

## U.S. Troops Out!

# IMF "Bailout" Means Misery for South Korean Workers

### For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!

DECEMBER 20—Former "dissident" Kim Dae Jung was elected president of South Korea two days ago amid one of the sharpest crises in the country's history. As the series of financial collapses which first erupted in Thailand this summer engulfed the world's eleventh-largest economy, South Korea has been thrown into turmoil. December 3, the day outgoing president Kim Young Sam acquiesced to the onerous terms of a \$57 billion "bailout" proposal by the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund (IMF), has been dubbed "National Humiliation Day" and compared to the Japanese colonization which ended in 1945. Among the working class, there is widespread fear and anger over the threat of massive wage cuts and even more massive layoffs—as many as one million in the coming months.

Even as the IMF deal was being pushed through, the imperialist-imposed partition of Korea was again highlighted, as the U.S., South Korea, China and North Korea began the first-ever "peace" talks aimed at bringing to a formal close the 1950-53 Korean War. For the past half century, the Korean peninsula has been divided at the 38th parallel between a capitalist police state in the South and a bureaucratically deformed workers state in the North. To this day, close to 40,000 American troops remain on South Korean soil—including a mammoth garrison right in the heart of the capital, Seoul—for which the U.S. demands some \$350 million a year from the South Korean government. The North Korean delegation at the talks rightly demanded the removal of this imperialist occupation force. As proletarian internationalists, the Spartacist League/U.S. has consistently called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. military forces from Korea.

The conditions imposed by the IMF, under direct U.S. diktat, are clearly designed to undermine South Korea's capacity to compete economically—even as a weak rival—by clipping the wings of the high-flying industrial/financial conglomerates, the *chaebol*, and limiting exports of cars and other manufactured goods. With the South Korean *won* plung-



Reuters photos

South Korean workers protest against austerity measures dictated by U.S.-dominated IMF. Massive U.S. military presence bolsters Seoul police state, threatens North Korean deformed workers state. Below: Clinton during 1993 visit to 38th parallel dividing North and South.



ing in value against the dollar, the IMF deal also opens the way to a stream of imperialist takeovers, as former constraints on foreign investment and banking operations have been pried wide open. This has provoked a tide of nationalist sentiment, with middle-class housewives taking to the streets to protest imports of foreign luxury items and to collect donations to keep the *won* afloat. That wide layers of the South Korean population see the IMF accord as a plot to enforce neocolonial dependence speaks to the history of the country this century, subjugated first by Japanese colonialism and then by U.S. imperialism.

While South Korea's capitalist rulers are far from happy about having to bow before the IMF, they are sure to use this opportunity to go after the combative independent labor movement organized in the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). With the *chaebol's* profit margins squeezed by competition on the international market and their attempts to intensify exploitation at home frustrated

by the power of the unions, already a year ago the Kim Young Sam regime tried to ram through laws codifying the illegal status of the KCTU, allowing mass layoffs and strengthening the draconian National Security Law. This provoked an upsurge of workers' struggles, which could well happen again in response to the imposition of IMF-dictated austerity measures.

If the South Korean workers go into battle, they will not be fighting alone. Throughout Southeast Asia, economic cri-

sis has impelled workers onto the streets. Suharto's Indonesia has been hit by strikes on almost a daily basis (see "Capitalist Greed Fuels Worker Unrest—Crisis Rocks Southeast Asia," WV No. 678, 14 November 1997). Meanwhile, the question being asked everywhere is, "Will China be next?" As the venal Stalinist regime ruling the deformed workers state accelerates capitalist "market reforms," it faces enormous pressures on all sides. Foreign investment has plummeted this year, helping to undercut Beijing's designs for a "cold" restoration of capitalism, while strikes and protests against layoffs and falling living standards have mounted. The alternatives posed pointblank in China are proletarian political revolution, creating a regime based on workers democracy and proletarian internationalism, or bloody capitalist counterrevolution and untrammelled imperialist exploitation.

The workers of South Korea can play a leading role in the fight for a socialist Asia. Proletarian revolution in South Korea would not only sweep away the bloodsucking *chaebol* capitalists and their police-state terror but, together with workers political revolution in the North to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, would bring about the revolutionary reunification of Korea. This fight must be based on a perspective of internationalist unity with Chinese workers facing the threat of capitalist counterrevolution and with the proletariat of Japan, the industrial powerhouse of Asia. The International Communist League fights to forge Bolshevik parties in Korea and around the world in struggle for new October Revolutions.

### "Democratic" Police State

The South Korean bourgeoisie prides itself on performing a "miracle on the Han" in developing the country's industrial base over the past three decades. But there was nothing miraculous about this; rather, it was based on grinding exploitation of the proletariat enforced by an enormous police-state apparatus backed up by the U.S. military gendarmerie. Writing about backward countries in the epoch of imperialism, Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky noted in his 1940 article, "Trade Unions  
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### Part 5: Labor and the Fight for Black Rights

## Wall Street and the War Against Labor

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# The Silence of the IGs

Last September, the "Internationalist Group" (IG) posted on its Internet Web page an "ALERT!" reporting on "New Repression Against Brazilian Trotskyists." According to the IG, the Brazilian courts had ordered the seizure of the second issue of a union newsletter put out by the Comitê de Luta Classista (CLC—Class-Struggle Caucus), a group run by the IG's fraternal allies, the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil (LQB). The IG posting proclaimed: "The bosses' courts want to silence the voice that tells the truth." An appeal for "urgent solidarity" was addressed "to the workers, to the unions, to all opponents of repression." This "urgent" call has remained on the IG's Web page without a word of

update for over three months!

What gives? In a telephone interview with IG *supremo* Jan Norden on December 20, a *Workers Vanguard* reporter asked why, "if the point was to silence the voice that tells the truth," the IG hadn't circulated the issue of the CLC newsletter suppressed by the courts. Replied Norden, "We're not basically pushing for that." Norden and his IG certainly haven't pushed for the truth.

Since Norden & Co. engineered their expulsions from the International Communist League a year and a half ago, this handful of demoralized defectors from Trotskyism have trumpeted the fiction that the LQB is building the "nucleus of a genuine Trotskyist party" and have

appealed for "international solidarity" on the basis that their Brazilian allies are "class war" heroes who supposedly fight cop and court intervention into the SFPMVR municipal workers union in Volta Redonda. The ICL broke off fraternal relations with the LQB in June 1996 precisely over its *refusal* to fight for a Trotskyist party, as it became clear that the LQB was determined to pursue a course of ingrained trade-union opportunism, manifested in a squalid struggle for control of the SFPMVR. The utterly necessary and principled character of our break with the LQB was subsequently confirmed when we discovered that the LQB has since been up to its ears in class treason, repeatedly dragging the SFPMVR union through the bosses' courts, and even turning over internal union materials such as financial records (see "Lies, Damned Lies and Anti-Union Lawsuits—IG's Brazil Fraud Exposed," WV No. 669, 30 May 1997).

The LQB (then Luta Metalúrgica) initially resisted our urging that they take up the fight to expel cops from the SFPMVR union, and when they did so they tried to use it as a factional club against their rivals for union leadership. As they fought it out for control of the union, the LQB and an equally unprincipled faction headed by pro-cop thug Artur Fernandes, a supporter of the centrist Liga Bolchevique Internacionalista (LBI), brought one court suit after another against each other—and the union. It was the lawyer of the SFPMVR, now run by Fernandes, who got the latest court injunction against the LQB's CLC.

As we uncovered and published ever more proof of the LQB's betrayals, the IG has repeatedly weighed in with bombastic diatribes on their Web site, lyingly seeking to alibi their Brazilian collaborators with a calibrated "damage control" operation, reluctantly admitting to only those facts which we had already exposed. Now, in the phone interview with *Workers Vanguard*, Norden says in reference to the LQB's anti-union court suits: "You found out about it long after we found out about it!" So the IG (inadvertently) admits that it knew of this class betrayal while it was pushing its campaign for "solidarity" to demand the cops and courts keep their hands off the SFPMVR and its then-president, LQB supporter Geraldo Ribeiro. The IG stands condemned by its own words and its campaign exposed as a cynical sham.

To "explain away" the anti-union suits filed by its Brazilian fraternal allies, the IG fabricated the most preposterous tissue of lies. The IG ludicrously claimed that Ribeiro had been duped by his lawyer and had not even known of the suits filed in his name. Yet, as Norden admitted in the WV interview, the local newspaper, *Diário do Vale*, had even "published a statement saying that they were going to the courts." The IG itself has previously quoted from an (alleged) unpublished letter to the newspaper by Ribeiro dated 26 July 1996, eleven days after his first suit was filed, supposedly rejecting "the intervention of the bosses' courts in the labor movement." This letter has never been made available by the IG/LQB. And, as we asked in an earlier article, "If Ribeiro only learned about the court suits in his name on July 26, why then did he go on to sign 'power of attorney' documents for additional lawsuits on July 29 and again on August 6?" ("IG Lawyers for Brazil Betrayal: Caught in a Web of Lies," WV No. 672, 8 August 1997). The IG's response: silence.

The IG has repeatedly claimed that Ribeiro withdrew his suits as soon as he learned of them. But they were not withdrawn until *seven months* after they were filed. In our August 1997 article, we quoted a 30 January 1997 leaflet by

Ribeiro himself, in which he calls his suits against the union a "defense" and admits that he only let them "expire" after the Fernandes faction first withdrew theirs. The IG's response: again, silence.

Now the LBI is engaged in its own attempt to cover up its class treason. Taking a page from the LQB's book, the LBI-supported SFPMVR union leadership has now repudiated their own lawyer's action, claiming in the September/October 1997 issue of the SFPMVR newsletter that the lawyer initiated the suit behind their backs—the exact same excuse retailed earlier by Norden on behalf of Ribeiro. As Oscar Wilde said, hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue. The sharp political intervention of the ICL has compelled both sides in this sordid squabble to proclaim their opposition to using the bourgeois state against their opponents...while acting to the contrary.

While still in the ICL, Norden & Co. resisted our struggle to transform the LQB into the nucleus of a Trotskyist party and instead embraced the LQB's opportunist "mass work." They have since constantly attacked the ICL as having "fled from the class battle" for our break with the LQB. Yet the IG has also maintained a stony silence in response to the question we raised in our last polemic, why their vow of an "early" fusion with the LQB over a year ago remains unfulfilled ("IG, LQB—Forever 'Fraternal,' Never to Wed? Consumption or 'Brides of Christ,'" WV No. 678, 14 November 1997). For Leninists, fraternal relations are a process of common work and political clarification aimed at testing whether fusion can be achieved on a solid basis of programmatic agreement. Counting the time he was in the ICL leadership, Norden has had more than *three years* to judge whether a fusion should be consummated.

In the past, the Nordenites waved around copies of the LQB's newspaper, *Vanguarda Operária*, as supposed "proof" that their Brazilian allies were indeed fighting to build a Trotskyist propaganda group. But the LQB dropped its party press after only two issues in favor of a series of newsletters published in the name of the CLC, an amorphous—and phony—pan-union formation.

