

Racist Furor over Bronx D.A.

Clinton, Dole: Death Penalty Bloodlust

Once again, the presidential election campaign is marked by a vile outcry for racist "law and order" by capitalist politicians. In 1988, Republican George Bush brandished the image of black convict Willie Horton as a weapon against Democrat Michael Dukakis. Four years later, Bill Clinton trumped Bush by personally presiding over the execution in Little Rock, Arkansas of the Ricky Ray Rector, a brain-damaged black man. A campaign spokesman boasted that Clinton was "the only candidate in the race who has carried out the death penalty." Now, in the lead-up to the '96 elections, Democrats and Republicans are screaming for the execution of "cop killers," focusing their racist venom on heavily minority New York City.

On March 21, Republican New York governor George Pataki imperiously removed black Bronx D.A. Robert Johnson from prosecuting a case involving the killing of a white cop the previous week. Johnson had refused to bow to a racist outcry to go for the death penalty against the cop's alleged killer. That same day, Clinton issued a public ultimatum that NYC federal judge Harold Baer reverse a supposedly "anti-cop" ruling or face the consequences. Two days later, Republican frontrunner Robert Dole, touring the death chamber at San Quentin, ranted against "liberal judges" and screamed for "swift justice" against death row inmates.

Pataki's 1994 victory over liberal Democrat Mario Cuomo led directly to the restoration of the death penalty in New York last year, setting off a furious search for a test case. When NYPD cop



WV Photo
Protest outside the Bronx courthouse against NYPD executions of Anthony Rosario, Hilton Vega Jr. and others, July 1995. Partisan Defense Committee says: Struggle against police brutality and the racist death penalty are part of the same fight.

Kevin Gillespie was killed on March 14 in the crossfire during a wild nighttime shootout with three Hispanic men following a car chase along the Bronx's Grand Concourse, the pro-death politicians had the bloody shirt they were look-

ing for. Pataki and New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani rushed to the TV cameras to demand a death penalty indictment. The case was also tailor-made for a showdown with the state's only black D.A. When the new law was signed last

March, Johnson outspokenly declared his "intention not to utilize the death penalty provisions of the statute."

Gillespie's funeral at a Catholic church on Long Island's south shore was
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Bureaucrats' Sellout Squanders Union Power

Two-Week Parts Strike Shuts Down GM

CHICAGO, March 25—After a 17-day strike, during which they brought General Motors' North American empire to a grinding halt, some 3,200 workers at two brake manufacturing plants in Dayton, Ohio returned to work yesterday. By striking the Dayton plants, which produce 90 percent of the brake parts for GM's North American

production, the union took advantage of the auto bosses' policy of "just in time" delivery, which eliminates the cost of stockpiling parts by having small quantities delivered as needed. This method is based on the assumption that no significant strikes take place.

A key issue in sparking the strike was GM's intention to "outsource" the production of anti-lock braking systems for some car models, sending orders to the non-union South Carolina plant of the German company Robert Bosch. This continues the job massacre at General Motors, which
continued on page 14



AP
Striking workers in Dayton, Ohio display solidarity message from Michigan UAW members.



Freedom for the SUTAUR 12!

Release Leaders of Mexico City Bus Drivers Union!

MEXICO CITY—With a spectacular police deployment, the Mexico City government violently evicted former Ruta 100 bus workers from the city's central square on March 6 and 7. The workers were occupying the Zócalo demanding a resolution of their conflict and release of their 12 jailed leaders of the independent SUTAUR union. Union spokesmen reported that over a dozen workers were hurt during the police attack, including one who was gravely injured when cops threw him from the roof of SUTAUR's own bus. The cops' fury was also aimed at TV cameramen and photographers covering the rally, as *La Jornada* reported the following day.

The struggle of the SUTAUR workers has already lasted eleven months. Held behind bars as political hostages by the regime of Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo, the union leaders are facing a slew of charges and sentences of more than 12 years' imprisonment in a typical "justice Mexican-style" frame-up intended to demoralize and divide the combative ranks of this union. Since April of last year, when the government de-



Militant transit workers march in Mexico City, January 1995. Three months later, government fired all 13,000 bus company workers.

clared the Ruta 100 bus network "bankrupt," SUTAUR has faced a violent union-busting drive whose objective (besides destroying this union) is to send a

clear message threatening all workers and oppressed who seek to resist the starvation plans and reprivatizations that the Mexican government is imposing with bloody force.

In 1981, public transport in Mexico City became a state-owned corporation. Ruta 100's vast network of bus service and the Metro subway system represented a key element sustaining the battered livelihoods of millions of workers, who rely on it to get to work. But with the imperialist plunder of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), the government accelerated the sell-off of all state-owned enterprises and social services. Several powerful financial groups, hated by the masses who refer to them as the "bus octopus," decided that the time had come to grab back the juicy spoils of public transport and "disappear" Ruta 100. The regent (mayor) of Mexico City, Oscar Espinosa Villareal, was put in charge of the judicial and police campaign to eliminate the powerful bus drivers union that was the one immediate obstacle to privatization of transport. As a result, all 13,000 bus drivers and workers were thrown out of work (see "Mexico City: Union-Busting at Gunpoint," *WV* No. 621, 21 April 1995).

When Ruta 100 was suddenly declared bankrupt last April 9, Mexico City woke up under a virtual state of siege. Thousands of cops and riot police aided by helicopters took control of Ruta 100's depots, workshops and centers of operation in order to prevent furious protests by its workers and the population. The government hired scabs and buses began operating under police escort. There were confrontations and injured workers. To frighten and demoralize the workers, they proceeded to violently arrest their main leaders, among them the union's legal adviser, Ricardo Barco. The other jailed SUTAUR leaders currently in the Reculsoario Oriente prison are: Bavino Camacho Barrera, Ernesto Avila Velázquez, Eduardo Hernández Quiroz, Cristóbal Flores de la Huerta, Adalberto Loza Gutiérrez, Filemón Ponce Ceron, Octaviano Sánchez Palma, Marcos del Razo López, Jorge Núñez Carrasco, Hilario Salvador Caravantes Cisneros and Eduardo Jáuregui Santos. The Grupo Espartaquista de México demands: Freedom now for the SUTAUR 12!

Both the judicial farce of declaring a state-owned public service "bankrupt" followed by the unleashing of police

thugs against this union show clearly that working people and the oppressed will never get the justice they deserve through the capitalist courts. Last June, a magistrate in charge of issuing orders to arrest the SUTAUR officials, Abraham Polo Uscanga, refused to do so because he considered the accusations absurd. For this rare act of personal honesty, he was seized and shot to death in his own office. (The government tried to pass it off as a suicide, even though he was killed with two bullets to the head.) Since then, the judicial machinery has been churning out charge after charge against the 12 jailed leaders to pressure the union into accepting a miserable settlement which would leave them with two to four routes of the former Ruta 100.

Meanwhile in the southern state of Chiapas, tens of thousands of Mexican army troops are still besieging the Zapatista Indian rebels in their rain forest redoubts two years after their uprising on New Year's Day 1994. On March 21, hundreds of police attacked peasants occupying estates in Chiapas, leading to a day-long gun battle in which three peasants were killed. In the Gulf Coast state of Tabasco, the capitalist rulers are launching a drive to throw into jail for years those who have been fighting against auctioning off the state-owned petroleum company PEMEX and its genocidal contamination of the local environment. At the same time, the liberal magazine *Proceso* (12 February) recently made public a secret document describing a massive police operation to launch an even greater witchhunt against government opponents if public discontent explodes.

It's urgently necessary for the working class and the millions of oppressed to mobilize in powerful mass actions to stop this planned repression and secure the rescue of the hundreds of fighters for social justice from the dungeons of the bourgeoisie, as well as impoverished *campesinos* and indigenous peoples who oppose NAFTA's rape of their already slim existence. For more than six decades, Mexico's bourgeoisie has kept the millions-strong proletariat in thrall by smashing or buying off every attempt to break the stranglehold of "unions" directly controlled by the ruling capitalist PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party). Forging a revolutionary workers party that fights for socialist revolution is the urgent task, and the vehicle the powerful Mexican proletariat needs to free itself from the chains of the PRI-government and its corporatist labor bureaucracy.

* * *

We encourage *WV* readers and trade-union locals to send donations for the defense of the embattled SUTAUR workers and their leaders. Send the urgently needed donations by international wire transfer to:

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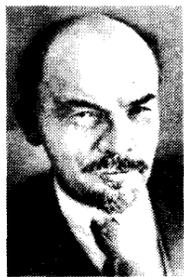
On Revolutionary Authority

With the dramatic collapse of Stalinism, leading to capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, anarchism has regained a certain currency among radicalized youth. Stalin and his heirs perverted the Marxist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat (a workers state) to justify the rule of a parasitic bureaucracy on the basis of a collectivized economy. In his classic anti-anarchist polemic, "On Authority," written in the

aftermath of the 1871 Paris Commune and its bloody suppression by the French bourgeoisie, Friedrich Engels explained why the political rule of the proletariat is a necessary transition to a classless and stateless society.

All socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the authoritarian political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority. Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon—authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough?

—Friedrich Engels, "On Authority" (March 1873)



LENIN

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Oakland Teachers Strike Sold Out

OAKLAND, March 25—After more than a month on the picket lines, Oakland teachers reluctantly voted on March 19 to go back to work under a new four-year contract that caved in on the two key issues of the strike: classroom size and wages. Although the strike faced mounting hostility from the ruling class, with both the mayor and state school officials threatening strikebreaking injunctions, and despite attempts by the school board to play off the black ghetto against the integrated teachers union, the strikers won widespread support from poor, minority and working-class parents. But the leadership of the Oakland Education Association (OEA) never sought to mobilize the power of labor for an all-out fight, and the rest of the Bay Area labor chiefs shamefully stabbed the strikers in the back.

When they walked out on February 15, the 3,500 members of the OEA had been working without a contract for almost two years and without a pay raise for five years! What gave the strike broad popular support was the union's demand for smaller class sizes in this heavily minority district where brutal cutbacks in public education have hit hard, cramming more primarily poor, black, Latino and Asian students into decrepit classrooms with inadequate supplies. On this vital question the strike settlement produced a deep sense of betrayal on the part of teachers and parents alike.

The last few years have seen teachers strikes throughout the state, in response to mounting attacks by the racist ruling class on public education. California, which once touted itself as "the education state," is now 48th out of 50 in spending per pupil; heavily minority districts in the miserably poor inner cities, stripped of assets, can scarcely educate anybody. California is leading the charge against affirmative action, while the "war on drugs" launches brutal cop terror against black and Latino youths. And in the Clinton-Gingrich-Buchanan immigrant-bashing frenzy, Congress is passing laws to kick immigrant children out of the schools altogether.

This strike could have and should have sparked a mobilization of integrated union power on the picket lines and in the streets in defense of the embattled black, Latino and Asian population and

for the right to a free quality integrated education for all. To do so requires breaking out of the constraints imposed by the capitalist rulers and raises the need to sweep away their entire rotten system. Instead, the bureaucratic misleaders of the Oakland labor movement accepted from the start the framework of a supposed "budget crisis," which is in fact a cutback offensive aimed at all working people, particularly minorities. In this one-sided class war, the rulers

ple, instructing adult education teachers to cross the lines).

Adding insult to injury, at the contract vote meeting, the president of the AFT local showed up with an anti-strike leaflet brazenly announcing that if only the OEA merged with them, teachers could "take full advantage" of their CLC affiliation. This has all the subtlety of a mafia protection racket!

For their part, the OEA tops never made any serious appeal to other unions



Teachers rally in downtown Oakland, February 20. Strike won popular support, despite vicious race-baiting campaign against the union, but local labor bureaucracy stabbed strikers in the back.

always have money for building prisons, but never a dime for teachers and schools.

At the OEA's contract vote meeting on March 19, many teachers told *Workers Vanguard* that they hated this contract, but saw little hope for victory given the way the strike was being run. The OEA leaders kept the picket lines feeble throughout, with no attempt to mobilize mass pickets to stop the scabs. While the OEA considers itself a "professional association" and is not affiliated to the AFL-CIO, about 300 teachers also belong to the Oakland branch of the AFL-CIO's American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Most non-teacher employees belong to AFL-CIO unions. Yet scandalously, the Alameda County Central Labor Council (CLC) refused to sanction the teachers' picket lines and its affiliated unions encouraged their members to cross them, and the backstabbing AFT officials likewise openly supported scabbing (for exam-

ple, to respect the picket lines, much less enforce the basic union principle that picket lines mean don't cross. At a March 13 school board meeting, CLC head Owen Marron blocked with the bosses in demagogically asserting that the teachers' demands would have to come at the expense of other workers. Earlier, OEA officials stated that "the hiring mentality" would have to go, a slur aimed at the non-teacher unionists. Thus, desperately needed united labor action was sabotaged, and the support of Oakland parents squandered, by different bureaucrats squabbling over who is going to get shafted.

Instead of mobilizing for hard class struggle, the OEA tops sought to put a "friendlier" face on the local overseers of education cutbacks by backing a slate of three Democrats and one fake-leftist in the school board elections (see "Sewer Socialists' Campaign in Oakland," *WV* No. 641, 15 March). OEA president Ben

Visnick cultivates the image of a socially conscious "progressive," and the union leadership draws around it a motley collection of aging ex-lefties and rad-lib types who eagerly jumped on the electoral bandwagon in order to play in the Democratic Party sandbox.

The sellout contract negotiated by OEA officials was pushed through with a vote of 1,043 to 330, but only after a bitter debate in which a section of the membership expressed anger at the terms. The pact includes only token class size reduction "goals"—contingent on taking funds from other programs, like desegregation—little better than those the district offered (and the union turned down) two weeks earlier. Maximum size for selected kindergarten classes is projected to go from 27 pupils per teacher to 26 next year and 24 two years later. Even smaller reductions were made for other elementary grades and none at all for middle and high schools.

Despite their rhetoric demanding the district "chop from the top"—cutting back the bloated administrative bureaucracy—in the end the union tops accepted the district's parameters of what was "available" for a wage package, essentially deciding who of their own members would get jobbed. Veteran teachers at the top of the pay scale will get about a 15 percent wage increase (\$7,091) through the end of next year, while recently hired teachers will be getting 2 percent (\$548) and preschool workers (already the lowest paid) and psychologists will receive almost nothing but cost-of-living increases. The latter, along with counselors, will have increased caseloads.

Demands for pay raises retroactive to 1994 were dumped and even the meager \$500 school supply stipend, which teachers often supplement out of their own pockets, was taken away. For many of the strikers, there will be no raise until next year. And a number of teachers at the ratification meeting complained that they would be getting less than the raises reported by the OEA. It's no wonder school superintendent Carolyn Getridge (known as "Get Rich" on the picket lines) hugged OEA president Ben Visnick at the press conference announcing the settlement, which was rushed through ratification to get the teachers

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Hands Off Bolivian Leftists and Labor Leaders!

The declaration printed below from our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México protests the arrest of left activist Juan Pablo Bacherer in La Paz, Bolivia. While Bacherer has now been freed from jail, he is still facing trial. The La Paz Center for Documentation and Information informs us that a number of other university activists have been detained, and a frame-up trial is pending against Lucio González, Secretary of International Relations for the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB—Bolivian Workers Federation).

Also jailed and facing serious charges is Dr. Manuel Morales Dávila, a journalist for *Tribuna de los Trabajadores* (Workers Tribune) who is being persecuted for denouncing the government's privatization plans as "treason." The current anti-labor crackdown recalls last year's state of siege—imposed to enforce the International Monetary Fund-dictated austerity programs of Bolivian president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada—and the vicious state persecution of Vilma Plata and

other striking teachers' leaders.

In response to protests against planned privatization of Bolivia's oil industry, as well as the "unlimited general strike" called by the COB on March 18, the army has now occupied the nation's oil fields, while police use tear gas and further arrests to break up protests in the streets of the capital.

Immediate Freedom for Juan Pablo Bacherer!

In response to the mobilizations of university students and professors against the projected "educational reforms" launched by the Bolivian government, on February 29 the police of this South American country detained Juan Pablo Bacherer, a militant of the Oposición Trotskista group and professor at the University of San Andrés in La Paz, together with another university activist and member of the same organization. After being brutally

beaten, both were let go hours later. The following day, an order was issued for the arrest of Bacherer on charges of "inciting crime" and "instigating students," and he was again arrested.

This clear example of political persecution is no isolated occurrence but part of a repressive assault by the Bolivian bourgeoisie in response to recent mobilizations by unionists, peasants and students. Thus, after declaring a state of siege throughout the country in the spring of 1995 to spike a general strike, this past January the Bolivian government declared a state of siege in the states of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, intended to contain social protests brought on by the rise in fuel prices and its effects on the prices of basic goods. Meanwhile, on March 12 the government warned it would undertake "legal action" to prevent workers' discontent from leading to a new general strike which, according to statements by the COB, is called for March 18.

Recently, attempts to impose "educational reform" have been accompa-

nied by repression from Mexico and Venezuela to Bolivia and Argentina, where last month police savagely attacked students in the city of La Plata. To defeat these attacks by the bourgeois governments, which are acting under orders from the International Monetary Fund, what is required is an internationalist struggle centered on the working class of the entire continent. As we said in our Spartacist statement "For International Working-Class Action Against Bolivian State of Siege" (25 April 1995): "We call on working-class organizations and defenders of democratic liberties around the world to join in protesting the Bolivian government's dictatorial measures and assault on the workers movement." *Immediate freedom for Juan Pablo Bacherer! Drop all charges against him! Stop the rightist repression against left-wing militants, unionists, peasants and university students and teachers in Bolivia!*

Grupo Espartaquista de México
Juventud Espartaquista
15 March 1996

In the largest U.S. naval deployment in the Pacific since the Vietnam War, two aircraft carrier groups from the U.S. Seventh Fleet have been positioned in waters off Taiwan. This was Washington's response to Chinese military exercises coinciding with Taiwan's presidential election campaign leading up to the March 23 vote. It is classic gunboat diplomacy intended to show China—as well as America's imperialist rivals—that the U.S. is the cop of the world.

The American action was a deadly provocation against China and the peoples of the entire region. Headed by the carriers USS *Independence* and *Nimitz*, the imperialist flotilla numbered 16 warships carrying 200 cruise missiles and 200 warplanes between them. Clinton's war secretary William Perry threatened, "Beijing should know, and this will remind them, that while they are a great military power, the premier—the strongest—military power in the Western Pacific is the United States" (*New York Times*, 20 March).

Both Taiwan's ruling Guomintang (Kuomintang, or KMT) Party, which has lorded it over the island for nearly 50 years, and advocates of Taiwan independence held mass election rallies denouncing China's defense exercises. But the U.S. military brinkmanship can't help but remind Chinese of earlier eras of imperialist gunboat diplomacy: the 1841 Opium War, when China lost Hong Kong to the British; and the 1920s and '30s, when the U.S. and several European states stole whole sections of the country in alliance with warlord rulers, while Japan occupied Manchuria and later much of central and coastal China in a genocidal war of conquest.

Even under Taiwan's iron-fisted regime, a protest (blacked out by the U.S. press) of several hundred demonstrators called for the U.S. to get out of the Taiwan Strait, burning American flags. Protesters outside the American consulate in Hong Kong also condemned U.S. actions.

As Marxists, we stand for the unconditional defense of the Chinese workers state, despite the political rule of a parasitic bureaucracy, against U.S. imperialism and its Taiwan client state. This includes defending China's right to stage military exercises. And unlike pacifists and "greens," we uphold China's right to test its nuclear weapons, as it did last summer, as part of maintaining a necessary deterrent against imperialist nuclear blackmail...or worse. The U.S., the only country to ever use atomic weapons against anyone, threatened to drop A-bombs on China in the Korean War.

At the same time, we categorically opposed the French nuclear tests in the South Pacific as part of our opposition to all imperialist military forces. With the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state under Yeltsin's counterrevolution, the world's capitalist powers are



U.S. aircraft carrier *Nimitz* led deployment of Seventh Fleet into waters around Taiwan in provocation against China. UPI

scrambling to capture spheres for exploitation, posing the threat of trade wars leading to shooting wars, including with nuclear weapons.

Taiwan: American Client Police-State

The Western capitalist press has been trumpeting Taiwan's economic power, and, now, its first-ever presidential "free elections." In fact, this fiercely repressive state, which calls itself the "Republic of China," was foisted on the Taiwanese by U.S.-backed dictator Chiang Kai-shek's KMT. Chiang's forces fled there in 1947-49 as they were routed by Mao Zedong's peasant-guerrilla army in the closing stages of the Chinese civil war. As the Chinese Communist Party consolidated its rule on the mainland, 2 million KMT "refugees" made it to Taiwan, at the time populated by 8 million indigenous Chinese and 200,000 Austronesian tribesmen. Ever since that time, the KMT has aspired to reconquer the mainland and reunify China through bloody counterrevolution.

Taiwan's economic "miracle" has been coupled with savage police-state rule, including decades of martial law, during which the left and labor movements were brutally repressed. Even before 1949, the Guomintang moved to cement its rule

on the island through sheer terror. A burning memory among Taiwanese is the "2-28" incident: a 28 February 1947 outpouring by the local population against KMT corruption and brutality, after which Chiang's forces systematically slaughtered every potential political opponent, killing several thousand. Now, some 50 years later, Taiwan president Lee Teng-hui has "won" in a preordained election over two KMT rivals and a pro-independence candidate.

Under the Guomintang dictatorship, advocates of independence for Taiwan were subjected to harsh repression. In fact, Lee's current pro-independence rival was jailed in 1964 and then forced into exile until 1992. With the growth of Taiwan's economy, sentiment for independence has spread to wider layers of young professionals and businessmen who see this as a vehicle for their own advancement. But Taiwan is ethnically, linguistically and historically Chinese. Taiwan was a Chinese province that was occupied by Japan from 1895 until the end of World War II. Particularly today, the demand for Taiwanese independence is aimed at maintaining a capitalist state.

The Taiwan Strait has been a stage for repeated imperialist provocations against China. In the years following the 1949 Chinese Revolution, the U.S. pumped in billions of dollars of aid—and enormous military support—to maintain Taiwan as a platform for capitalist superprofits and as an anti-Communist beachhead in East Asia. With the onset of the Korean War, the American navy occupied the Taiwan Strait. In 1958, U.S. naval forces patrolled the Strait at a time when Beijing came close to war with Taipei over the latter's control of the islands of Quemoy and Matsu. In the 1960s, Taiwan served as a key staging area for U.S. imperialism's war against the Vietnamese peasants and workers.

In the early 1970s, the U.S. achieved a rapprochement with the nationalist Maoist bureaucracy in China on the basis of shared hostility to the Soviet Union. This led to U.S. recognition of the People's Republic and a seat for China in the United Nations at the expense of Taiwan. As Mao's successors opened up China to foreign capitalist investment

beginning in the late 1970s, Washington pursued a course of "engagement" with Beijing. At the same time, a 1979 U.S.-Taiwan defense pact pledges the U.S. to back Taiwan in the event of armed conflict with the mainland. And fully one-fourth of Taiwan's budget goes to its military, which includes one of the most advanced air forces in the world.

American spokesmen describe the current U.S. posture toward China as "strategic ambiguity." While China's naval and air forces possess mostly outdated weapons and vessels, the People's Liberation Army is three-million-strong, and military spending has increased in recent years. As the Chinese Stalinists have increasingly abandoned even their socialist verbiage, the bureaucracy has adopted an aggressive nationalist tone in an attempt to maintain social stability. Washington is worried that China's military buildup poses a threat to American client states and a roadblock to its imperialist interests in the region. There are 100,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan and South Korea and on ships. Adding to the strains is the conflict over the oil-rich Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, claimed by China, Vietnam and a host of U.S. allies. And there is the always-tense Korean peninsula.

Clinton seized on China's military drills to show the flag in a bid for an electoral boost as the U.S. presidential campaign unfolds. Liberal Democrats and sections of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy have long pushed for a harder line against China under the rubric of "human rights." Meanwhile, the Republican Party has been pressuring the White House to take a more belligerent stand against China. Last year, Jesse Helms and other Republican right-wingers helped stoke China's anger by ostentatiously greeting Taiwan president Lee as he entered the U.S. to visit his alma mater, Cornell University. Now pressure is building in the Gingrich-Dole Congress to take a "hard line" against Beijing as China's "most favored nation" trade status comes up for renewal in June.

In this context, Taiwan once again becomes a potential flashpoint for military confrontation. As tensions rose over China's military exercises, Washington

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China's naval forces conducting military exercises. Trotskyists defend People's Republic of China against imperialist attack. Xinhua

Demonstrators Defend Abortion Center

PARIS—Despite a police ban on all demonstrations, more than 150 people came out on March 9 to defend the André Mignot Hospital in Versailles against a threatened mobilization by fascists and other sinister anti-abortion forces. A contingent of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF) participated in the demonstration, which was largely composed of militant youth from the anarchist CNT (National Confederation of Labor). When a score of anti-abortion reactionaries showed up, the cops hustled them away in a paddy wagon. Then the cops turned and charged the leftist demonstrators, arresting two young anarchists.

The anti-abortion reactionaries called their action to coincide with the sentencing of Dr. Xavier Dor, the head of SOS-Tout Petits ("Save the Little Babies"), who was prosecuted for leading a commando raid last year against a hospital which performed abortions. This group, like the other main anti-abortion organizations in France, unites Catholic fundamentalists with fascist stormtroopers. Their raids follow the same pattern: they burst into hospitals and clinics, destroy medical records, threaten patients and staff, and disrupt operating-room procedures.

While those who carry out anti-abortion commando raids number in the dozens today, they are a battering ram for larger reactionary forces, from the hierarchy of the Catholic church, one of the pillars of reaction in this country, to the fascists of Le Pen's National Front. In their anti-abortion frenzy, the fascists combine anti-Semitism, racism against North Africans and blacks, and virulent chauvinism in the name of "defense of the national identity." A favorite target of their venom is Simone Veil, a Jewish Holocaust survivor, who authored the 1975 law legalizing abortion.

The March 9 demonstration followed a confrontation six weeks earlier at the same hospital where the CNT, along with the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR) and other leftists, blocked an anti-abortion commando action. Although the cops intervened to protect the anti-abortion reactionaries, the leftist demonstrators were able to give a number of them, including Dor himself, a well-deserved thrashing. When the reactionaries provocatively announced they would return on March 9, the local prefect predictably outlawed all demonstrations on that day, equating the fascist scum with working-class and democratic organizations. Yet the pseudo-Trotskyist LCR leaders at the head of the abortion-rights organization CADAC applauded this outlawing of their own demonstration! When the March 9 demonstration

was held despite the prefect's interdiction, a couple of LCR members showed up, but they stood midway between the demonstrators and the phalanx of cops, while the leftist youth shouted insults at them. When the cops charged, the LCR was nowhere to be seen. After the arrests, the anarchists and LTF contingent marched to the police precinct where they demonstrated until the protesters were released.



Paris, 25 November 1995: 40,000 demonstrate for women's rights, including right to abortion, as wave of strikes and protests began against government austerity plan.

Illusions in the bourgeois state as a force that can supposedly be pressured into fighting the fascists are suicidal for the workers movement. Yet the entire strategy of the LCR has been based on pressuring the government to initiate criminal proceedings against the anti-abortion reactionaries. They point with pride to a 1993 law making it a crime to prevent or disrupt the carrying out of an abortion. But the Gaullist regime of President Jacques Chirac, like its "Socialist" predecessor under François Mitterrand, has turned a blind eye to the reactionaries' attacks on hospitals and clinics. Despite over one hundred anti-abortion commando attacks in the past five years, Dor is the first of their leaders to receive a jail sentence. Yet he was barely given a slap on the wrist. For targeting an operating room where an abortion was being performed (the doctor had to interrupt the procedure to help drive out the attackers), Dor was sentenced to spending nights and weekends in jail for three months!

The right to abortion in France was won in the years following the general strike of May 1968, through the struggle of women, workers and others. Subject from the start to a myriad of restrictions,

this right is today becoming such an obstacle course that for a growing number of women it is denied in practice. Drastic budget cuts have forced many hospitals to shut down their abortion services, as in Paris and several other major cities where 40 percent of the public hospitals do not provide the procedure. The dangerous ten-week waiting period forces many to seek illegal late abortions or go abroad—some 5,000

women are obliged each year to go to the Netherlands or Great Britain to obtain abortions. Particular discrimination hits minors (parental consent required) and HIV-positive women. And in this fiercely racist country, the large number of immigrant women without proper residency cards cannot get legal abortions at all. The struggle for full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers and their families dovetails with the struggle for free abortion on demand and free quality health care for all.

Emboldened by the victory of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, bourgeois rulers worldwide have launched a reactionary offensive whose main victims are the most vulnerable sectors of society: people of North African and black African origin, youth and women. The German bourgeoisie is exerting enormous pressure on its French counterpart to gut social welfare programs and slash the budget deficit in order to create a common European currency by the end of the century. Last winter, the sweeping attacks by Chirac and his prime minister Alain Juppé on the entire health care and social service system provoked a massive strike wave

of public service workers which paralyzed the country for almost one month.

On the eve of that explosion of class struggle, a mass demonstration in Paris on November 25 protesting the bourgeoisie's escalating war on abortion rights became a rallying point for all the oppressed. Contingents from every major union federation were joined by women's groups, homosexuals and large numbers of North African men and women

and their children. As the LTF wrote in a leaflet distributed at the March 9 demonstration:

"The few dozen fascists who came to engage in provocations on November 25 at the Bastille could easily have been swept away by that demonstration of 40,000 people, which included many trade-union contingents. But the reformist leaders of the working class—defenders of the bourgeois order and of the family, which is one of its pillars—prefer to appeal to bourgeois 'justice' to defend women's rights and fight the fascists. This creates the worst illusions in the bourgeois state and demobilizes the masses from the necessary actions to stop the fascists. Nor will small actions, however militant, be sufficient to drive the fascist vermin back into their holes and stop the racist, anti-woman and anti-working-class attacks of the bourgeoisie and its government. What is necessary is the widest possible mobilization of all the oppressed behind the social power of the working class. This requires a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party armed with a revolutionary and internationalist program of expropriation of the bourgeoisie....

"For mass mobilizations to defend the abortion centers! Free abortion on demand for all, including for minors and immigrants! Women's liberation through socialist revolution!" ■

Protest Paris Cops' Deportation Raids!

Three weeks before the French parliament is due to vote on the racist Toubon Law—a measure against immigrants and "those who aid illegals"—last week the government deployed an army of some 1,000 police and gendarmes to remove 300 undocumented Africans from a church in Paris. Sixty-two now face deportation. There have been repeated demonstrations in solidarity with the immigrants and in defiance of the massive cop mobilization. Our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France and the Comité de Défense Sociale, which is fraternally

linked to the Partisan Defense Committee, turned out to defend the immigrants and issued the protest statement translated below:

26 March 1996

Ministry of the Interior
Ministry of Justice

The Comité de Défense Sociale (CDDS) demands that deportations of the Africans arrested during the week of March 19 be immediately stopped.

On March 22 and 24, a thousand police and gendarmes staged dawn raids, first on the Saint-Ambroise

church (with the blessing of the Catholic hierarchy, who called on the police to intervene) against African families defending their right to have a decent life in this country. This recalls the dragnets of the pro-Nazi Vichy government of Marshal Pétain. Following the racist operation of March 23 [when the immigrants were locked up in a gymnasium], 300 Africans, men, women and children, were taken to the detention/concentration camp in Vincennes, while demonstrators protesting their deportation were themselves arrested.

The CDDS denounces this racist war

operation which follows the imposition of the Vigipirate "security" plan, the biggest deployment of military force on French territory against the immigrant population since the Algerian War. After last December's powerful strike wave, the Chirac-Juppé government is seeking with this racist offensive to divide the multiethnic working class in order to impose its program of social regression on all working people.

Down with the racist Mitterrand-Pasqua laws and the whole legal arsenal of anti-immigrant terror! No to the Toubon Law, which reinforces repression against immigrants and those who aid them! Stop the deportations and the hunt for "illegal" immigrants! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants and their families!

ISO Hails "Strikes" by Prison Guards, Security Guards

Cops Out of the Unions!

A couple of weeks after the leadership of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 32B-32J called off a bitter month-long strike by New York City commercial building workers in early February, 32B-32J pickets reappeared outside Manhattan's World Trade Center. But these were not striking workers. Rather, they were security guards who only a month earlier had acted as strikebreakers for the real estate bosses against the building workers. Having done their dirty work, some of these guards were then laid off by management. The security guards' "picket" is not an action class-conscious workers should support in any way. The Local 32B-32J tops have enrolled nearly 3,000 security guards in order to fatten their dues coffers. But these rent-a-cop auxiliaries to the racist thugs in blue have no place in the union movement.

It's hardly surprising that a right-wing "business union" type like SEIU local president Gus Bevena would embrace security guards. But tailing right behind Bevena is the so-called International Socialist Organization (ISO). During the building workers' strike, the ISO was one of several pseudo-socialist outfits that blithely waltzed across the picket



Bregg/Maclean's

Canadian Socialist Worker (March 6) brags that they "have gotten a hearing" from prison guard "unionists" at Toronto's Don Jail (left). Guards' "job action" included subjecting inmates to lockdown and rushing from picket lines to put down prisoners' protest.

guards and cops have the same function: to act as the armed fist of repression against the working class.

The ISO's support to the World Trade Center security guards is no aberration. Its Canadian sister group, International Socialists (I.S.), is currently enthusing over a "strike" by prison guards! The "screws" are members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), which has been waging a strike of government workers against the austerity onslaught of the rabidly anti-labor Conservative provincial government. In an article headlined "Crisis in Ontario Jails," written by Phyllis Waugh, a prominent I.S. supporter in OPSEU, the Canadian *Socialist Worker* (6 March) hails the "militant reputation" of "correctional workers." In fact, they portray these professional torturers and killers as the vanguard of the class struggle! The picket signs carried by these "militant workers" include direct appeals to their racist masters' "law and order" crusade, warning against "Young Offenders on the Loose" and proclaiming, "OPSEU Corrections Officers: Protecting Ontarians Against Rapists, Murderers."

The Canadian I.S. crows that it has "gotten a hearing" for its ideas among the prison guards "on picket lines recently, at the Don Jail and elsewhere"—no wonder, as the I.S. denounces "government cutbacks" in prison funding! As part of their "work action," guards at Toronto's Don Jail subjected inmates to a lockdown, denying them the right to watch television or use the showers and phones. When prisoners staged a protest against the lockdown, the guards rushed into the jail from their picket lines to suppress it (*Toronto Star*, 8 March). Likewise in Barrie on February 28, "striking" guards dropped their picket signs to put down a protest by inmates who had been locked down.

On March 18, a riot squad from the prison guards' colleagues in the Provincial Police viciously attacked a rally of 5,000 unionists outside the legislature building in downtown Toronto. A picture in a local paper the next day shows I.S. supporter Waugh in the row of OPSEU marshals holding back workers from the cops who had just busted some heads. As always, the I.S. reformists take their cue directly from the pro-capitalist union tops, in this case OPSEU president Leah Casselman, who is a former detention center guard herself.

The I.S./ISO's support to cops is a long-standing position. A few years back, their parent organization in Britain, Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party,

Socialist Worker
Paper of the International Socialists 50¢

Crisis in Ontario Jails

BY PHYLLIS WAUGH, OPSEU LOCAL 520

In the lead-up to the OPSEU strike, of capitalists — like the deaths at the the union spent 18 months negotiating. Westray mine — go unpunished, while agreements to maintain essential poor teenagers are turned into lifelong services during a strike. OPSEU... because of one break-and-promised that... the colour of their... are in the best interest... the corrections workers.

Socialists have gotten a hearing for these ideas on picket lines recently, at the Don Jail and elsewhere.

We live in a society where the crime...

also boasted that it "had a number of prison officers who were in sympathy with our objectives" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 26 June 1993).

After years of boycotting the fight to free black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, the ISO has now launched a "campaign to end the death penalty" based on liberal appeals to capitalist politicians. When the Spartacist League distributed a leaflet at an ISO event in Chicago last June, pointing to the glaring contradiction between their newly professed support to Mumia and their embrace of the cops, they responded with a physical attack. The previous fall in Boston, the ISO launched a vicious assault against Spartacus Youth Club comrades who were distributing petitions for Jamal (see *WV* No. 625, 30 June 1995).

At bottom, the Cliffites are social democrats who share the political outlook of their big brothers in the British Labour Party and Canada's New Democratic Party. These agents of capitalist class rule and their "left" tails foster illusions that the capitalist state can be "reformed" to serve the interests of

workers and the oppressed. In the early 1930s, the German Social Democrats disarmed the proletariat by preaching reliance on the Prussian police, who had largely been recruited from among socialist workers, to stop Hitler's Nazis. But as revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky warned, "The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state, is a bourgeois cop, not a worker" (*What Next?*, January 1932).

Today, with government funding for cops and prison construction burgeoning, unions from AFSCME to the Teamsters are feverishly competing to recruit cops, prison guards and security guards. They are looking to fatten their dues base, and to gain some political "clout" with the capitalist rulers. To what purpose? In California, the prison guards "union" is "using its muscle and generous campaign contributions to push...for ever more prisons and tougher sentencing laws" (*New York Times*, 7 November 1995). Over the last five years, California prison guards have killed three times as many inmates as were killed in all other state and federal prisons combined!

Police "militancy" and cop strikes over pay and 'conditions' inevitably have a bonapartist thrust, reinforcing the cops' view that they are a "law unto themselves." In an earlier polemic against the Cliffites and the British reformists of Militant Labour, who also argue that the cops are "workers in uniform," we wrote: "Better 'working conditions' for cops means fewer restrictions on their ability to brutalise minorities, attack picket lines and carry out provocations against leftists" (*Spartacist Pamphlet, Militant Labour's Touching Faith in the Capitalist State* [1994]).

The interests of the working class cannot be defended by those who invite its enemies to infiltrate labor's ranks. We fight to build a revolutionary vanguard party which, like the Bolsheviks of Lenin and Trotsky, understands that the capitalist apparatus of repression and terror cannot be reformed but must be swept away through workers revolution. ■

New York City security guards

by DAVID ELFANT The Port Authority hired a new

Socialist Worker
Paper of the International Socialist Organization 50¢

NEW YORK — Just days before the end of last month, New York's landlords are going after security guards at buildings across the city. The publicly-funded authority of New York and New Jersey, managers of the World Trade Center, is leading the charge. On February 20, security guards at the World Trade Center received letters from their landlords. The landlords want to use a little-known section of the Taft-Hartley National Labor Relations Act of 1947 to smash Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 32B-32J, which represents about 2,600 security guards in the New York City area. The law stipulates that security guards are only protected by the law if they belong to a union that exclusively represents security guards. SEIU Local 32B-32J represents other building workers as well as security guards.

American Socialist Worker (March 1) wrings hands over laid-off World Trade Center security guards. ISO laments that U.S. law distinguishes guards, police from workers. Cops are the armed fist of the bourgeoisie!

lines, even holding meetings inside struck buildings (see "Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!" *WV* No. 638, 2 February). But the ISO is ever so sympathetic to the plight of the laid-off security guards, lauding the protests of these "rank-and-file workers" and complaining that the Taft-Hartley anti-labor law "stipulates that security guards are only protected by the law if they belong to a union that exclusively represents security guards" (*Socialist Worker*, 1 March). Where the bourgeoisie, through its laws, implicitly recognizes that the rent-a-cops are counterposed to workers, the ISO denies this basic truth.

The job of security guards is to work in tandem with the official police to protect capitalist private property, including in particular against striking workers. One of the fastest growing industries in the U.S. today is private goon squads, like the notorious Vance Security ninjas, who serve almost exclusively as professional armed strikebreakers. In many cases, security guards are themselves "moonlighting" or retired cops who are simply wearing a different uniform. Whether paid directly by the bosses or by the bosses' state, at bottom security

Prison Guards: The View from Inside



MEMO: ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR WILL NOT BE TOLERATED -- Pa. Dept. of CORRECTIONS COMMISSIONER, DAVID S. OWENS, JR. (8/10/89)

FACT: ON EVENING OF OCT. 23, 1989, STAFF AT SCI-HUNTINGDON, PA., CONDUCTED NIGHT RAIDS ON BLACK PRISONERS, ASSAULTING, STRIPPING, AND BRUTALIZING NAKED, HANDCUFFED MEN. MANY WERE LAUNCHED IN OUTSIDE DOG PENS DURING THE NIGHT, NAKED AND IN PAIN. REPORTEDLY, 19 COPS AND 27 WERE INJURED.

ART BY MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

In 1989, Mumia Abu-Jamal wrote a column, "Nightriders Meet Rage," exposing an October 1989 prison guard riot against inmates at Huntingdon Prison, Pennsylvania, illustrating it with this drawing. He reported, "Armed, armored squads went from cell to cell, pulling, cuffing, punching, bludgeoning, kicking, brutalizing

naked prisoners. Men were handcuffed, seized, dragged outside, and thrown into cages, naked, beaten, and bloodied." Twenty-seven staff and 19 inmates were injured, as unarmed prisoners fought back against the racist guard assault. The column was reprinted in his book, *Live from Death Row* (Addison-Wesley, 1995).

Death Penalty...

(continued from page 1)

the occasion for a racist pro-death mobilization, as over 10,000 cops massed on the scene and police choppers roared overhead in formation. Under the fusillade of demands, Johnson indicated he had "never said he would never" seek the death penalty. But Pataki peremptorily ordered State Attorney Dennis Vacco, a rabid death penalty proponent, to personally take over the case. Meanwhile, Clinton's Justice Department offered to make it a federal case under a 1992 law mandating the death penalty for "carjacking" and "racketeering."

At the same time, Clinton joined the posse attacking liberal judge Harold Baer Jr., whom he appointed two years ago to the federal bench. As a former member of the Mollen Commission investigation into NYPD corruption and the first head of the city's Civilian Complaint Review Board, Baer was already hated by the police. But the entire bourgeois establishment went ballistic when he threw out evidence illegally seized from a parked car in a Washington Heights drug case in January. The cops claimed they were justified in searching the car without a warrant after they saw four black men "suspiciously" running away. The judge responded that it was "reasonable behavior" for minorities in Washington Heights—particularly given the reputation of the 34th Precinct cops—to flee "when the cops began to stare at them." This simple statement of fact provoked a crescendo of demands for Baer's resignation or impeachment.

This is the bloody backdrop to the 1996 elections. The mean streets of Giuliani's New York are being used by America's millionaire politicians as the stage for a campaign of racist fear and loathing aimed at all workers and minorities. As we have stressed for years, the "war on drugs and crime" is in fact a war against the ghettos and barrios, leading to the wholesale imprisonment of hundreds of thousands of minority youth, whom the rulers now consider a "surplus population." The fragile lifelines which once allowed a few to escape the ghetto and barrio through education or decent-paying jobs have been stripped away through factory closings, tuition hikes and welfare "reforms."

And the racist rulers use the death penalty as the ultimate sanction for control and intimidation. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the outspoken journalist, former Black Panther and MOVE supporter framed up and sentenced to death for his defiant exposures of this system of racist terror and oppression.

Behind the intensified push for police-state repression is the plummeting decline in living standards for all working people, white as well as black, while the profit-gouging corporations rake it in. Meanwhile, the capitalist rulers, aided by black demagogues like Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, push "divide and rule" to keep down those they exploit and oppress. The union misleaders have a heavy responsibility for this abysmal state of affairs, mobilizing the vote for Clinton while *demobilizing* and preventing the class struggle needed to reverse the onslaught against labor and minorities. Against the perennial appeals to support the Democrats as a "lesser evil," we Trotskyists fight for a revolutionary workers party, forged in political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor tops, to sweep away this whole rotten system of poverty and repression.

The Bronx: An Occupied Territory

The Fordham section of the Bronx was put under a virtual state of siege following Gillespie's shooting. Hundreds of police in riot gear descended on the neighborhood, going through buildings

floor by floor over a six-block area while cops stationed on rooftops trained their guns on the streets and helicopters hovered overhead. Such military-style police invasions, and the cops' regular practice of patrolling the streets with "task force" convoys, are standard operating procedure in NYC's ghettos and barrios. The Bronx and the heavily Dominican Washington Heights area of northern Manhattan have long been a particular target for Giuliani's cops.

New York's kill-crazy cops played a big role in putting Giuliani in City Hall,



Sawchuk/Newsday



Sheehan/Newsday

Bronx D.A. Robert Johnson, the only black district attorney in New York State, was removed from murder case for his reluctance to use death penalty. Governor Pataki (center) and Mayor Giuliani beat the drums for death.

and have taken his election as a license to murder in the black and Hispanic communities. In a rare instance when some action was taken after an uproar of protest, the 46th Pct. cop who killed Bronx youth Anthony Baez in December 1994 was finally charged with "criminally negligent homicide" a full year later. More typical is the case of Anthony Rosario and his cousin Hilton Vega, who were shot to death by 46th Pct. cops as they lay on the floor. One of the killers, a volunteer bodyguard for Giuliani during his election campaign, got a congratulatory call from the mayor after the shooting!

Although black and Hispanic youth have overwhelmingly been the NYPD's targets, New York's sizable Asian population has also suffered at the hands of Giuliani's uniformed thugs. Significantly, a joint sit-in protest was held March 13 at the Brooklyn D.A.'s office by relatives of Yong Xin Huang, the 16-year-old honor student executed by a cop in Brooklyn a year ago, and the family of Anibal Carrasquillo Jr., a 21-year-old Hispanic youth shot in the back by a cop in January 1995.

In witchhunting D.A. Johnson, Pataki insisted that the Bronx could not be an exception to the state's death penalty law. In fact, the law was *intended* for the population of the Bronx and other heavily minority areas of New York City. Well aware that inner-city minorities are far less enthusiastic about the death penalty than white suburbanites, the bourgeois rulers are prepared to do an end run around local officials and purge liberal judges. And with juries increasingly refusing to buy police "testilying," there has been a wave of proposals to gut the right to a trial by a jury of one's peers. Amid much consternation about the 40 percent acquittal rate by Bronx juries, there has been talk of moving New York's first death penalty trial out of the city.

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

The pace of executions has been skyrocketing in recent years. Last year it was 56, more than one a week and nearly 20 percent of the total number executed since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976. But even the massive speedup on death row has not slaked the bloodlust of the capitalist rulers. There is today a firm bipartisan consensus for eliminat-

ing any legal and constitutional obstacles that stand in the way of committing ever more people to lethal injection, electrocution, hanging or (in Utah) death by firing squad.

Clinton's "New Democrats" are trying to outdo the Republicans as the party of racist "law and order"—with some success. An article in the *Wall Street Journal* (8 February) observed: "The advantage that the GOP held for decades as the anticrime party has vanished." The article reports both major police organizations are planning to support Clinton this

civil liberties, as reflected in the near-absence of significant protest on the streets when the New York State legislature approved Pataki's death penalty law last year. Typically, groups like "New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty" are reduced to arguments about the cost or "effectiveness" of legal lynching in "fighting crime" (the same arguments raised by Bronx D.A. Johnson).

The liberals accept the framework of racist "law and order" enforced by the capitalist state, and can do no more than quibble over the terms and extent of repression and terror it metes out to working people and the oppressed. The reformist left takes the same tack. Thus an article in the International Socialist Organization's *Socialist Worker* (12 May 1995) declared, "Death Penalty Not a Deterrent to Murder." But the death penalty *is* murder, executed by the racist capitalist state.

Unlike the liberals and reformists, we do not advise the capitalist state on more "humane" ways to pursue its repression, like entombing its victims in a prison hell for life. We Marxists are opposed to the death penalty. We do not accord the government the right to decide who should live and who should die. The death penalty is a particularly barbaric component of the bourgeoisie's arsenal of repression. In the United States, it has historically served as a key prop in maintaining and reinforcing black oppression, from the Slave Codes of the pre-Civil War South to the present situation in which blacks occupy an overwhelmingly disproportionate number of places on death row. We fight against the racist death penalty as part of the struggle to finish the Civil War through a third, socialist American revolution.

It is this understanding which guides the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee in fighting for labor-centered action—like the labor/black rallies in New York and the Bay Area last August—to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty. Mobilizing the power of the multiracial working class is a key lever in the fight to free Mumia from the clutches of his would-be executioners. It is also part of our task as a revolutionary vanguard seeking to inculcate the proletariat with the consciousness of a class acting in its own interests and those of all the oppressed. As we wrote in "The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal" (Partisan Defense Committee Pamphlet, July 1995):

"This sinister web of spying, intimidation and frame-up is not an aberration which can be cleansed from the system, as liberals would have it. Rather it goes to the very core of the capitalist state which, with its cops and courts, its prosecutors and executioners, is an instrument for the repression of the working class and the oppressed.... As part of a multiracial workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed, black workers will play a key role in sweeping away this system of exploitation, war and racism." ■

Spartacist Events

BOSTON

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Tuesdays, 7 p.m. Next classes, April 2: *Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!*; April 9: *The Lessons of the Russian Revolution of 1917*; Boston College, Devlin Hall, Room 221
For more information: (617) 666-9453

CHICAGO

Spartacist League Forum

Saturday, April 27, 7 p.m.: *Black Separatism and "Black Capitalism" Are a Dead End—Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution! Fight for Revolutionary Integrationism!* University of Chicago, Ida Noyes West Lounge, 2nd Floor, 1212 E. 59th Street (at Woodlawn Avenue)
For more information: (312) 454-4930

NEW YORK CITY

Spartacist League Forum

Friday, March 29, 7 p.m.: *Stalinist Bureaucracy Opens Door to Capitalist Restoration—China: "Free Market" Misery Targets Women; For Proletarian Political Revolution!* Hunter College, Room 511, Hunter West, 695 Park Avenue (at 68th Street)
For more information: (212) 267-1025

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m. Next classes, March 30: *Imperialism*; April 13: *The Permanent Revolution*; Spartacist Public Office, 41 Warren Street (one block below Chambers Street, near Church Street)
For more information: (212) 267-1025

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Next classes, April 1: *The Russian Revolution*; April 8: *The Revolution Betrayed*; University of Maryland, College Park, Hornbake Library, Non-Print Media Section, Room P
For more information: (202) 872-8240

Young Spartacus

Mikhail Bakunin's precursor Proudhon and his successor Kropotkin were primarily theorists who sought to further the goals of anarchism through enlightening literature. Bakunin, however, was by temperament a political adventurer, whose activities therefore were often at variance with and sometimes in outright opposition to his avowed "anti-authoritarian" principles.

This is obviously so in the case of his secret societies. Here it should be emphasized that these "organizations" were to a large extent literally fantastic. Most of the legions of agents Bakunin claimed for the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy, the secret network he set up in the mid-1860s, existed only in his mind. But whether imaginary or semi-real, the declared purpose of these organizations was the *conspiratorial manipulation of the mass movement*. This is stated quite clearly in Bakunin's letter (July 1870) to his French follower Albert Richard:

"We must bring forth anarchy, and in the midst of the popular tempest, we must be the invisible pilots guiding the Revolution, not by any kind of overt power but the collective dictatorship of all our allies [members of the International

by Joseph Seymour

Alliance], a dictatorship without tricks, without official titles, without official rights, and therefore all the more powerful, as it does not carry the trappings of power. This is the only dictatorship I will accept, but in order to act, it must first be created, it must be prepared and organized in advance, for it will not come into being by itself, neither by discussions, nor by theoretical disputations, nor by mass propaganda meetings....

"If you will build this collective and invisible power you will triumph; the well-directed revolution will succeed. Otherwise, it will not!"

—reproduced in Sam Dolgoff, ed., *Bakunin on Anarchy* (1971)

It takes real *chutzpah* for present-day anarchists, who claim Bakunin as their forebear, to condemn the Leninist conception of a revolutionary vanguard party as elitist and anti-democratic. Unlike Bakunin's shadowy Alliance, the Bolshevik Party's program and aims were well-publicized and known to working people throughout the Russian empire. In addition to producing newspapers, journals and factory leaflets, and organizing study circles and workers' discussion clubs, the Bolsheviks used the electoral arena to propagandize for their revolutionary politics, running candidates for the tsarist Duma (parliament). The party was in form and practice internally democratic. On occasion, Lenin found himself in a minority on an important question in the Bolshevik Central Committee or at party congresses.

But Bakunin could never be outvoted in his various organizations since these had no rules and no policymaking bodies. Here is how the British historian E.H. Carr described the Alliance: "It had no list of members, no agreed rules or programme (since Bakunin's numerous drafts were all made on his own responsibility), no officers, no subscriptions, and no regular meetings" (*Michael Bakunin* [1937]). The contemporary American anarchist Sam Dolgoff concurs: "Bakunin's secret organizations were actually quite informal fraternities of loosely organized individuals and groups connected by personal contact and correspondence." This is a description of an organization run by a clique in

MARXISM vs. ANARCHISM

From 1848 to the Bolshevik Revolution

which rank-and-file members have no means to determine its leadership and policies.

Bakunin Joins the First International

The current image of Bakunin is that of the wild radical of the European left of his day, who defied the bourgeois order and bourgeois respectability. The reality was very different. Bakunin's conversion from pan-Slav nationalism to anarchism in the mid-1860s did not immediately

cern for its struggle against capitalist exploitation.

From the outset Bakunin aimed to displace Marx as the leading figure in the International, but he proceeded with tactical caution. Writing to Alexander Herzen in 1869, he explained: "If I started an open war against Marx now, three quarters of the International would turn against me, and I should find myself slipping down an inclined plane" (quoted in Boris Nicolaievsky and Otto Mäntchen-Helfen, *Karl Marx: Man and Fighter*

Part 3

The Fight in the First International

lessen his penchant for *class collaboration*. When the International Workingmen's Association (the First International) was formed in 1864, Marx personally invited Bakunin to participate. But the soon-to-be anarchist leader disdained to do so and instead involved himself in Italian petty-bourgeois nationalist circles.

When Bakunin, now an anarchist, returned to the Europe-wide political stage, he did so not in the workers movement but in the bourgeois liberal milieu. In 1867, he joined the Geneva-based League of Peace and Freedom. As the name connotes, this was a liberal pacifist organization launched by progressive bourgeois notables such as John Stuart Mill and John Bright in England, Victor Hugo in France and Giuseppe Garibaldi in Italy. Its immediate purpose was to head off the movement toward war between Louis Napoleon's France and Bismarck's Prussia. More generally, the League—which Marx derided as "peace windbags"—was an attempt by bourgeois liberals to counter the growing influence of the workers' International in the European left.

It is typical of Bakunin that having proclaimed as a paramount principle the "radical dissolution" of the state, he then turned around and joined an organization whose main programmatic demand was for a (bourgeois) United States of Europe! It was only when the liberal notables and literati of the League predictably rejected Bakunin's program of anarchist federalism that in 1868 he finally joined the International Workingmen's Association. Here it's worth pointing out that in his previous 25 years as a self-professed revolutionary, Bakunin had never been involved with the working class or expressed any particular con-

[1936]). Yet just a few years later Bakunin was able to win enough support to disrupt the International.

To explain this development it is necessary to consider the International before Bakunin joined it. The International Workingmen's Association was launched by British trade-union leaders, centrally those of the London building trades, whose primary concern was to prevent their strikes from being broken by the importation of scabs or scab products from continental Europe. The British union leaders were not socialists in any sense but rather radical democrats who

supported the bourgeois Liberal Party of William Gladstone and John Bright. They were also prepared to support not only economic struggles by workers in the continental Europe of Louis Napoleon and Bismarck but struggles for democratic rights such as freedom of the press and a sovereign parliament based on universal manhood suffrage.

Marx quickly became the preeminent figure in the London-based General Council of the International because he was able to define a *consensus* between the left-liberal British trade unionists and the various continental radicals—socialists, communists, French Proudhonists. The Provisional Rules of the International, written by Marx, simply stated its aims as "the protection, advancement, and complete emancipation of the working classes." How, concretely, the complete emancipation of the working classes was to be brought about was deliberately left an open question. After the demise of the International, Engels described its original character in a letter (12 September 1874) to his German American colleague Friedrich Sorge:

"It belonged to the period of the Second Empire [of Louis Napoleon in France], when the oppression throughout Europe prescribed unity and abstention from all internal controversy for the workers' movement, then just reawakening. It was the moment when the common, cosmopolitan interests of the proletariat could come to the fore.... German communism did not yet exist as a workers' party, Proudhonism was too weak to be able to insist on its own particular fads, Bakunin's new trash did not yet exist even in his own head, and even the leaders of the English *Trade-Unions* thought they could enter the movement on the basis of the programme laid down in the Preamble of the Rules."

These heterogeneous forces could work together under Marx's skillful guidance as long as the International's main activity involved support to local economic struggles, raising money for striking workers, organizing campaigns against scabbing, etc. But when the question of proletarian revolution was posed point-blank by the 1871 Paris Commune, the International disintegrated in a witches' sabbath of factional frenzy.

The Split in the International

The defeat of France at the hands of Bismarck's Prussia in 1870 led to the fall of Louis Napoleon and shattered the French army. As the Prussian army laid siege to Paris, the French ruling class moved to rebuild an effective state



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Political adventurer Mikhail Bakunin joined the First International at its 1868 Congress in Basel, Switzerland. In his previous 25 years as a self-styled revolutionary, Bakunin had never involved himself in the struggle of labor against capital.

apparatus. Elections based on universal male suffrage resulted in a victory for the parties of the right due to their support by the peasantry, which was still under the influence of the local Catholic clergy. Paris, however, remained a stronghold of the left which was growing amid the economic dislocations and privations caused by the German siege. The principal military force in the French capital was the National Guard, largely composed of working men. Fearful of the radical Parisian masses, the new right-wing government of Adolphe Thiers established itself in the suburb of Versailles, just outside of Paris.

When Thiers ordered the National Guard to surrender its artillery to the regular army, the Guard insurrected and took over the city. Thus was born the Paris Commune of March-May 1871. Its leadership consisted of radical democrats (old-fashioned Jacobins), the followers of Auguste Blanqui (the Jacobin communist advocate of a dictatorship of a revolutionary minority drawn from plebeian elements), and the Proudhonists. These divisions within the Commune's leadership along with the overriding task of military defense prevented the Communal government from undertaking the socialization of the city's economy. Nonetheless, Marx saw that the Commune was the first historical experience of the *political rule of the working class*: "It was essentially a working-class government, the product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of Labour" (*The Civil War in France* [April-May 1871]).

The French army's suppression of the Commune, massacring 20,000 people, was followed by a Europe-wide red scare and anti-communist witchhunt. Marx, whose impassioned defense of the Commune, *The Civil War in France*, was an official statement of the International, became the personal focus of the anti-communist frenzy. Hitherto Marx had been a relatively little-known figure outside of left-wing circles. But now he was denounced by government ministers and the bourgeois press as the "red terrorist Doctor," who supposedly commanded legions of fanatical revolutionaries from Madrid to St. Petersburg. As Marx wrote (18 June 1871) to his friend Ludwig Kugelmann: "It [*The Civil War in France*] is making the devil of a noise and I have the honour to be at this moment the best calumniated and most menaced man of London. That really does one good after a tedious twenty years' idyll in the backwoods" (emphasis in original).

However, Marx's newfound notoriety gravely weakened his position in the International. Two prominent British trade-union leaders resigned in protest against the General Council's defense of the Commune; several others quietly drifted out of the organization. Those British unionists who remained in the International distanced themselves from Marx by forming a separate English regional council independent of the General Council. A number of leading figures in the International who did solidarize with the Paris Commune, such as the eclectic Belgian socialist César de Paepe, nonetheless resented Marx's new public image as the supreme leader of the European left. Thus, Bakunin's campaign to weaken Marx's authority in the International received support from politically diverse forces extending well beyond his own anarchist followers.

The question remains: why did the decomposition of the First International coincide with the rapid growth of the anarchist movement, a movement which had scarcely existed a few years earlier? The answer lies on two levels: the uneven effect of industrialization on the different regions of Europe and the political climate in the immediate

March 1871 uprising of the Paris National Guard, largely composed of working men, ushered in the Paris Commune. Karl Marx hailed the Commune as first "working-class government."



aftermath of the Paris Commune.

The split in the First International was marked by a clear geographical divide. Marx's main bases of support lay in the most developed capitalist countries—Britain, Germany and among German American immigrants in the United States. Bakunin's followers were concentrated in economically backward countries—Italy, Spain and the French-speaking regions of Switzerland.

Bakunin's vision of a social order based on autonomous communes had little attraction or even meaning for a London construction worker or a German immigrant working in a factory in New York City or Philadelphia. In Italy and Spain, however, the urban economy was still dominated by small-scale artisanal production, the very existence of which was threatened by the spread of industrialization. Bakunin's initial base of support in the International came from watchmakers in the Jura region of Switzerland. These skilled craftsmen, most of whom worked in their own homes, were facing an influx of cheap watches from British and American factories. For Swiss watchmakers in this period, the Bakuninist program of autonomous communes meant above all trade protectionism against industrial competition. A current student of the fight in the First International has emphasized that Bakuninism "spread, chiefly in those countries—Spain, southern Italy, parts of France and Switzerland—where large numbers of newly restive peasants, domestic workers and artisans, all of them threatened in various ways by what seemed to them to be the 'leap in the dark' of capitalism (which held out the certain prospect only of proletarianization), were gaining a new political voice"

(Paul Thomas, *Karl Marx and the Anarchists* [1980]).

In his own way, Bakunin recognized that his anarchist program had little attraction for the industrial proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries, whom he disdained as bourgeoisified. After the collapse of the International, he wrote:

"Nowhere are there more favorable conditions for Social Revolution than in Italy. There does not exist in Italy, as in most other European countries, a special category of relatively affluent workers, earning higher wages, boasting of the literary capacities, and so impregnated by a variety of bourgeois prejudices that, excepting income, they differ in no way from the bourgeoisie."

—*Statism and Anarchy* (1873)

In addition to these basic socio-economic factors, the growth of anarchism was conditioned by the political climate prevailing in the aftermath of the Paris Commune. While Marx saw in the Commune a model for future social revolutions, he was under no illusion that the final battle between labor and capital was at hand. Indeed, the fate of the Commune had been sealed by its isolation. As the affronted reactionary government prepared to strangle the insurgent Parisian proletariat, an attempt in Marseilles to establish a "red commune" was quickly and easily smashed by Thiers. And the white terror following the suppression of the Paris Commune broke the power of the left in France for a decade. Furthermore, the Europe-wide anti-communist witchhunt seriously weakened the left wing of the workers movement in Britain, then the dominant capitalist country in the world. Marx insisted that a socialist revolution anywhere in Europe would require *years of preparatory work*, building up mass trade

unions and workers parties in the course of struggles for economic gains, social reforms and democratic rights.

Bakunin, by contrast, appealed to the *impatience* of many leftist radicals. With the fall of Louis Napoleon at the hands of the Prussian army in 1870, Bakunin staged an almost comical attempt at a coup in the city of Lyon, which was put down the same day. After the defeat of the Commune, he played on the desire within the left for vengeance against the bourgeoisie which had applauded the massacre of the Communards. Anarchist militants in Barcelona and Naples wanted to emulate the Paris Commune or at least give the propertied classes a good scare. The British social-democratic historian G.D.H. Cole described the mood of Bakunin's following:

"It now became for them a matter not of a general European revolution but of seizing every opportunity that occurred anywhere for revolutionary action, almost regardless of the prospects of success—for they held to the idea that every rising was part of a process of revolutionary education of the masses and was accordingly a step toward the desired end of utterly uprooting the existing social structure."

—*Socialist Thought: Marxism and Anarchism 1850-1890* (1954)

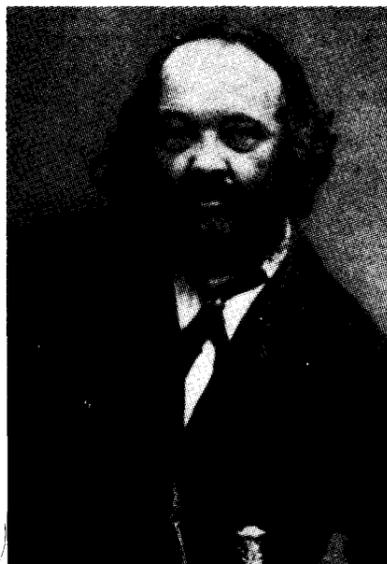
Marx's Answer to the Bakuninists

The fight between Marx and Bakunin was *not*, however, posed in terms of having the International adopt the principles and program of scientific socialism or, alternatively, of anarchism. Both protagonists maintained that the International should continue to be a broad, inclusive body open to all class-conscious workers whether English left-liberals, German communists or Italian anarchists. Hence the fight was conducted on narrow organizational grounds which only tangentially touched on the basic differences between Marxism and anarchism.

Marx held no official position in the International other than that of corresponding secretary for Germany. His authority rested on his de facto leadership of the General Council which issued the International's policy statements and programmatic documents, recognized new sections, adjudicated disputes between and sometimes within sections, etc. The Bakuninists therefore concentrated their efforts on stripping the General Council of its powers, reducing it to a "simple office for correspondence and statistics."

By way of theoretical justification, they held that the structure of the International should prefigure that of the anarchist society of the future. Just as such a society would be a free federation of autonomous communes without any central government, so the International should be a free federation of autonomous sections with no central leading

continued on page 10



Radio Times Hulton

Proclamation issued by Bakunin during an attempted coup in Lyon, France in October 1870, declaring state abolished. Rebellion was suppressed within hours.

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Fédération Révolutionnaire

DES

COMMUNES

La situation désastreuse dans laquelle se trouve le Pays; l'impuissance des pouvoirs officiels et l'indifférence des classes privilégiées ont mis la Nation française sur le bord de l'abîme.

Si le Peuple organise révolutionnairement ne se hâte d'agir, son avenir est perdu, la Révolution est perdue, tout est perdu. S'inspirant de l'immensité du danger et considérant que l'action désespérée du Peuple ne saurait être retardée d'un seul instant, les délégués des Comités fédérés du Salut de la France, réunis au Comité central, proposent d'adopter immédiatement les résolutions suivantes:

Article 1^{er}. — La machine administrative et gouvernementale de l'Etat, étant devenue impuissante, est abolie.

Le peuple de France rentre en pleine possession de lui-même.

Art. 2. — Tous les tribunaux criminels et civils sont suspendus et remplacés par la justice du peuple.

Art. 3. — Le paiement de l'impôt et des hypothèques est suspendu. L'impôt est remplacé par les contributions des communes fédérées, proportionnelles aux besoins du salut de la France.

Art. 4. — L'Etat, étant abolie, ne pourra plus intervenir dans le paiement des dettes privées.

Art. 5. — Toutes les organisations municipales existantes sont cassées et remplacées dans toutes les communes fédérées par des Comités du salut de la France, qui exerceront tous les pouvoirs sous le contrôle immédiat du Peuple.

Art. 6. — Chaque comité de chef-lieu de département enverra deux délégués pour former la Convention révolutionnaire du Salut de la France.

Art. 7. — Cette Convention se réunira immédiatement à l'Hôtel-de-Ville de Lyon, comme étant la capitale de la France et la plus sûre pour le pouvoir émergeant à la défense du Pays.

Cette Convention, appuyée par le Peuple entier, sauvera la France.

AUX ARMES !!!

E. B. SIMONS, BARRÈRE, DEUILLE, BARRON de France, François FAYRE, Louis PAIN, R. PLACE, BEAUM. G., G. DE LUYER, Albert BICHARD, J. BUCHERRE, DOBBIE, D. BOBBIOS, M. BAKHINE, PARRATON, A. GILBERT, JOURNÉ, P. de PILLEY, LATHUR, GULLO, SAVENY, J. GERMAIN, F. CHARVET, A. BASTELCA de Marseille, DUPIN de Soissons, Narros BARRET.

Anarchism...

(continued from page 9)

body. The main Bakuninist factional statement, the *Sonvillers Circular* (November 1871), argued:

"How can you expect an egalitarian and a free society to emerge from an authoritarian organization? It is impossible. The International, embryo of future human society, must be from this moment the faithful image of our principles of liberty and federation, and reject from its midst any principle leading to authority and dictatorship."

—quoted in James Joll,
The Anarchists (1964)

This is a concept of social organization corresponding to a petty bourgeoisie of property owners and would-be property owners, even where disguised under the watchwords of cooperativism and collectivism.

Marx and Engels responded that the purpose of the International was to bring about the overthrow of the existing bourgeois order. Such a *combat organization of the working class* must necessarily have a different internal structure and character than a future classless and stateless society in which social relations are harmonious. They pointed out that the Paris Commune, which the anarchists, too, held up as a model for social revolution, was *highly militarized* in order to defend itself against the hostile bourgeois government in Versailles. But in the future society envisioned by both communists and anarchists, there would be no armed forces, no police, no bodies of organized violence of any kind. Marx and Engels regarded anarchy, i.e., the disappearance of the state, as an end goal of the communist movement but certainly not a means of getting there:

"All socialists see anarchy as the following programme: once the aim of the proletarian movement, i.e., abolition of classes, is attained, the power of the State, which serves to keep the great majority of producers in bondage to a very small exploiter minority, disappears, and the functions of government become simple administrative functions. The [Bakuninist] Alliance reverses the whole process. It proclaims anarchy in the proletarian ranks as the most infallible means of breaking the powerful concentration of social and political forces in the hands of the exploiters. Under this pretext, it asks the International, at a time when the old world is seeking a way of crushing it, to replace its organization with anarchy."

—*Fictitious Splits in the International* (March 1872)

The showdown between Marx's supporters and the anarchists took place at the International congress held in the fall of 1872 in The Hague, capital of the Netherlands (see Hans Gerth, ed., *The First International Minutes of the Hague Congress of 1872 with Related Documents* [University of Wisconsin Press, 1958]). Of the six days allotted for this gathering, three were spent resolving disputes over the delegates' credentials. This alone indicates an organization in an advanced state of disintegration. Marx had a working majority at this congress in large part due to the support of the French Blanquists who were in exile in London. While Bakunin was expelled from the International for financial chicanery, Marx recognized that the organization was no longer viable and had, in fact, played out its historic role. In a surprise move at the end of the congress, Engels proposed that the seat of the General Council be transferred from London to New York City. With many anarchists voting in favor, the motion carried, signaling the self-dissolution of the International Workingmen's Association as an umbrella organization for working-class militants and leftist intellectuals.

Marx vs. Bakunin on Post-Revolutionary Society

It was paradoxical but understandable that the most serious polemical exchange

Women Communards defend the Paris barricades in May 1871. Bourgeois government of Adolphe Thiers massacred 20,000 Parisians in crushing the "red Commune."



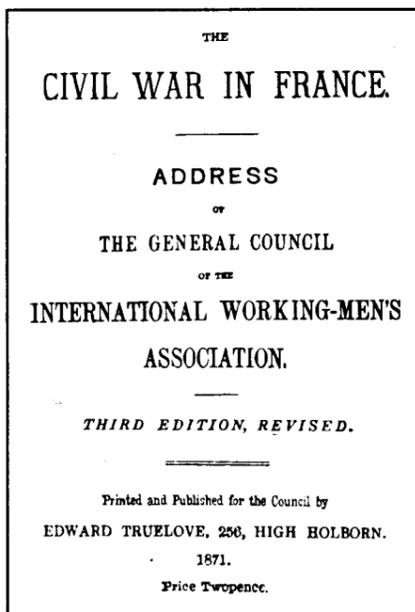
Musée Carnavalet

between Bakunin and Marx on the organization of post-revolutionary society took place after the collapse of the International rather than during their fight for its leadership. In 1873, Bakunin wrote, in Russian, a major work, *Statism and Anarchy*, which contained a section attacking Marx's concept of the proletarian dictatorship. A few years later, in the course of teaching himself Russian, Marx read this book and wrote extensive notes on it. These notes both defend his own conceptions against Bakunin's confused criticisms and indicate the basic fallacy of the anarchist worldview.

Bakunin and Marx posed the fundamental difference between them in a different way. The former concentrated his fire on the concept of a workers state or

where alongside capitalist production the industrial proletariat accounts for at least a significant portion of the mass of the people.... He [Bakunin] understands absolutely nothing of social revolution, only its political rhetoric; its economic conditions simply do not exist for him. Now since all previous economic formations, whether developed or undeveloped, have entailed the enslavement of the worker (whether as wage labourer, peasant, etc.), he imagines that *radical revolution* is equally possible in all these formations. What is more, he wants the European social revolution, whose economic basis is capitalist production, to be carried out on the level of the Russian or Slav agricultural and pastoral peoples.... *Willpower*, not economic conditions, is the basis of his social revolution." [emphasis in original]

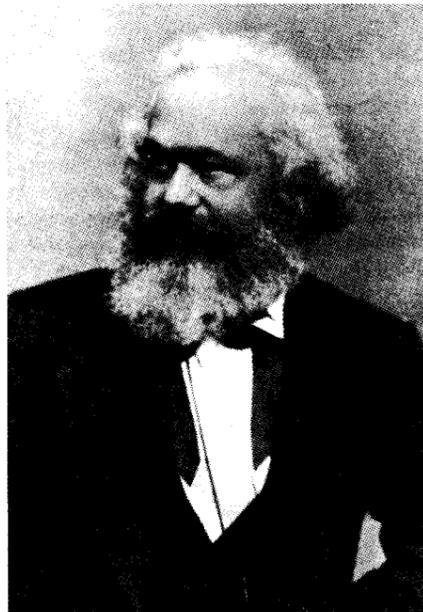
—"Notes on Bakunin's *Statism and Anarchy*" (February 1877)



Karl Marx's impassioned defense of the Commune in *The Civil War in France* made him target of Europe-wide anti-communist witchhunt. In the aftermath of the Commune, the First International disintegrated into warring factions.

revolutionary dictatorship, which he regarded as but a cover for the Marxists' lust for political power. "The leaders of the Communist party, meaning Mr. Marx and his friends," he asserted, "will concentrate all administrative power in their own strong hands." Marx pointed out that underlying the differences with the anarchists over the question of political and military power in the post-revolutionary situation was Bakunin's *idealist* conception of social change. This was expressed in Bakunin's notion that any and every exploited class could effect a socialist revolution and that a classless and stateless society could be established under any, even the most primitive, economic conditions. Marx wrote:

"A radical social revolution is bound up with definite historical conditions of economic development; these are its premisses. It is only possible, therefore,



John Mayall

Bakunin's argument against the proletarian dictatorship is basically a version of the old liberal canard that power corrupts:

"What does it mean that the proletariat will be elevated to a ruling class? Is it possible for the whole proletariat to stand at the head of the government? There are forty million Germans. Can all forty million be members of the government? In such a case, there will be no government, no state, but, if there is to be a state there will be those who are ruled and those who are slaves....

"Ultimately, from whatever point of view we look at this question, we come always to the same sad conclusion, the rule of the great masses of the people by a privileged minority. The Marxists say that this minority will consist of workers. Yes, possibly of former workers, who, as soon as they become the rulers or the representatives of the people, will cease to be workers and will look down on the plain working masses from the govern-

ing heights of the State; they will no longer represent the people, but only themselves and their claims to rulership over the people. Those who doubt this know very little about human nature.

"These elected representatives, say the Marxists, will be dedicated and learned socialists. The expressions 'learned socialist,' 'scientific socialism,' etc., which continuously appear in the speeches of the followers of Lassalle and Marx, prove that the pseudo-People's State will be nothing but a despotic control of the populace by a new and not at all numerous aristocracy of real and pseudoscientists."

—*Statism and Anarchy*

Engels, writing to the German workers leader August Bebel in March 1875, repudiated any notion that he and Marx stood for a "people's state." In this letter, which preceded Marx's famous "Critique of the Gotha Program," Engels wrote:

"The 'people's state' has been flung in our teeth *ad nauseam* by the anarchists, although Marx's anti-Proudhon piece and after it the *Communist Manifesto* declare outright that, with the introduction of the socialist order of society, the state will dissolve of itself and disappear. Now, since the state is merely a transitional institution of which use is made in the struggle, in the revolution, to keep down one's enemies by force, it is utter nonsense to speak of a free people's state; so long as the proletariat still *makes use* of the state, it makes use of it, not for the purpose of freedom, but of keeping down its enemies and, as soon as there can be any question of freedom, the state as such ceases to exist."

Engels further maintained that "the Commune...had ceased to be a state in the true sense of the term." As Lenin later elaborated in his fundamental work, *The State and Revolution* (1917): "The Commune was *ceasing* to be a state since it had to suppress, not the majority of the population, but a minority (the exploiters). It had smashed the bourgeois state machine. In place of a *special* coercive force the population itself came on the scene."

To Bakunin's rhetorical question about the entire proletariat standing at the head of the government, Marx responded: "In a Trades Union, for example, does the entire union form its executive committee?" Marx saw the trade-union movement within capitalist society as prefiguring in important respects the future workers state. Many decades later, Trotsky would describe Stalin's Russia as analogous to a highly bureaucratized trade union with state power. Bakunin's arguments against a workers state could logically be applied against trade unions as well. If the elected officials of a workers government, even if themselves former workers, must inevitably become corrupt and despotic, why would this not also be true of the elected officials of the trade unions? Here one should recall that the original theorist of anarchism,

Washington: Dramatic UDC Protest over Budget Cuts

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Three hundred students at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) sat down in the middle of busy Connecticut Avenue in front of their school, stopping traffic for hours and facing down scores of cops eager to bust heads on March 18. The demonstrators were protesting against massive budget cuts and the threatened April 1 closure of the school. UDC, the only public university in the District, has a policy of open admissions. The students' target was the federally appointed financial control board charged with overseeing D.C. finances. The control board recently ordered \$10 million in budget cuts. Combined with earlier cuts over the past five years, this would mean that the university has reduced its budget by 47 percent in the past two years (*Washington Afro-American*, 23 March). The demonstration petered out when students got a letter from the control board's point man in the city government, Anthony Williams, which the students say rescinded the cuts.

Washington is a 70 percent black city—with a growing Hispanic immigrant population. The ruling class, which sees the nation's capital as "their" plantation, is hell-bent on gutting all the social services that support black working people and the poor. Last month, D.C. mayor Marion Barry announced layoffs of 10,000 city workers—one-quarter of the city workforce. A dozen public schools are slated to close. There are plans afoot to "privatize" the city's health clinics and only public hospital. Like the city itself, UDC's student body consists overwhelmingly of working-class blacks. Student protests rocked the campus six years ago when students objected to the poor quality of education and services at the school. Last year, the city floated a proposal to move UDC off of its rented



Hundreds of UDC students stage March 18 sit-in on busy Washington street against budget cuts which threaten to close the school.

campus in affluent, mainly white Northwest D.C. into an old abandoned high school in the heart of the black ghetto.

At the March 18 demonstration, Spartacus Youth Club activists agitated among demonstrators for open admissions, no tuition, and a state-paid stipend for all students. We fight for free, quality higher education for all those who wish to attend. Farrakhan supporters at the demonstration responded to these key demands with vicious anti-communist, race-baiting venom from the microphone. The fight of UDC students necessarily must be part of a struggle against the racist capitalist system as a whole. But the Farrakhanites seek to work within the racist capitalist status quo, exploiting their "own." They oppose integrated struggles like mobilizations against

the Ku Klux Klan in favor of racial separatism.

The situation faced by black youth and working people in D.C. cries out for revolutionary leadership, a multiracial vanguard party that will lead the workers and the oppressed in the fight against the exploiters and their front men!

When the Democratic Party's mayor Barry showed up at the sit-down, the cry should have gone up against the city's principal budget axman. Instead, the student bureaucrats hustled him up to the mike to let "the brother" try to diffuse the student struggle with hollow words about opposing cutbacks and backing the students. While Barry has in the past been a target of the racist rulers, the mayor's role is to enforce the White House and Congress' cuts on black D.C. Just

last week Barry announced 500 layoffs of home health care workers who care for the sick and elderly. These workers are 99 percent black women, and make an average of \$7.20 per hour. Barry is a capitalist politician and no friend of black and working people!

Demonstrating their role as apprentice Democratic Party politicians, the student misleaders also had stacks of voter registration cards, which they passed out to demonstrators. Even if there were anyone besides the Republicrats to vote for, D.C. residents don't have the elementary democratic right to vote, at least not one that counts. The elected D.C. "delegate" in Congress doesn't have a vote in that body, and the mayor can't move garbage without asking Congress and the financial control board first. We say: Full enfranchisement for D.C.!

The only way UDC students are going to win their demands is through linking their struggles with all the victims of this vicious ruling class, particularly the workers who make this city run—and have the power to bring it to a halt. City workers have every reason to fight. Hispanic workers have actively organized around the "Justice for Janitors" campaign. One day last December, city sanitation workers blocked the offices of the control board with their trucks. The control board is still vindictively seeking their firing.

Workers, students and oppressed in D.C. must unite in common struggle against the common enemy. To win even the most basic rights, such as the right to a decent education, requires a fight against the whole capitalist system. This fight requires a Leninist vanguard party. The SYC, the youth auxiliary to the Spartacist League, seeks to win youth to this struggle. Join us! ■

Joseph-Pierre Proudhon, was *against* trade unions.

Anarchism and Stalinism

Given the experience of Stalinism in the former Soviet Union and also in "Communist" China, leftist youth reading the Bakunin/Marx exchange today might well conclude that Bakunin, whatever his other failings, was more prescient than Marx about the danger of bureaucracy in post-revolutionary societies. However, such a way of approaching the question is liberal idealism, and totally ahistorical. The rise and consolidation of a privileged bureaucracy in post-revolutionary Russia was the direct reflection of the ebbing of the world revolutionary tide and expressed itself in the Stalinists' anti-Bolshevik program of coexistence on the international plane with the reactionary old order. Analogously for a trade union, it is not the *union's* power which promotes corrupt bureaucratism, but the pressure of the powerful capitalist ruling class and its state.

Marx assumed that socialist revolutions would first take place in the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe—Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland. The resulting workers states would perforce not have to organize militarily and economically to defend themselves against hostile and more powerful capitalist states. And more fundamentally, socialist governments in West Europe could rapidly increase the level of economic productivity through the rational application of the most advanced available technology.

But the course of history didn't conform to these projections. Instead, proletarian revolution occurred first not in the most advanced capitalist countries but in what Lenin called the "weakest

link" in the European imperialist system. By the beginning of the 20th century, a significant industrial proletariat had developed in tsarist Russia alongside the huge, backward peasant sector still subject to feudal-derived forms of exploitation. This combined and uneven development was a key reason why proletarian revolution—the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917—succeeded in Russia.

However, Lenin, Trotsky and the other Bolshevik leaders sought to spread the Russian October on a world scale, recognizing that this alone would provide the economic resources for the socialist transformation of Russia. In November 1917, Nikolai Bukharin, one of the leading Bolshevik theorists, wrote: "The victory of the Western proletariat will make it possible to heal in a planned way the economic wounds of Russia with highly developed West European techniques. The economic backwardness of Russia will be offset by the high technical level of Europe" (quoted in C. Abramsky, ed., *Essays in Honour of E.H. Carr* [1974]).

The subsequent bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet Russian workers state—under conditions of encirclement by hostile and more economically advanced capitalist states—confirmed the basic premises of historical materialism. As early as 1920, Lenin warned that the new Communist officials were being contaminated by the values and attitudes of the old tsarist officials. And in the mid-1920s, Leon Trotsky declared political war on the bureaucratization of the Communist Party and Soviet government whose supreme leader would be J.V. Stalin.

Anarchism and Stalinism are conventionally viewed as representing the extreme opposite poles of the left. Yet the basic premises of Bakuninist anarchism are similar to that of the Stalinist dogma

of "socialism in one country" and especially to the Maoist notion of peasant-based socialism. Bakunin located the vanguard of the social revolution in the most backward countries of southern and eastern Europe, such as Italy and Russia, where in the 1860s-1870s the industrial proletariat scarcely existed at all. "If the workers of the West delay too long," he declaimed in 1869, "it will be the Russian peasant who will set them an example" (quoted in Joll, *The Anarchists*).

It is no wonder that Bakunin is hailed by contemporary anarchists like the American historian Paul Avrich as a "prophet" of the Maoist and Guevarist conception of an "alliance of estranged intellectuals with the dispossessed masses in guerrilla-style warfare" (preface to *Bakunin on Anarchy*). This peasant-based guerrillism led at best to the creation of bureaucratically deformed workers states in economically isolated and backward countries like China, Vietnam and Cuba.

It is true that Bakunin—never prone to theoretical consistency—also argued in the 1866 *Revolution Catechism* that an isolated social revolution in a single country could not succeed in the face of "the world counterrevolution and the conspiracy of kings, clergy, nobility, and the bourgeoisie, based on enormous budgets, on permanent armies." Characteristically, Bakunin's argument at the time for world revolution is based on *military, not economic* grounds. But Stalin, too, maintained that only imperialist military intervention could prevent Soviet Russia from building "socialism" with its own self-sufficient resources.

Against this, Trotsky wrote: "To the extent that productivity of labor and the productivity of a social system as a whole are measured on the market by the correlation of prices, it is not so much

military intervention as the intervention of cheaper capitalist commodities that constitutes perhaps the greatest immediate menace to Soviet economy" (*The Third International After Lenin* [1928]). The central theme of Marx's polemic against Bakuninist anarchism in the 1870s and of Trotsky's opposition to Stalinist doctrine of "socialism in one country" is the same: the establishment of a classless and stateless society in which all members can freely develop their full potential must be based on a level of economic productivity far higher than even the most advanced capitalism.

Both Bakunin and Stalin divorced socialist consciousness from the over-coming of economic scarcity. "The Russian people," according to the author of *Statism and Anarchy*, "are socialist by instinct and revolutionary by nature." During the 1930s, the Stalin regime proclaimed that a "new socialist man" had emerged in Soviet Russia, one who had overcome individualism and egoism and who totally identified with the collective well-being of the working people.

In pointing to the important elements in common to anarchism and Stalinism as ideologies, we of course also recognize the fundamental difference between Bakunin and Stalin as historical figures. Stalin was a psychopathic mass murderer who served the interests of a parasitic, corrupt, cynical and fundamentally conservative bureaucratic caste sitting atop and strangling a workers state. Mikhail Bakunin, with all his faults, genuinely aspired to an egalitarian and humane society whose members would live free and productive lives. Nonetheless, the "triumph of the will" idealism which lies at the core of the anarchist outlook is also a key component of Stalinist bureaucratic commandism.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!

Victory to the Yale Strikers!

MARCH 26—Yale University's campus workers are locked in a drawn-out fight with the arrogant Ivy League bosses. Service and maintenance workers in Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International (H.E.R.E.) Local 35 are scheduled to walk out tomorrow against Yale's union-busting drive. This strike continues a battle that began when

One Out, All Out!

sister Local 34, representing clerical and technical workers, struck in February for four weeks. Earlier in January, graduate student teaching assistants declared a "grade strike" in a drive for unionization. Crucial to winning this battle is the fight for a solid campus-wide strike and solidarity action by other unions. One out, all out!

Yale is New Haven's biggest employer, accounting for one in seven jobs in the city. Yale is also among the top, elite private universities, and its Board of Trustees is a rogues' gallery of powerful capitalists. Besides pushing a "two-tier" wage scheme for new workers, Yale is proposing to hit up retirees for medical insurance. The university plans to pay newly hired dining hall workers \$4 an hour less than current workers and eliminate their guarantee of alternative jobs in the summer. The result would mean a typical dining hall worker going from \$23,000 to \$10,000 a year! This is far below the poverty level in New Haven, the fourth-poorest city in the U.S. Workers would literally be driven to the welfare rolls. This was routine for Yale laborers in the 1960s, when dining hall workers clocked in during the school year for minimum pay, then collected welfare during the summer. With Yale grad Bill Clinton vowing to "end welfare as we know it," this is clearly the road to starvation.

The campus workers are in a fight for their livelihoods, seeking raises, better pension arrangements and job security, and an end to subcontracting. Yale wanted this strike to try to bust the unions. The university administration is running a slick anti-union campaign, hiring Robert Mann, the former partner in the notorious Chicago-based union-busting law firm Seyfarth, Shaw, Fariweather and Geraldson. At the same time, they have put a 150-plus supplementary security force of professional strikebreakers on the Yale payroll. Yale's pleas of poverty ring hollow, with an endowment of over \$4 billion. In fact, a

year's tuition is more than the average worker gets paid.

Members of the New York Spartacus Youth Club have gone to New Haven to join with supporters of the strike. The clerical workers strike gained broad appeal among Yalies. On March 5, as Local 34 brought down its picket lines just before spring break, SYCers joined undergraduates and graduates on a roving march of hundreds, rallying for strikers at Yale. We call for united action by students, teachers and staff to build mass pickets that *nobody* crosses, halting business as usual at Yale. Picket lines are the front line of workers' struggle. If unionists built mass pickets, coordinating strike action with student

Organization (GESO) has been closely involved in the H.E.R.E. locals' strike. In January, GESO's unionization drive was defeated when Yale threatened to ban the instructors from teaching. This campus workers strike now provides an opportunity for GESO to fight back against a common enemy. GESO members should turn their classes into pro-strike teach-ins and organizing meetings for a student boycott! This could be central to broadly mobilizing the campus to win.

During a day of solidarity teach-ins organized by GESO and other groups on February 29, members of the Spartacist League and SYC pointed out the role students can play in alliance with



Strikers picketing the private Yale Club in Manhattan on March 1 were joined by striking clerical workers from Barnard College.

supporters boycotting classes and boycotting the use of dining halls, the strike could win. Let's shut down the university!

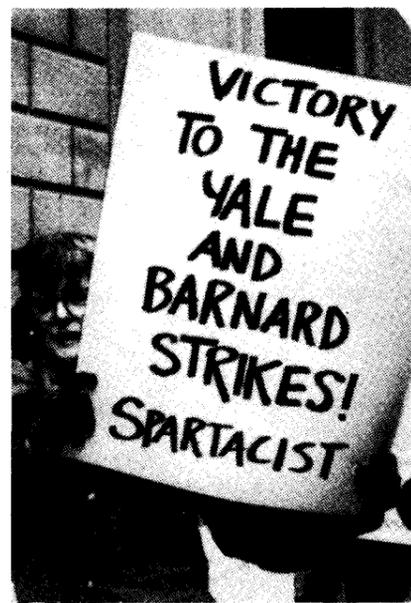
Boycott Classes! Shut Down Yale!

Even at this ruling-class bastion, before spring break grad student TAs organized more than 200 classes off campus in solidarity with the strikes. This gesture is a step in the right direction, but still continues the business of the university with a minimum of disruption. A full-scale boycott of classes would express concretely an alliance of students with the workers' strike. If the campus is struck, classes should be shut down. The Graduate Employees and Stu-

working-class struggles. At a meeting of about 100 undergrads, a Spartacist supporter said: "Yale's bosses are correctly perceived as the enemy of workers and blacks in this city. This provides a way to mobilize broad support for the union: a victory for the union would be a victory for everybody!" Only the working class can defeat the capitalist assault on the right to an education, which should be open to all, not the privilege of an elite few.

The elite private institutions like Yale should be nationalized. Against the inherent race and class bias of higher education under capitalism, we raise the demand for open admissions and free higher education for all with a paid stipend, posing the fight for the right to a decent education. We defend limited reforms like affirmative action, which in a minimal way allows minorities and working-class youth some access to higher education. The SYC seeks to link the struggles of students with the power of the labor movement as a whole. Yale's iron gates should be thrown open—including to those who work there!

While the administration claims Yale is pursuing a lofty mission of "community involvement," many students recognize in Yale a key exploiter of blacks and the poor in New Haven. These students show a real disgust for Yale's role as a ruling-class training ground for tacticians and technocrats who perpetuate the racist status quo. At the February 29 teach-in, a black student spoke movingly about racism on campus and remarked, "Yale is a plantation." Another student posed this idea: Why not refuse to let scabs handle trash in the dorms and



Young Spartacus

instead collect it and dump it on the administration building lawn?

The campus is becoming divided as students begin to see Yale as the workshop for union-busting that it is. On the one side stands the Yale Corporation, with an anti-union formation called "Students for Union Compliance" echoing the bosses' anti-working class hubris. On the other side stand the unions with student supporters who want to do the right thing and support the strikers. One Yale freshman remarked at a recent union rally: "My mother is a member of the teachers union. My father is in a public employees union. This is where I belong."

The question is: how is this sentiment of solidarity to be organized? A group called the Student Labor Action Coalition has circulated petitions which complain of the anguish suffered for having "to cross a picket line to go to class today"(!). But real student support for the campus unions is more than an empty statement of solidarity—it can be a factor in winning the strike. A strike picket line is the main defense workers have against the bosses. Boycotting classes is the most powerful way students can back the unions. If the picket lines were solid mass mobilizations that shut the campus down, no one would have to think twice about being fired from a teaching job or getting flunked out for missing a midterm. The problem is that with the *occasional* picketing pushed by the union leadership, students who support the strikers see the lines mainly as gestures of moral outrage rather than a real attempt to shut down the workings of the university. Honoring a picket line shouldn't be simply a question of individual will but a *collective act of hundreds mobilized to defend the strike*.

The strategy of the union locals of alternating their strikes—in effect, swapping turns crossing picket lines—starts from a position of weakness, rather than strength. While groups like the Communist Party's Yale Workers Club see this as a "creative strike strategy" mobilizing "support and solidarity on all levels," we insist that campus-wide labor action to shut down the university is what's needed. Remember, in 1984, joint strike action by both locals was decisive in winning official union recognition for clerical workers after Local 35 succeeded in shutting down all but one dining hall.

It's necessary to fight on a program that takes on the capitalist system, recognizing that it is fundamentally racist and based on the exploitation of workers. The corporate bosses who run Yale and other businesses are trying to take back every gain won by working people, from welfare and civil rights to the right to unionize or the right to a quality education. A victory for Yale workers means gains for all the oppressed.

Build picket lines—don't cross them! Victory to the Yale strikers! ■

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Brazil...

(continued from page 16)

working to separate the municipal police from the union, because the police are not part of the workers movement. The job of the police is to break strikes and carry out the racist attacks which are the everyday reality of capitalist "law and order" in Brazil.

Geraldo was elected president of the SFPMVR on the MEL slate, with an overwhelming 62 percent majority against the slate backed by the company union federation Força Sindical, the Popular Front government of the municipality of Volta Redonda, and Lima Netto, a federal deputy for the PFL [a right-wing party], who earlier carried out 10,000 layoffs in the National Steel Company (CSN) plant, as well as being the author of the *parceria* scheme ["partnership"—joint union-management committees] and is campaigning to eliminate job security for government workers. The local bourgeois press, such as *Diário do Vale*, was particularly dismayed by the ties of the MEL slate to Luta Metalúrgica, well known in Brazil for its principled struggle for the class independence of the workers and its political opposition to the class-collaborationist Popular Front headed by the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT—Workers Party) of Lula.

Behind Arthur Fernandes and his cohorts are powerful forces. Already during the election campaign last year, the MEL was the object of government attacks. The local bourgeois press virulently attacked Ribeiro, Alexandre Honorato "Cerezo" and Luta Metalúrgica as "radicals." Cerezo, a fired steel worker, had run for president of the union of metal workers of the Sul Fluminense region (which includes the now-privatized CSN plant) a few months earlier, also in opposition to Força Sindical and a popular-front slate, and is now an adviser to the SFPMVR. Geraldo is secretary of the regional CUT union federation, and Cerezo is vice president of the regional CUT; they were elected to these posts in November 1993.

A Pattern of Provocation

In an orchestrated campaign involving physical provocations, secret meetings and smear articles in the bosses' press, Arthur Fernandes and his camarilla have sought to usurp control of the union from president Geraldo Ribeiro. An initial leaflet demanding his ouster was issued by the plotters just two days before scheduled wage negotiations with the



Luta Metalúrgica photos
Luta Metalúrgica leader Alexandre Honorato "Cerezo" (above), speaking at demonstration last August in Volta Redonda to save life of American death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Municipal Workers union co-sponsored rally.

mayor. The result: the mayor postponed the negotiating session with the spurious argument that there was an internal dispute in the union. Next came another leaflet from the plotters accusing Geraldo of "treason" for mobilizing the workers and rejecting secret meetings with the mayor.

The March 13 meeting was intended to be the crowning piece of the attempted coup to remove the union president. In a scandal-sheet flyer, after reproducing the section of the program of the MEL slate—which Arthur was part of!—explaining that all levels of the police and armed forces, including municipal police, are "the armed fist of the bourgeoisie," the would-be usurpers then called provocatively to come to the meeting to "defend the police." This was a clear attempt to provoke a physical confrontation with the police at the meeting. However, the workers at the meeting overwhelmingly supported Geraldo and reaffirmed him as president. Seeing that their plans had backfired, the plotters resorted to physical provocation.

Who called the Military Police? Arthur himself admitted the following morning, 14 March, on the "Dário de Paula" radio program on FM-88 that he had done so. He claimed that union president Geraldo supposedly attacked Motorzinho, the exact opposite of the facts. In reality, after Motorzinho's attacks, Arthur had told him to apologize. This shows that Arthur is lying. Also on this radio program, Arthur accused Luta Metalúrgica of threatening him with death, using this as his excuse for calling the Military Police and contracting municipal police as "security." This is another, deadly lie!

In fact, it is Arthur who is setting up the leaders of the MEL and LM for violence from the state, as he tried to provoke on March 13.

Never before in the history of the SFPMVR have union members brought the Military Police to intervene in union meetings. In Volta Redonda, workers are tragically familiar with the murderous violence of the military. Under the military dictatorship of 1964-1985, this was a "national security zone," due to the importance of the CSN steel plant, the largest in Latin America. During the 1988 steel strike, three workers—William, Valmir and Barroso—were killed by the army.

The Military Police are notorious for the racist murders of hundreds of street children, most of them black, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, including the infamous massacres of Candelária and Vigário Geral, as well as the murder of two leaders of the black movement in November 1994, the "disappearance" of black trade-unionist Rufino, and the murder of various other leftists. In the Volta Redonda area, the newspaper *O Globo* (13 September 1991) reported that from January to August of 1991, at least 113 children were killed by military police, and the municipal *guardas* as well are suspected of involvement in these crimes. The Military Police together with the army are also responsible for the massacre of peasants in the state of Rondônia last August, in which "officially" eleven people were murdered. Recently, they attacked a land occupation by more than 3,000 peasant families in the state of Pará.

We call on the workers movement and

members of democratic rights organizations around Brazil and internationally to protest this outrageous attack on the municipal workers of Volta Redonda, demanding: *Stop the dangerous police provocations against union militants in Volta Redonda! Police hands off the unions!*

Thank you for your support. Workers' greetings,

Luta Metalúrgica/Liga
Quarta-internacionalista
do Brasil

20 March 1996

We urge that protest messages be sent to: Marcello Alencar, Governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Palácio Guanabara, Rua Pinheiro Machado s/n, Laranjeiras, CEP 22238-900, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil. Fax No. (55-21) 553-6090. And to: Paulo César Baltazar, Mayor of the City of Volta Redonda, Prefeitura Municipal, Praça Sávio Gama 53, Aterrado, CEP 27180-000, Volta Redonda, RJ, Brazil. Fax No. (55-243) 46-4954.

Messages of solidarity can be mailed to: Geraldo Ribeiro, Rua União No. 147, Bairro Santo Agostinho, CEP 27290-000, Volta Redonda, RJ, Brazil. And to: Luta Metalúrgica/Liga Quarta-internacionalista do Brasil, Av. Lucas Evangelista, n/418 sala 306, Aterrado, CEP 27295-320, Volta Redonda, RJ, Brazil.

Internationally, copies of solidarity messages can be sent to the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99 Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013, U.S.A. Fax No. (212) 406-2210.

Documentation is available at the Luta Metalúrgica office. ■

China...

(continued from page 4)

announced the sale of 150 F-16 fighter planes to Taiwan. In response to the dispatch of American warships to the area, Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen declared, "Those people have forgotten that Taiwan is a part of China and not a protectorate of the United States." But with the conclusion of the Taiwan elections, both Beijing and Taipei are making conciliatory statements, and Taiwan president Lee Teng-hui has hinted that he may make a visit to Beijing.

There is another major player in East Asian power politics, namely Japan Inc. The Japanese ruling class has consistently pursued a strategy aiming to bring about a "cold" capitalist restoration in China by buying off decisive sections of the venal Stalinist bureaucracy. Tokyo was the first imperialist capital to restore full commercial relations with China after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. Today Japan is providing massive loans to Beijing to modernize China's infrastructure—airports, water treatment plants, highways, etc.

A top official of the Clinton administration has admitted that if the U.S. adopts a hard line against China, such as a trade boycott, "not a single friend

and ally would join us," and it "would cause severe strains with Japan, South Korea, Australia and in Southeast Asia" (*Time*, 25 March). As for China's recent flexing of its military muscle in the Taiwan Strait, Tokyo went no further than saying this was "regrettable," while the Taiwan regime lashed out that the Japanese "care only about their own interests." And the interests of Japan are increasingly in conflict with those of American imperialism.

Chinese Revolution in Danger

Revolutionaries must defend China against attacks from the imperialist powers and their proxies. Yet at this time, neither the U.S. nor the most rabid Guomindang irredentists on Taiwan want a military confrontation with China, as this would threaten the course taken by the Stalinist regime in pursuing capitalist market "reforms." Through dismantling centralized economic planning and agricultural collectivization, and by opening up whole chunks of China to foreign exploitation, the Stalinists have encouraged the rapid growth of capitalist-restorationist forces, including inside the bureaucracy itself, which aim to destroy what remains of the gains of the 1949 Revolution.

Taiwan businessmen have already penetrated the mainland with almost \$30

billion in investment—second only to Hong Kong—mostly in light manufacturing plants in the capitalist "Special Economic Zones" (SEZs) where wages are a fraction of those on Taiwan. In a recent incident attesting to the horrendous conditions in these plants, 19 workers died on New Year's Day as a fire swept through a Taiwanese joint venture factory producing Christmas decorations in the Shenzhen SEZ. In 1993, a fire in a Shenzhen toy factory killed 87 workers who could not escape because the doors and windows had been locked by management.

Under the watchword "One China, two systems," the Chinese Stalinists have said they do not intend for reunification to threaten Taiwan's capitalist economy. The reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese control on 1 June 1997 is intended by the Stalinists to be a showcase of this policy. At a conference in Beijing last year with leading Hong Kong capitalists, a Chinese government official stressed that Hong Kong would remain "financially independent"—to the extent that Beijing would not even collect taxes there. However, such arrangements are highly unstable, and would soon go in one direction or the other. Reunification without expropriation of Hong Kong and Taiwanese capitalists would give a further powerful impetus to counterrevo-

lution on the mainland.

As the counterrevolution which destroyed the Soviet Union demonstrated, the restoration of capitalist rule in China would be an unmitigated disaster for the worker and peasant masses. The prospect of capitalist restoration is already stoking the fires of interimperialist rivalry as the U.S. and Japan position themselves to grab the anticipated spoils (and the Germans have started to invest heavily).

It is a cruel irony that the Stalinists' pro-capitalist policies have invited back into China the hated Guomindang oppressors who were driven out in 1949. But capitalist restoration is far from a certainty. Waves of labor unrest and peasant revolts testify to growing plebeian resistance to "free market" measures. Militant struggle, however, is not sufficient to defeat the forces of counterrevolution. The Chinese working people need a revolutionary Marxist leadership—a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party—to mobilize the workers at the head of the peasantry in struggle to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. Such a leadership would link the struggles on the mainland with workers struggles in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Japan, fighting for the perspective of proletarian political revolution in China and socialist revolution in the capitalist countries leading to a socialist federation of Asia. ■

GM...

(continued from page 1)

with the cooperation of the United Auto Workers (UAW) leadership has eliminated more than 100,000 jobs in the first half of the 1990s.

The strike began on March 5, and by the end of the second week lack of parts had forced GM to idle 26 of its 29 assembly plants and another 18 parts plants, laying off over 177,000 workers in the United States, Mexico and Canada. It was the largest stoppage in the auto industry in North America since the nationwide GM strike in 1970. By the beginning of the last week, key plants like the one in Janesville, Wisconsin which produces the highly profitable Chevy and GMC Suburban sport-utility vehicles were shutting down. But just as GM was beginning to really hurt, the UAW tops called off the strike—as they have in other local strikes in recent years. And from the outset, the UAW sent 300 strikers back across their own picket line to continue making brake components for Chrysler and Isuzu. Sounding just like the auto bosses, the Dayton strike chairman argued, “We either had to produce to keep these customers running or we felt we had a very real possibility of losing these customers” (*New York Times*, 10 March).

The UAW is claiming that on local issues, the GM subsidiary Delphi will add 275 workers to alleviate the grinding seven-day overtime schedule, and a total of just over 400 jobs in all will be created at the two Dayton plants. General Motors management says employment won't change significantly. To induce a “yes” vote, strikers were given a \$1,700 payment to settle “subcontracting violations.” But this payoff for letting GM ignore a 1994 contract agreement to buy brake systems from the UAW-organized parts factories amounts to the UAW bureaucracy authorizing non-union parts production. On the key issue of defending union jobs in the parts industry, the wretched UAW bureaucracy has again given GM its blessing to use more “outsourcing.” In particular, the UAW International okayed letting the work go to Bosch's Charleston, South Carolina plant where labor costs are one-third those at the unionized plants in Dayton.

Wall Street applauded when GM took a hardline position and let the strike drag on for almost three weeks. One analyst said, “The longer the strike lasts, the better it is for the company” (*Wall Street Journal*, 21 March). General Motors has a huge war chest, almost \$11 billion in cash, and last year made a profit of \$6.9 billion—more than any other U.S. corporation. With the exception of sport-utility vehicles and some trucks, GM was sitting on a glut of inventory. Clearly Wall Street welcomed the confrontation. After socking it to labor at Caterpillar, the ruling class saw this battle as important in hardlining it against the labor movement. We wrote after the UAW loss at Caterpillar that the defeat would be paid for by workers all over the country. Now GM (and the rest of the ruling class) is itching to capitalize on this and gouge ever more profits out of the workers.

Dave Yettaw, president of Local 599 in Flint, Michigan and head of the New Directions house “opposition,” criticized the decision of the UAW leadership under Stephen Yokich to send 300 workers into the struck Dayton factories to produce brakes for Chrysler, calling this “a taste of business unionism.” But in an interview with *Workers Vanguard*, Yettaw said he wasn't aware of the no-strike clause for the Dayton plants, and now says the UAW “properly got the members back in there to honor their contract.” Moreover, these union “dissidents” supported Yokich when he was elected UAW president last summer. Yettaw declared, “I know Yokich will fight back” (*New York Times*, 15 June 1995). Yet it was Yokich who as head of the union's Ford department presided over the destruction of

jobs there in the '80s, before moving over to the union's GM division, where he greased the skids for the company's “downsizing” through mass layoffs. As newly elected UAW chief, Yokich ordered Caterpillar strikers back to work last December, even though over 80 percent had voted against the surrender.

The UAW bureaucracy hoped that the Dayton work stoppage, with its dramatic impact, would make it easier to reach a settlement when the national auto contracts with Chrysler, Ford and GM expire in September. But by displaying the



UAW-organized Caterpillar workers (on 1992 picket line) taunting scabs. Union tops prepared devastating defeat, refusing to mobilize area labor to build militant mass picket lines to stop scabbing.

union's potential power to shut down the nation's biggest corporation, it could whet the workers' appetite to fight. The key question is leadership. And the last thing the gang in the UAW International's headquarters wants is a national strike against one of the Big Three automakers during the re-election campaign of their candidate, “right to work” Democrat Bill Clinton.

“Cheap Labor”: Made in U.S.A.

The job-slashing at GM has led to a series of strike actions from Dayton to Flint. What all these actions have in common is that the UAW brass called them off as soon as the workers had GM by the throat. (In fact, the “just in time” delivery system, taken over from Japanese management, has made the auto companies more vulnerable to strikes in key plants.) Such piecemeal actions save a few hundred jobs here and there, but the numbers pale in comparison to the overall numbers of unionized jobs that have disappeared over the last decade. As recently as 20 years ago, more than two-thirds of parts workers were in the UAW. Now it is less than a quarter. Of the Big Three, GM is the only company that supplies most of its own parts, roughly 70 percent. With the complicity of the UAW, Ford has cut the proportion of parts it makes in-house to about 50 percent, while at Chrysler it is only 30 percent.

The drive by the companies to save on labor costs by “outsourcing” production is not simply corporate policy, but is intrinsic to capitalism. If they can't hike their profits by forcing givebacks out of organized American workers, the bosses will go to cheap, unorganized labor in the “open shop” South or abroad. Without a class-struggle leadership with the program and determination to tackle the capitalist system head-on, union labor will continue to lose ground against the bourgeoisie's drive to increase its profits through layoffs and union-busting.

Codified in its allegiance to the Democratic Party, the labor bureaucracy's collaboration with the bosses has led to an unending string of defeats for organized labor. With a nationalist program of defending “American interests”—i.e., corporate profits—the labor misleadership laid the basis for the loss of millions of union jobs in recent decades. John Sweeney, president of the “new” AFL-CIO, calls for a “social contract” be-

tween corporations and workers, saying he wants to “build bridges between labor and management, so that American business can be more successful and American workers can share in the gains.” This fairy tale is a deadly dangerous illusion: American capitalists and American workers are not “partners” but class enemies, as the hardlining heads of General Motors well know.

The UAW misleaders have used the current campaign against “outsourcing” as a means of deflecting workers' anger away from the Big Three bosses and

Denny's restaurant chain—the German automaker will profit to the tune of more than \$4,000 per vehicle over labor costs in Germany. Mercedes-Benz is building a huge new plant outside Tuscaloosa, Alabama. From the Honda plants in Marysville, Ohio to the Nissan plant in Smyrna, Tennessee where the UAW tops lost a disastrous union representation election in 1989, the auto union tops have done nothing to organize the South. The only new assembly plant where the UAW is present is the Saturn plant in Tennessee, where they gave GM a sweetheart deal to get in the door.

The capitalists will always seek to move to where the profits are greatest: for high-wage Germany, the American South is a low-wage production site. Labor struggles in the manufacturing plants of Dayton or Detroit must be linked to a sustained and far-reaching drive to unionize the factories that stretch along the new industrial corridors of the South. Such an organizing drive will have to defy Taft-Hartley and other anti-labor laws in utilizing “secondary strikes” and labor boycotts. What's posed is a broad social struggle even more sweeping than that which led to the organization of the industrial unions of the CIO in the 1930s. Then, the UAW confronted Klan terror directly in its drive to organize the scattered outposts of the auto industry. During a 1936 strike at a GM plant in Anderson, Indiana, UAW organizers (including Sophie Reuther, the wife of Walter Reuther) had their headquarters stormed by Klansmen acting at the bosses' behest. In the Midwest and throughout the South, CIO organizers were hounded and murdered by these nativist fascists.

Today as well, any attempt to organize the South requires fighting racism, defending immigrants, and taking on the whole apparatus of capitalist repression—from the cops and courts to the mercenary strikebreaking outfits like Vance Security and the lynchers of the KKK. Last summer during a union organizing campaign at a poultry plant in Alabama, a cross was burned on company property to intimidate workers into voting against the union. The union tops breed illusions in the Democrats as supposed “friends of labor.” Yet Democrat Clinton's longtime financial backer, Arkansas-based Tyson Foods, is one of the biggest non-union poultry packing operations in the country. As we have repeatedly stated, black rights and labor rights go forward together...or fall back separately.

The pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy is the conscious enemy of class struggle. The bureaucrats' zeal for protectionism is a particularly vile betrayal of the working class, fueling anti-immigrant racism at home and poisoning workers' struggles internationally. Spewing such filth is nothing new for the labor sellouts, who for years, along with their Democratic Party bedfellows, have blamed the massive decline in the living standards of

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After UPIU Tops' Surrender at Staley

Trailmobile Workers Fight Lockout

CHICAGO—Less than an hour's drive from Decatur, the center of what was proclaimed the "war zone" of Illinois labor struggles, corporate union-busters are at it again. Trailmobile, a manufacturer of semi-trailers in the tiny city of Charleston, locked out 1,200 members of United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) Local 7591 on January 21. The workers, who have gone four years without a single pay raise, had just rejected the company's "offer" of another three-year wage freeze. A month into the lockout, Trailmobile started bringing in scabs protected by phalanxes of state and local cops while a police helicopter dived overhead. Since then, picketing union members have been watching 200 scabs enter the plant each day, while union tops wring their hands.

The shadow that falls longest across the workers at Trailmobile is the defeat at A.E. Staley, where UPIU Local 7837 ended their two-and-a-half year struggle in a total surrender just weeks before the lockout at Trailmobile. "A lot of people are scared because of what's happened in Decatur. They don't want that to happen here," a locked-out union member told *Workers Vanguard*. In fact, the Trailmobile bosses' aggressive union-busting assault is a direct result of the smashing of the Staley workers, as well as of the surrender by the United Auto Workers (UAW) tops at Caterpillar in early December and the folding of the Bridgestone-Firestone strike by the United Rubber Workers (URW) last May. This string of defeats was the product of the labor bureaucrats' refusal—despite the "war zone" rhetoric—to wage all-out class war against the capitalists who are bent on destroying the unions.

In late December, members of UPIU Local 7837 were strong-armed by Paperworkers' International president Wayne Glenn to vote on a contract worse than the one they rejected more than three years ago. Staley workers approved the contract with a vote of 286 to 226. It is indicative of their will to fight that even after enduring 30 months of a lockout, 45 percent of the bitter and

exhausted Staley workers voted against the surrender. Less than one-third of the original 762 locked-out workers will ever get their jobs back in Staley's huge corn processing plant. Those who do return face 12-hour days on 30-day rotating shifts and mandatory overtime, in addition to being "retrained" by scabs. Like UAW workers returning to Cater-

Pepsi" substitute for militant labor action predictably fizzled, and the UPIU traitors easily shoved Rogers and Tucker out of the picture just before knifing the Staley struggle altogether.

Tailing after the union brass and their "progressive" advisers were a gaggle of pseudo-socialists in the Staley Workers Solidarity Committee in Chicago, which



Staley workers being gassed by cops during sit-down demonstration in June 1994. Union tops played by bosses' rules, leading to bitter defeat.

pillar plants, any union members who aren't "polite" to the scabs can be fired on the spot.

The labor battles of the Illinois "war zone" could have been won. Thousands of Midwest workers repeatedly trekked to Decatur or Peoria to bolster picket lines or attend rallies. But the union brass refused to build mass picket lines to stop scabs and shut down production, refusing to "hot cargo" scab products and instead launching toothless consumer boycotts while spewing out poisonous protectionism. The centerpiece of the Staley struggle was yet another "corporate campaign" designed by Ray Rogers—whose policies ran the 1986 meat-packers strike against Hormel into the ground—and pushed by Jerry Tucker, the "New Directions" honcho in the UAW. Their struggle-free "Boycott

dedicated itself to "corporate campaign" demos against Miller Beer and Pepsi. Although some wanted to spice up their empty "solidarity" with civil disobedience stunts, they never frontally challenged the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy and its policies of defeat. Now this crowd is writing post-mortem reports, sugarcoating the surrender. The International Socialist Organization cynically reported "Staley Workers Approve Return-to-Work Proposal," the Socialist Workers Party headlined "Paperworkers Return Under New Terms," and Solidarity spewed out gobbledegook about how "Local 7837 should be proud of stretching the boundaries in how its members view business, the media, government and the interrelatedness of the three.... We shall never forget you!" (*Against the Current*, March/April 1996).

American working people on "unfair" Japanese competition. In their determination to knife struggle against the Detroit auto bosses in the 1970s and '80s, the UAW bureaucrats organized violently anti-Japanese "Toyota-bashing" rallies, inflaming racist attacks on Asian Americans. This fueled the chauvinist climate that led to the murderous 1982 attack in Detroit on Chinese American Vincent Chin by a Chrysler foreman and his unemployed stepson.

AFL-CIO tops recently complained of proto-fascist presidential candidate Pat Buchanan's "populist" appeal to blue-collar workers. AFSCME head Gerald McEntee said he felt "like a songwriter who wrote a song about seven years ago and he couldn't get anybody to publish or sing it, and then all of a sudden Pat Buchanan is singing part of it" (*AFL-CIO News*, 11 March). Their complaint over Buchanan's racist "America First" protectionism is that they said it first! Sweeney whined that Buchanan "talks the talk, but won't walk the walk." But just listen to Buchanan's talk—he is an admirer of witchhunter Joe McCarthy and clerical-fascist Father Coughlin. He calls Hitler "an individual of great courage" and denies the Nazis' mass murder in the Treblinka death camp. He is a Jew-baiting, black-hating, immigrant- and gay-bashing deadly enemy of workers and all the oppressed.

Meanwhile, Buchanan has provided the bureaucrats and their fake-left cheerleaders with a convenient foil for their usual "fight the right" rhetoric as an excuse for lining up behind Clinton. The massive layoffs, cutbacks and union-busting drives have only escalated under the Democratic White House. Nonetheless, the AFL-CIO tops plan to use the issues raised in the Dayton strike—job security and "corporate responsibility"—as their banner in the elections. Yesterday, a special convention of the AFL-CIO formally endorsed Clinton for president, and pledged to raise \$35 million for the campaign. The "Union Summer" campaign they have launched to recruit college students to become labor organizers will spend a lot of its efforts stumping for the Democrats.

Waging real class struggle against the capitalists requires a break with the Democrats and forging a workers party. The strike in Dayton showed that labor has the power to shut down industry. The question, however, is one of class-struggle leadership. What is necessary is a political battle to oust the labor lieutenants of capital and forge a revolutionary vanguard capable of leading the working class to victory over its exploiters. As we wrote in response to a letter from an IAM business representative who repeated many of the same themes as Sweeney, Yokich et al. ("Protectionism vs. Class Struggle," *WV*

No. 634, 1 December 1995):

"Two possible roads lie before the working class. There is the bureaucracy's acquiescence to what is possible and 'practical' under capitalism, which over the last two decades or more has led to disaster. Or there is the revolutionary strategy posed by us Marxists. In the course of sharp class struggles and through patient education, the workers will become imbued with the consciousness of their historic interests as a class fighting for itself and for all the oppressed." ■

Oakland...

(continued from page 3)

back to work one and a half days later.

Earlier, at a March 13 press conference, Oakland's black Democratic mayor, Elihu Harris, demanded that teachers accept a "compromise" within the week or face a strikebreaking court injunction. Also on hand were the state superintendent of schools, Delaine Eastin, to make her own injunction threat, and former Oakland mayor Lionel Wilson, who called on church ministers to help get the kids to school the following Monday, "strike or no strike" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 14 March). Highly paid black school officials (several pulling down over \$100,000)—echoed by the local NAACP leadership, black ministers, the capitalist media and the Chamber of

The same blueprint for defeat is being repeated at Trailmobile, where the UPIU's sellout bureaucrats have already told workers not to block the plant's entrances, but to stand in idle protest as the scabs cruise past. Despite this, Federal Express and UPS drivers have refused to cross the lines, as have a few other truckers. Students from nearby Eastern Illinois University have stopped by to bolster the lines and show their support. "The union has instructed everybody to abide by the law and everything," said a worker who then echoed the union misleaders' strategy of defeat. "We want everybody to realize that we're the victims here. We're protesting but we're being orderly about it." But Staley workers were "orderly" and all they got was pepper-gassed by the capitalists' cops. What's desperately needed are militant, mass picket lines that scabs won't dare cross!

Southeastern Illinois is Klan country, and while the locked-out Trailmobile workers are overwhelmingly white, many of the scabs recruited by the company are black. A class-struggle leadership would undercut the bosses' attempts to play the race card by aggressively mobilizing against the racist terrorists of the KKK. In January 1994, the Partisan Defense Committee initiated a labor-centered action to spike a Klan provocation at the Illinois state capitol in Springfield. But although there was considerable interest from among the embattled unionists in the Peoria-Decatur area, the state AFL-CIO tops ordered unions to stay away from the labor/black mobilization. Only by championing the struggle against the special oppression faced by black people, as well as by Hispanics and immigrants, can the unions forge the integrated struggle needed to defeat the capitalist attacks.

Turning back the "war zone" defeats won't be easy. Doing so means sweeping out the "labor lieutenants of capital" who sit atop the unions and whose main interest lies in protecting their own salaries, prestige and the profit system. Labor's misleaders have shackled the unions to the Democratic Party and are even willing to preside over their destruction. They are quite prepared to sacrifice the 1,200 Trailmobile workers, just as they did earlier with Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone and Staley. To conquer the bosses, the workers need class-struggle leadership fighting to build a workers party. Victory to Trailmobile workers! ■

Commerce—frequently denounced the integrated strike as "racist," while themselves trying to keep poor black youth condemned to decaying, understaffed schools!

However, these cynical attempts to set minority parents against the teachers mostly failed. Many black and Latino parents in the Oakland flatlands saw the strike as a way to fight for their children to get a decent education, and kept their kids out in solidarity until the bitter end. For them, the settlement was a real stab in the back. At one school with a mixed black and Latino student body, where no teachers crossed the lines, teachers decided as a group to oppose the contract because of its failure to provide for the children.

This was a fight for all of the working people of Oakland, for our children and our future. To bring that fight to a successful conclusion requires sweeping away the labor traitors. We need to forge a new, class-struggle leadership of the workers movement, one that will break with the Democrats and Republicans and build a workers party that champions the interests of those who create the wealth of this country. Such a party must lead labor to take up the struggle of blacks, women, Latinos and immigrants, fighting for a workers government where quality education will be a right for all and not restricted by class privilege. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Military Police Invade Municipal Workers Assembly

Brazil: Police Hands Off Volta Redonda Union!

Labor Alert: Call for International Labor Solidarity

We print below an urgent appeal from Luta Metalúrgica (LM—Metal Workers Struggle) in the Brazilian industrial center of Volta Redonda, near Rio de Janeiro. On March 13, a meeting of the Municipal Workers Union was invaded by the notoriously murderous Military Police. It is vital that the police and the state authorities who give them their orders are sent a message that the labor movement and defenders of democratic rights the world over stand in solidarity against this cop provocation against combative sectors of the Brazilian workers movement.

Luta Metalúrgica, which recently adopted the name of Liga Quarta-

internacionalista do Brasil (LQI—Fourth Internationalist League of Brazil), is fraternally linked with the International Communist League, of which the Spartacist League is the U.S. section. Last August, LM organized labor/black rallies in Brazil against the threatened execution of black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row in Pennsylvania. An August 10 protest in Volta Redonda was co-sponsored by the same Municipal Workers Union which is today under attack.

The Partisan Defense Committee urges readers of *WV* to take up the defense of these unionists. The following appeal is being circulated with

Appeals issued by combative workers in Brazilian steel center of Volta Redonda protesting Military Police invasion of Municipal Workers union meeting.

accompanying supporting documentation available on request from the PDC.

* * *

In the city of Volta Redonda, Brazil there has been a series of escalating provocations against the leadership of the combative Municipal Workers Union of Volta Redonda (SFPMPVR), climaxing in a sinister invasion of a union assembly by the Military Police. On the afternoon of March 13, while an SFPMPVR membership meeting was underway outside the city council building, a physical attack, apparently premeditated, was staged against union president Geraldo Ribeiro, who had been elected on the slate of "Municipários em Luta" (MEL—Municipal Workers in Struggle) last November. A bare five minutes after this attack, a squad of four Military Police entered the meeting armed with pistols and shotguns. Ominously, the assistant coroner, known as "Pereira" and currently a candidate for city councilman, showed up as well.

Although union president Geraldo managed to calm the police and no one was injured, this was a potentially deadly attack on the SFPMPVR, the CUT trade-union federation with which it is affiliated, and the entire workers movement. The Military Police are notorious for their massacres of street children, blacks, peasants and others the authorities consider "suspect." We urgently appeal to unions and organizations throughout Brazil and internationally to denounce this outrage and demand: Police hands off Volta Redonda Municipal Workers Union! An injury to one is an injury to all!

The Military Police invasion was orchestrated by one Arthur Bonizetti Fernandes, the secretary of the union, who has carried out a campaign of provocations over the last two months, seeking to stage a coup to oust union president Geraldo Ribeiro and his adviser Alexandre Honorato "Cerezo," leader of Luta Metalúrgica (LM). From the very beginning of the March 13 meeting, one of the members of the Arthur faction, Sebastião de Fátima Batista Passos, known as "Motorzinho," began provoking Geraldo, attempting to prevent the president of the SFPMPVR from presiding over the union meeting, which was attended by some 50 people. As the workers present chanted, "Geraldo

presidente," Motorzinho kept pushing and finally grabbed Ribeiro's arm, ripping the buttons off his shirt. Geraldo was unharmed only because union members intervened energetically to defend him, while Motorzinho kept hurling foul-mouthed curses against him.

Barely five minutes after this altercation, the four Military Police arrived. There were two sergeants and two privates, the latter armed with shotguns and pistols. Shotguns are generally not used in Brazil in strike situations. Rather, they are used in extremely violent confrontations. These are the preferred weapons of the ROTA, the Military Police of the state of São Paulo, internationally known as one of the most violent police forces in the world.

The Military Police said they came because they were called, and asked if there was a disturbance. Union president Geraldo replied that everything was under control. At this moment, Arthur and Motorzinho rabidly pointed at Cerezo, pointing him out to the Military Police, saying that Cerezo threatened to kill them. Cerezo demonstrated to the police that he was not armed. The Military Police put back their shotguns but came back with riot clubs and positioned themselves strategically around the meeting, placing the assembly under police occupation.

Later, three municipal policemen (*guardas*) arrived, and several plainclothes policemen were also present in the meeting. One of them was overheard saying that they had been contracted by Arthur for 10 Reais (US\$11) apiece, but expressed concern that because they arrived late according to Arthur, they might not be paid.

This attack comes at a time when the federal government and Congress are preparing a constitutional change to eliminate public employees' gains, rights and civil service job protection, preparing the way for massive layoffs. It is part of an effort to destroy the Municipal Workers Union, which has ceaselessly fought against firings by the Volta Redonda city administration. The SFPMPVR has carried out seven strikes in recent years, successfully preventing 2,800 threatened layoffs. Union president Geraldo played a leading role in those strikes. The timing of the police assault is particularly ominous, given that in recent weeks Geraldo has been

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Police Death Squads Murder Street Children

Financial Times



Brazilian police are notorious for murdering black street children in the huge *favelas* (slum areas) around the major cities. Above (top): Military Police patrolling the Rio de Janeiro district of Rocinha. Bottom: Six street children massacred in the shantytown of Duque de Caixas in November 1991.

Recently, on March 15, a police death squad killed three street chil-

dren outside the provincial capital of Belo Horizonte. Calling themselves the "Reaction Group," the cold-blooded murderers left a letter complaining of low wages for civilian cops and threatening that "the blood ritual will not stop."

This is the killer cops' grotesque idea of a "job action." We say: *Police are the armed fist of the bourgeoisie! Cops out of the unions!* ■