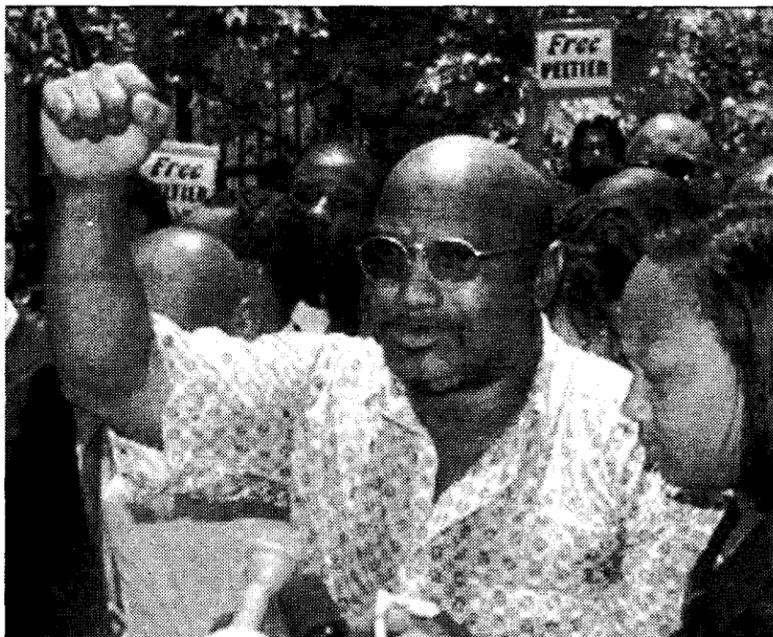


Drop Frame-Up Charges Against Former Black Panther!

Geronimo Out After 27 Years in Prison Hell



Reuters

JUNE 10—A jubilant, integrated crowd of some 400 people thronged around Geronimo Jaga (Pratt) this afternoon as he walked out of the Orange County Jail, where he immediately hugged his children and his two grandchildren. This was the former Black Panther Party leader's first taste of freedom after 27 years, well over half his life, in California's prison hellholes.

In a brief hearing earlier today in Santa Ana, Geronimo was released on \$25,000 bail following the May 29 overturn of a frame-up conviction for a crime *everyone* knows he did not commit. As Orange County Superior Court judge Everett W. Dickey announced Geronimo's release this morning, the 200 people packed into the courtroom and another 200 in the hall erupted in loud cheers which were heard floors away. Geronimo's elated supporters then made their way to the jail building four blocks away to greet him after his lawyers had posted bail.

Speaking to his supporters and the press, Geronimo denounced the FBI "Counter-Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO) which had orchestrated his frame-up and that of countless other black militants of his era. He described the "madness" he had just left behind: "You have political prisoners on top of political prisoners. I'm only one of a great many." Unbroken and unbowed in his commitment to the fight for black free-

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free All Class-War Prisoners!

United-front demonstration initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee in Oakland, March 1996, in support of Geronimo's fight against COINTELPRO frame-up conviction.



dom after all these years, Geronimo paid tribute to the numerous other militants who remain behind bars in America's dungeons, including Ruchell McGee and Hugo Pinell.

A number of other former Black Panthers were there to greet Geronimo as he came out. As well, there were numerous people carrying signs demanding "Free Leonard Peltier," the American Indian Movement leader and COINTELPRO

frame-up victim who has been imprisoned for nearly 20 years. Partisan Defense Committee signs demanded freedom for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

After a month-long hearing in which over 28 witnesses gave evidence, Judge Dickey ruled on May 29 that Geronimo was denied a fair trial in 1972 because the prosecutor withheld vital evidence from the defense. But Geronimo is

still not a free man.

Los Angeles district attorney Gil Garcetti, in a purely vindictive move, has filed notice to appeal Dickey's decision. And even if Garcetti fails in his appeal, he still has the option of forcing Geronimo to go through a new trial. The latter possibility is unlikely, however, as many elements of the initial frame-up engineered by the FBI and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) have now been publicly exposed and key prosecution witnesses are either dead or discredited.

Meanwhile, Geronimo has the legal status of someone who has been charged with a crime but not yet convicted. The state is thus holding an ax over Geronimo's head. It is crucial that all supporters of this unbroken fighter for black rights join in the call raised on Partisan Defense Committee signs outside the courthouse today: **Drop the charges now!**

The Spartacist League/U.S. joins Geronimo's many other supporters in hailing his release from prison. Yet we note with bitterness that the better part of his life has been stolen from him and his family, solely because of his uncompromising commitment to the fight against racist oppression.

We salute the heroic struggle Geronimo has undertaken for the past quarter century to prove his innocence and expose

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U.S. "Drug War" Covers for Brutal Repression of Peasants, Guerrillas

Military Reign of Terror in Southern Mexico

Numerous accounts in the Mexican press indicate that the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) government of President Ernesto Zedillo has sharply

escalated its military reign of terror in the southern state of Guerrero in the recent period. The Zedillo regime is conducting a war of extermination against the leftist guerrillas of the Popular Revolutionary Army (ERP), rounding up hundreds of community leaders and youth who are often tortured and "disappeared." Following the bloody U.S.-backed massacre of 14 Túpac

Amaru leftists in Lima by the Peruvian Fujimori dictatorship in April, we warned: "This will embolden Washington's Latin American front men—notably in Mexico, where peasant-based revolts rage in several provinces—to step up their murderous 'counterinsurgency' efforts" (WV No. 667, 2 May).

Representatives of three human rights groups who just visited Guerrero de-

scribed how the local population was being subjected to a state of siege involving "torture against detainees, cases of disappearances and an extensive military presence" including troops, tanks and helicopters (*La Jornada*, 3 June). The news magazine *Proceso* (1 June), citing a report in the ERP's *El Insurgente*, wrote that in Guerrero, "during the last six months, the federal army has increased tenfold, going from 4,500 to 45,000 on-duty soldiers."

Armed to the teeth by the Pentagon, Mexican troops are deployed in the region's sparsely populated, mountainous sierras, where desperate *campesinos* (peasants) live on the verge of starvation not far from the glitzy seaside

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Court Grants New Evidentiary Hearing for Mumia Abu-Jamal

Last week, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court granted a request by attorneys for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal to take testimony from key witness Pamela Jenkins. Jenkins was the central witness in recent investigations into a massive corruption and frame-up scandal in the Philadelphia Police Department. Earlier this year she came forward to

reveal that at the time of Mumia's 1982 frame-up trial for the shooting death of police officer Daniel Faulkner, she had been pressured by the cops to falsely name Mumia as the shooter (see "Witness Reveals New Link in Jamal Frame-Up," WV No. 664, 21 March). Most significantly, Jenkins revealed that her friend and fellow prostitute at the

time, Cynthia White—who was the star prosecution witness and the only one who claimed to have seen Jamal shoot Faulkner—gave this false testimony only after her life was threatened by the cops.

The new evidentiary hearing on Jenkins' testimony will take place on June 26. Unfortunately, the hearing will take place before notorious hanging judge Albert Sabo, who presided over Mumia's original trial and the Post-Conviction Relief (PCRA) appeal two years ago as well as a subsequent evidentiary hearing. Sabo has heavy-handedly dismissed all of the evidence of Jamal's innocence already presented before him. Prior to the state Supreme Court's decision to grant this hearing, there had been ominous signs that it was about to issue a negative ruling on Mumia's PCRA petition to have his conviction overturned. Now any ruling will be delayed until after the conclu-

sion of the Jenkins hearing and the consequent legal appeals.

Until now, the state Supreme Court had ruled that the prosecution would have the last word in the series of briefs and counter-briefs stemming from Jamal's PCRA petition. Now, the Court has agreed to grant Jamal's attorneys a final "sur-reply" rebutting the lies in the D.A.'s last statement. The "sur-reply" will be submitted on June 11.

Outrageously, however, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court denied a defense motion for "discovery" information and a further hearing based on revelations of systematic racist jury-rigging which came out through the release of the now-infamous Philly district attorney's office "training" video in March (see "Philadelphia: Frame-Up City," WV No. 666, 18 April). We say: **Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!**

Chicago Five Win Acquittal!

The Chicago Five, who initially faced a raft of bogus felony charges stemming from their participation in protests around the Democratic National Convention (DNC) last August, were acquitted June 5, moments after the defense rested its case, of the remaining "mob action" charge. This legal victory follows on the heels of the failed prosecution of the Anti-Klan Three for participating in a protest against a violent race-hate provocation by the KKK in Chicago's Daley Plaza last June 29. All these arrests were part of a massive police mobilization last summer by Democratic mayor Richard Daley Jr.'s administration, as it sought to stifle any protest whatsoever before and during Clinton's renomination convention.

As in the case of the Anti-Klan Three, the prosecution's witnesses consisted mainly of police who lied through their teeth, portraying the protesters, who were charged with breaking through cop

lines surrounding the convention center, as violent cop-bashers. The sinister "mob action" charge was brought in part because protesters invited residents of the Henry Horner Homes, a largely black housing project, to join the march. But the cop lies were torn to shreds by defense evidence, including a videotape of the march. The judge presiding in this non-jury bench trial ruled that the prosecution had not substantiated its charges.

Seeking to whip up a "terrorism" scare, the city authorities used repression of protest around the time of the DNC as both a trial run and justification for expanded cop spying and provocation against labor, minorities and leftists, hoping to take the wraps off the Chicago Police Department's notorious red squad (see "Chicago Cops Dust Off Red Squad," WV No. 669, 30 May). The acquittal of the Chicago Five is a small but important victory in the fight against heightened capitalist state repression. ■

CP Joins Witchhunt Against Arrested Anti-Fascists

Defend the Cleveland Anti-Duke Four!

As we reported last issue, four anti-fascist protesters who demonstrated against "former" Klansman David Duke in Cleveland on May 18 are facing charges that could land them behind bars for years. All opponents of racist terror must rally to the defense of the Cleveland Anti-Duke Four. If the government succeeds in sending them to prison, it will be a setback for working people and the oppressed across the country.

Yet Gus Hall's bedraggled band in the so-called Communist Party (CP) has not only abstained from defending these anti-fascist protesters but is actually joining in the witchhunt against them. In a despicable letter to the Cleveland Plain Dealer (29 May), Ohio CP chairman Rick Nagin wrote: "The violent incidents connected with the appearance of white supremacist David Duke at the Lithuanian Club in Collinwood have all the earmarks of a provocation orchestrated by the ultraright." Grotesquely, Nagin says not a word about the real perpetrators of violence that day, the cops who went on a rampage, beating and pepper-spraying the anti-racist militants in order to allow Duke to spew his genocidal filth.

Echoing the classic "outside agitator" litany used by anti-communists against all leftists, including the CP, Nagin sneers that the protesters were "evidently bused in from Michigan" and "lacked any support from labor or the African-American community."

Nagin assures the paper's readers (and the authorities) that his fossilized outfit "was neither present nor in any way involved." This hardly needs saying, since the CP's whole "anti-fascist" strategy has for years amounted to futile and suicidal appeals to this racist capitalist state to "ban the Klan," combined with fulsome support to Clinton's Democratic Party under the rubric of "fighting the right."

This is directly counterposed to what is urgently necessary: mass united-front mobilizations to stop the fascists, centered on the social power of the labor movement and drawing in blacks, Hispanics, Jews, gays and all of the Klan's intended victims. And, as opposed to the hatchet men of the CP, we believe in the old working-class principle that an injury to one is an injury to all. We fight for united-front defense of all those targeted by the bourgeois state for standing up against the Klan. Drop all charges against the Anti-Duke Four!

* * *

Letters demanding that all charges be dropped against the Anti-Duke Four should be sent to: Cleveland Municipal Court, Judicial Division, Box 94894, Cleveland, OH 44101-4894. Donations should be sent to: Anti-Dukke Four Defense Fund, c/o Refuse and Resist!, Box 606082, Cleveland, OH 44106, telephone: (216) 556-3512.



TROTSKY

For a Socialist United States of Europe!

The project of a European capitalist "superstate" is both utopian and reactionary: utopian in that the imperialist bourgeoisies cannot overcome their conflicting national interests; reactionary in that the moves toward greater economic integration are designed to intensify the exploitation of the working class and racist attacks on immigrants. Economic and political unification of Europe in the interests of the work-

ing masses, and especially of North African, Turkish, Kurdish and other minorities, can be achieved only through proletarian revolution. As Leon Trotsky explained in a 1923 article, the formation of a Socialist United States of Europe would have profound revolutionary repercussions around the world, from North America to East Asia.

Europe cannot develop economically within the state and customs frontiers imposed at Versailles. Europe is compelled either to remove these frontiers, or to face the threat of complete economic decay. But the methods adopted by the ruling bourgeoisie to overcome the frontiers it itself had created are only increasing the existing chaos and accelerating the disintegration.

To the toiling masses of Europe it is becoming ever clearer that the bourgeoisie is incapable of solving the basic problems of restoring Europe's economic life. The slogan: "A Workers' and Peasants' Government" is designed to meet the growing attempts of the workers to find a way out by their own efforts....

Long before the imperialist war we recognized that the Balkan states are incapable of existing and of developing except within a federation. The same is true of the various fragments of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and of the western portions of Czarist Russia now living outside the Soviet Union. The Apennines, the Pyrenees and Scandinavia are limbs of the European body stretching out toward the seas. They are incapable of an independent existence. The European continent in the present state of development of its productive forces is an economic unit—not a shut-in unit, of course, but one possessing profound internal ties—as was proved in the terrible catastrophe of the world war, and again revealed by the mad paroxysm of the Ruhr occupation. Europe is not a geographical term; Europe is an economic term, something incomparably more concrete—especially in the present postwar conditions—than the world market. Just as federation was long ago recognized as essential for the Balkan peninsula, so now the time has arrived for stating definitely and clearly that federation is essential for Balkanized Europe....

The sooner the popular masses of Europe regain the confidence in their own strength which was sapped by the war, and the more closely they rally around the slogan of "United Workers' and Peasants' Republics of Europe," the more rapidly will the revolution develop on both sides of the Atlantic. For just as the triumph of the proletariat in Russia gave a mighty impetus to the development of the Communist parties of Europe, so, and even to an incomparably greater degree, will the triumph of the revolution in Europe give an impetus to the revolution in America and in all parts of the world. Although, when we abstract ourselves from Europe, we are obliged to peer into the mists of decades to perceive the American revolution, yet we may safely assert that by the natural sequence of historical events the triumphant revolution in Europe will serve in a very few years to shatter the power of the American bourgeoisie.

—Leon Trotsky, *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vol. 2 (1953)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

EDITOR: Len Meyers

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Joe Sol

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mindy Sanders

EDITORIAL BOARD: Ray Bishop (managing editor), Bruce André, Helene Brosius, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Frank Hunter, Jane Kerrigan, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer

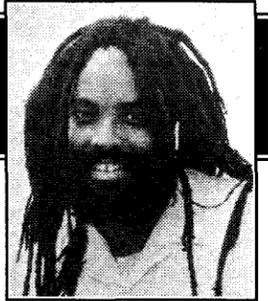
The Spartacist League is the U.S. Section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Workers Vanguard (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and with a 3-week interval in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 41 Warren Street, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net. Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is June 10.

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal



Summitry & Cynicism

"The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends."
— Proverbs 14:20 (King James version)

The recent so-called Volunteers Summit in Philadelphia was about many things, but really helping the poor wasn't one of them.

It was pure pageantry for politicians, camouflage for corporations and P.R. for a government bent on punishing the poor for the vile "sin" of poverty. It was the velvet glove that hides the iron hand that strangles the poor while singing a sweet, deceitful song: "I feel your pain." A pain caused by a social system that funnels the lion's share of wealth to the few, while snatching away the means of bare subsistence from the many, all the while donning the smiling mask of "volunteerism."

Why volunteerism? Why now?

Because the call for "volunteerism" comes amidst the most brutal government cutbacks in recent history, at a time when capital is triumphant, and both parties (the Republicrats) bow, scrape and genuflect to their masters on Wall St. They *know* these cutbacks will cause unmitigated disaster, unbridled, rampaging hunger, increased homelessness and bitter hopelessness, for men, women and children into the millions, but they don't give a hot diggity damn. In a world where all politics is theater, the "millionaires' government" was high opera, where the rich danced while patting themselves on the back, before a painted backdrop that covered a cavern of American socioeconomic decay.

While they danced a nice diddle, capital called the tune, and the play was staged in a city that has

become evocative of Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," for the stark contrasts between wealth and poverty.

Philadelphia's Center City, with its glazen, shimmering skyscrapers, and bustling business district, has its antithesis in its grim, crumbling northern neighborhoods, sites of socioeconomic neglect and official predation on the poor that echo the haunting emptiness of a ravaged Beirut.

In such a place, the brazen call of President Clinton, George Bush, former Pentagon chief Colin Powell, and the CEOs of America's wealthiest corporations to "volunteer" sound more like sacrilege than insult.

There is something almost perverse about these nouveau or born millionaires preaching to the poor about "volunteering."

Bill Clinton has worked for the government of Arkansas in some capacity for almost 15 years, as the state's attorney general, governor and law professor at the University of Arkansas, before his election as president.

George Bush was a Congressman, CIA chief, U.S. Liaison to Beijing, and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, before his vice presidency and presidency.

Colin Powell spent his adult life in the military.

The point being, all three men spent their adult lives working for the state in some capacity and made good livings doing so. None are known for volunteering.

For the corporations active in the summit the costs expended in Philadelphia can all be recovered by tax exemptions. For them, Philly was a freebie.

In the excessive media praise and fawning over the event much attention was given to a painting session,

where politicians painted the walls. It was a cheap photo op, the political equivalent of putting a band-aid on a cancerous sore, for in North Philadelphia, which has the most substandard housing in the city, to paint a wall when whole blocks stand barren is paying attention to a pimple while ignoring the loss of limbs.

"Volunteering" can't build enough houses needed by the poor, as even Habitat for Humanity supporter (and former U.S. president) Jimmy Carter admits.

According to the U.S. Census (1992) there were 36.9 million Americans living below the poverty line (33 percent of which are Black!). Will volunteerism feed them? Hardly.

Just as the call for volunteerism gains volume, government support gets shut off. Is that coincidence?

Thirty years ago, the government launched its War on Poverty; now it launches its war on the poor. As stocks rise, wages fall, and jobs slide across the border and abroad to fatten corporate coffers. In such a context the poor are seen as expendable, or at the very best as potential labor who may be paid at below minimum wage to keep "real" workers in line.

It is time to volunteer—it's time for folks to give their time and energy to revolution, to join and build such organizations that oppose this ruthless war on the poor, and work for a day when life comes before profit.

4 May 1997

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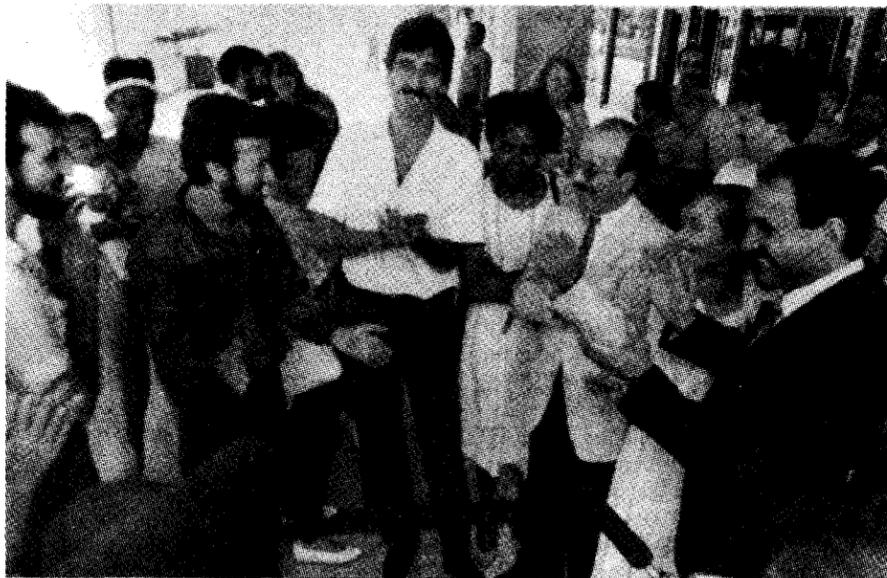
To join the fight to free Mumia and for the latest updates on his case, contact the **Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099; phone (212) 406-4252. E-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com. Urgently needed contributions for Mumia's defense, which are tax-deductible, should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense," and sent to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Avenue, No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370.**

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Down With Feds' Vendetta Against L.A. Eight!

For more than ten years, under presidents Reagan, Bush and now Clinton, the Justice Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) have tried to deport eight Los Angeles immigrants—seven Palestinians and a Kenyan woman—solely on the basis of their alleged political beliefs. In a surprising development, in April the INS granted legal resident status to two of the L.A. Eight, Aiad Barakat and Naim Sharif. But this is far from the end of the government vendetta. Deputy Attorney General Philip Bartz immediately announced that the feds planned to pursue their case against the others.

The case of the L.A. Eight symbolizes the anti-immigrant witchhunt which has reached fever pitch in recent years. Well-established businessmen, students and working people with families, they were arrested in dawn raids in January 1987 and charged under the McCarthyite McCarran-Walter Act with "advocating world communism." Specifically, the feds claimed that the L.A. Eight were supporters of the radical-nationalist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), despite their denial that they were either members of the PFLP or participants in any of its activities. In demanding "Stop Deportations of the L.A. Eight!" (WV No. 530, 5 July 1991), we declared: "Their struggle against deportation is vital to the fight against anti-immigrant racism and state terror."

The racist rulers have always sought to single out the most vulnerable sectors of the population in order to intensify capitalist repression against all working peo-



L.A. Eight in 1987, shortly after government launched witchhunting campaign to deport them.

ple and minorities. A case in point was the 1919 Palmer raids, carried out at the height of the "red scare" in the wake of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, in which thousands of socialist and anarchist immigrants were rounded up and deported. The patent aim of this witchhunt was to intimidate the labor movement as a whole and to purge it of its most militant elements. Italian anarchist workers Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti ultimately paid for their views with their lives, executed in Massachusetts in 1927.

The 1952 McCarran-Walter immigration act represented a continuation of this

anti-immigrant, anti-communist crusade. This reactionary "thought crimes" legislation was emblematic of the frenzied repression of the Cold War era, whose victims included the heroic Rosenbergs, U.S. citizens executed as "Soviet spies" in 1953 amid a crescendo of anti-Communism and anti-Semitism. In more recent years, the bourgeoisie has targeted Arabs in particular as it whips up "anti-terrorist" hysteria as a thin cover for all-sided anti-immigrant chauvinism.

It was in the course of the L.A. Eight's fight against deportation in 1987 that government plans came to light for herding Arab residents into concentration

camps in times of "national emergency." In the ensuing years, legislation has been passed to set up secret "anti-terrorism" courts for immigrants, where they can be "tried" without even being told what charges they face or what "evidence" the government is using against them. The bipartisan "Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act" signed by Clinton last year decrees that even permanent residents can be summarily jailed or deported on the basis of years-old prior convictions for things as minor as turnstile-jumping and bars *anyone*, including citizens, from providing even "humanitarian" aid to groups designated as "terrorist." This draconian law also guts the right of death row prisoners to *habeas corpus* appeals of their convictions in the federal courts.

Most recently, Clinton seized on the explosion of TWA Flight 800 off Long Island last year—which the FBI itself says was the result of a mechanical failure—to introduce a giant government database for flagging airline passengers with "suspicious" travel patterns or criminal history. Over the past few years we have characterized such escalating repression as indicative of a "creeping police state." With the latest measures, it's breaking into a fast gallop. One Justice Department official made this pretty clear when he stated in court last April that the government "can do pretty much what it wants to do" when it can demonstrate a "compelling interest."

The feds' dogged vindictiveness in going after the L.A. Eight reflects an intersection of anti-Communist (now dubbed "anti-terrorist") "thought crimes" prosecution and vile anti-immigrant chauvinism. After the McCarran-Walter Act was ruled unconstitutional and repealed by Congress in 1990, the government pursued the case of the L.A. Eight under other pretexts, charging them under the 1990 Immigration Act with supporting a "foreign terrorist group," the PFLP. The charges included raising

continued on page 5

Workers Power: Heart of Dimness

When the rebel army of Laurent Kabila drove former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko out of the capital city of Kinshasa last month, it brought a new reactionary, pro-imperialist regime to power in Congo (formerly Zaire). Kabila immediately clamped down on all political opponents and banned street protests. Numerous reports indicate that his largely Tutsi forces have carried out massacres of Hutu refugees. One of Kabila's first acts upon entering Kinshasa was to outlaw the wearing of pants or short skirts by women; his troops enforced the ban by stripping a number of women in the streets.

Having backed Kabila's rise to power, U.S. imperialism is now demanding that the new regime give lip service to a modicum of "democracy" in order to ensure stability in the mineral-rich country. Nonetheless, visiting American Congressman Tom Campbell praised the ban on political parties and protests as "perhaps actually in good judgement." Another Kabila patron, South African president Nelson Mandela, chimed in: "It would be suicidal for him to allow the operation of parties before he has had a firm grip on the government of the country" (*ITN World News*, 28 May).

Some months ago, we wrote that "revolutionaries do not have a side in this conflict," noting that the war between Kabila's forces and the despised Mobutu dictatorship "is essentially a struggle to decide who will preside over selling off the country's immense mineral riches to the imperialists while lording it over the dreadfully oppressed masses" (*WP* No. 665, 4 April). For its part, the British centrist Workers Power (WP) group hailed Kabila's movement as "progressive," lauding it as "a legitimate struggle against the pro-imperialist Mobutu dictatorship" and a "legitimate war of self-defense" by the Tutsi minority in Zaire against communalist terror (*Workers Power*, December 1996). But now that Workers Power can no longer sweep under the carpet Kabila's pro-imperialist, communalist and anti-democratic policies, it has taken to piously intoning that "Kabila is no friend of democracy" (*Workers Power*, May 1997).

Workers Power's methodology provides a case study in centrist opportunism. Kabila's "anti-imperialist" credentials, such as they were, stemmed from the fact that in the 1960s he led a short-lived guerrilla movement in which Che Guevara briefly participated. As Guevara's unpublished memoirs reveal, however, he was quickly disabused of Kabila's leftist pretensions (*Le Monde*, 8 April). When Kabila launched his power drive last fall, WP quickly latched onto it, consistent with WP's prior support to the neighboring Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (FPR) regime, which promoted Kabila's rebellion. WP supported the FPR's rise to power in Rwanda in 1994 and continued to back it even afterward, dubbing its military campaign in eastern Zaire a "just war" in "defence of the Rwandan population against the genocidal raiding parties" by Hutu militias.

For Marxists, the question of extending military support in civil wars and other conflicts is determined by whether the victory of one side or another will further the cause of social emancipation for the proletariat and the oppressed. A case in point in sub-Saharan Africa is our line on Angola. Before 1975, we gave military support to all three competing Angolan nationalist movements in their struggle against Portuguese colonialism. When the rival independence movements launched into a three-sided civil war against each other following the defeat of the Portu-

guese, none of these petty-bourgeois forces warranted any support from Marxists. However, when apartheid South Africa—backed by the U.S.—militarily intervened in the conflict in late 1975 on the side of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA and the FNLA, we then extended military support to the MPLA nationalists, who were



Robert/Syigma



Reuters

Hailed by Workers Power as "progressive," U.S.-backed Laurent Kabila banned opposition parties, ordered troops to suppress protests in Kinshasa (right) immediately upon taking power.

aided on the ground by Cuban troops. The defeat of the CIA/South African-organized offensive by the Soviet-backed MPLA/Cuban forces was a blow against imperialism.

In Rwanda and Congo, the Tutsi and Hutu armed forces were qualitatively similar communal-based movements in which neither side posed a military conflict with imperialism. When the Hutu militias had the upper hand, they perpetrated horrific slaughters of Tutsis; the Tutsi forces then carried out indiscriminate massacres against the Hutus. The Tutsis have received the backing of U.S. and British imperialism, while the Hutus were supported by French imperialism, which has been striving to maintain its historic "chasse gardée" (hunting preserve) in central Africa.

The line-up of the competing imperialist camps had its reflection in Workers Power's "international," where WP's support to the Tutsis didn't sit well with its French affiliate, Pouvoir Ouvrier (PO). PO publicly attacked the line of its British "cothinkers," using a similar position of Gauche Révolutionnaire (GR—affiliated to British Labour-Militant, now the Socialist Party) as a foil. PO denounced GR's call for "All power to the FPR!" as "totally opportunist, even treacherous," making the obvious point that the FPR wanted to "establish a new capitalist order albeit one loyal to other masters, Uganda and the USA" (*Pouvoir Ouvrier*, September 1994). WP/PO's parody of a "Revolutionary Communist International" is a vivid confirmation of Trotsky's observation that centrism—which, stripped of its revolutionary rhetoric, is defined by its overriding quest for "unity" with the chauvinist social democrats on its own national terrain—is inherently incapable of genuine internationalism.

Throughout the Cold War, WP repeatedly refused to side with the Soviet bureaucratically degenerated workers state against pro-imperialist and counter-revolutionary forces. But in every conflict between opposing petty-bourgeois or bourgeois nationalist forces, WP always searches for a so-called "progressive" or "anti-imperialist" side. At bottom, WP's methodology is social-democratic, substituting "classless" considerations (which camp is more or less "democratic" or

"genocidal," which best embodies a mythical "anti-imperialist" dynamic, etc., etc.) for the historic interests of the international proletariat. In WP's eyes, if the Hutu militias carried out a genocidal massacre of Tutsis, this makes the Tutsi-based nationalist movements "progressive."

WP's support to the FPR/Kabila forces

sneered that our warnings against support to Khomeini "amount to uncritical retailing of the chauvinist rubbish which filled the American press." WP ridiculed the notion that the mullahs in power would "introduce savage Islamic law punishments; stoning, public hanging and whipping" and "enforce the wearing of the veil" (*Workers Power*, February 1979).

Of course, that is precisely what the mullahs did once they came to power. Yet WP never repudiated its support to Khomeini. Likewise, as Kabila's forces closed in on Kinshasa, WP simply "dropped" its call for their "victory" and hoped no one would notice. Now, *Workers Power* (June 1997) blares, "Don't Trust Kabila—Fight for a Workers' Republic." Even now, WP promotes the sham "popular committees" set up by Kabila as vehicles for the workers to "press for their demands," while raising ludicrous calls for workers militias and workers and peasants councils in this extremely backward and economically shattered country.

WP disappears the need to link social struggles in Congo with those in South Africa—the industrial powerhouse of this region—which has a huge and combative black proletariat with the potential power to sweep away imperialist domination and carry through a socialist transformation of sub-Saharan Africa. WP's line there is *counterposed* to the fight for workers revolution, as it looks instead to the ANC-dominated nationalist popular front which suppresses the proletariat on behalf of the Randlords. In the 1994 South African elections, where the Communist Party and COSATU trade-union federation were part of a common slate with the bourgeois-nationalist ANC, WP yearned to give "critical support" to the popular front through the back door,

denies the fact that under imperialism, "nation-building" in backward countries with interpenetrated ethnic and national populations necessarily means one people dominating the others and seeking to drive them out or eliminate them. In practice, the policy of the "anti-imperialist united front" pursued by these pseudo-Trotskyists stands counterposed to Trotsky's theory and program of permanent revolution. Trotsky argued that in the epoch of imperialist decay, the unre-

Crowley/NY Times



Desperate Hutu refugees in eastern Zaire (now Congo) were subjected to massacres by Kabila's Tutsi-dominated forces.

solved bourgeois-democratic tasks (political democracy, national consolidation, agrarian revolution) in underdeveloped countries cannot be realized by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces, which are inevitably subservient to imperialism. The achievement of these aims requires that the proletariat, supported by the peasantry, seize state power and fight to extend socialist revolution to the advanced capitalist powers.

Marxism is a scientific guide to action, informed and reinforced by empirical evidence. Centrism, on the other hand, is, in Trotsky's words, "crystallized confusion," resorting to equivocation and obfuscation to cover its tailing of alien class forces. This is exemplified most glaringly over Iran in 1979 where, in the name of the "anti-imperialist united front," Workers Power joined with virtually the entire left in hailing Khomeini's "revolution." In bitterly denouncing our revolutionary proletarian opposition to both the shah and the mullahs, WP

complaining: "Had it been possible to vote separately for the workers' organizations and candidates within the ANC alliance then revolutionaries should have supported these candidates critically" (*Workers Power*, April 1994).

The unspeakable horrors of Belgium's colonial occupation of the Congo were powerfully evoked in Joseph Conrad's classic short novel, *Heart of Darkness*. Today, the horrors of neocolonialism—ethnic and tribal massacres, famine and poverty—are accompanied by the development of a powerful proletariat in the industrial centers of Egypt, the Maghreb, Nigeria and especially South Africa. The promise of liberation lies in proletarian struggle against capitalist imperialism and for socialism, extending to the imperialist centers. Proletarian victory requires the leadership of internationalist Trotskyist parties based on the program of permanent revolution and steered in the political struggle against all forms of nationalism and centrist opportunism. ■

All Honor to Black Civil War Regiment!

Boston Spartacist Leaflet

The May 27 Spartacist League leaflet reprinted below was distributed in Boston at various events held that week celebrating the 100th anniversary of the dedication of a memorial for the Massachusetts 54th Regiment.

On May 28, 1863, the troops of the Massachusetts 54th, under the command of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, left Boston for South Carolina, the first regiment of Northern black troops to be called up for the second American Revolution, the Civil War. The employment of *these heroic black troops* turned the tide of the Civil War, the greatest act in American history, which brought about the destruction of the slave system under which black people were not considered human beings but instead property.

The smashing of chattel slavery through the Civil War led to the most democratic period that this country has ever known—Radical Reconstruction, under which the Union Army occupied the South to prevent the former slave-masters from reversing the outcome of the Civil War and protected blacks from racist terror. Reconstruction was reversed by the “Compromise of 1877” when an alliance between the Northern capitalists and the Southern Bourbons took power away from the black ex-slave masses and placed it back in the hands of the former slaveholders.

In the South, a new form of white supremacy was established under the “Jim Crow” system of racial segregation and police-state control. In the North, although having formal “equality” under the law, blacks were forcibly segregated in inner-city ghettos. As the “last hired and the first fired,” they supplied a “reserve army of labor” for the Northern capitalists. Today, the ghetto poor are considered a “surplus” population that the ruling class doesn’t see as “worth” educating or maintaining even at the most minimal subsistence level. This is what is behind the attacks on every conceivable social program from welfare to affirmative action, the rise of cop terror in the streets and the speedup on death row.

As they condemn millions of black welfare mothers and their children to die, the government would like people to believe that the ghetto poor are responsible for their own poverty and desperation. To push this lie the ruling class upholds Colin Powell as “proof” that blacks can “make it if they really want” in racist America. Most recently, the former Pentagon chief—who oversaw the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis during

the Persian Gulf War—was one of the chief spokesmen at Clinton’s cynical “Volunteers Summit” in Philadelphia. The utter and vicious hypocrisy of this event was eloquently captured by black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal in a column titled “Summitry & Cynicism”:

“It was pure pageantry for politicians, camouflage for corporations and P.R. for a government bent on punishing the poor for the vile ‘sin’ of poverty. It was the velvet glove that hides the iron hand that strangles the poor while singing a sweet, deceitful song: ‘I feel your pain.’ A pain caused by a social system that funnels the lion’s share of wealth to the few, while snatching away the means of bare subsistence from the many, all the while donning the smiling mask of ‘volunteerism.’”

Now Powell has been invited to address the commemoration ceremony for the courageous black soldiers of the Massachusetts 54th. But, where the Massachusetts 54th fought against King Cotton and the racist system of slavery, Powell fought for the Seven Sisters of oil and racist American imperialism. Where Shaw and his troops fought for a revolution which would end chattel bondage, Powell served a military machine which has sought to enslave millions around the globe through bloody butchery. From the invasion of Panama to the racist occupation of Somalia under the aegis of “humanitarianism” to the rape of Haiti, wherever the forces of American imperialism are sent it has meant exploitation, oppression and death.

We also note that it is with the utmost hypocrisy that Mayor Menino and Governor Weld dare to attend this commemoration. Menino’s cops murdered the elderly black minister Accelynne Williams and ride roughshod over minorities and youth, carrying out sinister mass arrests at the housing projects. Meanwhile, Weld’s campaign to bring back the death penalty (itself a throwback to slavery) and “welfare reform” has meant the further impoverishment of hundreds of thousands of blacks and poor throughout Massachusetts. In the context of a national attack on blacks and immigrants, programs like affirmative action which provide some black and Hispanic students a chance at a decent education have been viciously slashed. Here in Boston, while students from Mattapan and Grove Hall were being purged from prestigious Boston Latin, Menino was busy restricting minority admissions at an experimental elementary school in West Roxbury. Weld and his education czar John Silber are doing their best to make the UMass schools inaccessible to black and working-class youth.



Women and Revolution

Monument by Augustus Saint-Gaudens honoring Robert Gould Shaw and the heroic black troops of the Massachusetts 54th stands in Boston Common.

We believe that not enough honor can be bestowed upon the heroes of the Massachusetts 54th. What they fought and died for was a society in which racism and slavery would be obliterated. But their aspirations were betrayed by the Northern capitalists. At one time the bourgeoisie had been capable of such revolutionary acts as eliminating the rule of monarchs and priests. Their profit system has since decayed to the point where it would rather throw the black masses to starve on the streets or lock them up in prisons than give them a decent education or job.

We maintain that the road to black freedom lies in the struggle to shatter this racist capitalist system through working-

class socialist revolution. At the time of the Civil War, Karl Marx, the founder of modern communism, captured the fundamental truth of American society in his statement that “Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.” The Spartacist League is fighting to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party that will wrest the tremendous productive resources of this country out of the hands of the corrupt and greedy capitalist owners. When the power of the racist ruling class and its state are shattered, and this wealth is deployed for the benefit of those who labor to produce it, then the basis will be laid for eradicating all inequalities based on class, sex and race. ■

L.A. Eight...

(continued from page 3)

money for hospitals, clinics, day-care centers and schools in Lebanon and the Occupied Territories, distributing literature (all of which was available in bookstores and libraries) and participating in demonstrations with anti-U.S. and anti-Israel placards. A lawsuit by the L.A. Eight seeking to block their deportation charged that the government had unlawfully targeted them because of their political beliefs. Indeed, former INS regional director Ernest Gustafson admitted that the L.A. Eight had been “singled out for deportation because of their alleged political affiliations.”

When a federal court issued a preliminary injunction blocking their deportation last year, the Clinton administration retorted that non-citizens were not entitled to the full protection of the First Amendment! After the government’s claim was rejected on appeal, Clinton’s Justice Department broadened its attack, arguing that neither citizens nor non-citizens should be allowed to provide “support” to those deemed by the government to be foreign “terrorist” groups. Now the government is using a new immigration law to claim the courts have no power to stop the INS from doing anything it wants. This law is a frontal assault on the democratic rights of all, giving formal legal sanction to what is demonstrated every day to black and Hispanic youth and striking workers—that the capitalist state’s police agencies act as a law unto themselves.

The new law, which went into effect April 1, not only subjects hundreds of thousands to deportation but strips immigrants of the right to appeal arbitrary INS decisions in the federal courts. Last October, the Justice Department tried to use the new law against the L.A. Eight retroactively, even before it took effect.

A January 13 ruling by District Court judge Stephen Wilson again rebuffed the administration, noting that the government’s position would render any immigration appeal on constitutional grounds a “fiction.” Despite a string of favorable court rulings, defenders of the L.A. Eight must redouble their efforts to finally put an end to the government’s continuing harassment and attempts to deport them.

The anti-immigrant witchhunt—part of a generalized assault on civil liberties—is aimed as well at pitting one section of the working class against another. This country’s capitalist rulers use *la migra* raids and anti-immigrant laws in an attempt to intimidate immigrant workers, many of them Central American refugees with experience in tumultuous class battles at home, threatening deportation into the hands of the death squad regimes from which they fled. It is necessary to fight for full citizenship rights for *all* immigrants, “legal” or “illegal.” The bourgeoisie’s anti-immigrant offensive must be fought by mobilizing the power of the multiracial working class—black, white, Hispanic and Asian. ■

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Turkish Regime Invades Iraq, Slaughters Kurds

The following is translated from Spartakist (No. 128, June-July 1997), published by the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD), German section of the International Communist League.

In the early morning hours of May 14, 50,000 Turkish troops backed up by Phantom fighter-bombers and Cobra helicopter gunships poured across the Iraqi border. During Turkey's 12-year war against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), 2,000 villages have been destroyed, 25,000 people killed and two million people turned into refugees, including some 15,000 who have fled to northern Iraq. Since the 1991 UN/NATO massacre of the Iraqi peoples, Turkey has repeatedly extended its military offensives to the Kurdish population of northern Iraq—but this invasion far exceeds, in scale and firepower, any previous one. Ten thousand Kurdish and Turkish political prisoners throughout Turkey went on a hunger strike at the end of May in protest against the invasion.

While Bonn competes with Washington in providing military and financial support to its NATO ally in Ankara, the ruling Christian Democrats (CDU) and "oppositional" Social Democrats (SPD) have brought this murderous war home by ruthlessly banning the PKK and other Kurdish organizations (as well as Turkish left groups), or even such elementary expressions of national identity as showing the Kurdish national colors. Despite our sharp political differences with the petty-bourgeois nationalist PKK, we of the Spartakist Workers Party stand with it militarily against Turkey's "scorched earth" war and defend its supporters against state repression here. Our comrades participated in a demonstration of 10,000 mainly Kurdish and Turkish youth in Hamburg against the Turkish invasion. We say: The Fourth Reich is the godfather of the bloody war against the Kurds! Down with the ban on PKK and [the Turkish leftist] Devrimci Sol! Turkish Army: Get out of Kurdistan!

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns immediately gave U.S. approval. Doing the dirty work for Washington in the region, Israel refitted the U.S.-built Turkish air arsenal so it could carpet bomb previously inaccessible Kurdish villages in the mountainous regions bordering Iraq. The president of the European Union issued a tepid statement of "deep concern" that the Turkish invasion remain within "appropriate boundaries"(!), even as German-made tanks and armored vehicles transported



Top: Turkish troops sweep into Kurdish region of northern Iraq. Above: Victims of army massacre in Turkish rulers' ongoing war against PKK and Kurdish people.

Turkish divisions into Iraqi Kurdistan.

The imperialist powers are enemies of working people throughout the world. As revolutionary internationalists, we stood with the peoples of Iraq against imperialist aggression during the 1991 Gulf War and the U.S. air strikes against Iraq last year, while stating that Saddam Hussein should be dealt with by his own working class for his crimes against them. We demanded: "Down with the imperialist embargo against Iraq!" Meanwhile the

SPD, the Party of Democratic Socialism and the Greens in Germany embraced it as the "bloodless" way to starve Iraq into submission to its imperialist masters.

The imperialists have repeatedly used the Kurdish people as pawns for their great-power ambitions while stabbing them in the back. Following the 1991 Gulf War, the strategic region of Iraqi Kurdistan bordered by Turkey, Syria and Iran and near the oil and gas fields of Kirkuk was declared to be a "safe haven" for

Kurds and off-limits to the Iraqi army—to be policed by the U.S. and its allies, under a UN fig leaf, as part of Washington's "New World Order." We warned at the time that such control by U.S. and other imperialist "peacekeepers" would create a situation as bad as that in Gaza and the West Bank. This "safe haven" has been repeatedly invaded by the Turkish army to round up and kill supporters of the PKK.

The feudalist and bourgeois-nationalist misleaders of the Iraqi Kurds, Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani's rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), have long histories of sacrificing the Kurdish national struggle for illusory support from the imperialists and their regional lackeys, while killing each other. During the Gulf War, they both sided with the U.S. and joined the CIA-backed "Iraqi National Congress." Both groups have been ruthlessly policing their "own" people, as well as collaborating with Ankara in hunting down

PKK supporters inside Iraqi Kurdistan. When the PUK, backed by Iranian troops, appeared to be getting the upper hand last year, Barzani got help from Saddam Hussein. The U.S. used this as a pretext for a major show of force in the Gulf—mobilizing its Pacific and Persian Gulf fleets as well as deploying B-52 bombers from as far away as Guam. Now the Turkish army is using Barzani's "invitation" as the pretext for its invasion, and the American imperialists are overjoyed. But it means nothing but death and devastation for the Kurds in both Turkey and Iraq.

With the USSR gone, the U.S. wants to show that it is the world's No. 1 military power, and it will use this power to exert its control over the oil and gas fields of the region, which are of vital concern to Germany and especially Japan. U.S. trade sanctions against Iran and Iraq are in turn also aimed against its imperialist rivals. When Turkey signed a \$20 billion gas deal with Iran last year, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* exulted that "it was a slap in Washington's face." And on the eve of its invasion, Ankara signed a deal with Baghdad for a 1,300 kilometer (800 mile) gas pipeline to run to the Turkish port of Ceyhan. But in both cases the pipelines pass through Kurdish territory, which has to be "secured" before they can be built. The sharpened inter-imperialist rivalries in the Near East are the harbinger of a future world war, this time fought with nuclear weapons.

At the same time, Turkey is also ex-

Protest Saddam Hussein's Execution of Iraqi Leftists!

As thousands of Turkish troops massacre Kurds in northern Iraq, the Ba'athist dictatorship of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad has launched a wave of mass executions of political prisoners. Reports from the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and the Worker-Communist Party of Iraq (WCPI) indicate that more than 250 detainees, including ICP members, have been killed since February in the notorious Abu Ghraib political prison, with another 600 facing execution in the coming weeks. The ICP has long been a special target for the terror of the Ba'athist regime. Other ICP members

remain in the Abu Ghraib dungeons, as do supporters of the WCPI and other leftists.

On May 30, supporters of the International Communist League in London and Toronto joined urgent protest demonstrations initiated by the WCPI against the executions. We call on all working-class and left-wing organizations to demand an immediate end to the executions, and freedom for all leftist opponents of Saddam Hussein!

While the American rulers hypocritically denounce the Iraqi strongman as a tyrant and flood the country with CIA

agents in an attempt to bring down his regime, Washington backed him for years in the 1970s and '80s as he cracked down on Iraq's workers, Kurds and other minorities. And now the U.S. and other western media are conspicuously silent on his mass executions of Communists and other leftists.

In the six years since the U.S.-led imperialist war against Iraq, hundreds of thousands more men, women and children have died as a direct result of the economic blockade carried out under United Nations auspices. We defend the Iraqi people against imperi-

alist attack, including the numerous terror raids since the 1991 Gulf War. Down with the UN starvation embargo! U.S. out of the Persian Gulf!

The Iraqi dictatorship and all the reactionary regimes of the Near East must be brought down by the working people and oppressed who have suffered under their heel. This requires the construction of revolutionary parties which take up the cause of all the oppressed—from the beleaguered Kurdish people to doubly oppressed women—in the fight for a socialist federation of the Near East.

Trotskyists Say: Independence for Quebec!

Anglo-Chauvinism Dominates Canadian Elections

JUNE 7—The virulently Anglo-chauvinist Reform Party, based in the Western provinces, emerged as “her Majesty’s loyal opposition” in the recent Canadian elections. In a campaign dominated by appeals for “national unity,” a code phrase for the continued suppression of the national rights of the Quebec nation, Reform Party leader Preston Manning played first fiddle in appealing to the crudest anti-Québécois bigotry.

Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien, who retained a slim majority in Parliament, called for outlawing any move by Quebec to secede. Conservative Party leader Jean Charest raised the spectre of partitioning Quebec to create a separate Anglo-dominated enclave in the event of secession. Yet election ads by the racist Reform Party, for whom all Québécois are “*untersmenschen*” (subhumans), scurrilously attacked both Chrétien and Charest as “unfit to govern” because they were born in Quebec! Railing against any “special status” for Quebec, Manning obscenely compared the calls for a “sovereign” Quebec by the bourgeois nationalists of the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois provincial government with the secession of the Southern Confederate slavocracy which triggered the American Civil War.

The Reform Party swept the Western provinces, with their biggest base of support coming from British Columbia. Among the first to praise Manning’s BC victory was the province’s New Democratic Party (NDP) premier, Glen Clark, who grotesquely declared that “the Liberals will have to be more responsive to legitimate B.C. concerns” (*Toronto Globe & Mail*, 4 June)! Playing the card of Maple Leaf chauvinism is nothing new for the social democrats of Canada’s so-called “labor party.” As our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada wrote in a 21 May election statement which demanded: “Down With

‘National Unity’ Chauvinism—Independence for Quebec!”:

“The bigotry fostered by the NDP and the labor bureaucracy serves to rally the workers of English Canada behind their ‘own’ exploiters, while driving Québécois workers into the arms of the bourgeois-nationalist PQ and Bloc.... In standing foursquare against Anglo chauvinism and supporting independence, we seek to redirect the workers’ struggles against their respective national capitalist exploiters. Independence would put an end to the historic oppression of the Québécois people at the hands of the Anglo rulers and allow the decisive class questions to come to the fore in both nations, laying a basis for common struggle against all the capitalist oppressors.”



Spartacist Canada

October 1996 “Day of Action” labor protest in Toronto against austerity attacks. Anti-Québécois chauvinism pushed by Canadian rulers and NDP lackeys is poison to proletarian struggle.

That the racist bigots of the Reform Party are now the official opposition party once again underlines the depth of the national divide which has long dominated the Canadian political landscape. The forcible confinement of Quebec—a

distinct nation with its own language, culture and, particularly since the early 1960s, a self-conscious bourgeoisie striving to cohere a separate political economy—has sharply undermined the cause of common class struggle by the English-speaking and Québécois working class.

Last October, the streets of Toronto, the financial capital of English Canada, were filled with the largest labor protest in Canadian history, against the vicious slashing of social programs. Waving the chauvinist flag of Maple Leaf “unity,” the capitalist rulers seek to deflect working-class anger over mass unem-

ployment and austerity into hatred of the Québécois. They are assisted in this by the right-wing social democrats of the NDP, who not only fan the flames of anti-Québécois reaction but whose provincial governments have served to

enforce the austerity diktats of the Canadian bourgeoisie.

Disillusioned in “their” party, hundreds of thousands of unionists and other working people in English Canada cast their votes for the unvarnished chauvinism of Manning’s Reform Party. The only place the NDP gained support in the recent elections was in the impoverished Maritime provinces, a protest vote against the Liberals’ austerity drive. In Quebec, the historic combativity of the French-speaking working class has been sapped, channeled by nationalist labor bureaucrats into support for the Parti Québécois.

Voter turnout in Quebec was sharply down, as embittered trade unionists, the poor and unemployed stayed home in protest against the PQ’s relentless attacks. Yet the Bloc Québécois again won a majority of Quebec seats and the ominous and increasing rise of the Reform Party can and will be wielded by the PQ and the Bloc Québécois to “rally the nation” behind them. Confident that the electoral success of the Reform Party will lead to a “yes” vote in the next Quebec referendum on secession, PQ leader Lucien Bouchard declared his conviction that this was “the last federal election in the history of Quebec.” Indeed, the governing Liberals remain the only substantive federal party in the fractured Ottawa Parliament.

As the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste wrote on the eve of a 1995 Quebec referendum on secession which failed by a narrow margin (“For Quebec Independence!” *Spartacist Canada* No. 105, September/October 1995):

“Nationalism and chauvinism have been the key strands in the ropes which bind the English-speaking and French-speaking workers to their ‘own’ capitalist enemies, setting them against each other, and against anyone else who is ‘not us.’ Thus French-speaking Haitians in Montreal, English-speaking Jamaicans in Toronto, Asians in Vancouver, aboriginal peoples struggling to assert their rights, are all victims of racist abuse and open state terror ‘justified’ in large part by the vicious logic of nationalism which currently defines and bedevils this country.

“We advocate independence for Quebec to help clear the way for united struggle by the racially integrated working class of the whole continent against the system of exploitation and oppression that threatens the future of all humanity. For an independent Quebec! For class struggle against *all* the capitalist exploiters, from Bay Street and Ottawa, to Rue St-Jacques and Quebec City, to Wall Street and Washington! Forward in the fight for North American socialist revolution!” ■

tremely unstable and ripe for class struggle. Massive social oppression and dislocation caused both by the war and capitalist austerity measures generated the mass public workers strikes which shook Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir last year. Even the conservative British *Economist* (17 May) bluntly warns that Turkey’s war on the Kurds is “unwinnable.” The parliamentary façade of what is in effect a military dictatorship is rapidly disintegrating; the country’s top prosecutor is seeking to have the ruling party, Necmettin Erbakan’s Islamic fundamentalist “Welfare” (Rafah) Party banned, while members of parliament from its corrupt coalition partner, Tansu Ciller’s “True Path,” are defecting like rats deserting a sinking ship.

For semicolonial countries, the collapse of the Soviet Union has meant the loss of what room for maneuver they had by playing off the Soviet Union against the imperialist countries. In this context, the PKK’s call on the UN and the imperialist powers to bring about a “political solution” is a dead end. At best, it would mean the kind of “autonomy” that exists in the West Bank and Gaza, where PLO police assist the Israeli armed forces in the brutal subjugation of the Palestinian masses.

The 25 million Kurdish people in the Near East, partitioned among Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran, constitute the largest nation in the world without a state of its

own. Because genuine national emancipation of Kurdistan requires the revolutionary destruction of four capitalist regimes—and accompanying imperialist domination—in this strategic region, the solution to the Kurdish question must be revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist. As we wrote in “For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!” (*WV* No. 651, 13 September 1996): “The motor force for the struggle for Kurdish inde-

pendence is to be found in the proletariat of the countries which oppress the Kurds. The workers of Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq have their own scores to settle with their exploiters.” In turn the Kurdish working class exists in diaspora, not only in the major industrial centers of the region, but together with Turks in the coal mines, metal plants and chemical works of Germany and West Europe. Immigrant workers here are the living bridge be-



Der Spiegel

February 1991 “mile of death” north of Kuwait City, where U.S. imperialist war machine slaughtered fleeing Iraqi troops during Gulf War.

tween the struggle for the emancipation of the Kurds in a socialist Near East and proletarian revolution in imperialist West Europe.

This is the perspective of Trotsky’s permanent revolution for countries whose capitalist development has been retarded by imperialism—the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution can be achieved only through the seizure of power by the proletariat, supported by the peasant toilers, and the extension of proletarian revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. It can only be realized by winning Turkish, Arab and Persian workers to champion the emancipation of the Kurdish nation and other oppressed peoples of the region and to be mortal enemies of the great-power chauvinism of “their” respective bourgeoisies. This internationalist perspective is counterposed to every variant of petty-bourgeois nationalism, no matter how “socialist” its rhetoric. In “Fortress Europe,” a first step in forging revolutionary unity is combating the poisonous anti-immigrant racism that serves as the battering ram for the all-sided assault on living standards and the ideological preparation for new imperialist wars. This perspective can be realized only by building vanguard parties of the working class in the Near East and Europe as part of a world party of socialist revolution. This is the task to which the SpAD and the International Communist League are dedicated. ■

Geronimo...

(continued from page 1)

the massive government frame-up machine which put him behind bars. Geronimo was denied parole 14 times simply because he refused to renounce the fight to prove his innocence, underscoring the assumption of police and prosecutorial infallibility in this country, where a prisoner must admit guilt before he can be paroled. In a June 4 statement on the overturn of Geronimo's conviction, fellow former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is currently fighting for his life from death row in Pennsylvania, noted: "His only 'crime' in the words of the authorities was 'he is still a revolutionary.' That is why they cased him, framed him and held him so long."

Geronimo Is Innocent and the Government Knows It

Judge Dickey's May 29 ruling came months after a hearing on Geronimo's fifth *habeas corpus* petition, which documented the all-sided collusion of government police agencies to railroad him into prison. The court's decision rips apart both the prosecution's original case against Geronimo and its continued attempts to deny prosecutorial misconduct. It details the D.A.'s failure to reveal that Julius Butler, the key prosecution witness, was an informant for the FBI, the LAPD and the D.A.'s office itself. It asserts that the false testimony at trial by the LAPD and Butler denying that he was an informant "left a grossly inaccurate impression on the jury." The judge's memorandum concludes that "this was not a strong case for the prosecution without the testimony of Butler, and certainly not an overwhelming case in any event."

In a June 1 statement aimed at mobilizing California unions and black organizations to demand Geronimo's immediate release, the Partisan Defense Committee, which has actively championed his cause for nearly two decades, pointed out:

"The court's decision, narrowly based on the compelling defects of the 1972 trial, is in fact a *cover-up of the massive and grotesque frame-up* to which Geronimo has been subjected. As we have detailed over the past decade, the government knows that Geronimo *did not commit and could not have committed* the crime of which he is accused."

Indeed, while almost unanimously behind the court's decision, bourgeois liberals are now seeking to mute or disappear Geronimo's political history as a leader of the Black Panther Party, while the press muses on Garcetti's current "dilemma" and wonders what the best course might be "when you honestly believe that someone was guilty as convicted."

The fact is that unambiguous evidence of Geronimo's innocence has been revealed through two decades of disclosures of government misconduct and perjured testimony. The failure to disclose Butler's informant status barely scratches the surface of the criminal conspiracy against Geronimo. There is a mountain of evidence detailed in volumes of government documents which have still not been disclosed, some of which have already been destroyed.

As early as 1985, a former high-level



FBI documents from COINTELPRO, the murderous campaign to destroy Black Panther Party, show Julius Butler (above), key prosecution witness against Geronimo, was a government informant.

FBI agent named Wesley Swearingen revealed the existence of FBI wiretaps which showed that Geronimo was in Oakland, 400 miles away from the scene of the murder for which he was convicted, at the time it took place! The FBI then claimed those wiretaps had been "lost."

An investigation by lay minister James McCloskey has led to the identification of the likely actual killers. It also came out that the sole eyewitness, the husband of the murder victim, identified a different suspect two years before Geronimo was charged.

Judge Dickey's opinion permits the false conclusion that those in charge of the case were ignorant of Butler's informant status and the benefits he obtained for

L.A. FBI Report on Geronimo, 26 June 1970

It is noted, however, that constant consideration is given to the possibility of the utilization of counterintelligence measures with efforts being directed toward neutralizing PRATT as an effective BPP functionary.

L.A. FBI Memorandum, 7 November 1969

For the information of the Bureau, BUTLER was extensively interviewed on 11/4/69, by SA [redacted] and [redacted] at which time he stated he was willing to provide information to the FBI on a confidential basis. Results of the interview will not be disseminated at this time, as additional contact will be made with BUTLER to determine his potential as a PRI.



Banner carried in April 1967 San Francisco protest against Vietnam War captured hatred of many black militants for racist U.S. imperialism at home and abroad.

concocting and attributing to Geronimo a fake "confession." But Julius Butler had over 33 contacts with the FBI in the 18 months before and 18 months after Geronimo's indictment in 1970. During that time, the FBI, the LAPD and the L.A. D.A.'s office coordinated their surveillance of the Panthers and of Butler's actions against Geronimo. As was revealed for the first time in the recent hearing, Southern California police agencies formed a group called the Los Angeles Intelligence Unit which met up to four times a year to exchange information.

Judge Dickey's opinion covers up for these active participants in the railroading of Geronimo and carefully protects those who built their careers on the government's racist vendetta—from Edwin Meese, who presided over the war on the Panthers as then-governor Ronald Rea-

gan's top cop in California, to Richard Kalustian, now a sitting L.A. County Superior Court judge who as deputy D.A. prosecuted Geronimo and paved the way for the fink Butler's admission to the California bar. The government conspiracy against the Panthers which targeted Geronimo among many others was orchestrated right from the top, through the FBI's notorious COINTELPRO operation.

Down With LAPD/FBI COINTELPRO Frame-Up!

A highly decorated Vietnam veteran, Geronimo returned from two tours of duty in 1968 a determined opponent of U.S. imperialism who was committed to

they will be dead revolutionaries." Thirty-eight Panthers were murdered outright; Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were assassinated in their beds in a 1969 raid by a Chicago police hit team under the direction of the Illinois State's Attorney. Countless others were framed up on false charges.

FBI documents from 1969 record the agency's designation of Geronimo as a "Key Black Extremist" and target him for "neutralization" as an effective leader of the Panthers. An FBI memo spelled it out: "Operation Number One is designed to challenge the legitimacy of the authority exercised by ELMER GERARD PRATT, BPP Deputy Minister of Defense." In December of that year, an LAPD Metro Squad and SWAT team commandos armed with M-60 machine guns, tear gas launchers and dynamite subjected Panther headquarters to a five-hour barrage and raided the house where Geronimo was sleeping.

Having failed to murder him, the FBI, LAPD and D.A.'s office then used Julius Butler to frame up Geronimo for the two-year-old unsolved murder of Caroline Olsen on a Santa Monica tennis court. Butler had an ax to grind after being expelled by Geronimo from the Panthers on suspicion of being a fink. With the knowledge of the FBI, Butler fingered Geronimo to the LAPD and then turned over to the LAPD weapons that he claimed belonged to the Panthers. Despite having earlier been found guilty on four felony counts, Butler was kept out of state prison and instead given probation and a \$200 fine. He was also given money to buy a gun by the D.A.'s office. Three days after Geronimo's conviction, D.A. Kalustian personally intervened to have Butler's fine reduced. All of this information was known at the time by the FBI, LAPD and D.A.'s office—and was withheld from the defense and the jury at Geronimo's original trial.

There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!

With Geronimo's enormous victory, his case is now being held up as an example of the justice of the bourgeois legal system. The truth is that Geronimo is a living condemnation of the American capitalist state and the racist injustice of its courts. After 27 years and mountains of evidence demonstrating Geronimo's innocence, the courts have produced a ruling on narrow legal grounds which covers up the scope of this mammoth frame-up and amnesties its perpetrators. The state and federal courts have proven to be a steady and firm ally of the FBI's COINTELPRO, repeatedly withholding from the defense secret FBI documents which have been examined by the courts and flatly refusing Geronimo any opportunity to expose the government vendetta against him. Until the December 1996 hearing in Judge Dickey's court, Geronimo had never even been permitted to call Butler as a witness in any proceeding.

Justice in America is neither blind nor does it carefully weigh the evidence on balanced scales. The courts, like the cops and prison system, are part of the capitalist state, which is not a neutral body but exists to administer the exploitation of the working class by the handful of rulers who own the wealth of society. By its nature, the capitalist judicial system is based on racial discrimination and class



AP photos

Massive cop assault on L.A. Black Panther Party headquarters, December 1969; Geronimo barely escaped assassination.



bias. Statistics gathered for the 1987 case of *McCleskey v. Kemp* showed that in Georgia a black man who killed a white man was eleven times more likely to be sentenced to death than a white who killed a black. The Supreme Court found this proof of racial bias *irrelevant*, saying that they could not overturn the death penalty on these grounds because that would put into question the entirety of the criminal justice system in this country!

At the same time, to justify its continued rule over the populace while veiling the racial and class oppression inherent in bourgeois democracy, the ruling class must maintain the appearance that the law applies equally and evenhandedly to all. Unlike the blatant bias shown in the kangaroo court of "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who has presided over the ongoing frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Judge Dickey has from the outset taken great care to preserve the appearance of impartial justice in Geronimo's case. His ruling, while most heartily welcome, does not change the nature of capitalist injustice.

Nor was this ruling a matter of humanitarian considerations. Geronimo's long-time support from significant layers of the California labor movement, black organizations and civil libertarians has made it difficult for the ruling class to simply bury him in prison and to hide the facts of his frame-up, which have persisted in coming to light. At the same time, with the unions prostrate and social struggle at an ebb, the capitalist rulers see no immediate challenge to their untrammelled exploitation and oppression. COINTELPRO succeeded in destroying the Black Panther Party and a generation of black militants who identified with it, while others were bought off and co-opted. With the key players in Geronimo's frame-up shielded from harmful exposure, there is no particular reason for the state not to let Geronimo out.

Moreover, there's plenty of reason for the racist rulers to want a facelift for the badly tarnished image of the judicial system in Los Angeles, with the obscene display of racist injustice in the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King still vividly imprinted in the consciousness of many. In a country where the gap between rich and poor rivals that in

many "Third World" countries, it is useful for the ruling class to confess a past "excess" in order to more effectively exploit and repress the working and oppressed masses.

On June 2, the *Los Angeles Times* concluded an editorial statement on Geronimo by stating, "Garcetti should close the book on this shameful chapter in law enforcement history." But the frame-up of Geronimo was not some aberration of a time now past. While the government was forced by embarrassing exposure to shelve COINTELPRO in the mid-1970s, America's apparatus of repression is still at work: from the 1985 firebombing of MOVE in Philadelphia which killed eleven black people, including six children, to the horrendous massacre of more than 80 men, women and children outside Waco, Texas in 1993.

Above and beyond these atrocities are the ever-escalating speedup on death row and the cold-blooded cop executions of black and Hispanic youth on the streets, part of the "routine" cop terror which stalks the ghettos and barrios across the country. And in his four years in office, Democrat Clinton has presided over an intensifying onslaught on basic civil rights, including slashing prisoners' access to legal defense and gutting the

vital *habeas corpus* right of prisoners to appeal their convictions in federal court.

There are to this day a number of class-war prisoners in America's jails, guilty only of the "crime" of having fought against racist oppression. Ed Poindexter and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyenwe Langa (David Rice), members of the Omaha, Nebfaska Committee to Combat Fascism, are in their 25th year of life sentences, convicted on perjured testimony in the 1970 killing of a cop in a bomb explosion. Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin Six, has been behind bars since 1965, framed up on charges stemming from the killing of three guards in the melee that erupted after prison officials assassinated Black Panther spokesman George Jackson.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has become a symbol of the racist injustice of capitalism in the U.S., persecuted by the same COINTELPRO operation that put Geronimo in prison, and Geronimo has consistently spoken up in his defense. An award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless" for his outspoken condemnation of police brutality, Jamal had been in the sights of the FBI and Philadelphia cops from the moment he joined the Black Panther Party as a teenager. Framed up for the killing of a cop, Jamal

was railroaded to death row based on his political beliefs, in a proceeding that was such a mockery of bourgeois justice that he cannot even be said to have had a trial. While a massive international campaign of protest stayed the hand of the executioner in the summer of 1995, Jamal remains on death row awaiting the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's ruling on his petition to overturn his conviction.

It is genuinely obscene to speak of "closing the book" on the frame-up of Geronimo ji Jaga. There is no way to rectify the vicious actions of the ruling class and its state against him—injustice has been irrevocably committed. But we can and will redouble our efforts to win freedom for the many other class-war prisoners and to continue the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party that can fight for a workers government which alone will put an end to racial oppression. As we said in an article on Geronimo's case in 1985:

"The full counterrevolutionary scope of COINTELPRO and its massive crimes against the Panthers and other black militants will be unearthed when the working class, led by a multiracial Trotskyist vanguard party, takes power by smashing the decrepit capitalist system through socialist revolution. The working class will not forget and surely will not forgive such bestial crimes." ■

Mexico...

(continued from page 1)

resorts of Acapulco and Zihuatanejo. Army encampments that sprang up when the EPR first appeared on the scene in June 1996 have now become full-scale bases. During this same period, the Peasant Organization of Sierra del Sur, the most prominent independent organization of *campesinos* in Guerrero, has had most of its leaders killed or jailed.

Guerrero has a long tradition of radical agrarian insurgencies, which for decades have been met with brutal government repression. But the current military deployment is larger than anything seen before. The PRI's terror campaign is aimed not only at crushing the EPR but at squelching even liberal bourgeois opposition to its corrupt rule. Indeed, the recent military escalation comes on the eve of legislative and state elections which pose an unprecedented challenge to the PRI's historic, near-total grip on political power. Among the scores of people assassinated by government forces in Guerrero since 1995 were 15 well-known leaders of the bourgeois-nationalist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. Now, with Cárdenas poised to win the first-ever mayoral election in Mexico City, the repression has escalated throughout the country. In Chiapas, armed thugs organized by the PRI have launched a series of murderous attacks against supporters of the Zapatista guerrillas of the EZLN as well as against the PRD.

For years, U.S. imperialism has been supplying arms to its capitalist client regime in Mexico in the guise of pursuing its global "war on drugs." When a

Guerrero legislator charged on June 3 that Zedillo was using U.S.-supplied helicopters intended for fighting drugs to carry out its current wave of terror against the EPR, the U.S. embassy stonewalled with pleas that it had "no information" to that effect. According to the *New York Times* (4 June), Washington's denials "were greeted with some skepticism." No doubt! As we wrote earlier this year:

"The 'drug war' is nothing more than a pretext for imperialist-sponsored terror.... Shortly after the EZLN rebellion broke out, the Pentagon not only delivered huge quantities of military equipment to the Mexican army, but sent thousands of U.S. troops and DEA [Drug Enforcement Administration] and CIA agents to Guatemala near the border with Chiapas. Even the U.S. government's General Accounting Office has admitted that American 'counter-narcotics' helicopters were used to transport Mexican troops to Chiapas, where they slaughtered hundreds of peasants."

— "U.S. 'Drug War' Means Imperialist Terror"
(WV No. 664, 21 March)

While defending the fighters of the EPR and EZLN against bourgeois state repression, we warn that their guerrillaist strategy, based on an atomized peasantry and relying on nationalist appeals, cannot lead to fundamental social change for the dispossessed and impoverished masses. In fact, these groups offer only an illusory strategy of trying to pressure the capitalist state for some "democratic" reforms, which in practice boils down to more or less open support to the "progressive" bourgeois PRD. In the midst of the current wave of military terror, on June 4 the EPR announced a unilateral truce as a "show of respect for the electoral struggle," pointing to legislative elections scheduled

for July 6. But in the electoral contest between the PRI, the right-wing PAN and the "left" bourgeois-nationalist PRD, there is no choice for workers and the downtrodden peasantry.

U.S. imperialism's brutal exploitation of Latin America is premised on the harsh suppression of the democratic aspirations of the workers and peasants, enforced through its bloody neocolonial regimes. The real threat to the rule of Wall Street and its local henchmen is not represented by petty-bourgeois guerrilla forces but by the many-millioned proletariat, which from Buenos Aires to Bogotá has recently entered into a series of sharp defensive struggles against starvation austerity measures dictated by Wall Street and the International Monetary Fund and carried out by the local bourgeoisies.

We fight for a perspective of mobilizing the working class at the head of all the oppressed—impoverished peasants, women, youth, indigenous peoples—in a struggle for socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist rulers who gorge themselves on profits extracted from the blood of their "own" working people. This fight must be extended throughout the hemisphere, in particular by linking up with the class struggles of the North American proletariat. As we wrote in our article in March:

"What is needed above all is the forging of revolutionary workers parties armed with the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution: to break the chains of imperialist domination, the proletariat—standing at the head of the peasantry and all the oppressed—must seize state power from the weak and venal local bourgeoisies and seek to extend socialist revolution to the U.S. imperialist heartland." ■

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Bonaventura/Contrasto

Workers' protests rock Europe: Trade unionists march in Paris against threatened closure of Renault auto plant in Belgium (left); Italian workers demonstrate last November against austerity cuts imposed by "left-center" Prodi government.

"Euromarch"...

(continued from page 16)

The destruction of the Soviet Union has led to increased interimperialist conflicts over the redivision of world markets and spheres of exploitation, ultimately threatening World War III. The global system of "free trade"—the economic cement which held together the U.S.-dominated anti-Soviet alliance—is crumbling as the major capitalist powers form rival trade blocs: a German-led European Union, with East Europe as its hinterland; a Japanese-led "East Asian Co-Prospereity Sphere," with Southeast Asia as its low-wage workshop; and a U.S.-dominated North American Free Trade Agreement,

protests and plant occupations protesting shutdowns that threatened thousands of jobs. In Germany this March, 85,000 miners throughout the Ruhr and Saar mining regions downed tools against shutdowns and layoffs. In every instance the mass reformist parties have betrayed these struggles, seeking where possible to divert them into the dead-end of parliamentarism. This poses the urgent task of forging a revolutionary leadership of the working class. The ICL fights to build Bolshevik parties to lead the proletariat in struggle against the entire capitalist system and toward the conquest of proletarian state power.

Trying to take advantage of the increasing and massive opposition to the economic austerity policies associated

The intent of the march organisers, who supported the election of the French Socialist Party (PS) and Communist Party (PCF), is simply to pressure the reformist misleaders. For the fake left, prostrating themselves before larger, alien class forces is nothing new. Throughout Cold War II, which began with the imperialists' frenzied reaction to the Soviet Army's intervention in Afghanistan in 1979, such groups as the USec, the British-based Workers Power, and Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party echoed their own ruling classes and labour lackeys in supporting every sort of counter-revolutionary scum in the former Soviet Union and East Europe. Thus, they backed the Nazi-infested Baltic nationalists; Lech Walesa's Solidarność (the only "union" in the world supported by the Vatican, Reagan and Thatcher); and Yeltsin's coup in Russia in August 1991. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, such groups as the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), the French group affiliated to the USec, are now playing a more open role as left social-democratic pressure groups on the mass reformist workers parties and as advisers to the top union bureaucrats.

While remaining committed to the Maastricht project, Lionel Jospin's Socialists have cynically sought to capitalise on the strong anti-Maastricht sentiment of the working class. Aiming to dampen the labour unrest which has rocked France, the PS mouths empty liberal platitudes about a "reorientation of European construction" around policies which would be "placed at the service of man." But Mitterrand's heirs are no less committed to serving the interests of the Paris Bourse than the Socialist government of yesterday, whose economic programme was encapsulated in *le franc fort* (the strong franc) and Maastricht. The new "cohabitation" government of Chirac and Jospin, and including the PCF, will continue the brutal attacks on the working class and poor, police terror against racial minorities at home, and imperialist plunder in African and other French colonies and neocolonies. Indeed, the fascist Le Pen strongly hinted that his supporters should vote for the candidates of the popular front in the second round of the elections against Chirac & Co.

Echoing Jospin's PS, the march organ-

isers, in a letter to sponsoring organisations, state that the march's basic aim is to "reverse the whole direction of European Union and national governments' economic and social policy." Indeed, the "Euromarch" programme does not even oppose the European Union or the Maastricht Treaty, while its USec organisers boast that endorsers include "those who are against the Treaty in principle and those who are not" (*Socialist Outlook*, March 1997). While some of the participants pay lip service to a "workers Europe" or a "united socialist Europe," **all support** the social-democratic and ex-Stalinist labour lieutenants of capital—the Party of the Democratic Left and Rifondazione Comunista (RC), who respectively are part of or prop up the pro-austerity popular-front capitalist government in Italy; the PS and PCF in France; Blair's "New" Labour Party in Britain. Thus the British groups involved in the "Euromarch" emblazoned on their press in gigantic letters the call to **vote Labour**.

In contrast, the ICL maintains that effective resistance to the present capitalist offensive requires a revolutionary internationalist perspective and programme. The European bourgeoisies are intent on savage attacks on the working class, slashing jobs, wages and social programmes, hitting hardest at the weakest sectors of society. Immigrants, asylum seekers and racial minorities are made scapegoats by the capitalist rulers, who use racism to divide the working masses and to poison the workers' class consciousness. As capitalist restoration ravages East Europe and imperialist aggrandisement drives the masses of the neocolonial "Third World" into ever more grinding poverty, larger and larger numbers of refugees face refusal of entry or deportation from "Fortress Europe," as well as deadly racist terror at the hands of the cops and the fascists, who have grown dramatically in France, Italy, Germany and Austria.

Fascism feeds off mass unemployment and despair, and across Europe racist terror against immigrants and Roma (Gypsies) is the cutting edge of the capitalists' attacks on the living standards of the whole working class. The interests of the working class and minorities must advance together, or they will fall back



Christian von Polentz

German Spartakists led anti-fascist protesters in stopping Nazi provocation in Berlin in February.

for the benefit of the American bourgeoisie, their Canadian junior partners and their lackeys in the Mexican ruling class. As we wrote in a joint declaration of the Spartacist League/U.S., the Grupo Esparquista de México and the Trotskyist League of Canada titled "Stop U.S. 'Free Trade' Rape of Mexico" (WV No. 530, 5 July 1991):

"Already at the time of the First World War, Lenin noted that the narrow limits of the capitalist nation-state had become a fetter on the development of the productive forces, producing a struggle over redivision of the world. The various 'common markets' in no way overcome this, but instead intensify interimperialist rivalries. We Trotskyists, communists, struggle for the economic integration of the world on a socialist basis."

The bourgeoisies must sharply increase the rate of exploitation and lower their labour costs, in order to compete internationally. The social welfare programmes currently under attack in West Europe were granted in the period following World War II, to avert what the capitalists saw as the "threat of Communism." Since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the imperialist bourgeoisies have moved to dismantle the "welfare state."

These austerity drives have provoked defensive workers' struggles, notably in Italy, France, Spain and Germany, often on a scale not seen in decades. In Belgium, Spain and France, Renault workers have staged internationally coordinated

with Maastricht, a number of organisations, centrally including the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec) of the late Ernest Mandel—are staging a "Euromarch '97" in Amsterdam on June 14 to coincide with an EU conference aimed at negotiating the terms of a Maastricht Treaty "Mark 2." The nominal demands of the march are for full employment, defence of social welfare provisions and against social "exclusion." There is **no call** to combat racism or fascism, and the demands which are raised are all couched within a framework which **accepts** the capitalist system.



Growth of Le Pen's National Front means more fascist terror attacks against immigrants in France.



separately. Thus defence of the immigrant communities against government and fascist attacks, centring on the demand for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants and asylum seekers*, is key to advancing working-class struggle in West Europe.

Furthermore, as we wrote last year (*Spartacist* [French-language edition], No. 29, Summer 1996):

"West Europe's dark-skinned proletarians are not just defenceless victims but a very important component of the forces capable of destroying the racist capitalist system. West Indian transport workers and South Asian nurses in Britain, North African Arab and Berber auto workers in France, Turkish coal miners and Kurdish chemical workers in Germany will play an important part in a European proletarian revolution. These workers are a bridge to the workers and peasant masses of the neocolonial Third World, a living link in an international socialist perspective. To transform this perspective into reality requires above all the construction of revolutionary parties, the re-forging of the Fourth International based on the principles of Lenin and Trotsky."

For Proletarian Struggle Against the European Union

Now the West European powers are fearful that the main objective of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, the pursuit of "currency union," may have to be postponed or abandoned. The French elections were called by Chirac to obtain a mandate for further attacks on the working class, to meet the criteria for monetary union on schedule. However, the victory of the Socialist-led coalition was fueled by the protest vote against the government cutbacks which also provoked massive public sector strikes in December 1995. Imperialist Germany itself now looks unlikely to meet its own economic criteria for monetary union.

As the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the ICL, noted in our 15 May statement on the French elections:

"If tomorrow 'monetary union' were abandoned or postponed indefinitely in the face of workers' struggles, it would be a victory for the workers who, throughout Europe, have put up sharp resistance to the capitalist offensive....
"Nevertheless, such a victory would necessarily be temporary and reversible. It is impossible, within the framework of the capitalist system, to do away with unemployment, austerity and racism."

Some reformist organisations, such as Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP) and the French Communist Party, present the EU and the Maastricht Treaty as the root cause of rising unemployment, government cutbacks and the general worsening of economic conditions. This obscures the fact that, with or without the Maastricht Treaty, the main enemy of the workers of each country is their "own" bourgeoisie. Here it is important to recall that Thatcher's Britain pioneered the dismantling of the "welfare state" years before there was any serious talk of a common European currency. Throughout most of the 1980s, the government of French Socialist president François Mitterrand (supported by the PCF) pursued a harsh monetarist austerity. As a result, unemployment rose steadily from 6 percent in 1981, when the "Union of the Left" came to power, doubling by the time Chirac replaced Mitterrand two years ago.

Our opposition to Maastricht and the EU is based on a proletarian-internationalist perspective and is counterposed to the nationalist protectionism pushed by the PCF and the SLP, with their respective calls to "produce French" and to "stop imports of coal" to Britain. In 1992 Scargill, leader of the miners union, shared a platform with Winston Churchill Jr., a notorious racist, in a campaign supposedly to "save British coal." Similarly, Klaus Zwickel, leader of the German IG

Metal union, demanded racist "immigration quotas" to "ease the German labour market," while the German building workers union organised a demonstration explicitly against Portuguese, Polish and Russian workers. Nationalism is poison to the working class, fanning the flames of racism by pitting sectors of the working class within each country and of different countries against each other.

The power of the working class must

defence of capital which the rulers hold in reserve to use against the proletariat, will ultimately be directed against the workers organisations. In contrast, we understand that crushing the fascist gangs requires mobilising the social power of the organised proletariat standing at the head of all the oppressed. This perspective has been exemplified by mass united-front actions initiated by the Spartacist League/U.S., which stopped

U.S. president Clinton with France's Chirac and Russian leader Yeltsin at meeting mandating NATO expansion to East Europe. Polish shipyard workers in Gdansk facing imminent plant closure are among victims of capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and former Soviet Union.



Reuters

be mobilised to fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours with no loss in pay in order to spread the work among all the workers and to maintain the workers' standard of living. The bosses' attempt to create a two-tier wage system is also aimed at pitting youth and immigrants against the unions. Now more than ever, the unions must fight to organise all non-unionised workers and the unemployed. We fight for industrial trade unions, to include all workers in the same industry. The crisis of unemployment and attacks on social welfare have hit women workers the hardest. We demand equal pay for equal work, and free 24-hour day care. To achieve these demands requires the systematic mobilisation of the masses for the proletarian revolution.

The Working Class Must Fight Racist Terror

The deadly danger of such nationalism was clear when this February in Berlin-Hellersdorf the Hitlerite "Young National Democrats" tried to stage a murderous racist provocation under the slogan "Jobs for Germans First!" But the Nazi skinheads' provocation was spiked by a united-front mobilisation of hundreds of anti-fascist demonstrators. This modest but politically significant victory over the fascists, who were sent scurrying under heavy police protection, required a political battle to counter the demobilising efforts of the social-democratic SPD and PDS. Those who wanted to *stop* the Nazis were mobilised under the leadership of our comrades of the Spartacist Workers Party (SpAD).

At bottom, the reformists look to the forces of the racist capitalist state to deal with the fascists. However, any bans or other action by the bourgeois state against the fascists, the armed gangs in

Ku Klux Klan and Nazi provocations in a number of cities.

It is the policies of the mass reformist parties—which are seen as part of the "establishment," sworn to protect the capitalist status quo which is more and more unbearable—that in fact engender the growth of the fascist menace. These reformists don't offer anything except more austerity, unemployment, attacks on social programmes, mass expulsions of "illegal" immigrants. The fascists then have an easy time presenting themselves in the eyes of the petty bourgeoisie and the most backward workers as the only "radical" alternative to the established order.

It is necessary to counterpose to the chauvinist demagoguery of Le Pen or the

Austrian Haider, who promise to end unemployment through the mass expulsion of immigrants, the socialist reorganisation of the European economies which alone can provide jobs for all with a rapidly rising living standard. As Trotsky wrote in 1930 when, under the impact of the Great Depression, the Nazi Party emerged as a real threat to take power:

"The problem of unemployment is one of the most important elements of the political crisis. The struggle against capitalist rationalisation and for the seven-hour working day remains entirely on the order of the day...."

"The *Soviet United States of Europe*—that is the only correct slogan which points to the way out of the splintering of Europe, which threatens not only Germany but all of Europe with complete economic and cultural decline.

"The slogan of the proletarian unification of Europe is simultaneously a very important weapon in the struggle against the abomination of fascist chauvinism, the baiting of France, and so forth."

— "The Turn in the Communist International and the Situation in Germany" (September 1930)

A Capitalist European "Superstate"? Utopian and Reactionary

The European Economic Community, predecessor to the European Union, was set up in the mid-1950s as an economic adjunct of the NATO military alliance against the Soviet bloc. Its precursor was the Cold War Marshall Plan, implemented by U.S. imperialism in the late 1940s. However, since the counterrevolution in the former USSR and East Europe, the reunified Fourth Reich has become more dominant within the EU, with the Bundesbank bent on dictating austerity from the Mediterranean to the Baltic. Germany's renewed drive for hegemony in Europe has generated sharp divisions within the ruling classes of the other EU countries, especially its rivals in two world wars, Britain and France. German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel predicted that the Amsterdam conference may be a "night of the long knives," a chilling reminder that the German Fourth Reich is the successor state to Hitler's Third Reich.

Control over the quantity of money within its boundaries is a basic economic prerogative of a bourgeois state, one necessarily closely linked to other instruments of economic policy. A stable monetary system based on the "euro" would require tight and permanent restrictions over taxation and government expenditure in all the EU member states. This is precisely what Kohl and the Bundesbank are now demanding. But since capitalism is organised on the basis of particular national states, itself the cause of repeated imperialist wars to redivide the world, it is impossible to cohere a stable pan-European bourgeois state. A European imperialist "superstate" can be achieved only by the methods of Adolf Hitler, not those of Jacques Delors, the French social-democratic architect of Maastricht. Should the Maastricht project for a common European currency come

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Workers Vanguard skips alternate issues in June, July and August.
Our next issue will be dated July 11.

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(English Edition)

No. 53
Summer 1997
(56 pages)

\$1.50

Spartacist is sent to all WV subscribers.

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NUMBER 53 ENGLISH EDITION SUMMER 1997

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"Euromarch"...

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into being, it would amount to only a brief, conflict-ridden episode.

The idea of a gradual evolution into a "united states of Europe" under capitalism is a utopian fantasy. Lenin was clear in his denunciation of the concept in 1915:

"From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the 'advanced' and 'civilised' colonial powers—a 'United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary...."

"Of course, *temporary* agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists...but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America."

— "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe" (August 1915)

In the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, Marx and Engels noted that the capitalist system had created a world market, laying the basis for proletarian internationalism. Only the taking of state power by the working class, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in at least several advanced industrial countries, can achieve a rationally planned economy, placing the productive capacity of Europe at the service of the working people of the world. Only on this basis can we speak of a *Socialist* United States of Europe.

The Left Fringe of European Social Democracy

The stage for the present attacks on the working class and immigrants in West Europe was set by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. In East Europe and the former Soviet Union, the devastating consequences of capitalist restoration are manifest: from intercommunal slaughter to widespread hunger and homelessness. In Poland and elsewhere, women have been driven from the workforce, while abortion rights have been sharply curtailed. The impact of counterrevolution, both in the former degenerated/deformed workers states and internationally, underscores how profoundly right was the Trotskyist position on the Russian question: for unconditional military defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counter-revolution, and for proletarian politi-



1917 Russian Revolution: soldiers demonstrate under banner reading "Communism." For new October Revolutions!

cal revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. This remains our program for the remaining deformed workers states of China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba.

In 1979 we said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan" and "Extend Social Gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan Peoples." We noted that the Red Army was defending the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism, and was on the side of social progress, defending the rights of women against the CIA-backed *mujahedin* reactionaries. From the moment Polish Solidarność consolidated around an openly pro-imperialist programme in the autumn of 1981, we raised the call "Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution!" Eight years later, we threw our forces into East Germany, seeking to provide revolutionary leadership to the incipient political revolution which erupted with the opening of the Berlin Wall. While Gorbachev gave the green light to capitalist reunification and the Stalinists of the SED/PDS sold out the DDR, we unconditionally opposed capitalist *Anschluss* (annexation) of the East German deformed workers state by West German imperialism. We fought for a "Red Germany of Workers Councils" as part of a Socialist United States of Europe.

Today with the West European bourgeoisies gloating about the "death of communism" and dismantling state welfare programmes, the already very tame mass social-democratic and ex-Stalinist parties have moved even farther to the

right. Foremost among them is Tony Blair's "New" Labour in Britain, whose leaders want to refashion it as an outright bourgeois party modelled on Clinton's Democrats in the U.S. Blair's party has dropped its few remaining pretences to represent the interest of the working class and intends to sever Labour's link with the trade unions.

Keeping in step with this shift to the right, a host of pseudo-Trotskyist groups are openly embracing the lie that capitalism can be reformed. One of the smaller centrist outfits participating in the Euromarch campaign, the British Workers Power group (WP) and its League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI), actually maintains that the European Union and a common European currency are progressive, or potentially so. WP took an abstentionist position during the 1992 referendums on Maastricht. Echoing Labour's enthusiasm over the EU "Social Charter," they argued that "the terms of the Maastricht Treaty can also be a basis for extending rights and gains from states where the working class never won those gains, or where it has lost them" and they added that "to some extent European workers will be better armed to fight back on a continental scale after the implementation of the terms of Maastricht" (*Workers Power*, June 1992).

Today, these EU socialists still hold that Maastricht is preferable to nationally "isolated" capitalism:

"The national states would carry out equally anti-working class policies whether they were in the EU or out of it. To the extent that they would be thrown back upon smaller markets and face sharper competition, their capitalists would have to launch redoubled attacks."

—"Build a United Socialist Europe!" *Workers Power*, May 1997

In its own way, the LRCI is here echoing the threats of the Bundesbank and international financiers that any EU member state which does not accept a common currency will face massive capital flight and suffer economic hardships even worse than those resulting from the Maastricht convergence terms. This same kind of argument is also used by both capitalists and labour bureaucrats to oppose increased wages and benefits within the framework of a particular European nation-state.

The LRCI's own answer to Maastricht is a parody of parliamentary cretinism:

"Dissolve the powerless European parliament and convene a Europe-wide constituent assembly (organised and defended by the workers' organisations) to tear up the Maastricht treaty and to draw up a new workers' plan for economic and political convergence, designed to meet the needs of the workers, not the ruling class."

—*Workers Power*, January 1997

Why not tear up the NATO treaty, too, while they're about it? Or "open the borders" of the bourgeois states—another utopian demand raised by Workers Power? The Maastricht Treaty is an agreement between bourgeois *states*. As Marx and Engels explained a long time ago, bourgeois states are ultimately based not on parliaments or ministries

but on *armed bodies of men*. The working class can tear up the economic as well as the military arrangements of the world capitalist system only by smashing the bourgeois state apparatus and replacing it by the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a government of workers councils. But this perspective is completely counterposed to the aims of the sponsors of Euromarch '97.

In practice, the "internationalism" of groups like the USec, the LRCI and the British-based centrists of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency boils down to support for "progressive" imperialism. This was graphically illustrated by their joint campaign for "Workers Aid to Bosnia," which was a stalking-horse for NATO/UN intervention on the Bosnian Muslim side, inflaming communalist war in the Balkans. The "Workers Aid" campaign, with its calls to "lift the arms embargo of Bosnia," was a thinly veiled call for imperialism to arm the Bosnian Muslim forces. Capitalist restoration in the bureaucratically deformed workers state of Yugoslavia led to all-sided communalist massacres among the Balkan peoples, fuelled by rival imperialist intervention forces. As proletarian internationalists, we oppose all the competing nationalist forces, demand the withdrawal of all imperialist troops and called for military defence of the Bosnian Serbs when they were targeted by NATO bombing raids. We recognise that the only just solution to murderous nationalism and communalism lies in socialist revolution to sweep away all the reactionary regimes and to establish a socialist federation of the Balkans.

It is the duty of communists in the imperialist countries to call and work for the military defeat of their "own" bourgeoisie in wars against the colonial and semicolonial countries. Our comrades of the LTF fight against the bloody colonialist machinations of French imperialist troops in Africa. Building for the Euromarch, the British Socialist Party (SP, formerly Militant Labour) declares: "We are internationalists and support greater solidarity and integration of the working peoples of Europe and the world" (*Socialist*, 16 May). The British SP's "internationalism" certainly does not extend to opposition to British imperialism in Ireland. Notorious in Britain for their rejection of the call for British troops out of Northern Ireland, SP meetings in Belfast and Dublin have hosted a representative of the fascist Ulster Loyalist paramilitary groups, convicted for the murder of two Catholics. Scandalously, the British SWP *supported* the introduction of British troops to Northern Ireland in 1969, on the pretext that they would "save lives."

In stark contrast to this social-chauvinism, the Spartacist League/Britain and the Dublin Spartacist Group call for the immediate unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland as part of the fight for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles. As a 21 April SL/B election statement stressed:

"We oppose the forcible reunification of Ireland, and recognise that there can be no equitable solution to the national oppression in Ireland within the framework of capitalism. Northern Ireland is a situation of interpenetrated peoples in which the Catholic minority is currently oppressed within the sectarian Orange statelet.... A proletarian perspective is necessarily internationalist, and requires the mobilisation of the working class on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the Irish Sea for the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism, smashing the Orange statelet in the North as well as the Catholic clericalist state in the South."

Against Popular Frontism

As Lenin indicated, under certain conditions it is a correct tactic for a small revolutionary organisation to give critical electoral support to a larger reformist workers party. The basic condition for such a tactic is that the reformist party in question presents itself as representing the interests of the working class independently of and against the parties of

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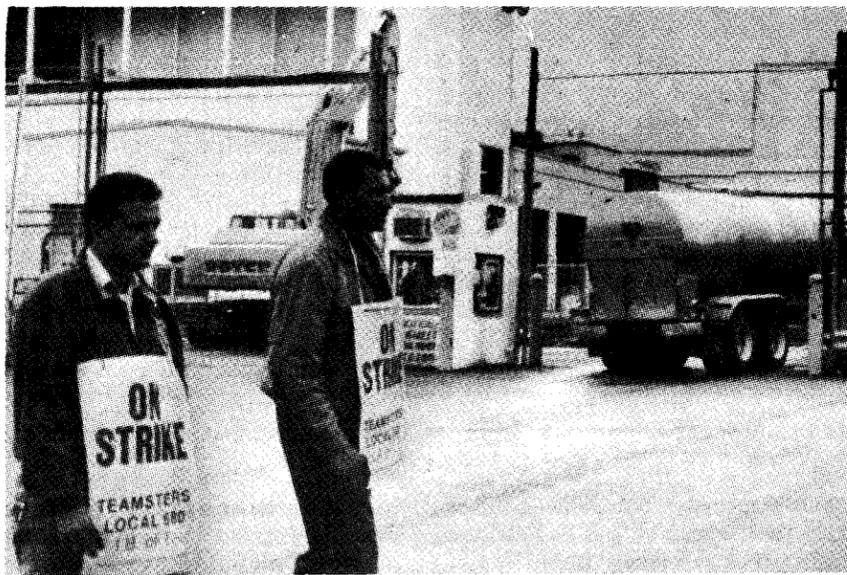
Defend Farmland Teamster Strikers!

New Jersey

A small strike by Teamsters drivers in northern New Jersey provides an object lesson in how the union bureaucracy is running the labor movement into the ground. The strike at Farmland Dairies in Wallington began in December 1995 when the owners tried to impose a union-busting *three-tier* scale of wages and benefits. Farmland supplies milk to supermarkets throughout New Jersey and New York City. By cutting off deliveries and leaving management with thousands of gallons of soured milk, this strike *could and should have ended in victory in a matter of days*. Instead, the strike has dragged on for 18 months, 150 workers have been locked out and replaced by scabs, and over a dozen strikers face imprisonment on assault and other bogus charges for defending their picket lines. All labor must demand: **Drop all charges against Farmland strike militants!**

Typically, the strike began with a burst of militancy. Just as typically, that militancy was stifled and suppressed by misleaders committed to enforcing the strikebreaking dictates of the capitalist courts. A couple of days into the strike, over 400 unionists from striking Teamsters Local 680 and New York Local 584 dairy workers massed outside the plant before dawn—intent on stopping scabs entering and delivery trucks leaving. As local police called in the county Rapid Deployment Force, strikers were confronted by 150 helmeted riot cops outfitted with gas masks.

But what stopped the strikers was their own “leaders,” who that very day caved in to a temporary restraining order and a further injunction reducing the “picket line” to two or three strikers. Instead of appealing to Teamsters and other unionists throughout the area to



Isolated Farmland strikers watch as scab trucks roll through plant gate; union tops caved in to court injunction barring mass pickets.

turn out for mass pickets which could have turned the injunction into a meaningless scrap of paper, the union tops dispersed the strike *away from the point of production*, sending picketers off to far-flung supermarkets to plead with shoppers not to buy Farmland products.

“Family owned” Farmland, whose sales total more than \$150 million a year, has pulled every dirty trick in the book in an attempt to divide the multi-racial workforce and smash the union. Strikers told *Workers Vanguard* that the owners called a plant meeting a month before the contract expired to offer “lifetime jobs,” skills training and job upgrades to all workers who would agree to cross picket lines. Fifty scabs accepted the bosses’ inducements; those who refused to quit the union were threatened with a permanent lockout.

The owners’ strikebreaking has been backed to the hilt not only by the cops and courts, but the capitalist state’s prison system has also been brought

into play. A shop steward reported the use of *prison labor as scabs*: “Every day, three times a day, we’d see the sheriff’s van pull in and seven or eight guys would get out. A couple of times we saw them putting their orange jumpsuits on at the end of the day.”

Farmland also filed an antitrust suit against the New York and New Jersey Teamsters locals. Nearly a year into the strike, Local 680 members learned that a transparent company union called “United Workers of America” (UWA)—with no AFL-CIO connection—was challenging the Teamsters for representation. A sham vote under Labor Department auspices—with one polling place for the strikers and a second inside the plant for the scabs—resulted, not surprisingly, in a narrow victory for the company-promoted “union.” The feds’ “Labor Relations Board” (NLRB) then dutifully dismissed the Teamsters’ challenge to the election, which is still being appealed. Looking to the capital-

ist government to “save the strike” is part and parcel of the same losing strategy which led to the dismantling of the picket lines.

The strike was undermined from the beginning by a 1992 agreement for a two-tier wage scale which the local executive board slipped in behind the workers’ backs. Management recruited its scabs from among these disgruntled “second-class” workers. One striker expressed a common sentiment when he said, “With a second tier you’re underselling a man coming in under you. Nobody with a conscience can work that way. That’s how they separate you. That’s what they did; they separated us.” This also emboldened Farmland to try to impose yet a *third* tier, which would doom new-hires to permanently lower wages with no health care, pension or holidays. If Farmland succeeds, it could affect all unionized New York and New Jersey dairies because of “me too” clauses in the contracts.

The Farmland strikers—white, black, East European, Middle Eastern, West Indian and Hispanic—have shown a determination to fight over all these months. What they have lacked is a leadership which starts from the ABCs of the class struggle—that the bosses and their state are the enemies of workers and minorities. One striker from East Europe remarked, “Here in America, the term ‘middle-class’ is used to cover up the difference between workers and the bosses. Everyone is middle-class—the homeless, the stockbrokers—everyone.” The political lessons of this strike need to be learned. What is needed is a *class-struggle leadership and program* which intransigently guards the political independence of the labor movement from the capitalist rulers and their political parties as part of the fight for a society in which those who labor will rule.

the bourgeoisie. Critical electoral support affords revolutionaries a broader hearing for their own views and puts them in a better position to attract militant workers who become disillusioned when their leaders betray, as they inevitably do, their professed principles and programme. Thus, in the recent elections the Spartacist League/Britain campaigned for a vote to Arthur Scargill’s SLP, a left split from Blair’s “New” Labour Party. The SLP, which stood in opposition to New Labour, espouses a variant of “old Labour” reformism.

Like Lenin and Trotsky, the ICL opposes in principle any type of coalition with capitalist parties (“popular frontism”), whether in government or in

opposition, and we oppose voting for reformist parties in popular fronts, like the PDS and RC in Italy and the PS and PCF in France. In its 15 May leaflet, the LTF noted that by running in an alliance with bourgeois formations (including the ultra-chauvinist Jean-Pierre Chevènement) the French reformist parties “thus become representatives of a *bourgeois* coalition. Under these conditions, a vote for the parties in these coalitions is a vote for the class enemy. It is a break with the principle of class independence. **No vote for the workers parties in popular fronts! No to class collaboration!**” The LTF also said no vote to Lutte Ouvrière, who ostentatiously refuse to participate in any struggles against

the fascist forces of Le Pen or against racism.

The USec’s LCR and LRCI’s Pouvoir Ouvrier both called for votes to pro-Maastricht Socialists and the virulently chauvinist PCF. This flatly negates their respective posturing for a “socialist Europe.” In Italy, the USec section serves as a loyal “opposition” within RC, which in turn acts as a prop for the “left-center” capitalist Prodi government. The “Ulivo” (Olive Tree) coalition presides over vicious austerity, murderous attacks on immigrants and imperialist military intervention in Albania. More left-leaning elements in the USec look to the centrist Proposta group led by Franco Grisolia, which also operates within RC as a “left” cover for popular-front betrayal. Proposta expressed its allegiance to Italian imperialism recently by voting in favour of an RC motion which sought to provide a “United Nations” fig leaf for military intervention in Albania. Our comrades of the Lega Trotskista d’Italia denounced the bloody murder of 89 Albanian refugees by the Italian navy and demanded: “Italian imperialism, get your bloody hands off Albania! Full citizenship rights for the Albanian refugees and all immigrants!”

For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky!

The social democrats and ex-Stalinists now present themselves as a “lesser evil,” as advocates of a lesser degree of unemployment, cutbacks in social programmes and overall economic hardship. And the “far left” pseudo-Trotskyists have in their turn become the defenders of the “welfare state” status quo. We stand for a fundamentally different programme and per-

spective: the smashing of the capitalist state, the expropriation of the means of production and the establishment of a planned, collectivised economy under a workers government. We seek to go forward to new October Revolutions throughout Europe and throughout the world. As the Transitional Programme, the founding document of the Fourth International written in 1938, states:

“The Fourth International does not search after and does not invent panaceas. It takes its stand completely on Marxism as the only revolutionary doctrine that enables one to understand reality, unearth the cause behind the defeats, and consciously prepare for victory. The Fourth International continues the tradition of Bolshevism, which first showed the proletariat how to conquer power.”

The ICL is dedicated to the task of re-forging Trotsky’s Fourth International through intransigent political struggle against the social-democratic and ex-Stalinist betrayers and their centrist hangers-on. ■

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AFL-CIO...

(continued from page 16)

took a break from celebrating Clinton's second inauguration to raise the white flag. The Knight-Ridder and Gannett newspaper bosses were out to bludgeon the unions at any cost. The direct connection between the corporate bosses and their state was as vivid as the photos showing police attacking strikers and their allies on the picket lines. This was a graphic affirmation of the Marxist understanding that the capitalist state is not a "neutral" agency but rather an apparatus of repression—cops, courts and prisons—whose purpose is to protect the class rule of the bourgeoisie.

Trade unionists throughout the area saw this strike as a key battle, joining the strikers on militant picket lines which initially threw back the scabs and cops. But from the outset, the union tops sought to quell the workers' militancy, using strike-breaking court injunctions as a cover for dispersing the pickets and channeling the struggle into impotent consumer boycotts and even more futile appeals to the Gannett and Knight-Ridder boards of directors. The AFL-CIO misleaders who now talk of "solidarity" were the very ones who *killed this strike!*

In part to cover over the tracks of this betrayal, on April 13 Sweeney & Co. organized a march by some 20,000 trade unionists, students and others in Watsonville, California to support an organizing effort for mostly immigrant strawberry pickers. But far from seeking to mobilize the unions *in struggle* against California's powerful agribusiness corporations—through strike action in the fields backed by solidarity strikes and labor boycotts by the Teamsters and other unions—the AFL-CIO leadership ensured that this was a political rally for Clinton's capitalist Democratic Party. Their keynote speaker was black Democratic spokesman Jesse Jackson, who pleaded, "Mr. Clinton, stand up and lead us forward." This appeal to the capitalist state's commander in chief to "lead" the struggle for the downtrodden immigrant farm workers is particularly obscene given Clinton's militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border and his axing of welfare and other benefits for blacks, immigrants and the poor.

Behind both the debacle in Detroit and the defeatist strategy pushed in Watsonville is the labor bureaucracy's political partnership with capital, expressed chiefly through its ties to the Democratic Party. And in this profoundly racist society, that means turning a blind eye, at best, to the oppression of blacks and immigrants. Yet particularly in the cases of Watsonville and the newspaper strike in overwhelmingly black Detroit, it is manifest that labor's cause cannot be advanced without championing the cause of all the oppressed. At the outset of the Detroit strike, we wrote: "A class-struggle leadership in the union would have the



Daymon J. Hartley

Detroit newspaper strikers were repeatedly attacked by union-busting "security guards" (seen above) and cops.

authority to rally thousands of black youth—whose fathers and grandfathers once worked in central Detroit's now rusting auto plants—to the side of organized labor."

But the union misleaders—the "new" Sweeney team no less than the "old guard" they replaced—*oppose* class struggle and instead promote class *collaboration* with the racist capitalist rulers. Instead of mobilizing labor's ranks to defend immigrant rights and to beat back the avalanche of attacks on the ghetto masses, the union tops push racist protectionism and have enlisted as overseers for slave-labor "workfare" programs.

Nevertheless, the AFL-CIO's face-saving call for the Detroit march was cheered by the bulk of the reformist left, which has consistently and unabashedly hailed the Sweeney crew's (barely) "militant" pretenses. Month after month, the reformists pleaded with Sweeney for this march. With the defeat of the newspaper strike an acknowledged fact, many of these reformist "socialist" outfits are now mouthing a few tepid criticisms of the bureaucrats, complaining that the march comes too late and that the union leaders should have defied the strike-breaking injunctions.

This is simply after-the-fact eyewash designed to cover for the reformists' own role in backing the labor traitors. The problem with the labor bureaucracy is not one or another isolated "mistake" or even capitulation, but an entire perspective premised on the defense of the capitalist profit system. As we wrote in reply to a letter from a Machinists union official ("Exchange on Boeing Strike," WV No. 634, 1 December 1995):

"The labor bureaucracy is the top layer of the unions which long ago separated itself from its working-class base, and which sees the world through the same lens as the capitalists and their government. The purpose of these top union officials is to ensure the subordination of the workers to the national interests of the enemy class. This collaboration with the capitalist rulers is codified in the labor bureaucrats' fealty to the Democratic Party—and it has led to an unending string of defeats for organized labor."

Even to defend working people and minorities against the current onslaught of attacks, much less to win new gains, requires a political struggle against the labor misleaders, "new" as well as old. This is part of the fight for a workers party committed to ending the rule of the racist capitalist exploiters through socialist revolution.

Labor Must Fight Racist Oppression

California's strawberry pickers slave away for up to 12 backbreaking hours a day, earning as little as \$150 for a six-day week. Working in fields laden with dangerous pesticides, with little access to bathrooms or fresh drinking water, they get no health insurance or overtime pay. Child labor is widespread, while sexual harassment of women workers by growers and foremen is rampant. As the turnout for the April 13 Watsonville rally showed, the strawberry workers have tapped into deep sympathy from union members and student youth. But the AFL-CIO officialdom have channeled this support into the call for "five cents for fairness." This pathetic plea is an appeal to supermarket chains to raise the price of a pint of strawberries!

California's huge Central Valley produces half of the food crops grown in the U.S., dominated by giant agribusiness corporations whose immense profits have always been based on brutal exploitation of migrant workers. Initially, these consisted largely of Japanese and Filipino immigrants, later workers fleeing the Southwest Dust Bowl and, since World War II, primarily Mexican immigrants. Throughout this century, efforts to organize California's farm workers have been met with violent resistance from the growers, who have on their side the full arsenal of capitalist repression—from private anti-union squads to the *migra* cops of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Five years of strikes in the late 1960s, coupled with a consumer boycott, won union contracts for grape and lettuce pickers which provided significant gains in

wages and working conditions. By 1970, the United Farm Workers (UFW) had organized 80,000 workers. But faced with a union-busting drive in which Teamsters bureaucrats despicably broke strikes in exchange for sweetheart contracts, UFW leader Cesar Chavez called off the strikes. In the absence of labor struggle, the consumer boycott was little more than a public relations stunt aimed at the "consciences" of a random and atomized middle class. Today, the UFW has been reduced to only 20,000 members.

An estimated 60 percent of strawberry pickers are undocumented immigrants, overwhelmingly Mexican. Easily replaced by other desperate immigrants, threatened with INS raids and deportation for daring to organize or even speak out, farm workers on their own have little social power to bring to bear against the vicious agribusiness giants. Key to organizing farm workers is linking their struggle with more powerful unions like the Teamsters who pack and truck produce. And posed pointblank in any organizing effort is defense of immigrant rights.

Yet the Teamsters bureaucracy under Sweeney sidekick Ron Carey, no less than its "old guard" predecessors, is dead-set against any such perspective. Under Carey, who won office under the direct supervision and sponsorship of the feds' Labor Department, the Teamsters have organized a series of chauvinist protests nominally directed against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) but in fact targeting Mexican truck drivers. Carey and the other AFL-CIO tops oppose NAFTA from the standpoint of racist job-trusting against the "threat" of low-wage Mexican labor. The late Cesar Chavez, lionized by the opportunists on the left as a "progressive" alternative to the right-wing AFL-CIO hierarchy, himself mobilized the UFW to finger undocumented workers to *la migra* and in 1973 organized a union vigilante force to work with the INS along the Arizona border.

We Marxists denounced NAFTA as the "free trade" rape of Mexico, arguing for international labor solidarity against the capitalist exploiters. A class-struggle leadership of the labor movement would seek to link the fight of immigrant workers in the U.S. in proletarian-internationalist struggle with superexploited workers in the *maquiladora* factories on the Mexican side of the border, in sharp counterposition to the American-chauvinist poison of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy. Communists fight for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

In racist America, advancing labor's cause is inseparably bound up with the fight for the rights of oppressed minorities. This is clear in organizing farm labor on the West Coast, where the oppression of immigrants is used to divide black, white, Latino and Asian workers and keep undocumented workers terrorized. It is no less true in tackling the task of organizing in the South, where auto and other industries have fled from their previous unionized bases in



WV Photo

Watsonville march for California strawberry workers, April 13: "new" AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney (far left) boosted Democrat Jesse Jackson as keynote speaker. Spartacist banner at march stressed that fight for rights of labor and the oppressed requires break with capitalist Democratic Party.

the North and Midwest. The capitalists have relied not only on "routine" racist cop terror but on KKK lynchings and burnings to keep the South an "open shop" bastion against the integrated labor movement. Mobilizing the labor movement against racist terror is critical to organizing and defending unions, in the North as well as the South. In July 1996, in the midst of the newspaper strike, the KKK staged a race-hate provocation in Ann Arbor, Michigan—less than an hour's drive from Detroit. We fight for mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the KKK/Nazi fascists.

More generally, the fight against black oppression is central to the struggle against capitalist exploitation in the U.S. This is patently clear in the former "Motor City," whose devastation was part of the "deindustrialization" of the Midwest over the last two decades and the accompanying assault on union rights. Today, the racist rulers have decided that the ghetto masses, who were formerly seen as a "reserve army of labor," are a "surplus" population to be consigned to homelessness and starvation. It is no accident that Michigan's Republican governor, John Engler, pioneered many of the anti-welfare measures codified into law nationally by Democrat Clinton last summer. At the same time, black workers still form a substantial part of the unionized workforce and are a link to the dispossessed ghetto masses. They have the potential to play a strategic role in the

various Rubber Workers officials raving that "It's America against Japan" and talking of "another sneak attack," recalling the pretext for the U.S. entry into the Pacific war with Japan in World War II. The labor bureaucracy whips up vile, chauvinist "yellow peril" racism and anti-immigrant bigotry as it rails against the "threat" of "cheap labor." But the pro-capitalist union tops have themselves helped create conditions of "cheap labor" in the U.S. Over the last 20 years, they have presided over the decimation of the labor movement, enforcing "two-tier" wage agreements and other givebacks which have led to a drastic decline in workers' wages and living standards.

The fundamental reason for this could be seen in Jesse Jackson's keynote speech in Watsonville. Calling on workers to join their exploiters "under one big tent," Jackson intoned: "We've come to put justice in business. The growers should make a profit, the workers should make decent wages, the customer should have a good product, we can all be winners." This is a lie: either the workers win or the capitalists win.

It is unremarkable for a bourgeois politician like Jackson, masquerading as a "friend of labor," to propagate the lie of the "partnership" between labor and capital. But this lie is fully embraced by those who claim to lead the working class. In upholding the sanctity of the bourgeoisie's "right" to profits, the union bureaucracy must necessarily enforce the

1934 Minneapolis general strike which laid the foundations of Teamster power for decades to come:

"The old fashioned trade union movement, which used to deal with the bosses without governmental interference, belongs in the museum. The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn. Our people were prepared for that since they were political people, inspired by political conceptions. The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups."

—History of American Trotskyism (1944)

Cannon and the Minneapolis Teamsters leaders were imprisoned for their opposition to U.S. imperialism during World War II, foreshadowing the anti-Communist purges within the unions during the postwar McCarthy era. Sweeney & Co. are the descendants of the Cold War witchhunters who drove the "reds" and thousands of militant unionists out of the labor movement in order to more securely tie the unions to the capitalist class enemy.

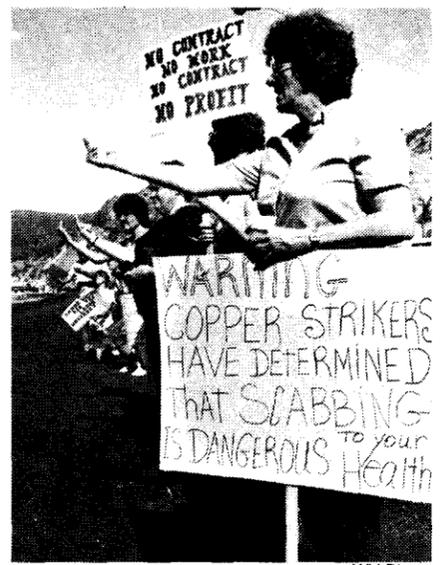
Today, the various reformist "socialist" groups share the fundamental outlook of the trade-union bureaucracy, accepting the limits imposed by the capitalist system of production for profit. Thus, they bury the need to break labor's ties to the capitalist Democratic Party and, at best, criticize the union tops only on the terrain of tactics, occasionally urging more "militancy" in economist struggles. Virtually all of them support "progressive" bureaucrats like Ron Carey and his boosters in "Teamsters for a Democratic Union," whose calling card is inviting the capitalist government into the unions through court suits or elections run by the Labor Department. This puts them in opposition to the central task of fighting for the political independence of the labor movement from the capitalist state and the bosses' parties.

Sweeney & Co.'s capitulation to the Detroit newspaper barons is directly related to the AFL-CIO's support for the Democrats. When faced with this simple fact, the reformists can only express their "disappointment" in Sweeney. Revealing her own illusions, Jane Slaughter of *Labor Notes* complains that Sweeney "stalled" when he was asked to call a national march in Detroit because "he didn't want to embarrass Bill Clinton's election run-up with a display of 'special interest' acting-out by Big Labor" (*Nation*, 14 April). Meanwhile, *Labor Notes* is a prime mover in Labor Party Advocates/Labor Party, which is nothing but a "union" shell for support to Clinton's Democrats.

The social-democratic Solidarity writes in its *Against the Current* (May/June 1997) that the "Action! Motown '97" march "probably" won't "change the balance of power in Detroit's newspaper labor war." Why? Because, according to these apologists for the bureaucracy's defeatist strategy, the union leaders "weren't prepared to let the public know that the boycott of the papers remains in effect." So, for the misnamed "Solidarity," Sweeney's big betrayal is in not publicizing the consumer boycott which was implemented to bury the strike!

Socialist Action (March 1997) simply acts as publicity agents for the final sellout, which one local Teamsters hack imaginatively painted as "a bold new strategy to take our jobs back." Arguing against "the false impression that Detroit newspaper strikers, by their offer to go back to work 'unconditionally,' are giving up their struggle," *Socialist Action* retails as good coin the bureaucrats' bluster that "everybody goes back, or no one goes back!" But as even the unions admit, they went back *on management's terms*, with almost all the strikers still locked out.

One group, David North's "Socialist Equality Party" (SEP), occasionally tries to strike a "leftist" posture against such crass opportunism. These counterfeit



WV Photo

Hard-fought strike at Phelps Dodge, 1984. Militant workers understand: picket lines mean don't cross!



Robideau/USWA

Bridgestone-Firestone strike was knifed by union misleaders who directed workers' anger into vile anti-Japanese chauvinism.

fight for workers revolution to sweep away capitalist rule. *For black liberation through socialist revolution!*

AFL-CIO Tops: Labor Lieutenants of Capital

The treachery of the trade-union misleaders is most sharply exposed during open clashes between workers and the employers and their state. Early in the Detroit newspaper strike, even as thousands of unionists were turning out for mass pickets outside plant gates to stop printing and distribution, Sweeney's current vice president and then United Mine Workers chief, Richard Trumka, moved in to divert the strike into a boycott campaign against companies advertising in the scab paper. This was the strategy which strangled the press strike.

We stressed at the time (WV No. 629, 22 September 1995): "Militant, mass picket lines that shut down the scab papers are urgently necessary. But as one defeated strike after another has shown, militancy alone is not enough." Pointing to a string of defeated newspaper strikes, from the *Chicago Tribune* in 1987 to the *Pittsburgh Press/Post-Gazette* in 1992, we called for a political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor traitors who were the main roadblock to winning the strike.

The Detroit newspaper strike has joined a long list of recent battles knifed by the AFL-CIO tops, notably Caterpillar, A.E. Staley and Bridgestone-Firestone. The latter strike in particular was buried by the union tops under an avalanche of racist anti-Japanese protectionism, with

conditions for securing those profits. In an earlier era, when the rulers occasionally offered some crumbs to the workers to promote the illusion of "class peace," this was expressed in business-unionist pleas for "more"—within the framework of capitalism. Today, as the bourgeois rulers in the U.S. and other capitalist countries drive down wages and slash social programs to hone their competitive edge against each other, the union tops negotiate only the terms for less.

The only "solidarity" the union tops have is with the interests and aims of American imperialism. As revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky explained in his 1940 article, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay":

"The intensification of class contradictions within each country, the intensification of antagonisms between one country and another, produce a situation in which imperialist capitalism can tolerate (i.e., up to a certain time) a reformist bureaucracy only if the latter serves directly as a petty but active stockholder of its imperialist enterprises, of its plans and programs within the country as well as on the world arena."

Forge a Class-Struggle Leadership!

So strong are the bureaucrats' ties to the capitalist order that they have renounced the very means—factory occupations, secondary strikes, etc.—by which unions were built in this country. Those unions were forged in opposition to the bosses' cops and courts. As American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon wrote in describing how revolutionary socialists led the

WORKERS VANGUARD

ICL Statement for June 14 Amsterdam "Euromarch"

For a Workers Europe— For Socialist Revolution!

The capitalist rulers of West Europe have escalated their austerity attacks against the working people and intensified racist terror against immigrants and minorities. As proletarian internationalists, we of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) oppose the European Union as an imperialist economic bloc which is a vehicle for capitalist co-operation against the working masses of Europe. The working class must oppose the imposition of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty for "currency union." This treaty is a pact among the capitalist masters of Europe to compete for markets against other world powers, which means increasing attacks against the working class and racial minorities.

The current reactionary onslaught symbolised by Maastricht is a direct consequence of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and the bureaucratically deformed workers states of East Europe. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution was the signal event of the 20th century, the first and only victorious proletarian revolution. But the pressure of imperialist encirclement on an economically backward country, the devastation of the Russian working class in the Civil War, and the failure and defeat of proletarian revolutions abroad—in large part due to the betrayals of the West European social democracies—set the stage for a political counterrevolution in 1923-24. This Soviet Thermidor led to decades of misrule by a nationalist, para-

Down With Maastricht!
**No to Social Democratic
Front Men for Capitalist Austerity!**



Jobless workers in Britain. Newly elected French "Socialist" prime minister Lionel Jospin (top right), British Labour's Tony Blair. While "Euromarch" organizers tail social democrats, we fight for revolutionary workers parties to sweep away racist capitalism.

sitic caste headed by Stalin and his heirs. The ultimate result of the Stalinist betrayals carried out under the lie of building "socialism in one country," whereby workers revolution internationally was subordinated to an accommoda-

tion to imperialism, was the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92. We Trotskyists, who consistently defended the gains of October against imperialism and counterrevolu-



Economist Martin Argles

tion and fought for proletarian political revolution to sweep away the Stalinist usurpers, today fight for new October Revolutions as the only answer to deepening capitalist reaction.

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Break with the Democrats! For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

"New" AFL-CIO Tops Killed Detroit Press Strike



Mass pickets at Detroit News/Free Press stop scab truck, September 1995. Union bureaucrats used cover of court injunction to disperse pickets, push impotent consumer boycott.

Watsonville: For Class Struggle to Organize Farm Workers!

The strike by 2,500 pressmen, reporters, truck drivers and clerks against the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* which began in July 1995 officially ended in the unions' surrender this February, with all but a tiny handful of strikers' jobs now replaced by scabs. This defeat was a blow against the entire labor movement. Now, nearly two years after the strike began, John Sweeney's "new" AFL-CIO leadership is staging an "Action! Motown '97" weekend of "solidarity" with the Detroit

newspaper workers on June 20-21. But what's being offered in Detroit is not a march for action, but rather a funeral procession in "solidarity" with *surrender*. Turn-of-the-century "Wobbly" (Industrial Workers of the World) militant Joe Hill said, "Don't mourn, organize!" Sweeney and his fellow bureaucrats instead preach, "Don't organize, mourn!"

The *Detroit News/Free Press* strike was defeated long before the union tops

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