The IG and LQB have repeatedly sought to camouflage their scandalous anti-union lawsuits by accusing the ICL of being "a willing accomplice" of Fernandes and the LBI. Curious. Unlike the IG, we have consistently denounced the LBI's hypocrisy in attacking the LQB's court suits, including in a major polemic against the LBI and its faith in the bourgeois cops and courts, "Brazil: The LBI and Police 'Strikes'" (WV No. 673, 5 September 1997). We also published a lengthy account of a debate with a representative of the LBI's Argentine cothinkers, the Partido Bolchevique por la Cuarta Internacional, titled "Spartacist League Debates Argentine PBCI: Trotskyism vs. Nationalism in Latin America" (WV No. 678, 14 November 1997). For its part, the IG has published barely a couple of paragraphs polemicizing against the LBI in its *Internationalist*, largely devoted to the fight inside the Volta Redonda union, while spewing out reams of vitriol against the ICL. As Trotsky noted, centrists always direct their main fire against opponents on their left.

The ICL has done a service to the international workers movement by exposing the IG/LQB as the unscrupulous and dangerous hustlers they are. The IG has responded by spinning an elaborate web of the most extravagant lies. And where the tissue of lies becomes too thin to hold together, their response is guilty silence. ■



TROTSKY

## For Political Independence of the Proletariat

The key strategic question in the fight for socialist revolution is the political independence of the proletariat from the capitalist class enemy. In an unfinished 1940 article intended as a preface to the Chinese edition of his *History of the Russian Revolution*, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky outlined how the policies of class collaboration pursued by the Stalinists—from the liquidation of the Chinese Communist Party into the



LENIN

bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang in the 1920s to the "People's Front" in France and Spain in the 1930s—led to catastrophic defeats for the proletariat and set the stage for bloody capitalist reaction. Again in the aftermath of World War II, the Stalinists betrayed revolutionary opportunities in France, Italy and elsewhere by tying the working class to the bourgeois order. The International Communist League seeks to hammer home these lessons as we fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution.

The essence of Bolshevism was the class policy of the proletariat, which alone would bring about the conquest of power in October. In the course of its entire history, Bolshevism came out irreconcilably against the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Precisely in this consisted the fundamental contradiction between Bolshevism and Menshevism. Still more, the struggle within the labor movement, which preceded the rise of Bolshevism and Menshevism, always in the last analysis revolved around the central question, the central alternative: either collaboration with the bourgeoisie or irreconcilable class struggle. The policy of "People's Fronts" does not include an iota of novelty, if we discount the solemn and essentially charlatan name. The matter at issue in all cases concerns the political subordination of the proletariat to the left wing of the exploiters, regardless of whether this practice bears the name of coalition or Left Bloc (as in France) or "People's Front" in the language of the Comintern.

The policy of the "People's Front" bore especially malignant fruit because it was applied in the epoch of the imperialist decay of the bourgeoisie. Stalin succeeded in conducting to the end, in the Chinese revolution, the policy which the Mensheviks tried to realize in the revolution of 1917. The same thing was repeated in Spain. Two grandiose revolutions suffered catastrophe owing to this: that the methods of the leadership were the methods of Stalinism, i.e., the most malignant form of Menshevism.

In the course of five years, the policy of the "People's Front," by subjecting the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, made impossible the class struggle against war. If the defeat of the Chinese revolution, conditioned by the leadership of the Comintern, prepared the conditions for Japanese occupation, then the defeat of the Spanish revolution and the ignominious capitulation of the "People's Front" in France prepared the conditions for the aggression and unprecedented military successes of Hitler.

The victories of Japan, like the victories of Hitler, are not the last word of history. War this time, too, will turn out to be the mother of revolution: Revolution will once again pose and review all the questions of the history of mankind in advanced as well as in backward countries, and make a beginning for overcoming the very distinction between advanced and backward countries.

—Leon Trotsky, "China and the Russian Revolution" (July 1940)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Racist Popular Front Government

## Italy: Mass Deportations of Albanian Refugees

On December 3, the Italian Ulivo (Olive Tree) coalition government of Prime Minister Romano Prodi and Massimo D'Alema's Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) carried out dawn raids on asylum centers in order to deport thousands of Albanian refugees. This racist capitalist government relies on the active parliamentary support of Fausto Bertinotti's Rifondazione Comunista (RC)—a successor, like the PDS, to the reformist Communist Party—whose "left" wing includes the fake-Trotskyist Proposta group. The Lega Trotskista d'Italia (LTd'I), section of the International Communist League, responded with an immediate leaflet, translated below, demanding, "No to the Deportations of Albanian Refugees!"



Oggi  
**Desperate Albanian refugees at Cassano delle Murge center in Bari. Cops later dragged off refugees for deportation in dawn raids.**

such expedition undertaken by the Italian imperialists since Mussolini) to that tiny Balkan country to prop up its faltering puppet regime. Their aim was to defend the interests of Italian capitalism—threatened by the social chaos that came in the wake of the outrageous Italian/Albanian monetary speculation—and to increase the exploitation of the impoverished Albanian masses. Now the government wants to ship back into this nightmare those few refugees who escaped and made it to Italy.

Just yesterday the government promised a 300,000 lire [\$175] bribe to any refugee who agrees to leave, announcing that only those who "find a job...have family...or are under medical treatment" will be allowed to stay. "As for the rest—nothing doing." Albanian prime minister Fatos Nano pronounced, "We will help support them for six months so that they can find work" (*Corriere della Sera*, 2 December 1997). Despite this, today at dawn police carried out violent assaults on the centers, forcibly evicting all the refugees and taking them under guard to the Falconara Marittima airport and to Brindisi where two Navy ships awaited

them. We say: **Italian troops out of Albania! Full citizenship rights for all Albanian immigrants and refugees!**

The Italian bourgeoisie has used the spectre of an "Albanian invasion" to foment racism against all immigrants, to divide the working class and create a scapegoat for rising unemployment. The resurgence of aggressive Italian imperialism goes hand in hand with the Ulivo government's anti-worker, anti-woman, racist austerity. The drowned Albanian refugees are victims of the same bourgeois regime that is responsible for the suicides of desperate unemployed workers in the South and the rising toll of workers killed in "industrial accidents," a toll that will increase with the signing of the "labor pact" by Ulivo, RC and the trade-union bureaucracy.

### Ulivo: Imperialist Murderers with RC and Proposta in Tow!

Rifondazione Comunista is a pillar of support for the Ulivo government, whose foreign minister, Lamberto Dini, demanded the construction of concentration camps in Albania to imprison the deported refugees. On July 24, RC's Senate fraction voted for a 45-day extension of "Alba 2" (Dawn 2), which stationed the Italian troops in Albania. Many of these are the same units which perpetrated torture and rape in Somalia. The Ulivo/RC coalition covered up for these sadistic beasts in order to give them a free hand in Albania in the interests of Italian imperialism. Just a few weeks ago, RC voted in favor of the racist Napolitano law that further restricts immigration and makes it easier for the state to deport immigrants. Thanks to this new law approved by RC, over 200,000 immigrants face immediate deportation. Under the Ulivo/RC coalition government, immigrants make up over one-third of the Italian prison population.

This past summer and autumn, the Ulivo/RC regime used police to carry out military-style, house-to-house "anti-Albanian" roundups. On May 13, Fausto Bertinotti had a friendly, one-and-a-half-hour chat with [National Alliance] parliamentarian Gianfranco Fini, a fascist in a suit, on the *Maurizio Costanzo Show*. Rather than fight to unionize all immi-

grants and for jobs for all, RC supports the Treu Agreement, which imposes a lower wage scale in the South and increases the number of jobs not covered by union contract. At the same time they support the racist laws and deportations.

On April 7, the fake-left RC, with *Proposta's* support, voted in favor of a leadership motion calling for "postponing the projected military mission to Albania," and for carrying it out under a UN flag. This motion supported by *Proposta* also called for "limited and temporary visas [for Albanian refugees], to be renewable until the end of the emergency in Albania, with provisions for the prosecution and expulsion of all criminal elements." RC/*Proposta's* motion implicitly guarantees the **deportation of the Albanian refugees!**

*Proposta* never fights for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, for the unionization of immigrant workers, nor against the deportations. In *Proposta* (January 1996), they write that "the right to vote in administrative [local] elections should be granted after one year, and full suffrage should be granted after three years residence in our country," openly opposing full citizenship rights for immigrants. *Proposta* accepts the racist status quo of this capitalist society, especially under this bourgeois, racist Ulivo coalition. **Any RC member who wants to be a communist must break with this party which supports the bourgeois government, its anti-immigrant laws and its capitalist austerity! Break with the popular front!**

It is necessary to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and against the divisions introduced by the bourgeois state with the classifications of "legal" and "illegal" immigrants! Wherever there are immigrant workers, it is necessary to fight for their union organization in order to strengthen the workers movement and defend their rights. It is a basic principle for any class-conscious worker that the rights of the workers and those of the most oppressed layers of society will either go forward together or be driven back separately. But parties like Rifondazione Comunista, in allying with the imperialist bourgeoisie, necessarily trample on the struggle for the liberation of women and the struggle for the rights of immigrants and all minorities.

What's needed is a new, revolutionary leadership of the working class, a tribune of the people and fighter on behalf of all the oppressed. It is necessary to break with the class-collaborationist politics of RC which, in the name of a "lesser evil," subordinate the vital interests of the proletariat to those of its capitalist exploiters and oppressors. Break with class collaborationism! Stop the racist, capitalist austerity of Prodi, D'Alema, and Bertinotti! No to class collaboration with the bourgeoisie!

We of the LTd'I/ICL struggle to forge a Bolshevik party that fights for workers power! **Build a revolutionary workers party, tribune of the oppressed! For worker/immigrant mobilizations to smash racist terror! Unionize all immigrants! For workers strikes and actions against the imperialist intervention in Albania and the deportations! The main enemy is at home!** ■

**SPARTACO** 

Newspaper of the  
Lega Trotskista d'Italia

November 30 was the expiration date set by the government for temporary visas issued to Albanian refugees last March. Four days ago, refugees living in the "welcoming centers" (read: concentration camps) went on a hunger strike at Cassano delle Murge (Bari province), Caraffa (Brindisi province), Sarnano (Macerata province), Borgo Mezzanone (Foggia province) and Falerna (Catanzaro province). The refugees barricaded themselves inside the centers, refused to accept food and turned away Red Cross ambulances. Despite their meager forces, they were prepared to put up as much resistance as possible to the expected intervention by the Carabinieri [police] and army to deport them by force. The refugees said, "It's better to die in Italy than to return to Albania," and threatened to use Molotov cocktails against a possible police attack.

The PDS is the core of the racist bourgeois Ulivo coalition government and it enjoys the full support of RC. This is the same regime that [last spring] sent the Navy destroyer *Sibilla* to sink a ship carrying Albanian refugees fleeing desperate poverty, drowning 89 of them. Then, under the fig leaf of "humanitarian aid," it sent imperialist military forces (the *first*



Paoni/Contrasto

**Italian imperialist "peacekeeping" troops dispatched to Albania by popular-front Ulivo government.**

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—MARXIST LITERATURE—

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# Australia: Massive Surveillance Operation Revealed

## Victoria's Secret Spies: Deadly Threat to Workers, Minorities

The following statement, issued by the Spartacist League/Australia on October 27, was printed in Australasian Spartacist No. 162 (Summer 1997-1998).

The Melbourne Age's exposure in early October of the [state of] Victoria police's massive spying operation starkly reveals for all to see the day-to-day machinations of "official" capitalist state repression. According to the Age, under successive Labor (ALP) governments between 1985 and 1992 the Operations Intelligence Unit (OIU) targeted more than 1,200 individuals and organisations—socialists, including the Spartacist League, trade unions, Aboriginal, immigrant, civil rights groups and women's rights activists.

Liberal Victoria premier Jeff Kennett rallied to the defence of these sinister spies, branding their targets "those who

In order to attack the organised working class, the bourgeoisie is targeting the most vulnerable sections of the population. In this country, dominated for decades by an official policy of "White Australia" racism, it is unsurprising that the OIU's surveillance singles out Aboriginal groups who have protested against black deaths in custody, and immigrant and minority political organisations. The inclusion of some fascist terrorists cannot disguise that the cops' operation was aimed at those whom the fascists also have in their sights. The rights of labour and minorities must go forward together, or they will fall back separately.

In August 1996, thousands of trade unionists came to the defence of Abo-

about continuing to monitor "extremist" political groups, anti-Hanson rallies and university protests.

### A Workers Party Has the Right to Organise!

The government brands leftists as "terrorists" so as to set them up as nameless, faceless victims of capitalist state terror. In 1983 in the U.S. the FBI issued new "Domestic Security Terrorism Guidelines" which sought to equate Marxist political opposition to the capitalist government with criminal "terrorism." A year later, comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. successfully concluded a lawsuit against the FBI, forcing it to retract its "definition" of the SL, which tried to

named and refurbished, their spooks and provocateurs were restocked with their bugs, black bags and guns, and sent out to hunt reds again.

For the bourgeois liberals of the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties the problem with all this spying is that it undermines public confidence in the state and its police. "We understand the need for an Operations Intelligence Unit..." they say, urging that "the priorities of the police must be made more transparent so that community confidence in their activities can be re-established." Just as the illusions created by the hoopla about Labor premier Cain's "abolishing" Victoria's political police gave the cops better cover, so do calls for "accountability," community control, inquiries, etc. serve to streamline police operations, rendering them more credible and strengthening the bourgeois state.

Our own organisation is among those against which the state of Victoria has sent its prying cops. This is not the first time the Spartacist League has been targeted for surveillance and disruption. In 1977 ASIO paid an agent, one Janet Langridge, to spy on our organisation. After two months as a candidate member of the SL, she voluntarily revealed her spy role, because, she claimed, she came to "respect them and... what they stand for." We immediately expelled her and made a concerted effort to let the workers movement and left know about this ASIO dirty work and the existence of this particular individual.

As we said then, this spying was "an intolerable violation of our democratic rights. We are a fully legal political organisation, entitled to carry on our activities, openly propagating our political views, without subversive infiltration by government bodies." Our aggressive campaign garnered front-page and major TV news coverage across the nation. ASIO and the government were very embarrassed by it. Two years later new laws were introduced which made publicly identifying an agent or employee of ASIO illegal, punishable by jail and fines.

Our forthright campaign was in sharp contrast to the actions of the reformist Socialist Workers Party (forerunner of the Democratic Socialist Party—DSP) around the same time. Instead of expelling self-confessed police spy Lisa Walter, they trumpeted her "conversion" to socialism and kept her in the organisation.

Unlike the DSP and others of its ilk we revolutionary Marxists take as our starting point the fact that society is divided into two hostile classes whose interests are irreconcilably counterposed: workers who must sell their labour power in order to survive, and the property-owning capitalist class to whom their labour power is sold. The state consists in essence of armed bodies of men—cops, courts and prisons—whose purpose is the repression of the working class and oppressed to protect the wealth and power of that tiny minority who exploit the labour of the overwhelming majority. As V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian Revolution, wrote in *State and Revolution*, "The state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another." The state and its political police cannot be "cleaned up," reformed or pressured into acting on behalf of workers and the oppressed. It

Australasian  
**SPARTACIST**

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Spartacist League of Australia

are going to pervert the course of justice and commit acts of crime." Kennett's police chief, Commissioner Neil Comrie, boasts that the spying continues, and all potential opponents of the government are targets for state disruption and provocation: "Some apparently innocuous organisations are nothing but front groups or fundraisers for terrorist activities overseas. And some groups are unknowingly exploited by extremists who use them as a cover to pursue their own agendas" (Age, 10 October). Kennett & Co. smear political protesters as "violent" and "extremist" yet it is the capitalist apparatus of state repression that is the source of all manner of violence. The Victoria police are notorious for gunning down 28 people since 1988—Aborigines, the mentally ill and others. In 1995 alone they killed eight.

The great number and diversity of the organisations listed in the Age demonstrates that this surveillance was aimed at heading off any struggle against the increasingly raw exploitation and oppression of those at the bottom of this society. In fact the ultimate target of the political police is the organised workers movement. Among the organisations in the Age's list were at least eight trade unions. The current revelations coincide with far-reaching state and federal union-busting in which the right of workers to picket or even be in a union is under sharp attack.

rigines under police attack at the massive Canberra demonstration. Such powerful actions, historically all too rare, are deeply alarming to the racist Australian rulers. The state responded by launching a sinister witchhunt, "Operation Veneer," against trade unionists, Aborigines and student activists. The ALP/ACTU [labor federation] tops, seeking to prove their loyalty to capitalism, joined hands with the bosses, and actively set up and purged their ranks.

Now, in response to the large protests against vile racist demagogue Pauline Hanson, the government has increasingly turned to brutal state repression, as mounted cops charge demonstrators, arresting dozens. Even as the cops are caught out for their earlier spying, the "Protective Security Intelligence Group" (PSIG), the OIU's successor, is unabashed

**Spartacist contingent at anti-fascist protest, Melbourne, March 1997. Secret police spy operation targeted labor, Aboriginal and other minority groups, socialists, including Spartacist League.**



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must be *shattered* by workers revolution, replaced by a workers state which expropriates the capitalist class.

### Labor Party Whitewash

The Victoria Labor opposition and New South Wales Labor premier Bob Carr denounced the secret police spying and called for an inquiry (a demand since met), all the while claiming their hands are squeaky clean. The Victorian Council for Civil Liberties even says the OIU existed "without, it appears, the knowledge of the Government of the day" (*Age*, 7 October). While much of the fake left is happy to play along with the charade that the Cain and Kirner Labor governments were unaware of these massive spying operations, it's a crock!

Completely committed to the defence of the capitalist system, the Australian Labor Party in power administers the bourgeois state, including, necessarily, its spies and cops. It has an unbroken history of anti-Communist, anti-working-class subversion. In fact it was the Labor government of Ben Chifley in 1949 which established the infamous ASIO, the same year the ALP called out the army to break the coal miners strike.

Also in the ALP's sights at that time were the waterfront unions which had been staging strikes not only over economic demands, but also in support of the Indonesian independence struggle against the Dutch. Today Australia's secret police work hand in glove with the blood-drenched Suharto regime against leftist Indonesian and Timorese students and exiles. The White Australia rulers very much need their spies, not least as they feel their imperialist enclave threatened by the very existence of the peoples of Asia. At the same time they lord it over the dark-skinned peoples of the region from Bougainville to Fiji and beyond. Their "intelligence" agencies are deeply enmeshed in attempts to keep it that way.

By 1983 Labor was in power in Victoria and federally. This was during Cold War II, the imperialist offensive against the bureaucratically degenerated and

Aboriginal protesters address trade unionists (below) during August 1996 Canberra protest against welfare cuts, anti-union laws. Thousands of angry protesters joined in storming Parliament building.



Reuters



Australasian Spartacist

More recently, in 1992 under Labor's Joan Kirner, Victoria police raided the homes of seven students, including members of the International Socialist Organisation (ISO). A smear campaign blamed leftist groups for "violence" at student protests against education cutbacks, naming the ISO, Left Alliance and the "Spartacist" League (the designated misspelling favoured by the FBI), and the cops launched a "special investigation unit

Workers Power. The October/December issue of their paper declares that "the capitalist state...cannot be reformed or 'democratised'... It must be smashed." Yet their parent British group (in December 1994) called for demanding of a future Labour government "abolishing MI5 and all secret state services." Why is this reformist/utopian demand placed on a Labour government? Because they think a capitalist state administered by Labour is something other than a capitalist state administered by, e.g., the Tories. The deeply Labor Party-loyal Workers Power thus exhibits its touching faith in the reformability of the bourgeois state.

Even more cynical is the Socialist Labour League (SLL)/Socialist Equality Party (SEP) of Nick Beams, part of David North's "International Committee of the Fourth International" (IC). Nevertheless, they too mouth "orthodoxy" about "the state forces—they are bodies which exist for the express purpose of suppressing opposition to the existing order based on the ever greater accumulation of private wealth" (*Workers News*, 17 October). This is pretty rich coming from those who are notorious for their long history of dragging leftists through the capitalist courts.

These people and their recent forebears in Gerry Healy's British Workers Revolutionary Party have blocked with quite a number of those "state forces." A

secret report by an IC Commission to investigate "the corruption of G. Healy" details payoffs that were received for services rendered to a variety of oil-rich Arab despots. This included supplying photographs to the Iraqi embassy of a demonstration of opponents of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime in Iraq. An indisputable and monstrous fact is that the Healyites hailed the execution of 21 Iraqi Communists by Ba'ath rulers in 1979.

Several years later, as the British coal miners were gearing up for their heroic 1984-85 strike, the Healyites dropped a carefully timed bombshell, publishing a letter by miners leader Arthur Scargill in which he correctly castigated Polish Solidarność as "an anti-socialist organisation." This was a bonanza for the Tory rags of Fleet Street, and fed directly into the MI5-inspired witchhunt of Scargill and the miners. In 1986 the Australian Healyites admitted they had printed the *Bell of Saigon*, an exile organ of the fascist Vietnamese thugs who physically attacked leftist and labour meetings.

Of course the SLL/SEP would like to say this is all past history. But the very same Richard Phillips who declared printing a fascist rag was justified as part of a turn toward "commercial enterprise, commercial print work" today appears in the *Workers News* editorial box. When it serves their opportunist ends, the Northites can spout something resembling orthodox-sounding Marxist rhetoric. But in fact they are, to borrow Lenin's term, "political bandits," i.e., political pirates who will show any flag to attack any target.

Unlike the reformists and centrists, we understand that it will take a workers revolution to finally get rid of the capitalists' criminal secret police once and for all. The Spartacist League/Australia, section of the International Communist League, fights to forge the necessary instrument to achieve this, a revolutionary workers party committed to the abolition of capitalism around the world. ■

Australasian SPARTACIST Special supplement 24 June 1977

"Turned" agent exposes infiltration ASIO targets Spartacist

ASIO and its subsidiaries... In 1977, in June, the special... ASIO and its subsidiaries... In 1977, in June, the special... ASIO and its subsidiaries... In 1977, in June, the special...

ASIO and its subsidiaries... In 1977, in June, the special... ASIO and its subsidiaries... In 1977, in June, the special... ASIO and its subsidiaries... In 1977, in June, the special...

Spartacist League launched campaign of public exposure against ASIO secret police after uncovering informers paid to spy on our party in 1977.

deformed workers states—the Soviet Union, Vietnam, China, East Europe and elsewhere—in which capitalism had been thrown out. The imperialist bourgeoisie's drive for counterrevolution found its domestic reflection in heightened state repression and attacks on workers. As we wrote at the time, "While Hawke/Hayden front for US/Chinese military provocations and war plans against Soviet-allied Vietnam, the political climate is being prepared to strengthen and unleash imperialism's secret police agencies such as ASIO and the state Special Branches against the left" (*Australasian Spartacist* No. 102, June/July 1983).

In 1983 while the Special Branch carried out covert surveillance of the left and workers movement, Cain and Hawke joined together to smash the Builders Labourers Federation—a union led by Maoists and specially targeted for repression for over two decades—and witch-hunt its leaders for their opposition to the ALP/ACTU Prices and Incomes Accord, a nationalist, union-busting trap based on the lie that there is a partnership between labour and capital.

aimed at cracking the violent socialist organisations," a revival of the "Red Squad."

### Reformists, Centrists and...Political Bandits

Deeply loyal to the ALP, in and out of power, the reformist left covers up the fact that successive Labor governments were responsible for this sinister police spying. Religiously calling for votes to Labor, the reformists cover up the ALP's role to better portray it as a "lesser evil," especially now that it is on the opposition benches. It also reflects their own cringing belief that this capitalist state can really be reformed in the interests of the oppressed. Thus the Freedom Socialist Party's front group, Radical Women, calls for the police to "be made accountable to the community." For its part, the DSP (which has also called for votes to the bourgeois Democrats!) wants to breathe life into the corpse of the "Campaign for the Abolition of Political Police" which itself was a vehicle for corraling support to the ALP.

More slippery are the centrists of

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# Wall Street and the War Against Labor

We publish below the concluding part of this series. The first four parts appeared in WV Nos. 676, 677, 679 and 680, 17 and 31 October, 28 November and 12 December 1997.

The 1960s was the most significant, sustained period of mass social struggle and leftist radicalization in the U.S. since the 1930s. However, the social and political character—as well as the outcome—of the struggles during these two periods were very different. In the '30s, the battles had centered on the formation (except in the South) of mass industrial unions, overcoming in part the racial-ethnic divisions which had hitherto crippled the American working class. In many cases, these unions were led by self-described communists or socialists. In contrast, the 1960s saw a widening racial divide within the American working class while the main currents of young radicals emerging from the civil rights and Vietnam antiwar movements were indifferent or hostile to organized labor. Primary responsibility for this development lay with the racist, anti-communist trade-union bureaucracy.

The Spartacist League, which originated in the early 1960s, fought for a different outcome. In the civil rights movement and subsequent black struggles, we intervened around the program and perspective of *revolutionary integrationism*, linking the struggle for racial equality to that for proletarian power:

“The vast majority of Black people—both North and South—are today workers who, along with the rest of the American working class, must sell their labor power in order to secure necessities of life to those who buy labor power in order to make profit. The buyers of labor power, the capitalists, are a small minority whose rule is maintained only by keeping the majority who labor for them divided and misled. The fundamental division created deliberately along racial lines has kept the Negro workers who entered American capitalism at the bottom, still at the bottom. Ultimately their road to freedom lies only through struggle with the rest of the working class to abolish capitalism and establish in its place an egalitarian, socialist society....

“Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution.”

—“Black and Red: Class-Struggle Road to Negro Freedom” (1966), reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 9, “Basic Documents of the Spartacist League”

The Southern civil rights movement, in which entire black communities mobilized against the local white-supremacist regimes, provided an exceptionally favorable opportunity to finally unionize the states of the old Confederacy. This would have immeasurably strengthened the labor movement on both the economic and political levels and could have cracked the solid front of racist reaction in the South along *class lines*. However, the AFL-CIO tops still did nothing to organize the South because doing so would have shattered their political alliance with the Dixiecrats, on which the national dominance of the Democratic Party depended.

At the 1964 Democratic Party convention in Atlantic City, a group of predominantly black civil rights activists calling themselves the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party demanded to be seated in place of the official, white-supremacist Mississippi delegation. Hubert Humphrey, the party's leading liberal figure and darling of the AFL-CIO officialdom, successfully maneuvered to defend the Dixiecrats against the black



AP

## Part 5: Labor and the Fight for Black Rights



Southern Patriot

**Top: Civil rights protesters attacked by cops in Birmingham, 1963. Above: 1960s strike by Charleston, South Carolina hospital workers. AFL-CIO betrayed struggle for black rights, union organization in South on altar of alliance with racist Democrats.**

challenge. This, along with innumerable similar actions, rapidly alienated young civil rights militants from the liberalism of the Democratic Party and its labor lieutenants.

Furthermore, the AFL-CIO had its own segregated sector: the building trades, the stronghold of the pre-1930s craft unions. Membership was passed down from father to son and uncle to nephew. Liberal bureaucrats like Victor Reuther occasionally criticized the openly racist practices of the construction unions but did nothing about them. By the 1960s, major industrial unions like the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the United Steel Workers were heavily—even disproportionately—black. But in the eyes of many blacks, especially those outside the unions, the whites-only building trades discredited the labor movement in general.

The politics of the 1960s cannot, of

course, be understood solely in terms of struggles within the United States. The blacks who defied the Klan and White Citizens Councils in Alabama and Mississippi and who battled the cops in the ghettos of Los Angeles and Detroit identified with and were partly inspired by the revolt of the dark-skinned peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America against Western imperialism. The Cuban Revolution, the Algerian War of Independence and, above all, the bloody imperialist war in Vietnam had a profound effect on American politics, especially the consciousness of young leftists. While blacks overwhelmingly opposed the war, the anti-Communist fanatics in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, headed by George Meany, remained Vietnam War hawks even after Republican president Richard Nixon had given it up as a lost cause by the early 1970s.

The Spartacist League fought for independent working-class action—including labor strikes against the war—in opposition to the reformism of organizations like the formerly Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, which pushed a strategy of pressuring liberal bourgeois politicians. A wave of important strikes, including the 1970 national postal strike, public employee strikes and Teamsters wildcats showed the potential power of labor in contrast to the impotent “peace crawls” favored by the liberals. To turn this power against the war would have required a break with class collaboration in hard opposition to the liberal, Democratic Party-loyal wing of the labor bureaucracy.

### The Rise of Black Nationalism

All of these factors led a significant current of black militants in the mid-1960s to break to the left from Martin Luther King Jr. and Democratic Party liberalism under the slogan of “black power.” We wrote in 1966:

“In contrast to the reform program of the civil rights movement, the demands of the black masses are necessarily and inherently class demands, and demands which the ruling class cannot meet. The call for jobs, for housing, and for emancipation from police brutalization (attacking the very basis of the state)—these cannot be answered by another civil rights bill from Washington. Their pursuit leads inevitably to a sharper and sharper confrontation with the ruling class. It is this transition which is represented by the black power slogan. Its popularization represents the repudiation of tokenism, liberal tutelage, reliance on the federal government, and the non-violent philosophy of moral suasion.”

—“Black Power—Class Power,” reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised): “What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism” (1978)

At the same time, we warned that the “black power” slogan “can be used by petty bourgeois black nationalist elements who want to slice the social cake along color rather than class lines and to promote reactionary color mysticism. More seriously, it can be degraded to mean mere support for black politicians operating within the system.” And that is, in fact, what happened.

In the mid-to-late 1960s, the big urban ghettos—Harlem, Watts in L.A., Chicago, Newark, Detroit and elsewhere—exploded, as black youth took to the streets, battling the cops and looting stores. These rebellions were savagely repressed by the police, National Guard and even army units. At the same time, the ruling class moved to buy off a layer of community activists, including nationalist demagogues, with federal money provided by “poverty” programs. Aiding in this were pseudo-nationalist operators, a development termed “porkchop nationalism” by the more radical Black Panther Party. Over the next few years, many major cities would acquire black Democratic mayors to oversee the ghettos on behalf of Wall Street and the Fortune 500 corporations.

A manifesto of porkchop nationalism was Stokely Carmichael's 1967 *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, co-authored with black academic Charles Hamilton. Carmichael (now Kwame Ture) had been a leading militant in the Southern civil rights struggles. Now, he and Hamilton demanded that black politicians be given a free hand to run the ghettos while being generously funded by the U.S. Treasury. They were predictably hostile to the trade unions, identifying the racist and pro-imperialist

policies of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy with organized labor as such:

"Organized labor has participated in the exploitation of colored peoples abroad and of black workers at home. Black people today are beginning to assert themselves at a time when the old colonial markets are vanishing; former African and Asian colonies are fighting for the right to control their own natural resources, free from exploitation by Western and American capitalism. With whom will economically secure, organized labor cast its lot—with the big businesses of exploitation or with the insecure poor colored peoples?... The answer, unfortunately, seems clear enough."

The views expressed here were by no means peculiar to Carmichael and Hamilton but in fact were part of the conventional wisdom of late-1960s American radicalism. The Black Panthers, who were influenced by Maoism, thought that all employed workers, black and white, had been bought off by the ruling class and that black lumpens were the revolutionary vanguard.

A prominent leftist intellectual of the day was Paul Sweezy, whose journal, *Monthly Review*, introduced many a leftward-moving young liberal to Stalinist ideology in its Maoist incarnation. Sweezy sought to provide a sophisticated, "Marxist-Leninist" rationale for prevailing New Left/black nationalist anti-labor prejudices. Noting that Lenin had "argued that the capitalists of the imperialist countries could and do use part of their 'booty' to bribe and win over to their side an aristocracy of labor," Sweezy maintained: "As far as the logic of the argument is concerned, it could be extended to a majority or even all the workers in the industrialized countries" (*Monthly Review*, December 1967).

This assertion was made at the very moment when American capitalism could no longer concede significant improvements in the economic conditions of its working class. The next decade would see stagnating wages followed by the intensification of the rate of exploitation and a frontal assault on the labor movement.

### The Bankruptcy of Liberalism and Ascendancy of the Right

During the 1950s and early '60s, the structural weakness of the trade-union movement and treacherous nature of its pro-capitalist leadership was partly masked by the fact that American capitalism was still strong enough to raise living standards for a majority of the working class while maintaining a high level of profits. By the late 1960s this was no longer the case. The underlying sources of weakness—an aging industrial plant, declining international competitiveness—were exacerbated by the inflationary pressures of the Vietnam War. During the second half of the 1960s, average real weekly earnings of non-supervisory workers increased by a minuscule 2 percent and actually declined slightly in two of the years. Union leaders were no longer delivering to their members at the basic bread-and-butter level, while rhetoric by liberal intellectuals about an "affluent society" provoked bitter resentment among blue-collar workers, black as well as white.

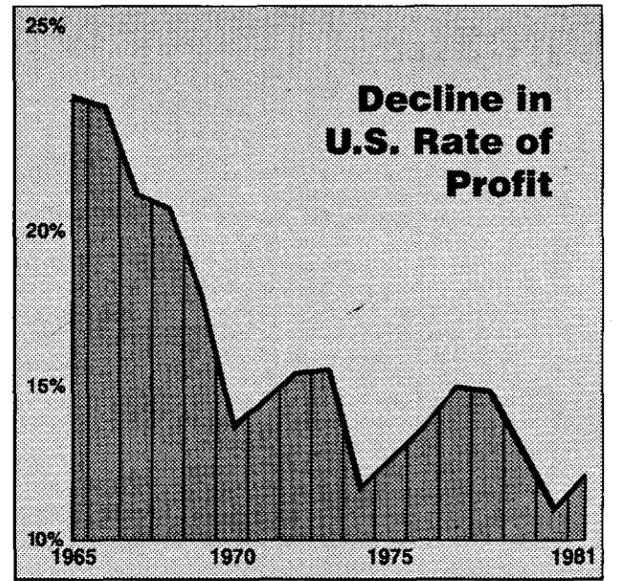
This period also saw the entry of a new proletarian generation—the post-World War II "baby boomers"—into the labor market. Their social and political consciousness, unlike that of their parents, was not shaped by the experience of the Great Depression and the labor battles of the 1930s and '40s. They had no strong loyalties to either the AFL-CIO or the Democratic Party. Young white workers were thus open to right-wing demagoguery and to blaming the country's social and economic ills on black radicalism and "welfare liberalism," while young black workers and unemployed ghetto youth were receptive to nationalist denunciations of organized labor as a bastion of white privilege.

The ghetto rebellions and Vietnam antiwar protests have in retrospect obscured the fact that the late '60s-early '70s was also a period of considerable



WV Photo

Abandoned steel furnace in Cleveland, 1980. Faced with declining rate of profit, U.S. capitalists shifted production to low-wage operations elsewhere, turning Midwest industrial heartland into Rust Bowl and laying off hundreds of thousands.



WV Graph

labor discontent and unrest on the shop floor. In 1968, one out of eight contracts negotiated by the union bureaucrats was rejected by the members, whereas this almost never happened in the 1950s. More importantly, that same year marked a postwar high in wildcat strikes, most dramatically in the auto plants of the Midwest.

However, rank-and-file hostility to the Walter Reuther regime in the UAW and kindred union bureaucracies polarized, on the political level, along racial lines. In Detroit, black militants involved in the wildcats formed the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which was strongly influenced by Maoist ideology. The League called for a separate union for black auto workers and combined

cant amounts of federal tax money were going to the black ghetto poor via President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs was a lie. In 1968, the last year of the Johnson-Humphrey administration, slightly less than \$12 billion was spent on welfare and all other such programs (the bulk of which went to whites), an amount equal to *one-seventh of the military budget*. Interest on the federal debt amounted to \$11 billion, a form of welfare for Wall Street financiers. The Great Society "poverty" programs were very small potatoes compared to programs from the 1930s New Deal, like Social Security.

Phillips was correct, however, in that liberal Democrats no longer even promised significant economic reforms to ben-

real wages declined over the next decade, right-wing attacks on "tax and spend" liberalism would gain increasing potency.

Seeking to regain the White House, the Democrats ran an avowedly pro-business Southern Democrat, Jimmy Carter, former governor of Georgia, as their presidential candidate in 1976. The AFL-CIO bureaucracy and black liberal politicians duly mobilized their constituencies for the most right-wing Democratic presidential candidate in half a century. Seeking to polish the tarnished image of the U.S. after the Vietnam War, Carter laid the ideological basis for Cold War II under the guise of a "human rights crusade." His hapless administration would oversee the worst deterioration in the economic conditions of American working people since the 1930s.

The world economic downturn of 1974-75 exposed the weaknesses of American capitalism, as the after-tax profits of U.S. corporations plummeted over 20 percent. The American ruling class responded with a concerted drive to reduce labor costs through "downsizing," speedup, two-tier wage systems and the shift of production to the low-wage, non-union South and Southwest as well as to Latin America and the Far East. In 1978, UAW president Douglas Fraser accused the leaders of big business of "waging a one-sided class war in this country."

It was indeed a one-sided class war, because Fraser and his fellow labor bureaucrats were fighting on the side of capital. This was clearly demonstrated the following year when Chrysler, the country's third-largest automaker, was on the verge of bankruptcy. The corporation's management, working closely with the UAW tops, successfully lobbied the Carter administration for a government bailout. As part of this deal Carter and the Democratic-controlled Congress demanded that Chrysler workers take a cut in wages and benefits. The Chrysler deal opened the floodgates to giveback contracts throughout unionized industry, using the labor bureaucrats as active and direct agents of capital in intensifying the exploitation of union members.

The last year of the Carter administration

*continued on page 10*



WV Photo

Auto workers protest outside Detroit Chrysler headquarters over closing of Dodge Main plant, July 1979.

legitimate demands against the auto bosses' racist practices (e.g., for more black apprentices in the skilled trades) with demands for more black foremen and other supervisors. At the same time, many of the white workers involved in the wildcats against the Big Three automakers voted for the racist Alabama demagogue, George Wallace, or the victorious Richard Nixon against Democratic "friend of labor" Hubert Humphrey in the 1968 presidential elections, in part out of hostility to the Reuther bureaucracy.

Immediately following these elections, Kevin Phillips, a right-wing, self-described "populist," published an influential book, *The Emerging Republican Majority*, in which he argued:

"The principal force which broke up the Democratic (New Deal) coalition is the Negro socioeconomic revolution.... The general opposition which deposed the Democratic Party came in large part from prospering Democrats who objected to Washington dissipating their tax dollars on programs which did them no good. The Democratic Party fell victim to the ideological impetus of a liberalism which had carried it beyond programs taxing the few for the benefit of the many (the New Deal) to programs taxing the many on behalf of the few (the Great Society)."

Phillips here combines partisan distortion and demagoguery with important elements of truth. The notion that signifi-

efit the majority of working people. Johnson's Great Society did *not* include socialized medicine, free universal higher education or the massive construction of low-rent public housing. Liberals no longer even talked about redistributing income from capital to labor. Insofar as they advocated expanding social programs, they proposed financing these through higher taxes across the board. As

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### James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism

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# Korea...

(continued from page 1)

in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay”:

“The feebleness of the national bourgeoisie, the absence of traditions of municipal self-government, the pressure of foreign capitalism, and the relatively rapid growth of the proletariat, cut the ground from under any kind of stable democratic regime. The governments of backward, i.e., colonial and semicolonial, countries by and large assume a Bonapartist or semi-Bonapartist character; they differ from one another in that some try to orient in a democratic direction, seeking support among workers and peasants, while others install a form close to military-police dictatorship. This likewise determines the fate of the trade unions. They either stand under the special patronage of the state or they are subjected to cruel persecution.”

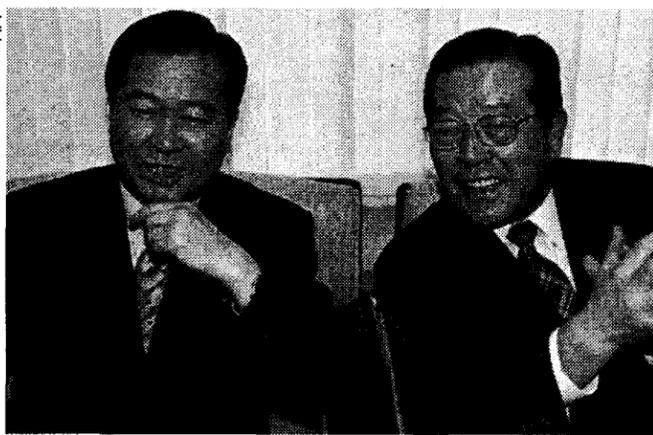
South Korea is a prime example of this. For years, independent trade unions were completely outlawed, while the proletariat was saddled with a corporatist formation, the Federation of Korean Trade Unions, which was set up under the auspices of the Korean CIA (now named the Agency for National Security Planning) and under the tutelage of the Cold War AFL-CIO bureaucracy. It was only as a result of a wave of militant workers' struggles in 1987 that the South Korean bourgeoisie abandoned open military rule and proceeded to implement presidential elections every five years. It was out of this upsurge that the KCTU, which now has over a half million members, emerged.

These developments have fostered illusions in the democratic credentials of the *chaebol* bourgeoisie, which are promoted as well by self-styled leftist organizations like the United Secretariat. Recently, these fake Trotskyists claimed: “Ten years after the end of authoritarian rule, the political landscape in South Korea has changed enormously. The country is no longer a police state” (*International Viewpoint*, 15 July 1997). This will come as news to the many radical students and trade-union militants who continue to be imprisoned by the regime. The National Security Law, which bans even vaguely leftist activity as aiding the North Korean “enemy,” continues to be wielded by the regime against militant workers and political opponents, including during the recent elections. In July, the government used the law to outlaw the Hanchongnyon student federation after riot cops had brutally suppressed a series of student protests. And in November, members of a youth group which calls for organizing a working-class party were rounded up, while 500 cops invaded Hanyang University Hospital to crush a strike and drag away the union leaders.

## Korea and Permanent Revolution

A prime beneficiary of “democratic” illusions in South Korea is newly elected president Kim Dae Jung, who was jailed—and nearly assassinated—under the former military dictatorship of Park

**Newly elected president Kim Dae Jung, touted as “democracy campaigner,” with electoral ally Kim Jong Pil (far right), founder of murderous KCIA.**



Chung Hee. In the past, much of the petty-bourgeois nationalist student left has looked to Kim, as has the KCTU leadership. They are echoed by the International Socialists of South Korea (ISSK), tied to Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain and the International Socialist Organization in the U.S. An interview with a “South Korean socialist” in the British *Socialist Worker* (22 November 1997) parroted the standard liberal refrain that Kim “was a democracy campaigner in the 1970s and 1980s,” while complaining that he has since “moved to the right.” In fact, the Cliffite social democrats agree with this capitalist politician on fundamental questions, sharing the anti-Communist hatred by South Korea's capitalist rulers for the deformed workers state in the North. Cliff

election outcome as a “big opportunity,” while the *New York Times* (20 December 1997) noted that the South Korean leader's “credibility with the unions” places him in a “good position to convince his followers that they need to endure a year or two of pain.” And the return to government of Kim Jong Pil underscores that this will involve intensified repression against the workers movement.

Appealing to populist/nationalist sentiment, Kim Dae Jung vowed to “renegotiate” the terms of the IMF agreement during the election campaign, but backed off as soon as the imperialists put their foot down. Indeed, Kim had called for IMF intervention in early November, well before the regime did. A revolutionary workers government in Korea would cancel the imperialist debt outright as



**Amid wave of nationalist sentiment, middle-class South Korean housewives are mobilized to donate personal possessions to prop up declining currency.**

was expelled from the Fourth International in 1950 for publicly opposing defense of the Soviet Union, China and North Korea during the Korean War.

Kim traces his origins to the Korean Democratic Party set up by U.S. occupation forces in 1945. His bloc partners in the recent elections included Park Tae Joon, head of one of the largest *chaebol*, and Kim Jong Pil, who founded the KCIA and served as prime minister under dictator Park! Just a year ago, Kim Jong Pil was screaming for a crackdown on the “burgeoning leftist activism on campuses” (*Korea Times*, 26 April 1996). Now he is about to be appointed to a top government position. A Clinton aide welcomed the

part of the expropriation of industry and infrastructure.

The fact that Kim Dae Jung and the other two leading presidential contenders were forced to drop calls for renegotiating the IMF accord underscores the dependent character of the South Korean bourgeoisie. Korea in this century is an archetypal example of uneven and combined development: modern industry coexists alongside rural backwardness, where many remain as impoverished tenant farmers, with a police-state regime, albeit with some trappings of parliamentary democracy. South Korea's political structure is manifestly closer to that of Malaysia and Indonesia than to Japan's.

As Trotsky explained in advancing the perspective of permanent revolution, in countries of belated capitalist development, the bourgeoisies—tied to the imperialist powers on the one hand and confronted by a growing proletariat on the other—are incapable of throwing off the yoke of imperialism and resolving the other tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. These tasks can only be accomplished by overthrowing the bourgeoisie and placing the proletariat in power. This was confirmed by the Russian Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

Socialist revolution in the backward countries would necessarily have to link up with—and would act as a powerful impetus for—the fight for proletarian power in the imperialist centers. In the 1938 Transitional Program, Trotsky stressed that in backward countries “the struggle for the most elementary achievements of national independence and bourgeois democracy is combined with the socialist struggle against world imperialism.” This is posed particularly acutely in Korea,

where the imperialist-imposed partition places the question of national unification directly on the agenda. A proletarian vanguard party in Korea would be in direct competition with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists who seek to unify the country on a capitalist basis, destroying the collectivized foundations of the deformed workers state in the North. Trotskyists call for unconditional military defense of North Korea against capitalist attack and internal counterrevolution as part of the fight for *revolutionary reunification* through socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution in the North.

Coming atop decades of imperialist military encirclement and starvation embargo, the demise of the Soviet Union and the Beijing bureaucracy's drive toward capitalist restoration have pushed the North Korean deformed workers state into near-terminal decline, with wide swathes of the country beset by famine. Under the regime of Kim Jong Il and his father, “Great Leader” Kim Il Sung, the Pyongyang bureaucracy has pursued the autarkic program of *Juche* (self-reliance), a variant of the Stalinist nationalist dogma of “socialism in one country” infused with Korean mythology. Until his death in 1994, Kim Il Sung was idolized by many radical students in the South as a Korean “patriot” who fought Japanese colonialism and later U.S. imperialism. In fact, the North Korean Stalinists have always opposed the fight to extend social revolution throughout the peninsula, calling instead for “peaceful reunification” under nationalist colors—a recipe for *capitalist* reunification. Today, Kim Jong Il pleads for better relations with the U.S. and South Korea as an “urgent requirement.”

The South Korean proletariat has time and again demonstrated its capacity for militant struggle, not least in last year's general strike against Kim Young Sam's anti-labor law. But it has lacked a political party organized independently of the capitalist rulers. This year, the KCTU fielded a candidate in South Korea's presidential elections. But far from seeking to rally the working masses in struggle against South Korea's capitalist rulers, the “People's Victory 21” campaign headed by former KCTU leader Kwon Young Kil is a class-collaborationist lash-up, including various liberal groups, which promotes nationalist opposition to “foreign interference,” blending in with bourgeois rhetoric which seeks to deflect class anger away from the domestic exploiters. This has not prevented the South Korean International Socialists from supporting Kwon's candidacy as a “step forward” (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 22 November 1997).

The South Korean proletariat can go forward only on the basis of complete and unconditional independence from the bourgeoisie. This is all the more urgent today, as the South Korean ruling class seeks to line the workers up to sacrifice their livelihoods and struggles in order to appease imperialist dictates.

## U.S. Imperialism and IMF Austerity

The IMF package imposed on South Korea is so severe that no less an authority than Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs denounced it. Describing the IMF as a “small, secretive institution” which has the power to “dictate economic conditions of life to 75 developing countries,” Sachs fumed: “The IMF threw together a draconian programme for Korea in just a few days, without deep knowledge of the country's financial system and without any subtlety as to how to approach problems” (London *Financial Times*, 11 December 1997). Sachs ought to know what's drastic—he is the architect of the “shock therapy” which has driven millions of workers in the former Soviet Union to the brink of starvation. Sachs expected the imperialist rulers to adopt a rational, far-sighted approach to capitalist counterrevolution and pour billions into Russia to erect a stable capitalist economy there as part of a post-Soviet “New World Order.”

## SPARTACIST

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But capitalism is anything but rational. As we have repeatedly observed, the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 ushered in an era of heightened interimperialist competition, as the conflicting interests of the major imperialist powers were no longer subsumed in a (U.S.-led) anti-Soviet alliance. Germany, Japan and the U.S. have each sought to carve out trade blocs and spheres of influence, with the latter two in particular engaged in fierce competition in the Asian Pacific region. Seeking to reassert the imperialist hegemony it exercised in the aftermath of World War II, the U.S. proclaimed a "one superpower" world following the collapse of the USSR. While continuing to ratchet up the rate of exploitation of workers and slashing social programs benefiting the poor and all manner of minorities in the U.S., the American ruling class has also engaged in an aggressive trade war, ominously manifested in Washington's threat two months ago to embargo Japanese shipping on the West Coast.

Displaying unalloyed imperialist arrogance, the *New York Times* (14 December 1997) ran a front-page headline exulting in "Asia's Surrender," while a piece in *U.S. News & World Report* (8 December 1997) was titled "How the Far East Was Won"! The American bourgeoisie has seized on the burgeoning financial crisis in Southeast and East Asia to impose its interests in the region, using the IMF as its instrument of choice. In the wake of the IMF bailout of Thailand, foreign investors have been busily buying up local banks. And the "opening" of South Korea—with an economy bigger than those of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia combined—could be a bonanza for U.S. and Japanese moneymen alike.

But Wall Street brokers may not be grinning for long. In commenting on last October's stock market crash in "Death of Communism' Myth Goes Splat" (*WV* No. 677, 31 October 1997), we wrote: "The question yet to be answered is whether the latest crash is also a prelude to depression." In the wake of the South Korean collapse, that question is being raised by bourgeois commentators as well. Japan, already beset by seven years of economic downturn, has been plagued by a series of financial collapses in recent weeks, including the century-old Yamaichi Securities. If the devaluation of the *won*—which plunged 72 percent against the dollar in the past month alone—is combined with a sustained economic collapse in Japan, this could put enormous pressure on the U.S. economy. "There is nothing to stop the coming shock to U.S. trade," the Salomon Brothers brokerage firm recently warned investors (*U.S. News & World Report*, 8 December 1997). The article observed:

"As a declining currency makes exports cheaper, trading partners begin to retaliate with tariffs and beggar-thy-neighbor policies.

"The last time a major industrial country faced these conditions was 1929—and the result was a worldwide depression."



Workers took to the streets in general strike one year ago against anti-labor laws. At January 1997 solidarity demonstration in Tokyo (below), a Korean-language sign carried by Spartacist Group Japan contingent read, "Korean Workers Need a Bolshevik Party!"



As interimperialist rivalries sharpen, we fight to win workers in the U.S., Japan and other imperialist countries to the understanding that *the main enemy is at home*. This means, first and foremost, a sharp political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor tops. Even as it turns a blind eye to the barrage of attacks being leveled at the labor movement in the wake of the victorious UPS strike, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy is wallowing in its successful protectionist campaign to stop Democratic president Clinton's "fast track" trade proposal. Along with their latest phony "friend of labor," Democratic Congressman Richard Gephardt, the union misleaders seek to rally working people behind the banner of imperialist chauvinism. The Spartacist League fights to break workers and minorities from the racist, capitalist Democrats and to forge a revolutionary workers party to

sweep away the U.S. bourgeoisie, the most rapacious power on earth.

### Front Line in the Cold War

In a recent spread on South Korea, the *British Socialist Worker* (22 November 1997) claims that in 1953 "Korea was partitioned between the pro-Russian North and pro-US South after a war between client states of the superpowers which claimed four million Korean lives." This "third camp" rendition of the Korean War is part of the Cliffite school of falsification, aimed at alibiing Cliff's capitulation to Anglo-U.S. imperialism.

In fact, U.S. occupation forces, with Stalin's criminal acquiescence, divided the country at the 38th parallel only days after landing on the peninsula in 1945. In the North, the Kim Il Sung regime, basing itself on the Soviet Army, proceeded to expropriate the capitalists and

landlords, carrying out a social revolution from above. In the South, the U.S. imperialists and their local lackeys—Japanese soldiers, colonial police and the capitalists, who had previously loyally served the brutal Japanese occupation—proceeded to suppress a series of massive worker/peasant upheavals. The 1950-53 war—in which some three to four million people were killed and North Korea was virtually leveled—was a continuation of this counterrevolutionary policy by U.S. imperialism, targeting as well the Chinese deformed workers state which had issued out of the victory of Mao Zedong's peasant-based guerrilla forces in 1949. While the last Soviet forces had been withdrawn from the North by 1948, U.S. troops remained in the South to prop up its hand-picked puppet, Syngman Rhee, followed by one dictatorial regime after another.

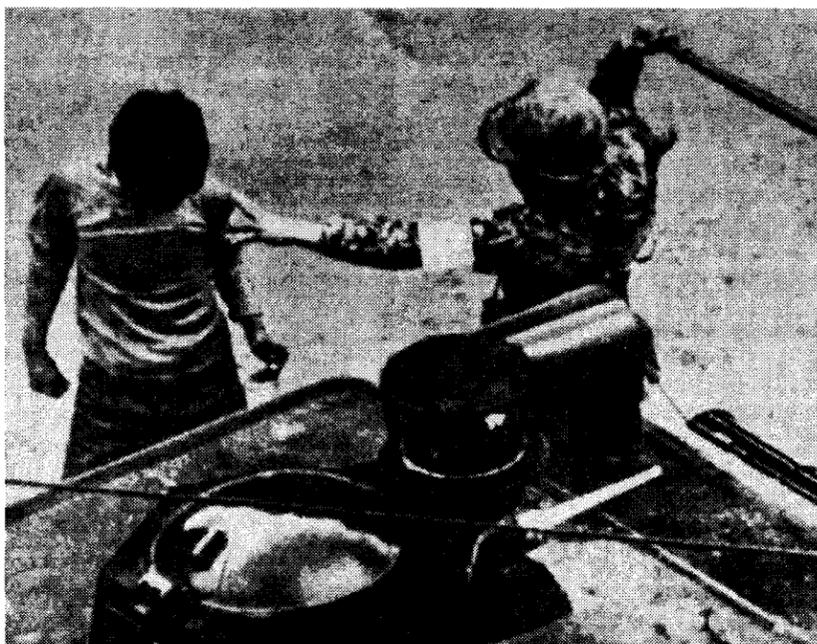
While Washington poured billions of dollars into South Korea to maintain a militarily strategic base of operations for its Cold War designs, on an economic level the U.S. sought to make South Korea subordinate to Japan. As late as the 1970s, the North Korean economy was stronger than that in the South. At the same time, South Korea's position as a key Cold War asset gave the weak local bourgeoisie some leeway. When military strongman Park Chung Hee took power in a 1961 coup, he embarked on a program of forced-pace industrialization, funneling the huge funds derived from the U.S. military presence, as well as Japanese financial and technological assistance, to develop the *chaebol*, many of whose founders had gotten their start servicing the American occupation. Between 1965 and 1973, Seoul got more than \$2 billion for services rendered to U.S. imperialism's dirty war in Vietnam, through lucrative contracts to supply American forces and as payment for the 300,000 South Korean troops shipped off to fight there.

Japanese investment in South Korea took off in the 1960s, especially after Park signed a "normalization" treaty in 1965. Park used some \$800 million in Japanese aid and investment to build the most efficient integrated steel mill in the world—despite American objections—laying the basis for large shipbuilding and auto industries. South Korea imported parts and equipment from Japan and exported finished products to the U.S. When South Korea faced a serious financial crisis—and IMF demands—in 1980, it was bailed out with Japanese assistance, including a massive \$4 billion loan package on favorable terms.

However, as the huge *chaebol* operations—epitomized by the gigantic shipworks of Hyundai Heavy Industries—began to compete with Japan and the U.S. on the world market, Japanese capitalists began to withhold the most modern technology from their South Korean "partners." As long as the Soviet Union existed, U.S. ruling circles were unwilling to risk destabilizing South Korea by imposing protectionist measures against Hyundai or Samsung, or by pressuring Seoul into opening up financial markets. With the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the interests of the U.S. in the peninsula have shifted. Counterrevolution in North Korea remains one of its goals, but a stronger South Korean bourgeoisie is not. When South Korea's rulers pleaded for assistance from Washington and Tokyo this time around, they had the door slammed in their faces.

The American military presence on the peninsula is not only a dagger aimed at the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states but an assertion of U.S. interests in the region against the South Korean bourgeoisie and Japanese imperialism. It also serves as a warning to South Korea's working masses, threatening to drown in blood any challenge to the capitalist order. From their suppression of the "autumn harvest" rising in 1946 to orchestrating the bloody Kwangju massacre of 1980, in which some 2,000 people were killed to put down an insurrectionary

*continued on page 10*



Protester attacked as troops drowned 1980 Kwangju insurrection in blood. U.S. gave green light for slaughter of 2,000 workers and leftists by military dictator Chun Doo Hwan, seen here with Reagan at White House in 1981.



UPI photos

# Wall Street...

(continued from page 7)

witnessed the unusual combination of a sharp recession with accelerating inflation, approaching 20 percent a year. The rapid inflation pushed working-class families into higher income-tax brackets so that take-home pay was falling even faster than real wages before taxes. Right-wing Republican Ronald Reagan won the election by promising large tax cuts along with cuts in social programs, perceived as mainly benefiting the black and Hispanic poor (e.g., welfare, food stamps). This demagoguery worked, as half of those white union members and their families who bothered to vote in the 1980 elections supported Reagan over Carter.

Some months prior to the election we pointed out that "the 'tax revolt' is the white backlash at two or three removes." But in contrast to the liberals we insisted: "The white backlash is not however the result of Reagan the Republican, but of decades of betrayal of *class struggle* by the labor bureaucrats and liberal black leaders who are tied to the Democratic Party. And it is only through united class struggle that racist demagoguery and attacks can be fought and reversed" ("Behind Friedmania," *WV* No. 260, 11 July 1980).

## For a Workers Government!

Despite fulminations about "Reaganomics" on the part of liberals and union leaders, the main policies of the Reagan administration expressed the general interests of the American ruling class, including those sections and factions represented by the Democratic Party. Indeed, all of Reagan's major policies and programs, from the massive arms build-



Washington Post

**Labor/black mobilization organized by Spartacist League stopped Klan provocation in Washington, D.C., 27 November 1982. Fight for black freedom is key to the struggle for socialist revolution.**

up against the USSR to tax cuts for the rich, were endorsed by the Democratic-controlled Congress. As we wrote in a document adopted by the 1987 National Conference of the SL/U.S.:

"The core goals of the Reagan presidency conform to a reactionary bourgeois *consensus*, the basic elements of which are: 1) overcoming at the level of popular attitudes the 'Vietnam syndrome,' i.e., disillusionment with the Cold War against the Soviet bloc and unwillingness to make sacrifices for the sake of anti-Communism; 2) increasing military and economic pressure on the Soviet Union, its allies and client states;... 3) decisively weakening the organized labor movement through a combination of giveback contracts, union-busting and the extension of non-union shops; and 4) reversing the limited and token gains of the civil rights movement, and cutting back and dismantling social programs beneficial especially to the black and Hispanic poor and the aged."

This reactionary bourgeois consensus was clearly demonstrated when a Democrat returned to the Oval Office, after 12 years of Republican rule, in the person of another former governor. Under Bill Clinton—not Reagan nor his Republican successor George Bush—the core welfare program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, has been eliminated. And the current bipartisan agreement to balance the federal budget by 2002 can be achieved only by massively slashing Social Security and Medicare. Having succeeded in their decades-long goal of destroying the Soviet Union, a workers state albeit deformed, and having battered the trade unions at home for two decades, the men who rule this country believe they can now do *anything* to the workers, the poor, the elderly, the black and Hispanic communities without the slightest

danger of social turmoil—not to speak of revolution.

However, the sudden collapse of the East Asian economic "miracle," which is wreaking havoc on world financial markets, has exposed the fragility of the post-Soviet global capitalist order. And the Teamsters strike of UPS last summer showed on a small scale the power of organized labor, producing worries about a "worker backlash" on Wall Street.

The desire to fight and a mood of anger at the arrogant CEOs of corporate America are certainly there. But that in itself is not enough. There also needs to be leadership and organization, based on the understanding that union rights and black rights go forward together or fall back separately. As we wrote in a special *WV* supplement (27 August 1997) on the lessons of the UPS strike:

"Two possible roads lie before the working class. There is the revolutionary strategy proposed by us Marxists. In the course of sharp class struggle and through the instrumentality of a revolutionary party that patiently educates the working class in the understanding not only of its social power but of its historic interests, the workers will become conscious of themselves as a class fighting for itself and for all the oppressed against the *entire* capitalist class and its government. Or there is the continuation of the bureaucrats' acquiescence to what is possible and 'practical' under capitalism, which over the past two decades and more has led to disaster."

The mobilization of the proletariat in pursuit of its own class interests requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor tops. This is integrally linked to the construction of a revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government which will expropriate the productive wealth now monopolized by the capitalists, in order to construct an egalitarian, socialist society. ■

# Korea...

(continued from page 9)

revolt, U.S. forces have been a key bulwark for counterrevolutionary repression on the peninsula. Yet not once in nine articles on Korea over the past two years has the American Cliffite *Socialist Worker* raised the call for U.S. troops out. (Indeed, only one, reporting on South Korean student protests, even mentioned the U.S. military presence.) This underscores our characterization of the "third camp" as the *camp of imperialism*.

Acting as "third campists" of the second mobilization is a group grandiosely calling itself the "International Bolshevik Tendency," formed by defectors from the Spartacist tendency who couldn't stomach our hard Soviet-defensist line at the height of Reagan's Cold War II. In a lengthy article on last year's strikes in South Korea against the anti-labor laws, these counterfeit "Trotskyists" do not once raise the call for defense of the North Korean deformed workers state, nor do they so much as *mention* the U.S. military presence in the South, even as they scream to "dislodge the crumbling

bureaucratic dictatorship in the North" (1917, [March] 1997).

In the first instance a capitulation to imperialism, the line of the "third camp" in South Korea represents an embrace of the interests of the *chaebol* bourgeoisie. The Cliffites demonstrated this even as their own comrades were dragged off to prison under the National Security Law (see "Free Choi Il Bung and All South Korean Class-War Prisoners!" *WV* No. 574, 23 April 1993). At the time of ISSK leader Choi's arrest, the Cliffites assured the anti-Communist regime that "he had not broken the National Security Law by reading banned literature from the North or belonging to a foreign organization. On the contrary, he had published books critical of regimes like North Korea" (*Socialist Worker* [U.S.], February 1993).

At the same time, the Cliffites uphold the social-democratic notion that the bourgeois cops can be won to the side of the working class. This line is particularly grotesque in South Korea, where every strike or student protest comes up against battalions of murderous police clad in Darth Vader outfits. Cliff's followers are also notorious internationally for crossing

picket lines, including during the momentous year-long miners strike in Britain in 1984-85.

## For a Trotskyist Party in Korea!

The Korean proletariat must reappropriate the history of the pioneer labor militants who were won to the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky and fought heroically against Japanese colonialism from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism. In its "Statement of Mission," the Korean Labor Federation, founded in 1925, proclaimed: "Our purpose is to liberate the working class and to build a completely new society. We will fight with the capitalist class with the collective power of the workers until a final victory is won" (quoted in Martin Hart-Landsberg, *The Rush to Development: Economic Change and Political Struggle in South Korea* [1993]).

The courage and combativity of the South Korean proletariat have been amply demonstrated in the struggles to forge independent unions in defiance of the police-state regime over the past 30 years. Thousands were imprisoned or killed for labor's cause. To this day, South Korean workers commemorate Chon Tae-il, a Seoul textile worker who immolated himself in November 1970 to protest anti-labor repression. Following his death, Chon's mother founded the Chonggye Garment Workers Union, one of the first independent unions. Through-

out the 1970s, young women workers—many of them brought in from the countryside to work up to 16 hours a day in stifling sweatshops for no more than the price of a cup of coffee—played a key role in organizing trade unions. Their heroic efforts, in the face of brutal degradation and terror by company thugs and legions of cops, paved the way for the subsequent formation of unions in heavy industry in the 1980s.

To become conscious of its historic tasks, the South Korean proletariat must champion the cause of all the oppressed, from the fight for women's emancipation to the defense of Filipino and other immigrant workers. As we wrote in "For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!" (*WV* No. 612, 9 December 1994):

"Only a party grounded in revolutionary internationalism can lead the South Korean proletariat to power against the *chaebol* bourgeoisie and oust the bureaucratic caste in Pyongyang through workers political revolution. A Trotskyist party would draw in all the oppressed behind the working class, basing itself on the program of permanent revolution. Only proletarian state power can emancipate the country from the stranglehold of U.S. and Japanese imperialism and resolve the belated tasks of the bourgeois revolution. Against the Stalinist/Confucian glorification of the family, which serves to maintain the age-old subjugation of women, a revolutionary workers party would act as a tribune of the people, fighting all manifestations of social oppression." ■



Poor crops have exacerbated economic collapse in North Korea, leading to widespread famine conditions.

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斯巴达克同盟  
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International Communist League  
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# Dockers...

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associated. The PMA has also demanded that the Laney College Labor Studies group, through its coordinator, Al Lannon, turn over all documents that refer or relate to the "composition and mission" of the organization, including membership lists, minutes of meetings, names of students who participated in demonstrations, etc. Lannon has refused to comply with this witchhunt.

Demonstrating that college administrations are in fact the agents of the capitalist class, the Laney College administration has now unilaterally imposed new restrictions on student club activities. Students are now required to get permission from the administration before participating in off-campus political activities such as union organizing, while the Labor Studies group has been banned from using its banner. All defenders of labor and democratic rights must demand an end to the Laney administration's outrageous attacks on the right to free speech and assembly.

## Waterfront Bosses Target ILWU

The PMA's real target in the victimization of the *Neptune Jade* protesters is the ILWU. All around the Pacific Rim, longshore unions are coming under increasing attack by the big shipping lines as they seek to increase their profits by breaking union wage scales and work rules. Singapore-based Neptune Orient recently purchased the Oakland-based American President Lines, which is the biggest shipper in the Port of Oakland, with 1,000 employees in the Bay Area, and a major player in the PMA. The combined company will rank third by market share in the immensely lucrative Pacific cargo trade (Oakland *Tribune*, 23 November 1997). The waterfront bosses' vendetta against the union was highlighted when an ILWU Local 10 official was reportedly dragged from his house by cops in October and tossed into jail for a night—on instructions from the PMA—after a confrontation with a process server.



Howard Barlow

**Liverpool dockers have waged bitter two-year struggle after being fired for refusing to cross picket lines in 1995.**

The PMA's McCarthyite vendetta comes in the context of escalating attacks on the labor movement in the wake of the successful and widely popular Teamsters strike against UPS. In retaliation for the union's victory, the government has ousted Ron Carey as Teamsters president, while the *Wall Street Journal* has rabidly rebaited the ardently pro-Democratic Party AFL-CIO president, John Sweeney. The U.S. bourgeoisie will brook no opposition to its "inalienable right" to intensify the exploitation of the working class. But the AFL-CIO bureaucracy—wedded to the racist capitalist order through its alliance with the Democratic Party—continues to sabotage class struggle in favor of continued reliance on the same capitalist state that is carrying out these attacks on the workers organizations.

In the case of the Oakland protests, there should have been a *union* picket line put up by the ILWU. Having refused to sanction union action in defense of the Liverpool dockers, after the port demonstrations, ILWU International head Brian McWilliams hypocritically intoned that "an injury to one is an injury to all" in a letter to the All Japan Dockworkers Union. In the letter, McWilliams wrote that the *Neptune Jade* "was not unloaded in Oakland" because longshoremen refused to cross a "picket line" in solidarity with the Liverpool dockers!

ILWU officials refused to picket out the *Neptune Jade* because they fear retal-

iation by the PMA. Covering for the bureaucracy's capitulation to the bosses' rules, the protest organizers substituted a demonstration organized by leftists for a real picket line. Sensing weakness, the PMA then launched a truly sinister witchhunt aimed at the union and its officers. So who is fooling whom?

At a September 14 meeting to defend the Oakland protesters, Howard Keylor upheld as a model the 1984 boycott of the *Nedlloyd Kimberly*. Keylor is a supporter of the International Bolshevik Tendency, a group of embittered renegades from the Spartacist League, and he provided a left cover for the ILWU bureaucracy in 1984 as well. The *Nedlloyd Kimberly* boycott came at the height of the black revolt in South Africa against the apartheid police state, as the ILWU Local 10 membership voted to refuse to handle South African cargo on the next Nedlloyd ship in port. Unlike the liberal strategy of seeking to pressure U.S. imperialism to "divest" itself from apartheid South Africa, this proposal was a concrete act of urgently needed labor solidarity with black South African workers, who had been engaged in courageous class battles for some months.

Fearing that union action would anger the PMA and be ruled illegal by the bosses' courts, the ILWU bureaucracy deep-sixed official union action and claimed that longshoremen who refused to unload the ship were simply engag-

# Chicago...

(continued from page 12)

the Chicago Committee Against Police Brutality, formed by Rev. Paul Jakes along with State Senator Rickey Hendon and other bourgeois liberals. The central demand of this group, for a civilian review board to oversee the cops, is touted by the Communist Party (CP) in its newspaper, the *People's Weekly World* (8 November), which gushingly notes that Hendon "called for complete independent citizen accountability also for the FBI, the CIA and the military"! This *reductio ad absurdum* underlines the essential fallacy of reformism: does anybody in his right mind think the Pentagon is going to let John Q. Public control the nuclear trigger? Civilian review boards are designed to curb, not cop terror, but independent working-class action against it, by fostering illusions that a supposedly "neutral" government can be pressured to rein in police "excesses." Such "excesses," however, are no aberration but a deliberate policy aimed at suppressing militant social struggle by minorities and working people.

Thus Hendon's plan isn't about "controlling" the cops but about making them more effective. "We have to get the bad cops out because they destroy the morale of Black and good white officers," he said (*Chicago Defender*, 6 October). Jakes meanwhile calls for more police lieutenants and sergeants while demanding that blacks get their "fair share" in this racist and repressive apparatus. Advising the powers that be on the benefits of reform, the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, associated with the social-democratic Committees of Corre-

spondence, dots the i's and crosses the t's: "A democratically elected Police Control Authority could go a long way toward helping the police department regain some respect and cooperation from the people. *Without this, there could be a total breakdown of law and order in our city*" (*Chicago Defender*, 11 October [emphasis added]).

The need to put on some kind of show of taking action against "rogue cops" was not lost on Chicago mayor Richard Daley and his police superintendent, Matt Rodriguez. While Rodriguez blustered that bigotry and excessive violence wouldn't be tolerated, Daley appointed a "blue-ribbon panel" headed by a former federal prosecutor to recommend changes in the police department. Some 200 angry protesters packed a meeting of the Chicago Police Board on October 9. But instead of exposing the Daley administration's dog-and-pony show, the reformists who intervened simply called for "real" action by the politicians. Thus one Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) supporter told Rodriguez: "We're tired of you pretending to hear us and saying you're going to give justice when you haven't done a thing" (*Revolutionary Worker [RW]*, 26 October). Similarly, a spokesman for the International Socialist Organization was quoted by the Chicago *Sun-Times* as saying, "Mayor Daley is the No. 1 cause of police brutality because he tolerates it" (10 October). The implication here is that a different mayor and police superintendent, ones committed to some version of social justice, could stop the terror emanating from the station houses. This is a liberal pipe dream that ignores the cops' social function as henchmen of capitalist law and order.

One group that puts up a front of rejecting this abject reformism is the Pro-

gressive Labor Party (PL). In an article titled "No Such Thing as a 'Good' Cop" (*Challenge*, 17 September), PL writes: "The police can never be any good for the working class. Their main role is to enforce the bosses dictatorship over our class." Such fine phrases, though, contradict PL's flagrantly opportunist *practice* of counseling its supporters to voluntarily enlist in other capitalist armed bodies like the imperialist army and the National Guard. Though volunteer soldiers generally aren't lifelong, conscious guardians of racist capitalism like cops, they do wield arms to disperse strikers, put down colonial insurrections, etc. Recently PL decided to get in on the class-collaborationist bloc between the reformist "left" and the Democrats, lamenting that its supporters in Teamsters Local 743 in Chicago had failed to propose "that the local endorse the Rally Against Racist Police Terror on Oct. 22" (*Challenge*, 5 November).

The October 22 mobilization organized by Refuse & Resist! was an alliance of liberals and leftists based on the slogan: "Stop Police Brutality!" Chicago community organizer Wallace "Gator" Bradley, a Democratic Party wannabe and member of the October 22 Coalition's national coordinating committee, called on Mayor Daley to "put out an executive order making police brutality a crime" (*RW*, 26 October). This call for a non-brutal police force implies that it's possible to enforce capitalism's racist and anti-working-class laws without chokeholds, pepper spray, billy clubs, frame-ups and murder. This liberal lie was used to politically subordinate working people and minorities to the capitalist Democratic Party in the October 22 Coalition.

While seeking to organize social protest based on the power of labor against

ing in "individual acts of conscience." Members of the Militant Caucus, a class-struggle opposition within the ILWU politically supported by the Spartacist League, fought tooth and nail for a union picket line and against the bureaucrats' sabotage, which emboldened the PMA and left the most conscious elements vulnerable to attack by the bosses without the backing of their union. In contrast, various fake leftists in the union—including Keylor—helped to break the ten-day boycott of the *Nedlloyd Kimberly* and then set up a non-union protest as a sop to those who wanted to protest apartheid terror (see "Battle Over Union Action at South Africa Ship," WV No. 368, 7 December 1984; "Labor Traitors and Their Lackeys," WV No. 374, 8 March 1985).

Now, with the longshore contract expiring in 1999, the ferocious witch-hunting attack against the *Neptune Jade* protesters and some union officials should be seen as a warning to the ILWU that the PMA will be out for blood in the upcoming negotiations. Playing by the PMA's rules and bowing to capitalist legality will only encourage further anti-union attacks. Refusing to set up a union-sanctioned picket line against the *Neptune Jade* in the first place has now put the ILWU in a defensive posture against the PMA.

Throughout the labor movement, it is crucial to break the stranglehold of the union misleaders—aided and abetted by the fake leftists—whose support to the Democratic and Republican parties and reliance on the capitalist courts and cops disarm the working class and bind it to its class enemies. The road of class struggle is the only way forward. We must forge a workers party that will fight for a socialist society where those who labor will rule.

\* \* \*

**The union movement must be mobilized to stop the PMA's witchhunt. Send donations for the legal defense of the *Neptune Jade* protesters to: Liverpool Dockers Victory Defense Committee, P.O. Box 2574, Oakland, CA 94614. ■**

cop terror, Marxist revolutionaries fight to win the working class to understand the utter impossibility of reforming the agencies of state repression such as the cops, military, courts and prisons. The only way to "stop police brutality" is to put an end to the entire system based on exploitation and oppression that the police defend. "The social power to do that lies in the hands of the working class, with its numbers, organization and discipline—and most importantly, its capacity to bring the wheels of the profit system to a grinding halt" ("For Non-Sectarian Class-Struggle Defense!" *Workers Vanguard* No. 679, 28 November). To unleash that power in this country we need to build a revolutionary workers party with a program to fight for black liberation through socialist revolution. ■

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## Protests Hit Cop Terror in Chicago

We reprint below a leaflet issued on December 22 by the Spartacist League in Chicago.

Jeremiah Mearday is facing years in jail in a frame-up carried out by the very same cops who beat him to a bloody pulp last September 26. Jeremiah's only "crime" was being young and black in "Segregation City," where cops mete out racist terror each and every day. Hundreds of outraged demonstrators have turned out to protest the savage beating and bogus prosecution of Mearday. The ominous response of the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.), sending some 200 menacing thugs to pack Mearday's November 7 courtroom appearance, was a declaration that the police will brook no challenge to the racist brutality they call "street justice." The Spartacist League demands: *Drop all charges against Jeremiah Mearday!* We understand that the only way to stop this kind of racist cop violence once and for all is to mobilize the social power of the working class to sweep away the profit system these gunmen serve.

In order to unlock this revolutionary potential it is necessary for working people and minorities to understand that the police are not "workers" but their sworn enemies who have no place in the labor movement. They are enforcers of capitalist rule whose violent bigotry conforms to the racism embedded in America's profit system. Such armed bodies of men form the very core of the bosses' state power, which is why collective action by cops poses a deadly danger to the oppressed and at times even challenges the authority of the government's elected officials. The F.O.P.'s sinister mobilization was



Wagner/Chicago Tribune

**Vicious beating of Jeremiah Mearday (above) and other racist cop atrocities in Chicago provoked October 11 march and other protests.**



WV Photo

enough to demolish the notion that cops cease to be "agents of the state" when they "rebel collectively," to quote the reformist International Socialist Organization's British cothinkers (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 8 February 1997). Such actions in fact reveal bourgeois state power stripped of its "democratic" cloak.

Across the country police powers are being strengthened along with the mounting toll of executions, policies pursued with vigor by Democratic president Bill Clinton. The capitalists' all-out war on the living standards of America's poor and working people has been measured in the drive to cut off the nation's ghettos from all suste-

nance and hope. Particularly for oppressed minorities, joblessness and starvation go hand in hand with prison and, not infrequently, death in the streets. In Chicago's South and West Side ghettos, the nation's largest, the cops feel free to rob, beat and murder with impunity.

In the years since the 1991 videotaped Rodney King beating by Los Angeles cops and the ensuing explosion of nationwide outrage at their acquittal, however, there has been increasing concern in bourgeois circles that such high-profile incidents of police brutality will make it more difficult to maintain racist "law and order." The Mearday beating, coming in the wake of the brutal cop

torture of Haitian immigrant Abner Louima in New York, threatened to undermine the already damaged authority of a scandal-ridden police department. The Democratic politicians who run Chicago focused their energies on damage control, promoting a series of plans to supposedly heighten popular "control" over the police. Such schemes are based on the lie that the working class and minorities can reform the very capitalist state that systematically oppresses them, but that didn't stop an array of "socialist" groups from aiding this endeavor.

A series of protests against the Mearday atrocity have been organized by  
*continued on page 11*

## Bay Area Longshore Union Under Attack

# Defend Supporters of Liverpool Dockers!

OAKLAND—The Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) has launched a rabid, McCarthyite witchhunt against trade unionists, students and leftists who carried out protests at the Port of Oakland in September against the *Neptune Jade*, a ship carrying scab cargo. The ship had been loaded at a port in Britain controlled by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (MDHC), which has carried out a vicious union-busting attack on Liverpool dockers who have battled for *two years* in defense of the basic class principle that *picket lines mean don't cross*.

MDHC has employed scabs to work the Liverpool docks since 1995. The bosses had sacked the entire workforce after engineering a dispute with, and then firing, five young workers fighting for their right to overtime pay. Shamefully, the leaders of the British Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) have done all in their power to knife the dockers' struggle. At its biennial conference in July, TGWU leader Bill Morris

even tried (unsuccessfully) to get the union to disown the dockers completely! Morris' backstabbing is of a piece with the Thatcherite attacks on workers and the poor now being carried out by Tony Blair's "New" Labour Party.

The PMA was enraged by the fact that the Oakland protests had prevented the offloading of the *Neptune Jade's* scab cargo. