "big stick" at the Haitian military, talking of a U.S. invasion of Haiti for the second time this century. At a May 19 press conference, Clinton announced that he was "weighing" military action to oust Haiti's junta if the new, more stringent United Nations sanctions failed. Listing six justifications, he began with the classic expression of Yankee imperialist arrogance, "It's in our backyard." Next on his list were drug trafficking by the junta and the spectre of waves of Haitian boat people as the murderous regime steps up its killings of political opponents, seeking to terrorize slum dwellers and peasants.

Clinton's announcement was a response to the heat he's been getting from white liberals and the Congressional Black Caucus, who have been lambasting his Haitian non-policy. The Bush/Dole Republican leadership, the Pentagon and the CIA are quite content with the present gang in power in Port-au-Prince. But facing the possibility of a mass exodus of Haitian refugees fleeing murderous repression and the starvation embargo, even some right-wingers are now sympathetic to the U.S. reinstalling ousted populist president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Right-wing columnist William Safire has gotten into the act, calling for creation of a "Haitian

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Teun Voeten/Impact Visuals

U.S. dumps Haitian refugees on docks of Port-au-Prince, where they face terror by murderous military regime.

The Rwanda Horror

The small central African republic of Rwanda is being swept by an orgy of murderous ethnic violence that since early April has left up to 250,000 dead and driven more than one million people from their homes. The massacres have been directed mainly against the country's Tutsi ethnic minority by the Hutu-dominated army and death squads mounted by the Hutu-based ruling party. Reports from journalists and refugees describe unspeakable horrors as children in schools and orphanages, patients in hospitals, families seeking refuge in churches have been hacked to death with machetes. Some 40,000 bodies dumped into rivers have reportedly floated into Lake Victoria, causing Uganda to declare the region a disaster area because of the health hazard. And the murderous frenzy could easily spread to neighboring Burundi, where last fall some 100,000 were killed, mainly Hutus, by the Tutsi-dominated army.

The hideous carnage in Rwanda has been all over the imperialist media, often portrayed in racist terms of "black-on-black violence." Liberals and African governments have called for United Nations intervention. After Washington's debacle in Somalia, the U.S. is hesitant

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Bitter Legacy of Colonialism



Reuters

A quarter million desperate refugees fleeing ethnic slaughter in Rwanda streamed across border to Tanzania in a single day.



Defend Lansing Anti-Fascists!

Police Pens Are a Trap

Hundreds of anti-fascists are herded into fenced-in enclosures, stripped of their personal belongings and then set upon by an army of black-booted, uniformed thugs. Germany, 1933? No, it's the American Midwest in 1994.

On April 23 in Lansing, Michigan, more than 500 cops in riot gear unleashed a violent assault on anti-fascist militants protesting a Klan recruitment rally. As a score of KKK scum waved

Confederate flags on the steps of the state Capitol, the police prepared a trap for the 800 counterdemonstrators. Anti-racists seeking to protest the Klan were herded through two metal detectors into a chain-link pen surrounded by the cops. "Snipers positioned themselves on downtown rooftops while 18 mounted deputies patrolled the area," according to the *State News* (25 April), the student newspaper at Michigan State University.



TROTSKY

Sacco and Vanzetti— Class War Martyrs

The frame-up and execution of the immigrant American anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in the 1920s galvanized mass working-class protest from Buenos Aires and New York to Berlin and Moscow. On the eve of their judicial murder, James P. Cannon, chairman of the International Labor Defense, pointed out that the two worker militants had already suffered the prolonged torture of seven years in prison

with the death sentence hanging over their heads. Today the militant black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has already spent almost 12 years on Pennsylvania's death row, must not suffer the same fate as Sacco and Vanzetti! The Partisan Defense Committee, continuing the tradition of Cannon's ILD, calls for putting all faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatever in the "justice" of the courts. For mass working-class action to save Jamal!

The cause of Sacco and Vanzetti demands of us, of the entire labor movement, militant, unhesitating and united support. We may have different opinions on many problems; but there is one thing we have become sure of in these seven years in which we have said our word for Sacco and Vanzetti. We have become absolutely convinced that the case of Sacco and Vanzetti, the case of these two Italian workers in Massachusetts, is not the case of two hold-up men or bandits. We have become convinced that it is the working class against the capitalists. We have become convinced that Sacco and Vanzetti are not only innocent of this specific crime which they are charged with, but that they are innocent of any crime except that of being rebels against capitalist exploitation of the masses....

Despite the hundreds of interminable nights and days of imprisonment, with the ghastly thought of execution constantly in their minds, they have remained as simply true to the worker's cause as they were before this infamous frame-up was conceived in the minds of the Massachusetts reaction. Yes, their persecution has even steeled their convictions, and has already bound them inseparably with the history of the American labor movement.

After seven years they came to court for sentence. I wish every worker in America could read the speech that Vanzetti made there. After seven years of torture, with the death sentence hanging over him, this man stood up in court, not as one guilty, not as one afraid. He turned to the judge on the bench and said to him:

"You are the one that is afraid. You are the one that is shrinking with fear, because you are the one that is guilty of attempt to murder."...

Let us demand not only the liberation of Sacco and Vanzetti. Let us demand also the impeachment of the monstrous judge who tried and sentenced them. Let us consider ways and means of making our protest more effective. From this great movement, from the words of Sacco and Vanzetti, let us draw inspiration.

We have hope, and we have faith in the workers of America, and in the workers of the rest of the world, who have so often and readily responded to the calls for solidarity and aid for Sacco and Vanzetti. Every worker in the land must be made to realize the monstrosity and significance to the whole labor movement of this crime. Every worker must stand shoulder to shoulder with his brothers to build a solid wall of defense for the victims of the Massachusetts Bourbons who are bent on their bestial revenge. Only the great and inspiring solidarity of the whole working class will succeed in snatching Sacco and Vanzetti from the chair of death.

—James P. Cannon, "A Speech for Sacco and Vanzetti,"
Labor Defender, June 1927



LENIN

Cops maced anti-fascist protesters *inside the pen*.

After escorting the white-supremacists away under heavy police protection, the cops went after the anti-Klan demonstrators with a vengeance. Volleys of CS tear gas were shot off "to hurry the crowd's departure," in the words of a police department spokesman. Those who didn't run fast enough were attacked by cops wielding nightsticks and riot shields. The police arrested anyone they got their hands on. "Cops placed automatic rifles in their backs while they searched the demonstrators. Rows of police carried out sweeping maneuvers of streets and plazas. In one case a police line racked shells into their pump shotguns" (*Workers World Service*, 9 May).

Eight anti-fascists were arrested. One victim of this cop riot faces a trumped-up felony charge of "assault with intent to inflict great bodily harm." We demand: *Drop all charges against the anti-Klan demonstrators!*

The Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee have consistently warned anti-fascist protesters that *police pens are a deadly trap!* These pens are the new, preferred method of anti-fascist "crowd control" by police agencies across the Midwest. Anyone who enters these traps is searched and stripped of any possible means of self-defense. At a demonstration against the Klan in Dayton, Ohio on March 19, cops confiscated not only weapons but cameras, cellular phones, hair picks, jewelry, and excluded people wearing steel-tipped boots. Anti-racist youth who go into these pens are

completely at the mercy of the racist cops, with their guns, their gas, their nightsticks and their horses.

The police, armed defenders of the racist profit system, are interpenetrated with fascist groups like the KKK, capitalism's extralegal dogs of race war. When a handful of KKKers blew away five anti-Klan demonstrators in broad daylight in Greensboro, North Carolina in November 1979, the killers were aided by the capitalist state: an FBI agent led them to the site, an agent of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) gave them firearms training, the local cops "disappeared" just in time for the massacre—and the courts let the fascist murderers go free! For anti-Klan demonstrators to place their fate in the hands of such forces is suicidal.

In the new "copspeak," police pens are called "public observation areas" where anti-fascists are permitted to bear impotent moral witness of the deadly Ku Klux Klan and Nazi scum. These pens are a law-and-order "success" only because *anti-racist demonstrators voluntarily enter them*. Here the cops are getting invaluable assistance from an array of "left" groups that herd their supporters into these traps to "protest" the Klan under the thumb of the cops. To ensure that a KKK rally could proceed unimpeded on May 7 in Springfield, Illinois, the state built a costly, high-tech fence over the Capitol grounds, complete with airport-style metal detectors at the cop-controlled points of entrance and egress. Pathetically, the International Socialist

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Darrell Taunt

Lansing, Michigan, April 23—Cops herded hundreds of anti-Klan protesters into chain-link pen. They maced the crowd, arresting eight protesters.

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Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win!

Fight for an All-Out Strike to Shut Down CAT and Deere!

EAST PEORIA, Illinois—A strike by 7,200 members of United Auto Workers Local 974 quickly spread among Caterpillar's Peoria-area plants last week after the company indefinitely suspended 37 workers at the company's Mossville facility on May 16. The workers were suspended for refusing to remove balloons from their tool boxes! The balloons carried a call for the ouster of Caterpillar chairman Don Fites.

As word of the suspensions spread, first-shift workers at CAT's Mossville assembly plant immediately walked out in solidarity. The action quickly spread to Caterpillar's two other plants, in East Peoria and Mapleton. A striker told *Workers Vanguard* that Local 974 bureaucrats tried to confine the strike to the Mossville plant, but when they called the Mapleton foundry to order workers to stay on the job, they were informed that pickets were already up. By the third shift all three plants were struck. At the CAT plant in Aurora, UAW tops moaned, "We are having a hard time keeping our members in" (*Peoria Journal Star*, 17 May).

Two days into the walkout, Caterpillar threatened to replace striking workers by recalling laid-off workers and hiring scabs. Management also withdrew health coverage from the strikers and declared that the union could pay the \$625 per month premium. The next day, over 500 strikers staged a defiant lunchtime rally at Caterpillar's corporate headquarters in downtown Peoria, chanting, "Bring 'em back!" and "Union!" Caterpillar's claim that 15 percent of the workforce were crossing the line was met by derision from strikers—the parking lots were empty.

But the threat of hiring scabs was all it took to get the UAW tops to call off the walkout on May 20, after Caterpillar agreed to reinstate 34 unionists. The bureaucrats abandoned three workers who remain suspended because of what company spokesmen described as "prior disciplinary problems."

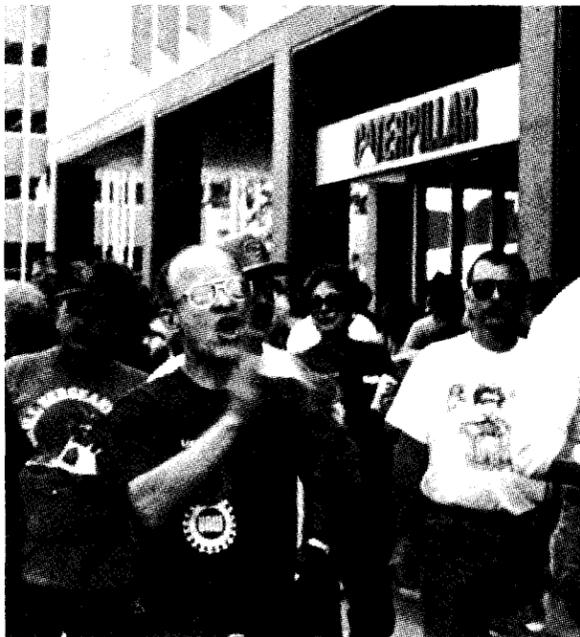
This was the eighth job action at Caterpillar since September, as workers rebel against the measures the company has exacted since the defeat of the 163-day strike that ended in April 1992. In that crucial battle, the UAW's Solidarity House first called a partial strike that dragged on for months. Then, when the company announced they would hire scabs, rather than mobilizing powerful union support from throughout the Midwest, UAW chief Bieber ordered Caterpillar workers back. The strike was knifed just hours after the AFL-CIO executive council voted to endorse "right-to-work" Democrat Bill Clinton for president.

"Sacrifice House" plays by the bosses' rules. In the face of the ongoing union-busting offensive by Caterpillar, the UAW tops have pursued the same impotent strategy that killed the 1991-92 strike. The so-called "in-plant strategy" of slowdowns and "corporate campaign" begging of stockholders is the same setup foisted on Staley workers in nearby Decatur by Ray Rogers and former UAW regional director Jerry Tucker, before the company called their bluff and locked the workers out.

At Caterpill: the company is continuing on a full-scale union-busting offensive. Dozens of workers have been fired since the strike for union-related activities and hundreds of others have been disciplined. CAT workers have continued to fight for their union with courage and determination. After a bitter defeat, brief walkouts can be a useful tactic to reassert the union's capacity to fight. But endless guerrilla warfare will not win against such a determined enemy, and the hard fact is that the UAW tops have no strategy for a fight to win.

Now that negotiations with John Deere are coming up this fall, the UAW sellouts are anxious to cut any deal they can with Caterpillar. But the opposite should be the case. What was needed in '91 was an all-out strike by the construction/agricultural equipment workers—Deere, CAT, everybody. And that's what union actions today should be building toward. The "in-plant strategy" that can work is a *shutdown strike*—seize the plants with their valuable machinery and hold them!

The political program behind the UAW tops' "inside game" is to look not to labor's power but to the Democrats in Congress to pass the AFL-CIO's much-ballyhooed bill to supposedly outlaw "striker replacement." Actually, it would only prohibit *permanent* hiring of scabs, while imposing arbitration on all labor



WV Photo
Hundreds of striking UAW workers rally in front of Caterpillar's Peoria headquarters May 19, protesting company's suspension of 37 workers.

disputes! And the capitalist Democratic Party has no intention of passing it, certainly not as long as it has its loyal "labor lieutenants" to sabotage militant strikes from within.

The UAW leadership's defeatist strategy was on full review as the union staged a gaudy rally, "Defending the American Dream," at the Peoria Civic Center on May 7. The 15,000 unionists attending, mostly auto workers from as far away as Michigan, were bombarded with flag-waving protectionism and impotent appeals to the Democratic Party.

The UAW's Owen Bieber, while plumping for the "striker replacement" bill, sounded the theme, "Let's Get CAT Back on Track." He abjectly pleaded with the company to "put all this behind us so CAT can keep its competitive position in the world market." Fat chance—the company is raking in the profits, with a projected \$760 million this year.

UAW vice president Bill Casstevens announced the union's latest empty ploy—begging CAT to either return to the terms of the 1991 contract as the basis for new negotiations or submit to binding arbitration. But even this groveling by the UAW tops was not enough to satisfy CAT's union-busting appetites.

The same day that thousands of unionists gathered in Peoria, the Ku Klux Klan staged racist provocations in nearby Decatur and Springfield. What was urgently needed was a powerful labor and minority mobilization to crush the nightriding KKK and Nazi scum, who also fill the ranks of strikebreaking outfits like Vance Security, used by Caterpillar. But the union tops sabotage multiracial struggle against the fascists: back in January, Illinois state AFL-CIO chief Don Johnson, a featured speaker at the May 7 UAW rally, ordered union locals throughout the state to "stay away" from the labor/black mobilization built by the Partisan Defense Committee and the Spartacist League to stop the KKK's provocation against the Martin Luther King holiday in Springfield.

As a Mossville worker with 21 years' seniority told

WV at the rally outside Caterpillar headquarters, "We need to stop walking out of those plants, we should just sit down inside the plant like they did at GM in the '30s." Such class-struggle action is what the Spartacist League fights for: mobilize union power to win strikes! And mobilize politically for workers power by ousting the bureaucrat friends of the Democrats, who are no friends of labor, and replacing them with a class-struggle leadership fighting for a workers party.

New York: Immigrant Workers' Strike Rattles the Harvard Club

Over 130 strikers from Local 6 of the Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees (HERE) union have been giving members of New York's oh-so-private Harvard Club a lesson in class struggle they probably didn't get at their alma mater. Since April 8, they have kept picket lines up 24 hours a day, carrying signs saying "It's wrong to cross a picket line."

Management wants to take away health benefits and force huge co-payments for medical coverage and make workers go without sick pay and other bonuses. The givebacks could mean a \$700 annual pay cut for workers. And the pittance that workers earn in "bonuses" for doing extra chores, such as making coffee "just so" or shucking and garnishing oysters to a member's demanding tastes, are on the chopping block. One proposal is to take away a \$10 bonus paid to workers who clean "vomit, blood, excrement, etc." when the members can't keep their boozy lunches down. For the fat cats who probably write off club dues as "business expenses" on their taxes, this is truly rich.

Many of the strikers are Hispanic and Asian immigrants who have more than 30 years on the job catering to the penny-pinching ruling-class elite in the style to which they've been accustomed. Their "patrons" are Harvard-trained capitalist bosses who have plenty of experience in union-busting and corporate blood-sucking from Mexico to Southeast Asia. Cold food preparer Dulal Bhowmik earns \$335 a week; many of the lawyers in the club charge that much and more per hour.

Club president Don Shapiro, who also is president of New York Federal Savings Bank, is claiming the club is losing money, while managing a \$250,000 annual set-aside to buy the building next to the 100-year-old club on West 44th Street. Shapiro whines that with tax-code changes preventing club members from taking the usual tax deductions, the club simply can't allow for the workers' modest pay increase.

When the rulers of this country talk of belt-tightening, they never mean their own. Local 6 strikers know their picket line is the class line. Harvard Club management has hired scabs to keep the blue bloods who cross the lines well fed. These guys may turn crimson at the "unseemly" commotion in front of the club's doors as they sweep toward the maitre d', but strikers must keep the heat on. For starters, how about direct appeals to Teamster liquor truck drivers to cut off the gin and vermouth supplies! Victory to Local 6 strikers! ■



WV Photo
Chanting workers on strike at Harvard Club on 44th Street make blue bloods boil.

Rwanda...

(continued from page 1)

to get involved in (or pay for) a UN "peacekeeping" force in Rwanda. The American ambassador to the UN cynically called for an international force to wait on the borders while the rump Hutu-based "government" and Tutsi-led rebels, the Rwanda Patriotic Front (FPR), fight it out.

Moved by the gruesome scenes of killing fields in these impoverished countries, many, particularly black Africans and black people in the U.S., hope that "international" intervention could put a stop to the bloodbath. But we must urgently warn that the imperialists are no friends of the Rwandan and Burundian masses. A "humanitarian" intervention by the UN—or under the auspices of the Organisation of African Unity, that cabal of neocolonial rulers—would produce a racist slaughter like in Somalia. Remember how in neighboring Zaire, UN intervention in the early 1960s served as a cover for the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the leader of the fight against Belgian colonial rule.

Moreover, the origins of the slaughter are to be found in the "divide-and-rule" legacy of colonialism. The genocidal violence sweeping Rwanda is not, as the capitalist press would have it, the result of "centuries-old tribal hatred." The Hutu and Tutsi peoples, who share a common language, culture and territory, are not tribes. The seeds of explosive ethnic conflict in Rwanda and Burundi were sown by the racist colonial powers—Germany, followed by Belgium—who transformed the precolonial feudal society, one of the most developed in



Yan Morvan

Tens of thousands of Hutu refugees from Burundi, fleeing terror by Tutsi army, in camp on hillside in Rwanda earlier this year.

a Hutu-based regime arose and has remained in power to this day. As throughout Africa, the former colonialists sought to continue their domination, but now through neocolonial front men. However, the situation has been complicated here by the attempt of France to replace the Belgians as the overlords

people perished. In Rwanda, a peace accord signed last August between the government and the FPR, which called for a "transitional" government, broke down into the present ethnic holocaust.

The signal to launch the slaughter was the shooting down of a plane carrying the presidents Juvénal Habyarimana of Rwanda and Melchior Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi, both of them Hutus, as they returned on April 6 to Kigali, the Rwandan capital, from negotiations in Tanzania over "power sharing" agreements. Claiming that the double assassination was the work of Tutsis, within hours of the plane crash, troops of the Rwandan presidential guard moved to wipe out all prominent political opponents, Hutu or Tutsi, and their families. Simultaneously, as if by prearrangement, throughout the country local militias linked to Habyarimana's party launched what appears to have been an attempt at mass extermination of the entire Tutsi population, as well as of any Hutu suspected of opposition.

It is not at all clear that the plane was shot down by Tutsi rebels, and Belgian officers in Kigali as part of the UN contingent claim that the two rockets which downed the plane came from the Kanombe military base, which is home to airborne commandos of the Rwandan army. The Hutu militias, called *Interahamwe* ("Those Who Attack Together"), were already responsible for the massacre last year of several hundred Tutsis and members of opposition parties in the president's home region.

Habyarimana and his military cronies also organized death squads known as "Zero Network," which killed hundreds of Tutsis and Hutu opponents of the president last February. Habyarimana's inner circle was also reportedly responsible for the 1985 murder of American naturalist Dian Fossey, subject of the film *Gorillas in the Mist*, when she threatened to denounce their lucrative selling of gorillas.

Six weeks of bloodlust instigated by the Rwandan government has reportedly broadened support for the mainly Tutsi FPR guerrillas, as many Rwandans see the rebels as the only force capable of bringing a halt to the slaughter. Further, the FPR, which claims to be non-communist and has always included Hutus among its leadership (including the chairman), is said to receive significant political and financial support from Rwandan exiles in North America, Europe and elsewhere. Yet like the Rwandan army, the FPR has frequently engaged in indiscriminate attacks on civilians, targeting hospitals, schools, markets and refugee camps. UN observers who drove through rebel-held territory along the Tanzanian border saw rebels shooting refugees who tried to swim across the river.

The FPR is in reality thoroughly subordinate to the harsh Ugandan regime of Yoweri Museveni. Formed from among Rwandan refugees in Uganda, the FPR helped Museveni's guerrilla force seize power in Uganda in 1986 and then joined his army. According to a report by the



Eidon/Reuters

Racist "humanitarian" U.S. occupation of Somalia. No to imperialist U.S./UN intervention in Africa!

Africa, into a vicious machine of colonial oppression based on hardened ethnic divisions. The Tutsi minority, who had constituted most of the nobility, became the overseers of indirect colonial rule, while the primarily Hutu peasants were obliged to submit to forced labor, severe taxes and beatings.

With "independence," two parallel states were set up. But although the population mix was comparable, in Burundi the Tutsi minority continued to constitute the ruling elite, while in Rwanda, following a peasant rebellion in 1959-62,

of the region. In recent years, Paris has shored up—financially and militarily—the governments of both Burundi and Rwanda. And now these imperialist manipulators of genocidal violence pose as "humanitarian" saviors!

Imperialism's Bloody Henchmen

During the Cold War, the imperialist powers maintained their blood-drenched killers in power as a bulwark against Soviet influence in Africa. For example, the bloody Rwandan military has been armed by France, South Africa and the U.S. With the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and East Europe, the imperialists began pressuring Africa's dictatorial "Big Men" to head off potential social explosions by allowing their opponents a share of power. But the imperialists' push for "democracy" has in fact led to a series of largely ethnic civil wars across the continent.

Nowhere has the failure of peacefully "reforming" the blood-drenched African regimes been more evident than in Rwanda and Burundi, where "power sharing" agreements, held up last year as models for the rest of the continent, have been swept away in waves of ethnic bloodshed. Elections last June brought to office Burundi's first Hutu president; his murder in a failed coup by the Tutsi-dominated military set off ethnic massacres last October in which some 100,000



Delentree/La Nouvelle Gazette

Victims hacked to death on street. Hundreds of thousands have been brutally killed in Rwanda.

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Human Rights Watch Arms Project (*Arming Rwanda*, January 1994), when the FPR attacked into northern Rwanda in 1990 many soldiers were still wearing Ugandan army uniforms and most of their arms were supplied by Museveni.

The intervention of French imperialism in the ethnic slaughter in Rwanda and Burundi has been particularly despicable. When FPR troops entered Rwanda in 1990, and again last year when the guerrillas threatened to take Kigali, France rushed combat troops and matériel to defend the bloodsoaked Hutu government. Some 700 French troops directly participated in the war, manning roadblocks, providing artillery support and piloting attack helicopters. A representative of the French defense ministry served as personal military adviser to Habyarimana (who was reportedly a close friend of Socialist President François Mitterrand). Previously, French troops in neighboring Burundi directly participated in the gigantic slaughter carried out by the Tutsi military regime in reprisal for the 1972 rebellion of Hutu peasants.

Western Colonialism Behind African Bloodbath

Prior to the colonial period, Rwanda was a centralized kingdom with a developing feudal civilization based on ties of vassalage, with largely Hutu serfs personally bound to largely Tutsi nobles. The colonialists made this into a rigid system, setting up a society in which racism was the touchstone. The Tutsi (or Watusi), who tended to be taller, lighter-skinned and have narrower noses than the Hutu, were declared by the ideologues of colonialism to be a "superior" race, destined to rule the "inferior" Hutus. Anthropologists in the service of colonialism "discovered" that the Tutsi were a supposed "Caucasoid Hamitic" race, which—it was claimed—had originally brought civilization to Rwanda. While such racist dogmas were hammered home in the schools and elsewhere, Hutus were excluded from higher education, administrative posts, and

most jobs. Everyone was required to carry apartheid-like cards identifying his ethnic group, a system which continues today in Rwanda.

The Rwandan upheaval of 1959-62 was led by Hutu youths, mainly former Catholic seminary students, who had been educated by left-leaning priests. (Under pressure from the UN, which oversaw the Belgian "trusteeship" of



French imperialist troops, here protecting Kigali airport, have participated in massacres by governments of Rwanda and Burundi.

the former German colonies, and in order to head off an independence movement, the educational system had been opened up to Hutus after World War II.) The central manifesto of the rebellion called for breaking "the political monopoly of one race, the Tutsi race" (Robert Rotberg and Ali Mazrui [eds.], *Protest and Power in Black Africa* [1970]). A massive peasant *jacquerie* in 1959 overthrew the monarchy and brought the Hutu elite to power as the Belgian colonialists, fearing "another Lumumba," switched their support while granting "independence." But instead of opening

the road to the liberation of the oppressed masses, this led to several years of mutual ethnic slaughter in which tens of thousands died.

An important element in the repeated ethnic conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi has been the drive by the military regimes to maintain their power, wealth and privileges. Armed and actively supported by their imperialist patrons, they

of the 17th and 18th centuries. In the classic French Revolution of 1789, peasant revolt was the driving force in destroying the reactionary feudal order, putting the land in the hands of the tiller, and opening the road to (capitalist) economic development. But in the imperialist epoch, the raw force of peasant insurrection in the colonial and semi-colonial countries—if it is not to be dissipated or even turned in a reactionary direction, as in the continuing cycle of ethnic slaughter in Rwanda and Burundi—must be harnessed to the international struggle of the working class for socialist revolution.

Barely one hundred years ago, before the scourge of colonialism was inflicted on Africa, the region of Rwanda and Burundi was one of the most advanced on the continent. Today, these are among the most poverty-stricken countries in the world, buried in debt to the imperialist governments and international bankers and squeezed by the giant trusts which dominate the market—and inexorably drive down the price—of their only significant export, coffee. On top of everything else, an estimated 40 percent of the population of Kigali and other Rwandan cities is infected with the AIDS virus.

Having done everything imaginable to turn Rwanda into a living hell, the imperialists have now seized on the country's tragedy to establish their credentials as "humanitarians." But burned by the humiliating retreat of the U.S. expeditionary force from Somalia, Washington is now appealing to "post-apartheid" South Africa to intervene. (During the inauguration of Nelson Mandela in Cape Town earlier this month, U.S. vice president Gore tried to float this proposal.) But a capitalist South Africa, despite the fraud of "power sharing," is still the state of the Randlords and an enemy of black liberation. A socialist revolution in that industrial powerhouse, led by the millions of black workers, however, will be a liberating force producing social transformation reaching into the most backward areas of the African continent. ■

Lansing...

(continued from page 2)

Organization (ISO) requested permission to enter the cops' pen hours before the Klan arrived!

Among the ISO's "pen pals" are the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) and its front group, the National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition (NWROC). Back in March, NWROC members who hesitated entering the Dayton pen were quickly shepherded in by RWL leaders. Like the reformist ISO, the RWL pushes the fraud that shouting at Klansmen while under the thumb of the cops equals militancy because they have no real strategy to stop the KKK.

Playing at "struggle" inside cop pens does nothing to combat the growing fascist threat. In wilfully submitting to the forces of the racist capitalist state and in displaying their weakness before the fascists and their police escorts, these pseudo-socialists show that their "anti-fascist" strategy is nothing but impotent

moralism and ultimate faith in the capitalist state to "arbitrate" and "regulate" the struggle between these opposing forces. The ISO and RWL posture to the left, but in practice their actions are no better than the reformist Communist Party's appeals to the government to "ban" the Klan—all of them rely on and foster illusions in the nonexistent "benevolence" of the bourgeois state and its bodies of armed men, the racist cops.

Refuting this class treachery, the American Trotskyists in the 1930s argued:

"...the best of the workers must be organized into Workers Defense Guards, prepared and trained to smash the fascist gangs. There is no other way. The fascist gangs do not believe in abiding by the results of the ballot-box, or by any other peaceful procedure. On the contrary, the fascists plan to come to power by physical violence against the labor movement and anti-fascists generally. To appeal to 'democracy' against the fascists is like trying to stop bullets with the biblical edict 'Thou Shalt Not Kill'."

—*Socialist Appeal*,
14 March 1939

Two weeks earlier, the Trotskyists' initiative brought out 50,000 anti-fascists in New York City, who besieged a fascist rally in Madison Square Garden.

This is the program that has guided the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee in our successful mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists. From Detroit in 1979 to Philadelphia in 1988, our focus on mobilizing the power of labor as an independent political force enabled us to build united-front actions, bringing together all intended victims of the fascist scum to defeat the racist terrorists and defend themselves based on the social power of the working class.

Notably, the one recent anti-fascist

protest in the Midwest that did not allow itself to be herded into a police pen like lambs to a slaughter was the labor/black mobilization against the KKK initiated by the PDC in Springfield, Illinois on January 16. With the entire force of the state of Illinois arrayed against us, we were unable to stop the KKK from rallying. But a mass and defiant show of opposition to them was organized—under the protection of trade-union defense guards—and it was the Klan that slunk out of town with their heads down that day. Our labor-centered mobilization—and fight against every attempt by the state to push the overwhelmingly black, anti-fascist protesters back—meant that there was no pen in Springfield. While the RWL/NWROC and the ISO refused to join this mobilization, they demonstrated that day under the more favorable conditions won by the

labor/black mobilization.

The crass opportunism toward the capitalist state of groups like the RWL and ISO is an expression of their profound petty-bourgeois despair in the revolutionary capacity of the working class. Herding anti-fascist fighters into police pens objectively helps the capitalist state set such young radicals and other anti-fascist fighters up for defeat. Those who are interested in building a working-class party that can win against the fascists and the capitalists they serve should contact the Spartacus Youth Club and learn how to put revolutionary strategy into action.

We urge our readers to send donations for the defense of the victims of the police attack in Lansing on April 23 to: Lansing Anti-Klan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 6746, East Lansing, MI 48826. ■

Correction

In our last issue (WV No. 600, 13 May), the article "LAPD Assaults 'Cinco de Mayo' Celebration" erroneously referred to the May 5 Mexican holiday as "Mexico's Independence Day." September 16 is the date commemorating the beginning of the struggle for Mexican independence from Spain in 1810. Cinco de Mayo commemorates the 1862 Battle of Puebla, the first major successful battle against the French occupation of Mexico.

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German Leftists in Suicidal "Dialogue" with Nazis

Fascist Terror Is Not Free Speech

The following article is adapted from Spartakist No. 112 (May 1994), published by the Spartakist Workers Party, German section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

A disgusting "fashion trend" has recently seized the left in reunified Germany: ostensible leftists are talking with fascists. For this purpose, the Nazis are prettified as "rightists" and gangs which burn people to death are portrayed as "mised youth." From SPD (Social Democratic Party) trend-setter Peter Glotz to ex-"Danny the Red" Cohn-Bendit and other Greens who have had published interviews in the Nazi rag *Junge Freiheit*, a whole layer of liberal and left intellectuals are participating in this monstrous campaign.

In the "conversations" with the Nazi murderers, the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) has played a leading role, with *Neues Deutschland* opening its pages to former SS officer Schönhuber (head of the fascist Republikaner) while the PDS' notorious Dresden leader, Christine Ostrowski, held secret talks with the Nazi leader Meyer. Last year this led to considerable agitation within the PDS, which was rather embarrassed by Ostrowski's quest for "agreement on social demands" with the National Offensive (a Nazi terror group). But in the meantime, Ostrowski is back in a top slot on the PDS' election slate, and the chairman of the PDS fraction in the state legislature of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Johannes Scheringer, is also writing in *Junge Freiheit*. Open Nazi appeals appear regularly in the "Word to the Wise" section of *Neues Deutschland*.

Andrej Hermlin, a prominent PDS anti-fascist, recounted a fable of such "conversations" with genocidal killers in *Neues Deutschland* (16 April):

"A rabbit and a snake meet. What happens? The rabbit holds a lengthy dis-



Dresden official Marita Schieferdecker-Adolph (right) was attacked and tortured by skinheads after attempt to "dialogue" at Nazi youth club.



Der Spiegel photos

course with the snake, whereupon the latter confesses to the utter rottenness of its intentions and slinks off in deep remorse. A strange fable? Certainly, yet strange things happen in our German lands."

The fascists are gangs of murderers, and just like Hitler's stormtroopers they cannot be "convinced" or "banned"—they must be smashed! Anything else is a suicidal illusion and a direct threat to all of the intended victims of the fascists. There is nothing "neo" about these shaven-headed Hitler Youth—they have the same program of genocide. The Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD) says: Genocide is not debatable! These gangs are *paramilitary shock troops*, who are now being used by the rulers to whip up a social climate against immigrants.

People who discuss with Nazis not only de facto place themselves on the same platform with Nazis, they have also politically come closer to them. *The basis for this is the Greater German nationalism of the Fourth Reich*, which is openly propagated by SPD ideologues like Tilmann Fichter and Wolfgang Templin, who complain that the left suffers from a "deficit" on the national question. The SpAD is fighting to mobilize organized worker/immigrant power

to stop the fascists.

While intellectuals discuss with "right-wing radicals" from their writing desks, sections of the PDS and groups such as the SAG (Socialist Workers Group, supporters of Tony Cliff's British SWP), Voran/JRE (Forward/Youth Against Racism in Europe, affiliated with the British Militant tendency) and the Edelweisspiraten (an East German anti-fascist group) want to talk directly with "young" Nazis, whom they portray as "nice kids." In doing so, they copy the arguments of the lawyers for the Nazis in Solingen, who want to prettify their clients' grisly arson murder of a Turkish family last year. If there is any difference from "dialogue" with the talk-show fascists, like Republikaner *Führer* Schönhuber, then it is that it's particularly dangerous and potentially suicidal to converse with these active gangs of thugs.

But for the JRE, "young fascists are victims of this society to the extent that they are reacting to unemployment and housing shortages" (*Voran* No. 157, December 1993/January 1994). In Mönchengladbach in West Germany, this "understanding" for fascists went to the point that the JRE elected a "former" Nazi, who surrounds himself with guys

in bomber jackets and paratrooper boots, into their leadership. The JRE leadership wants to go after Nazis by "outing" them and other games, but this is a deadly danger for Jews, immigrants, leftists, gays and the entire workers movement, including the JRE!

The ostensible left critics of the JRE in the Gruppe Spartakus (GS, part of the "Bolshevik Tendency") talk of drawing a "sharp line" against the Nazis. But the GS dresses up the bourgeois state by claiming that the state "only has tactical differences with the fascists."

No! It's not a matter of tactics or strategy—the fascists are the *shock troops of the ruling bourgeois class*, and their terror is presently targeted in the first place against minorities and ultimately against the entire workers movement. They are held in reserve until they are needed to put down the insurgent working class. That is why the cops protect the fascists, from the pact between the police and Nazis in Rostock in the summer of 1992 to police protection of the FAP (Free Workers Party, a Nazi group) in Berlin in mid-April. That is why the Free Police Reserve force in Berlin is infiltrated with Nazis, and the

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Down With Anti-"Stasi" Witchhunt Defend Günter Weinreich!

One of the consequences of the capitalist reunification of Germany has been a systematic anti-Communist witchhunt against anyone associated with the authorities of the former East German deformed workers state, the DDR. Since 1990, the German Federal Republic, notorious in the 1970s and '80s for its *Berufsverbot* (blacklisting) of Communists, has thrown *more than one million* government employees and others who had political functions under the DDR out of their jobs. This policy is closely linked to the deliberate destruction of East German industry which produced over 4 million jobless, more than half the workforce, in an effort to demoralize the working class. And the political purges continue. Using lists of alleged "informants" from the files of the former East German State Security Ministry, the so-called "Stasi," individual firings continue at a steady drumbeat.

Earlier this year, our comrades of the

Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD) and the Committee for Social Defense (KfsV) joined with workers of the famous Charité Hospital in East Berlin in defending well-known immunology professor Tomas Porstmann, who was fired on trumped-up charges of "Stasi activity." Last month, another victim of the anti-"Stasi" witchhunt, Günter Weinreich, a supporter of the SpAD, went before a labor court in the east German city of Halle demanding that he be reinstated at his job. Weinreich was in charge of environmental statistics in the statistical office of the state of Sachsen-Anhalt. His name appeared on a list of 4,500 names of alleged "informants" published by the right-wing tabloid *Bild* newspaper. Using files from the office of Joachim Gauck, which has become the Holy Office of the "democratic" anti-Stasi Inquisition, Weinreich's bosses fired him without notice last November. Thereupon he went to court, demanding that this ille-

gal political firing be overturned.

As the April 26 hearing date approached, the KfsV called for a demonstration outside the courthouse, declaring that "Günter, along with tens of thousands of scientists, teachers, employees and workers, is a victim of the anti-Communist witchhunt which wants to criminalize anything that recalls the DDR deformed workers state." Statements of support were received from prominent east German painter Willi Sitte; well-known Marxist historian Jürgen Kuczynski; biochemists I. and S. Rapoport; Karl Kielhorn, a leader of the association of former inmates of the Dachau concentration camp; and Atiye Ekşi, mother of Mete Ekşi, the West Berlin Turkish youth who was killed by fascists in 1992. But the local media and authorities reacted hysterically. Giving a foretaste of their reaction to the trial, the *Hallesches Tageblatt* (21 April) headlined, "Spartakists Call for 'Stasi-Demo'."

On the day of the trial, the protesters gathered before the court and Günter read a declaration. Their slogans included: "Defense of the DDR was no crime, its sellout was!" and "Bourgeoisie of Auschwitz: Hands off Markus Wolf!" (the head of the former DDR intelligence service who was convicted of "treason" against capitalist West Germany). Braving the climate of fear, a number of friends and former colleagues attended the hearing to show their solidarity with Günter. The proceedings lasted only 15 minutes, focusing on the legal irregularities in the firing. Despite the fact that Weinreich had openly stated that as an agricultural engineer and statistician he provided the security ministry with information for defense of the DDR economy, moreover at a time when the imperialists were brandishing the "food weapon," the judge supported the government's contention that he had hidden a Stasi connection.

Despite the fact that the verdict was not supposed to be made public until the next day, this didn't prevent the media from announcing their own verdict. The regional TV afternoon news, declared that the judge "rejected the plaintiff's complaint." The next morning the local press had a field day of "Stasi" hysteria-mongering. The

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Nazis Rampage in Magdeburg

Immigrants Fight Fascist Terror in Germany



Turkish, Arab, Algerian and African immigrants and workers heroically fought against Nazi attack on May 12. Police protected the fascists, disarmed the immigrants.

BERLIN—Capitalist reunification of Germany has unleashed an avalanche of racist state and Nazi terror which continues unabated after almost four years. The fascists have increasingly used the national holiday of *Himmelfahrt* (Ascension), which is widely celebrated in bars as "Men's Day," as an occasion for attacks on immigrants. This year in Magdeburg the Nazis turned it into a vicious manhunt which added the city's name to the internationally infamous list of racist horrors symbolizing the Fourth Reich: racist pogroms in Hoyerswerda and Rostock, arson murders in Mölln and Solingen, firebombing of a synagogue in Lübeck.

This time the events took place not under cover of night in an outlying area, but in the middle of the afternoon on May 12 in downtown Magdeburg, the capital of the east German state of Sachsen-Anhalt. A huge band of 150 or more armed Nazi "hooligans" stormed out of streetcars, attacked black Africans in a park on the central square, and chased them through the city. The Africans fled into the Turkish-run Marietta Bar. The fascists hurled benches and tables through the plate-glass window and went at the immigrants with baseball bats and knives. In the park restaurant, an Algerian man was beaten to the ground with bats and chains until he was unconscious. The Nazis continued their attacks well into the night.

Six immigrants were hospitalized; a Turk and the Algerian were comatose. Grotesquely, in the hospital the fascist attackers were put together with their victims: when the Algerian emerged from his coma, he found a Nazi skinhead in the next bed!

The fact that there were not more injuries and even deaths among the fascists' victims was because the immigrants fought back. Turkish and Arab restaurant workers from the Marietta and a neighboring snack bar armed themselves with kitchen knives to defend the African refugees and themselves and aggressively beat back the Nazis, four of whom landed in the hospital. This exercise of the basic right to armed self-defense by immigrants of several countries was heroic. It's a pity that more fascists didn't get their just deserts, which was attributable to the police, who were on the scene within minutes, not to protect the victims of the racist assault but to help the fascists. In addition, cops stopped and disarmed a group of immigrants from a refugee hostel in the Cracau neighborhood across the Elbe who tried to come to the aid of their besieged dorm mates.

Our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) fight for worker/immigrant mobilizations that would have stopped the Nazis cold. That this is not "pie in the sky" was shown in Berlin recently where moves for trade-union action thwarted fascist provocations on April 20 and May 1. Magdeburg is a workers' city with metalworking plants like SKET (the former Heavy Industrial Kombinat Ernst Thälmann) that used to employ tens of thousands

in the DDR and where thousands still work—the potential core for a decisive anti-Nazi mobilization. But east German industry has been devastated by capitalist reunification. The accompanying mass unemployment with no future for youth has created a climate of desperation that the brownshirts feed off. To combat fascism it is necessary to fight to uproot racist capitalism through socialist revolution. The SpAD seeks to build a revolutionary party that can bring the working class to power.

Today in Germany there is a corridor coalition between the ruling Christian

The complicity of the Magdeburg authorities is proven beyond question. The attack was not a surprise—it was announced by the fascists and the police knew of it beforehand. The Marietta Bar is known as a leftist hangout, and Nazis attacked it last year on "Men's Day." African refugees who were present on May 12, told our comrades that police watched as the fascists got out of the tram, and stood by while they charged past to attack the immigrants. The owner of another restaurant that was hit complained that two police cars pulled up right in front of his door and the cops

were welcomed and joined by the immigrant victims and defenders. On Monday 1,500 demonstrators, mainly youth from Magdeburg schools, marched against fascist terror. The demo was organized by the local anti-fascist group "Bandiera Rossa." In their leaflet they called for the right of immigrant self-defense and for "militant attacks against known fascist thugs." The state chairman of the ex-Stalinist, now social-democratic PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) explained that they could not officially take part in the demo because of the election campaign! The Turkish Maoist TKP/ML from Berlin as well as the SpAD had sizable contingents.

Those who were at the Monday anti-fascist demo in Magdeburg got an important lesson on the capitalist state. At the end of the demo, demonstrators spotted known fascists with video cameras and chased after them. Two minutes later they came running back, pursued by cops on foot in riot gear and driving tanks outfitted with water cannons. Suddenly, from all directions, cops piled out of streetcars—just as the fascists did four days earlier—and surrounded the demo. Some demonstrators chanted a familiar *Autonom* slogan at the cops: "Where were you on Thursday?" When the chants died down, a Spartacist supporter said simply: "On Thursday they were protecting the fascists." After half a second's pause, the youth roared their agreement.

At both demos, the SpAD's newspaper, *Spartakist*, was snapped up by the young demonstrators. Our demand for full citizenship rights for everyone living here was particularly appreciated among the immigrants who had been attacked by the fascists. Individual trade unionists of the miners union marched in the demo. The Spartakists called in particular on the powerful IG Metall and on the public workers union ÖTV and commercial workers union HBV, both of which have been waging strikes for equal pay for equal work in east Germany, to defend immigrants against Nazi and police terror.

Berlin: Unionists and Anti-Fascist Youth Stop Racist Provocations

As in Rostock, the way to Magdeburg was similarly prepared by the state. Every year Nazis "celebrate" Hitler's birthday on April 20 with racist provocations and terror. This year the Fourth Reich decided to make this day its own. Soccer matches in Europe are normally occasions for nationalist hysteria and rightist violence, yet the England-Germany game was planned for April 20 in the very stadium Hitler built for the 1936 Berlin Olympics. The rulers of the new capital of the reunited Reich took it upon themselves to demonstrate to the world that German *Ordnung* (order) rules in Berlin, while saying goodbye (and good riddance) to the Allied forces, who are departing next month. This gave the Nazis a platform which they intended to use for a march on the Reichstag. In

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Berlin, April 20—Spartakists at anti-fascist protest. Banner reads: "Stop the Nazis Through Workers United Front! Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrant Workers!"

Democrats (CDU) and the opposition Social Democrats (SPD), and it is these *Biedermänner* ("respectable citizens") in Bonn who have instigated and rewarded the terror of the Nazi/skinhead scum. The SPD agreed to gutting Germany's constitutional right of asylum in its "Petersburg decisions," taken on the eve of the August 1992 Rostock pogrom, and the Bundestag (parliament) vote in May 1993 to implement this racist "consensus" gave the green light to fascist murder in Solingen. Since then, racist attacks, protected or even supported by the cops, occur almost daily. Magdeburg is only the latest and most blatant example.

This is the city where two years ago Nazi thugs murdered the anti-fascist Thorsten Lamprecht at a punk café as cops looked on. This time an eyewitness said on national television that a young Turkish waiter was disarmed by the cops, thrown to the ground and held motionless as Nazis beat and kicked him. According to *Der Spiegel* (16 May), by 6 p.m. the cops had taken 13 immigrants but only 10 Germans into custody. At 8:10 p.m. cops stood by as fascists threw a handicapped person out of a crowded streetcar and a thug jumped down and continued to brutally kick him on the ground. In the official police report, cop support for the murderous Nazi bands is described as protecting "German persons" against "armed foreigners."

did nothing while rightist marauders broke windows and attacked the staff. Finally, police moved in and arrested 50 Germans. However, all but one of them were released that same evening (for "lack of evidence"—the one held was on unrelated charges)!

After succumbing to public outrage and issuing arrest warrants for seven Nazis, the state is now seeking to prosecute immigrants who had "overstepped the bounds of self-defense." Chief prosecutor Rudolf Jaspers declared, "For me that is now the priority." Police Chief Stockmann denied that the attacks were organized by the fascists, grotesquely attributing the pogrom to the effects of "alcohol and sunshine" and defending the immediate release of the Nazis taken into custody. Demands for Stockmann's dismissal and that of his boss, police and justice minister Remmers, rose together with demands by the Social Democrats for increased police powers and weaponry. But the SPD were in power in Rostock as the police there made a deal with fascists, leaving the field free for their fiery pogrom against Vietnamese workers that shocked the world.

Outraged youth and anti-fascists took to the streets in Magdeburg to protest in the days following the racist mob attacks. On Saturday, May 14, most of the several hundred demonstrators came from the anarchist *Autonom* milieu in Berlin. They

Assault Weapons...

(continued from page 12)

ten rounds of ammunition. In short, the bill—which apparently will be passed by a House-Senate conference—enables the government to bar all civilian access to standard, effective combat arms.

There is another sinister purpose to their capricious definitions of what is an "assault weapon." It allows for a selective proscription of firearms in the future, and selective legal persecution of those declared enemies by the state. And of course the cops will remain armed to the teeth, as will the company gun thugs and scabherding outfits increasingly used against strikers from the New York *Daily News* workers to West Virginia coal miners. The capitalists' private security forces are heavily armed, including with machine guns.

An Armed People

The bill passed with the help of some last-minute arm-twisting and fallacious propaganda by the Democratic White House. In a letter to "hunters and sportsmen," Clinton argued that there was a "difference between a firearm used for hunting and target shooting and a weapon designed to kill people," and went on to assert that the to-be-banned weapons are the "weapons of choice for drug dealers, gangs, and terrorists."

Parrotting their president, the *New York Times* (3 May) editorialized that assault weapons "are not sporting weapons; they have no legitimate civilian purpose." This is a complete straw man, a deliberate smokescreen for a sneak attack on the Constitution. The Second Amendment was not enacted to protect hunting, personal self-defense, sports, hobbies or recreation, and they know it. The Amendment, ratified in 1791, was clearly intended to ensure a *people's militia*:

"A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

For the framers of the Bill of Rights, only an armed people could be a free people.

The first ten amendments to the Constitution comprise the Bill of Rights, about which Thomas Jefferson wrote to James Madison in December 1787, "A bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth." The Second Amendment was intended to create militias based on an armed people equipped with military arms to fight against the perceived enemies of the time, including a despotic government. In the 18th century this meant the use of a musket; today this certainly would center on full/semi-automatic rifles, which are the standard infantry weapons.

As we wrote in "Revolution and the Right to Bear Arms":

"The constitutional right is not about hunting or target practice; the American colonial revolutionaries wanted the whole people armed, including with military arms, in order to be able to *kill British soldiers*, and to forestall the threat of any standing army, which they rightly regarded as the bane of liberty and the basis of tyranny....

"In the state conventions which ratified [the Constitution], a 'militia' was understood to mean the armed people, not a 'select' militia like the present-day National Guard.... The right to 'keep and bear arms' was universally recognized as an *individual* right. As Patrick Henry summed it up, 'The great object is, that every man be armed.'"

—WV No. 475, 14 April 1989

The present rulers of America shudder at the idea of effective weapons in the hands of the masses of this country—especially the black masses. That is why they seek to undo the safeguards of popular liberty that are a heritage of their "own" revolution. So they are precisely targeting *military* weapons.

Their attack on the Second Amendment is a significant change in the rights

of citizens relative to the government. The move to disarm the populace would transform everyone into second-class citizens. This is no recent American peculiarity. A book on the history of Yugoslavia notes that in the Ottoman Empire:

"Christians in areas under Ottoman dominion remained second-class subjects. They were prohibited, for example, from riding horses, carrying weapons, and wearing certain types of clothing, and their choice of occupation and freedom of movement were severely limited."

—Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country* (1991)

When the Bill of Rights was adopted in 1791, the right to bear arms was granted to every citizen. At the time, a "citizen" was understood to be an English-speaking Protestant farmer who owned his own land; other categories

are more deadly than hunters' rifles—the latter often fire more powerful cartridges!

The most abused argument is the allegation that "assault weapons" have become the "weapons of choice" for criminals. The most oft-used "fact" of the anti-gun nuts is that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) "estimates that only one of every 100 guns in this country is an assault-type weapon," but "in the bureau's criminal investigations, seven of every 100 guns its agents trace turn out to be such weapons" (*New York Times*, 5 May). But "trace" turns out to mean *any* tracking of a gun by the BATF snoopers, not necessarily because it was used in a crime. After all, the T-men's aim is not to "stop crime" but to enforce a *state monopoly of effective violence*.

Even the cops' own figures give the



Alonzo Chappel

American militia at 1775 Battle of Lexington against British troops: Second Amendment protected right of the people to bear arms as guarantee against tyranny. Red Guard workers militia leaves Soviet headquarters at Smolny, 25 October 1917, during Russian Revolution.

P. Otsup



were treated as second-class, at best. And it was the first-class citizen who was supposed to be armed. Nowadays, with blacks, women, Catholics, Native American Indians, Mexicans and others asserting their equal rights, the country's rulers want to ensure that everyone but the Praetorian guards of the government are second-class citizens. So the Second Amendment stands in sharp contradiction to present-day reality, and now there is a move to gut it.

The "Assault Gun" Hoax

To whip up public hysteria, the politicians of both parties and the pliant media are using every trick in the book. They talk about assault weapons which "spray" bullets like a "machine gun," but in reality such automatic weapons (which continue firing bullets as long as the trigger is pulled) have been tightly regulated since 1934. Today's civilian versions of military assault weapons are only "semiautomatic" (one bullet fired for each pull of the trigger). Then they intone, like Democratic Congressman Charles Schumer, a leading sponsor of the gun ban, that "these are guns that were fashioned for no other purpose than to kill" (*New York Times*, 5 May). It's really no news that guns were designed to kill people, and there's no basis for arguing that "assault weapons"

lie to the gun control propaganda. The percentage of guns seized by the police in alleged crimes which are "assault weapons" ranges from zero in New York City in 1992 to a high of 3.9 percent of seized guns in Oakland in 1990 ("The Assault Gun Hoax," by Edgar A. Suter, M.D. in *Fighting Firearms*, Spring 1994). And the National Rifle Association (NRA) notes in its latest pamphlet that semiautomatic assault rifles are "involved in less than one-half of one percent of violent crimes" and "guns with military cosmetics are rarely seen much less seized in connection with crime."

The fact is that assault rifles are too unwieldy for street crime and they're not concealable—the common gun crime is usually done with an ordinary pistol, though wealthy drug dealers might prefer more menacing machine-pistols with large-capacity magazines. (In fact, the easily converted TEC-9 of *Miami Vice* fame may inflate the crime statistics for "assault weapons.")

The present bill, the latest in a series of hysterical attacks on "assault weapons," was triggered by the brutal slaying of eight people at a law firm in downtown San Francisco last July. It was, in the words of the bill's author, Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein, in "a very secure building, a nice office build-

ing" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 8 May). Instead of the victims being black or Hispanic, this time influential white yuppie lawyers got blown away by a madman in their own offices. Incidentally, the murderer might have been stopped dead if anyone had had a defense weapon, but they didn't.

Gun Control Kills Blacks

The key here is *racism*. This is the same Feinstein who tried to fly the Confederate flag of slavery at San Francisco City Hall in 1984 when she was mayor, and got off posing like a SWAT cop in her black jumpsuit. "Dixie Dianne" was foiled by a supporter of the Spartacist League and Labor/Black League for Social Defense who tore down the banner of racist terror—*twice*. Defenders of the Second Amendment right to bear arms are often portrayed in the media as right-wing racist "gun nuts." An ignorant and malicious article in the *New York Times* (23 May) says that the NRA "has traditionally equated pistols with patriotism." But then it lets slip that: "The gun association...started in 1871 as a rifle-training organization by former Union officers who were dismayed that their troops could not hit a bear in the backside with a handful of sand...."

Today "crime" is the bourgeoisie's code word for going after blacks and other minorities. The *New York Times* is currently running a seemingly endless series on youth crime filled with photos of young black and Hispanic faces. Clinton's housing secretary Henry Cisneros is implementing massive search-and-seizure operations in government-financed projects where blacks are concentrated, in direct violation of Fourth Amendment protections. The NRA, which supposedly defends gun-owners' rights, is rabidly pro-cop, and self-defeatingly feeds the anti-crime frenzy, advocating more prisons and draconian "three strikes" sentences which will only leave the jails overflowing with senior citizens.

Blacks and Hispanics forced to live in the deadly high-crime areas of American cities know all too well the reality of lumpen crime, much of it fueled by the drug trade. If the bourgeoisie were really concerned about "violence," the logical step would be to decriminalize drugs immediately. Besides, the take-away-your-guns crowd doesn't believe their own propaganda about crime. As the pro-gun-control *New York Times* (5 May) admitted, "The proponents do not really believe that outlawing assault weapons would have much effect on crime," but is "a foot in the door" toward an outright total ban on handguns, or forcing all weapons to be registered.

Americans have good reason to want to keep their guns. The whole history of this country is strewn with examples of *ruling-class* violence: wiping out the Indians, mowing down strikers from Cripple Creek and Ludlow miners to Little Steel, the brutal suppression of ghetto rebellions from Watts '65 to South-Central L.A. in 1991. And when blacks defend their homes against racist terror, when workers defend their picket lines against scabs and gun thugs, the forces of the bourgeois state are mobilized against them.

Just over a year ago, in a combined FBI/BATF operation approved by the Clinton administration's attorney general Janet Reno, 86 men, women and children were murdered in a government assault on a racially integrated religious commune outside Waco, Texas. The feds brought in two helicopters, two M1A1 Abrams tanks, five M-60 main battle tanks (some equipped with CS gas dispersers), and nine Bradley armored fighting vehicles, along with enough submachine guns, grenade launchers and sniper rifles for a small army—which is what they had assembled there. And with all this overkill, they tried to justify their fiery holocaust with charges of "illegal gun possession" (although the Branch Davidians' Colt AR-15 rifles were *legally owned*) and "child abuse"!

Haiti...

(continued from page 1)

Legion" to attempt a "Bay of Pigs option." But the racist U.S. imperialists are far greater oppressors than their military puppets in Haiti. *The international working class must oppose all imperialist intervention: Down with the blockade! U.S./UN hands off Haiti!*

Imperialist Sanctions Victimize Haitian Poor

It's clear to all that so far Washington hasn't seriously tried to get rid of General Cédras and his cronies who ousted elected president Aristide in 1991. Clinton was ridiculed around the world for pulling out the USS *Harlan County*, which was carrying U.S. and Canadian "military trainers," because a few dozen pro-junta thugs were waving some pistols from the docks. Many Haitians in the U.S. recalled that when the U.S. decided to dump its previous satrap, Colonel Prosper Avril, all it took was a phone call from Bush and the dispatch of an Air Force transport plane to ferry him to Miami. In the face of Clinton's latest pusillanimous threats, Cédras formally deposed Aristide and installed the 81-year-old chief justice as puppet president.

Even now, the Haitian military is flouting U.S. strong-arming. The very day that "tightened" UN sanctions went into effect, barges were openly shipping oil from the Dominican Republic. Clinton's embargo has only had the effect of squeezing the lifeblood out of the Haitian poor while enabling the tiny Haitian elite to further enrich themselves with profiteering. Previous sanctions were discontinued after last summer's Governors Island Accords, which specified a deadline of October 30 for Aristide's reinstatement. After Cédras tore up the Accords (surprise!), the sanctions were started up again, but with plenty of loopholes for U.S. manufacturers to take advantage of Haiti's cheap labor.

Now a flotilla of Coast Guard cutters is supposed to enforce an embargo allegedly singling out 600 military officers and paramilitary *attachés* to have their visas revoked and assets frozen. However, the administration has reportedly decided to exempt many key civilian backers of the junta who, according to a U.S. embassy source, "still have a role to play" (*Los Angeles Times*, 20 May).

When Clinton was running for election, he denounced Bush's "inhumane" policy of forcible repatriation of Haitian refugees, claiming that he would ensure Aristide's return to power. But even before election day, Clinton was backpedaling, claiming it was necessary to "temporarily" continue deporting desperate Haitians back to bloody repression. The infamous concentration camp for Haitian refugees at Guantánamo naval base, stolen from Cuba, was kept in operation for months until a federal court ordered Clinton to shut it down. Instead, Coast Guard cutters now pick up refugees off boats and return them to Haiti, where they are snatched and beaten, and many killed, by Cédras' *attachés*.

As the rising tide of massacres, kid-



U.S. Marines invaded Dominican Republic in 1965 (left) to put down insurrection. Today Aristide looks to imperialist chief Clinton to determine Haiti's fate.

nappings, torture and rape in Haiti received increasing international attention, and after influential black lobbyist Randall Robinson, director of TransAfrica, staged a 27-day hunger strike in protest, Clinton abruptly announced that he was changing his policy. The U.S. would resume shipboard processing of refugees, and for that purpose it is leasing two Ukrainian cruise ships. However, in the meantime the Coast Guard continues to dump its haul of refugees on the docks of Port-au-Prince, returning over 600 in the space of a week.

The true intent of U.S. government policy toward Haiti is to keep Haitians out of the U.S. To that end, any number of "policy options" have been floated. The latest proposal is to maroon Aristide on the arid and rocky isle of La Gonâve, after giving him "assurances that the... plan is not simply meant as a new form of exile" (*New York Times*, 7 May). The Haitian military has reportedly taken to calling Clinton "the Comedian," after Graham Greene's novel about "Papa Doc" Duvalier's rise to dictatorial power.

Haitian Murder Inc.

The dramatic increase in coldblooded killings in Haiti is mostly the work of the Duvalierist FRAPH, which has picked up where the dreaded *Tontons Macoutes* thugs left off. In September 1993, Antoine Izméry, the most prominent bourgeois backer of Aristide, was dragged from a church service by FRAPH members and executed on the street in broad daylight. The next month, Aristide's justice minister, Guy Malary, was gunned down after presenting parliament with a proposal for a civilian police force. But the brunt of the terror has been directed against the slums and rural areas where the mass of Aristide's impoverished supporters live. In December, over 100 residents of the Cité Soleil district of the capital were massacred by army/FRAPH arsonists. This atrocity has been followed by months of assassinations, kidnappings and arrests targeting the neighborhood.

Last month, army troops conducting a sweep of the Gonaïves slum of Rabeau slaughtered dozens, leaving bodies strewn over the beaches. The troops were searching for a community leader

category of death by "Homicide and Legal Intervention"—killed by a cop.

The authors of the Bill of Rights passed the Second Amendment along with the others because they feared a despotic government. And from General Al ("I'm in charge here") Haig to Nixon's "enemies list" to Clinton's sinister BATF, the population of this country has plenty of reason to worry too. The assault on the Second Amendment may be the product of total racist hysteria on the part of the capitalist rulers...or they know exactly what they are doing. For our part, from the standpoint of the interests of the working class and oppressed minorities, we stand opposed to the bourgeoisie's campaign to disarm the people. ■

accused of leading an armed pro-Aristide group. Unfortunately, the Haitian masses are almost completely unarmed and at the mercy of the *zenglendos* (armed thugs) armed by the state. The working class has been decimated by mass firings and repression. Large numbers of unionists have gone underground, while CGT union leaders are targeted by the notorious police "Anti-Gang Service."

Under such conditions, there could be a desperate rising by the poor and dispossessed driven to the wall. Such an upheaval finally drove out "Baby Doc" Duvalier in 1986. But as long as the army remains, and their bourgeois backers are the masters of the country, this terrible cycle of repression will repeat itself as the masses remain mired in misery. To sweep away this machine of oppression and exploitation requires linking up with working-class forces internationally.

Contrary to the narrow views of petty-bourgeois Haitian nationalists, such an international struggle is entirely possible. Just over the border, workers in the Dominican Republic have a long history of leftist agitation going back to the 1965 insurrection. Memories are still vivid of the brutal repression by the U.S. invasion force which put down the Santo Domingo commune, resulting in the Balaguer regime that has ruled almost uninterruptedly for the last quarter century and which is currently trying to stay in power through stealing yet another election. Dominican leftists must champion the brutally oppressed Haitian slave laborers who produce the sugar that is the country's leading export, and who are vital allies for revolutionary struggle.

Haiti and the New World Disorder

In the U.S., black and white liberals are now calling for military intervention (under the UN fig leaf) to reinstate Aristide. Randall Robinson, having ended his fast, is now calling on Clinton to launch an "Operation Island Storm." This is also the de facto line of Aristide. The *New York Times* (13 May) reported Aristide's hints that "the Haitian people will welcome any effort to rescue them from military rule. 'He has come as close as one can get within the bounds of respect for the Constitution,' said Robert White, an American adviser to the Haitian leader." This is deadly dangerous, and it is the Haitian masses who will pay in the event of a new American occupation.

There is good reason the Haitian constitution outlaws appeals for U.S. intervention. The last time the Marines landed, in 1915, they didn't leave until 19 years later, after gunning down rebel leader Charlemagne Peralte, massacring thousands and putting in place the Haitian military which bedevils the island today. The predatory role of Yankee imperialism is so notorious throughout Latin America that even Washington's various client regimes in the Organization of American States (OAS) almost unanimously oppose a U.S. invasion, except for wholly owned puppets and other sleazeballs like Carlos Menem of Argentina. But the OAS also overwhelmingly condemned the December 1989 American invasion of

Panama, to no effect whatsoever.

In its delusions of imposing a "New World Order" in the wake of the counterrevolution that swept East Europe and the Soviet Union, U.S. imperialism is seeking to reinforce its hegemony over the Western Hemisphere. Beginning with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), laying the basis for Wall Street's rape of Mexico, Washington wants to assert total economic domination over its "backyard." If the Yankee imperialists have their way, the whole of Latin America will become like Panama, where the U.S. dollar is the local currency (called the "Balboa," though sporting the portrait of Jorge Washington on the \$1 bill).

From imposing a succession of military thugs on Haiti to sponsoring the death squads of El Salvador and intensifying the decades-long starvation embargo against the Cuban Revolution, the U.S. government has caused untold misery for the workers and peasants of its neocolonial empire. The only way to break the grip of the bloody military—in Haiti and elsewhere—is through struggle against their imperialist masters. Although the CIA and Pentagon portray Aristide as a wild-eyed radical and messianic psycho, his whole policy has been to offer himself as a willing participant in a U.S.-engineered deal. For years he has refused to oppose the forced return of Haitian refugees; only now, in desperation, does he say what has been obvious from the start—that Clinton's policy is racist. And still he goes along. We say: Stop the racist seizure of Haitian refugees!

From Papa Doc to Baby Doc to Avril and Cédras, the Haitian masses have been beaten down for generations, producing an understandable sense of despair. But amid intense anger and bitterness, a spark can also set the whole island aflame. And just as the Haitian slave revolt of 1791-1804 interlaced with the fate of the great French Revolution and sent tremors of revolt through the Caribbean, today an upheaval in Haiti would have an impact throughout the Americas. This potential is key in particular to the defense of the embattled Cuban deformed workers state.

But most directly, the impact of popular revolt in Haiti would be felt in the belly of the imperialist beast, through the hundreds of thousands of Haitian workers who are to be found in garment sweatshops, hospitals, restaurants and other service industries. Communists in the U.S. must seek to win from among them cadres for a Haitian Trotskyist party as we fight to mobilize the American workers in defense of their Haitian class brothers and sisters here and on the long-suffering island. We warn that Democrat Clinton no less than Republican Bush is an enemy of the Haitian masses, that a U.S. invasion would subject the island to new colonial rule, that the populist Aristide despite his occasional radical rhetoric cannot break with imperialism. This can only be accomplished—opening the road from the desperate poverty of capitalism to a socialist society—through a workers and peasants government in a socialist federation of the Caribbean. ■

This cynical excuse comes from "General" Reno, who has the blood of at least 25 children she slaughtered at Waco on her hands. Nor will we ever forget the black MOVE commune in Philadelphia who lost eleven of their own, including five children, when they were attacked by the cops using fully automatic rifles and machine guns, and plastic explosive provided by the FBI and dropped from a police helicopter.

While they strip the population of its weapons, the murderous cops get outfitted with high-capacity 9mm Glock pistols. One "statistic" the tough-on-crime Democrats leave out is the black and Hispanic victims of racist cop terror. Instead they hide this in the death statistics of young black men, under the

Cancellation of the Constitution

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

17 May 1994

"I have a right to nothing, which another has a right to take away...."

—Thomas Jefferson

America's third president, as a slaveowner, knew a great deal about "rights taken away," and the nation that he helped found, knows a great deal about it too.

Americans are taught, and the world is told, of the First Amendment of the Constitution, which supposedly "guarantees" fundamental rights to free exercise of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of association.

So state history books, and law books numbering into the millions.

In truth, such rights are illusory.

The recent controversy involving the writer is an excellent case in point.

Hired by the prestigious *All Things Considered* program aired on NPR network to produce brief commentaries, the writer, who reported for ATC prior to his imprisonment, remarked to one supporter that he felt like he was returning home.

NPR, stung by an FOP [Fraternal Order of Police] hate campaign, mumbled something about "misgivings," and without informing the writer, canceled the airing of the commentaries.

The FOP, branding the writer as a "monster," and heaping abuse on the network, forced them to renege.

It is perhaps ironic that the FOP

campaign began on May 13th, several days before the scheduled air date, for it marked nine years, to the day, after the Mother's Day MOVE massacre of at least eleven MOVE babies, women and men in West Philadelphia, by the aerial bombing of MOVE's home in 1985.

Phila. police shot and killed fleeing MOVE women and children, forced others back into a burning building, and stood by while several blocks of West Philadelphia homes were consumed by flames.

Who are the *real* monsters?

The same FOP that incinerated, decapitated and dismembered people with judicial impunity, *they* call *me*, "monster"! Are they then angels?

What rights of "free speech" exist when it can be denied because the state

objects to the speaker?

The same system that denied me the alleged "right" of self-representation, that intentionally denied me of my "right" to an impartial jury of my peers, that steered me to "trial" before a judge who was a life member of the FOP and known as a "prosecutor's dream"; that denied me the right to examine and/or cross-examine witnesses, and that went back over a decade to introduce evidence of my Black Panther Party membership and statements (said to be "protected" under the First Amendment's "guarantee" of "free" association and "free" speech) and used these to argue for a death sentence—these are the self-same forces that successfully censored me from the genteel listeners of NPR's *All Things (That the Police Will Allow) Considered*.

They have demonstrated how the media is mastered by police power, and how the First Amendment, once again, is but a dead letter.

They have made my point—and I hope, yours.

"Dialogue" with Nazis...

(continued from page 6)

main base of the Republikaner is the cops.

We Spartakists have fought in Hennigsdorf and Leipzig to drive Nazis out of workers' demonstrations when they show their heads, as they are a threat to everyone there. At the April 20 demonstration called by Antifascist-Gençlik, a joint Turkish and Kurdish group, we carried a sign listing cities where pogroms have taken place, declaring "Rostock, Mölln, Solingen, Lübeck: Nazis Are Gangs of Killers!" For this we were attacked by skinheads and social-democratic social workers! We have long warned about the milieu of lumpenproletarian youth, which shades into racist skinheads who beat up immigrants to chants of "oi."

If any proof were needed of the dangerous consequences of the idea of talking with Nazis, this was shown by the skinhead attack last December on the Dresden city official in charge of "foreigners," Marita Schieferdecker-Adolph. After returning from a trip to Israel with skinheads and other Nazis (including the "Gauleiter" of the Viking Youth) financed by tax money—millions of D-marks are invested in projects for Nazis—the Dresden "foreigner" official set up a "dialogue" with the skinheads in a Nazi youth club. As Schieferdecker-Adolph left, the thugs were already waiting for her. They tortured her, pressing lighted cigarettes into her neck, and poured beer over her, yelling "Jew sow." She reported that she was afraid for her life. "Those were monsters, not people," she said (*Der Spiegel*, 20 December 1993). But in spite of this she decided not to file a complaint against these terrorist gangs, and that same night the skinheads raged through the streets of Dresden, forcing passers-by to kiss their boots.

Let us return to the central point: discussing with Nazis is dangerous, not only physically but also politically. The lesson of Nazi rule in Germany was that the brownshirt gangs should have been stopped before they came to power. As Trotsky wrote in 1934 about France, "The tactical, or if you will, 'technical,' task was quite simple—grab every fascist or every isolated group of fascists by their collars, acquaint them with the pavement a few times, strip them of their fascist insignia and documents, and without carrying things any further, leave them with their fright and a few good black and blue marks."

Whoever thinks they can "discuss" with fascists is necessarily seeking com-

mon ground, which from the SPD to the PDS and Voran/JRE has a clear name: German nationalism, whether "left" or right. They all supported capitalist reunification of Germany and the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union, which led to the renewed flaring up of Nazi terror. As internationalists, we fight to *smash* the Nazis before they can attack us. Today the workers movement and all the oppressed must relearn the lessons of history and through mass mobilizations drive the brownshirt vermin back into their holes! ■

Defend Günter...

(continued from page 6)

Mitteldeutsche Zeitung (27 April) headlined, "Gauck Documents Gave the Initiative" with a kicker "Stasi Entanglement Hushed Up—Police in Front of Courtroom." The *Hallesches Tageblatt* ran a front-page spot "Despite Spartakist Ruckus, No Chance for 'Günter'," a lengthy article "Clear Decision Against Stasi Informer Günter Weinreich" and a commentary justifying the firing under the headline, "Otherwise They'll Be Back." The editorial complained, "Not even the PDS," the successor to the former Stalinist ruling party of the DDR, "acts as narrow-minded as the Spartakist Party." The PDS has often refused to defend its members accused of Stasi activity, even handing over its treasurers and its treasury to the capitalist rulers.

Despite the certainty of the "broad-minded" media witchhunters, the official verdict declared that while Günter's demand for reinstatement was rejected, his firing "did not dissolve the employment relationship" as the bosses' high-handed action failed to follow legal norms. The Committee for Social Defense issued a press release announcing, "Labor Court Decision: Firing Void—Witchhunt Will Not Silence Günter Weinreich!" The KfsV statement noted the vicious role of "the bourgeois press as an instrument of Bonn's Gauck office," which "faced with the devastating results of the capitalist reunification, seeks to silence any opposition and anyone who stands up against it." After the trial Günter thanked his supporters, saying "They all understood that I was fighting not only for my job, but for all those whom the vengeful Fourth Reich now wishes to destroy because they consciously stood for defense of the DDR."

Thrown into a situation of limbo, neither legally fired nor reinstated, Weinreich returned to his job the next day. This threw the director into a panic, and after half an hour on the phone with state authorities in Magdeburg, he told

Günter that his further employment was impossible. Furthermore, he was so enraged by protest letters charging a witchhunt that he threatened to turn this material over to the *Verfassungsschutz*, the "Office for the Protection of the Constitution," the German political police! At the end of the "discussion," Weinreich was banned from setting foot on the premises again or else he would be charged with "illegal entry." Since then, he has received a new notice of dismissal, so that he must now present another complaint against his renewed firing.

The political persecution of Günter Weinreich for his defense of the DDR and his support to the Spartakist Workers Party is a threat to all workers. The SpAD and KfsV will continue to defend our comrade, and urge all trade unionists and defenders of democratic rights to join us. Protest statements can be sent to: Komitee für soziale Verteidigung, c/o Werner Brand, Postfach 21 07 50, 10507 Berlin, Germany. ■

Magdeburg...

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addition, for the third time in three years, the Nazi thugs of the FAP ("Free Workers Party") planned a provocation against the labor movement with a march on the workers' holiday of May Day.

The DGB trade-union federation's youth organization and other anti-fascist youth immediately began to organize to prevent this obscene nationalist spectacle and the accompanying Nazi provocations. But not everybody. The self-styled Youth Against Racism in Europe (JRE), led by Voran (Forward, followers of the British-based Militant tendency), didn't even want to stop this nationalist "people's festival." They planned instead to flash "red cards" (the equivalent of penalty flags) at the fascists inside the stadium. In this way they would do their bit for the national image by putting a little make-up on the ugly face of racist Germany. Instead they discredited themselves as mounting protest from trade unions, immigrants and anti-fascist youth forced the cancellation of the game.

Leading up to April 20 there were moves in the trade unions to stop the fascists, including anti-Nazi union patrols together with anti-fascist youth. Although modest in scope, this is an indication of the possibility of mass workers actions, and Spartakist supporters in the unions took part in the patrols. The DGB Youth ran a two-week series of daily anti-fascist meetings. Also, on the 20th over 3,000 immigrants and leftists demonstrated against fascist terror and in defense of the Turkish, Kurdish and German supporters of Antifascist-Gençlik. Five supporters of this group

are locked up and charged with breaking up a sinister Nazi gathering in a Berlin immigrant neighborhood with the resulting death of one of these racist scum.

The Voran leadership of the JRE mobilized *against* the demo, telling JRE members it was "too dangerous" and claiming it was forbidden by the state. The *Gruppe Spartakus*, supporters of the so-called "Bolshevik Tendency," publicly denounced the Antifascist-Gençlik demo as "sectarian." Defense of immigrants is not their thing. But tens of thousands of youth and trade unionists are deeply outraged at the wave of fascist terror since reunification and seek ways to stop the fascists.

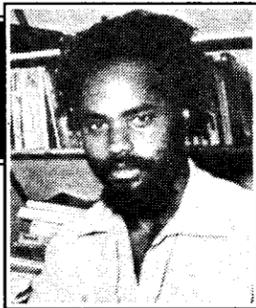
And this time the FAP's direct provocation against the workers movement on May 1 did not come off. Reflecting pressure from the membership, left-leaning trade-union officials in HBV, ÖTV and IG Metall called on the Berlin government to "ban" the fascists. Appealing to the same forces that tried to bring the obscene nationalist soccer spectacle to Berlin on April 20, and whose cops not only support but are infiltrated with Nazis, is not only stupid but dangerous. And these union leaders felt enough pressure from the ranks to threaten a countermobilization beginning from the traditional central DGB union demo if the city senate did not ban the fascist provocation.

On the morning of May Day, after the site of the planned Nazi provocation was announced, Spartakists along with supporters of Trade Unionists Against Fascism and Racism agitated at the DGB demo in the Lustgarten for immediate union action to stop the Nazis where they threatened to march. Our comrades also joined irate unionists and some SPD youth in defending supporters of the banned Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) as they were manhandled by police. Although the fascist provocation was ignored by the bureaucrats on the stage, dozens of union members and leftist youth headed for Berlin-Johannisthal. A group of unionists including SpAD supporters went directly from the heavily immigrant IG Metall feeder march. And in the face of a small but highly visible trade-union contingent in a largely youth and *Autonom* anti-fascist demo of several hundred at Johannisthal, *the Nazis did not show their faces*.

To stop the Nazis while they are still small, you must mobilize workers and immigrants along with all the intended victims of the fascists in united-front action. The party that fights for this program, based on the experience of the Bolsheviks who led the October Revolution of 1917, is the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and its German section, the Spartakist Workers Party. ■

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Actin' Like Life's a Ball Game



When I hear politicians bellow about "getting tough on crime" and barking out "three strikes yer out" rhetoric, several images come to mind.

I think of how quickly the tune changes when the politician is on the receiving end of some of that "tuffness," after having fallen from grace.

I am reminded of a powerful state appellate judge, who, once caught in an intricate, bizarre web of criminal conduct, changed his longstanding opinion regarding the efficacy of the insanity defense, an option he once ridiculed.

It revealed, in a flash, how illusory and transitory power and status can be, and how we are all, after all, human.

I also think of a young man I met in prison, who was one of the first wave of people imprisoned back in the '70s under new, tougher youth certification statutes, where teenagers are sentenced as adults.

The man, whom I'll call Rabbani, was a tall, husky 15-year-old when he was arrested in southeastern Pennsylvania for armed robbery.

The prosecutor moved that he be judicially certified as an adult, and the Court agreed.

Tried as an adult, Rabbani was tried and convicted

of all charges, and sentenced to 15-to-30 years in prison; for an alleged "robbery" with a CO₂ air pistol.

His first six or seven years in this man-made hell found him constantly locked in battles with guards, and he logged more years in the "hole" (or disciplinary status) than he did in general population status.

He grew into manhood in shackles, and every time I saw him, he seemed bigger in size, but more bitter in spirit.

When we took the time to converse, I was always struck by the innate brilliance of the young man; a brilliance immersed in bitterness; a bitterness so acidic that it seemed capable of dissolving steel.

For almost 15 years this brilliance has been caged in cubes of time and steel that hasn't melted; for almost two of these years he tried, largely in vain, to get a judge to reconsider his case, but the one line, two word denials—"appeal denied"—only served to deepen his profound cynicism.

For those critical years in the life of a male, from 15 to 30 years of age, those years that mark the transition from boy to man, Rabbani was entombed in a juridical, psychic, temporal box emblazoned with the false promise "Corrections" upon it.

Like tens of thousands of his generation, his time in hell equipped him with no skills of value to either himself or his community.

He has been "corrected" in precisely the same way that hundreds of thousands of others have been, that is to say, warehoused, in a vat that sears the very soul.

He has never held a woman as a mate or lover;

He has never held a newborn in his palm, its heart atump with new life;

He hasn't seen the sun rise, nor moon glow, in almost 15 years;

For a robbery, "armed" with a pellet gun, at 15 years old.

When I hear such easy, catchy, mindless slogans like "Three Strikes—You're Out," I think of men like Rabbani, who had *one* strike (if not one "foul!") and are, for all intents and purposes, already outside of any game worth playing.

31 March 1994

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Philadelphia black journalist, is on death row at Pennsylvania's Huntingdon state prison. Framed up because of his political views, Jamal faces death for his defiance of the racist, capitalist order. His columns appear periodically in *Workers Vanguard* and other newspapers.

To get involved in the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the death penalty, contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, 1100 Pike St., Huntingdon, PA 16652-1112.

Jamal...

(continued from page 12)

the network announced its cancellation, Clinton was pushing his crime bill to a national gathering of the FOP and said, "We recognize that there should be capital punishment for people who kill law enforcement officials in the line of duty." In Pennsylvania, the FOP is attempting with every kind of dirty trick to turn Mumia Abu-Jamal into the "Willie Horton" of the state's gubernatorial race. The cops have campaigned on radio talk shows and TV newscasts with a nightly barrage demanding his execution. When several hundred Jamal supporters rallied in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on April 12, some 50 cops tried to intimidate the death penalty abolitionists by counterdemonstrating and chanting, "Kill Mumia!"

The NPR gag order has met with widespread outrage. The network has been inundated with phone calls and letters demanding that Mumia be heard. Local NPR affiliates have voiced opposition to this blatant censorship, and Chicago's WBEZ is broadcasting what NPR refuses to air. So are other noncommercial radio stations, including New York's WBAI and other Pacifica stations.

All fighters for black freedom, all death penalty abolitionists must mobilize now to stop the assembly line of death. What's necessary is the broadest possible campaign of public protest and exposure for Jamal—the kind of campaign that saved the Scottsboro Boys, earlier victims of a racist frame-up. *Let the "Voice of the Voiceless" be heard—Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!*

We print below a press release issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on May 17.

Protest NPR Gag Order on Death Row Prisoner

Late last week National Public Radio announced in newspapers across the country that death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was going to be heard in a series of radio commentaries commencing on Monday May 16. In a blatant display of censorship, NPR caved in to pressure led by the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police, to announce on Sunday that it was canceling the broadcasts.

After hearing of NPR's cancellation of his commentaries Jamal stated, "This is

just one more instance of my constitutional rights being denied as they have been since December 9, 1981. The right to self-representation, the right to have counsel of my own choice, the right to a fair trial, the right to a fair and impartial jury and now the right to speech."

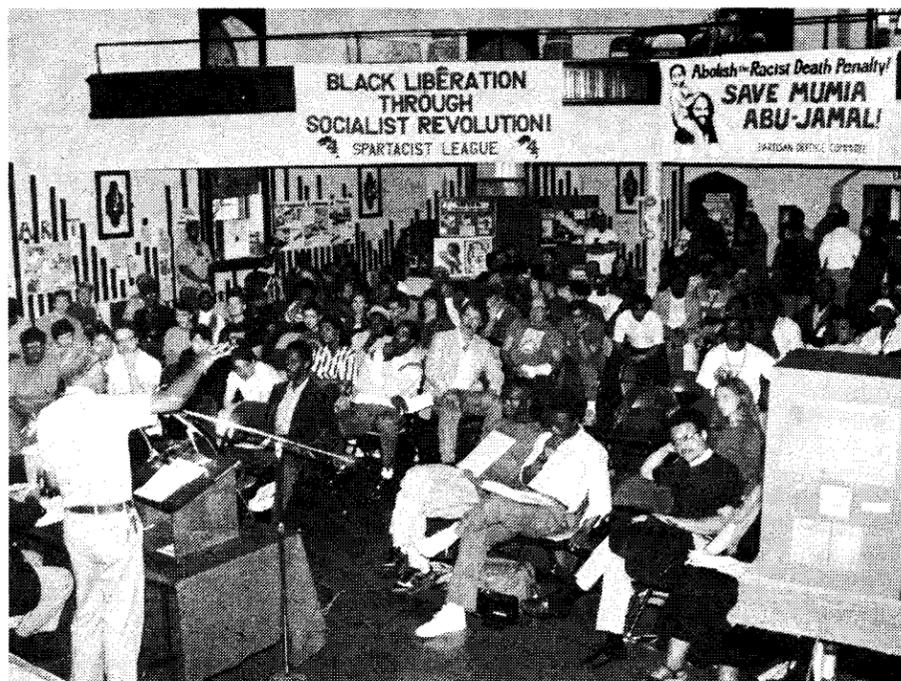
Leonard Weinglass, Jamal's lead counsel, announced, "It is ironic that efforts to silence Mumia were what put him on death row. Now, 12 years later they are still trying to silence one of the most effective spokesmen for the Afro-American community." Partisan Defense Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein added, "Jamal was supposed to be heard on NPR's program, 'All Things Considered.' Obviously, one thing NPR is afraid to consider is standing up to the police who are trying to silence Jamal to make it easier to execute this innocent man."

Jamal, a former spokesman for the Black Panther Party, supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization and award-winning journalist who was president of the Philadelphia chapter of the Association of Black Journalists at the time of his arrest, was framed in 1982 on charges of killing a Philadelphia police officer. His articles and radio broadcasts on behalf of the poor, minorities, homeless and immigrants won him the name of the "voice of the voiceless." He was tried and convicted by Philadelphia judge Albert Sabo, who has sent more men to death row than any other judge in the nation and who is known as "the King of Death Row." Sabo denied Jamal's request to represent himself and ordered him removed from the courtroom for jury selection and other key parts of the trial.

Following the NPR decision to kill Mumia Abu-Jamal's commentaries, the Pacifica Radio News network, which has 60 stations, announced Monday it would broadcast them as part of its daily news program. Gayle Christian, national program director for Pacifica, said, "Pacifica is proud to once again bring to the public a voice and opinion which the established media find too outspoken or controversial for their tastes."

In his first broadcast on Pacifica yesterday afternoon, Mumia Abu-Jamal stated:

"Every day in America the trek continues, a black march to death row.... In the 1987 case McCleskey vs. Kemp, the famed Bedeau study revealed facts that unequivocally proved: 1) defendants charged with killing white victims in Georgia are 4.3 times as likely to be



WV Photo

In Philadelphia over 200 rallied in 1990 to demand "Abolish the racist death penalty! Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!"

sentenced to death as defendants charged with killing blacks; 2) six of every eleven defendants convicted of killing a white person would not have received the death sentence if their victim had been black; 3) cases involving black defendants and white victims are more likely to result in a death sentence than cases featuring any other racial combination of defendant and victim.

"Although the U.S. Supreme Court by a razor-thin five-four vote rejected McCleskey's claim, it could hardly reject the facts underlying them. Retired Justice Powell said, in essence, differences don't amount to discrimination. The bedrock reason why McCleskey was denied relief was the fear again expressed by Powell, that McCleskey's claim taken to its logical conclusion throws into serious question the principles that underlie our entire criminal justice system. How true. McCleskey can't be correct or else the whole system is incorrect. Now that couldn't be the case, could it?"

PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein said, "The decision to cancel Mumia was a political decision pure and simple. It continues the political persecution that led to the death sentence against him. Congress is about to pass a 'crime' bill which will add dozens of new crimes to carry the death sentence. The NPR announcement immediately followed President Clinton's law and order speech on Sunday to a national gathering of the Fraternal Order of Police. Just a few days ago, on May 12, Clinton's home state of

Arkansas executed two black men within an hour of each other. It is in this context that this outrage against Mumia Abu-Jamal is taking place."

Jamal's struggle to overturn his conviction has won supporters around the world. Over 40,000 people have signed petitions to Pennsylvania governor Casey and trade unions representing millions more have also demanded that Jamal not be executed. His supporters include Ossie Davis, Mike Farrell, Congressman Ron Dellums, Pennsylvania State Representative David Richardson, Ed Asner, Harry Belafonte, Whoopi Goldberg and Percy Sutton.

PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein said, "NPR's censorship of Jamal must be protested. NPR's action denies Jamal's outstanding qualifications as a journalist, but more importantly strips him of his humanity. This is a life and death issue of free speech. They are saying that because Jamal is on death row the public is not going to hear what he has to say today, to make it easier to execute him tomorrow. Blacks, Hispanics, labor, all those opposed to the death penalty must demand, 'Let Mumia speak!'"

Phone calls protesting NPR's censorship should be addressed to Managing Editor Bruce Drake or Mary Morgan at (202) 414-2305, or fax to (202) 414-3045. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

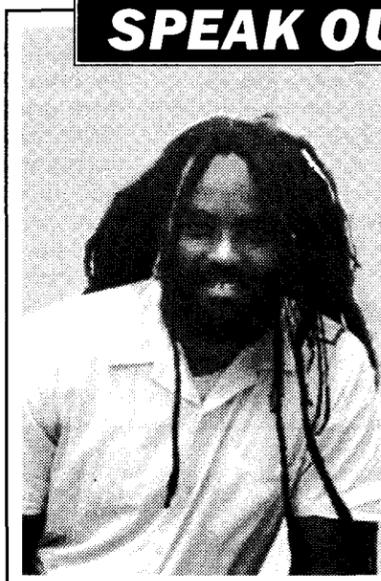
National Public Radio Censors Death Row Prisoner

Let Mumia Abu-Jamal Be Heard!

Two days after National Public Radio announced that it would air a series of commentaries by Mumia Abu-Jamal on its national "All Things Considered" program, NPR suddenly vetoed any broadcasts by the nation's only death row political prisoner. This racist censorship must be defeated!

For the "legal" lynchers, for the trigger-happy cops, for the politicians pushing the racist death penalty, it was unthinkable to let the public hear the powerful voice of Jamal. They knew what everyone who has heard the man called "the voice of the voiceless" knows: from his cell on Pennsylvania's death row, Mumia Abu-Jamal's searing indictments of all the racist hypocrisy and injustice of this system would resonate deep in the hearts and minds of people all across this country. And so, amid a din of threats by the Fraternal Order of Police, NPR pulled the plug on Mumia Abu-Jamal.

As the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty stated, "The death penalty is like a mushroom. It needs darkness to grow. In order to hold public support for executions, the people must be largely uninformed and misinformed.... The real



SPEAK OUT FOR JAMAL!

A Life and Death Issue of Free Speech!

Hosted by

Ossie Davis

Other featured participants include:
Wadiya Abu-Jamal and Len Weinglass

Friday, June 3, 7:00 p.m.

**Ethical Culture Society
2 West 64th St., New York City**

For more information call the
Partisan Defense Committee: (212) 406-4252

**Save Black Journalist on Death Row!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!**

problem the Philadelphia police officers and others have with Mumia Abu-Jamal's commentary on National Public Radio is that anyone listening as he speaks will realize that he is human. He is intelligent, articulate and alive. If that secret gets

out, it will become just a little bit harder to kill him."

Let Mumia Abu-Jamal Speak! The Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal and the Partisan Defense Committee are sponsoring "Speak Out for Mumia

Abu-Jamal!" on June 3 in New York City on this life and death issue of free speech. Hear Jamal in his own words—the man and the message that National "Public" Radio forbids the public to hear.

NPR's cowardly censorship was accompanied by a blizzard of hostile headlines in major newspapers across America aimed at dehumanizing Jamal as a "cop killer," "death row con." Threats were reprinted from Philadelphia president of the Fraternal Order of Police, Michael Lutz, that "He should be dead. He should be dead. He should have been dead a long time ago" (*New York Times*, 15 May). The "mighty media wurlitzer" was cranked up to blast out fear and loathing against this fighter for black freedom who was framed for a crime he did not commit. Lutz bragged, "We went to the federal government to stop funding for NPR." On the floor of the U.S. Senate, Republican whip Robert Dole railed against NPR for daring to let Jamal speak to the American people.

What role did the Clinton White House have in NPR's gag order? Shortly before

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"Remember that the musket...is better than all mere parchment guarantees of liberty."

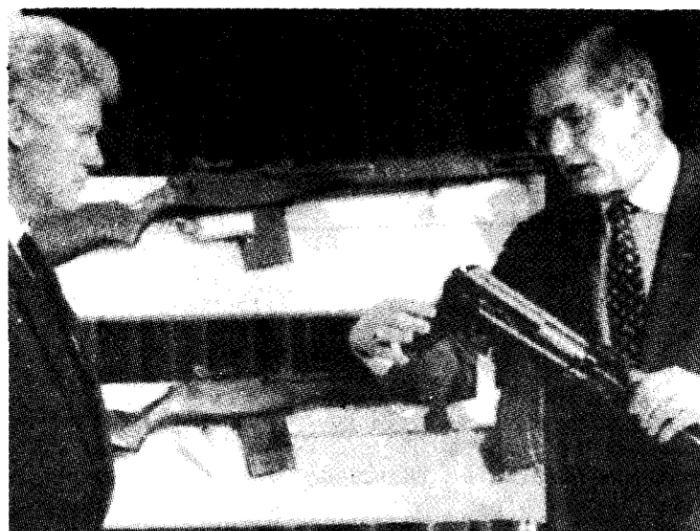
—Frederick Douglass, 1863

For years the federal, state and local governments have been sniping away at the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which supposedly guarantees the right to "keep and bear arms." But now Clinton and Congress have let loose with both barrels in a full-scale assault on this fundamental constitutional safeguard under the guise of an "anti-crime" bill.

They are taking aim at the heart of the Second Amendment, threatening to disarm the masses at a time of increasing social discontent, while the government is arming itself to the teeth—boasting of plans to put 100,000 more cops on the streets. The anti-gun hysteria, like the government's "war on drugs," is aimed squarely at minorities and all working people.

This newest gun ban is part of the Omnibus Crime Bill, a draconian measure which will spend billions of dollars on super-prisons and racist boot camps for black and Hispanic youth, while greatly expanding the number of federal crimes carrying the death penalty. And to drive home the racist character of the state's legal lynching, Congress voted down a measure to allow death row prisoners to challenge their death sentence on the grounds of racial discrimination.

By a narrow margin of two votes, the House approved a bill on May 5 which would ban 19 specific semiautomatic "assault weapons" including the civilian versions of the most widely known military rifles, the Russian Kalashnikov AK-47 and the American M-16, and any "copies or duplicates." Moreover, an



Left: Clinton inspects "assault weapons" with BATF director John Magaw. Right: Gun control, FBI-style, at religious commune near Waco. Government-unleashed firestorm killed 86 innocent men, women and children.



elastic clause would also ban any "semiautomatic rifle that has an ability to accept a detachable magazine" and at least two other military features, such as

a folding stock, a pistol grip, a bayonet mount, a threaded barrel which could accept a flash suppressor, or a grenade launcher. A broad category of semiauto-

matic pistols with military features would also be banned, along with magazines capable of accepting more than

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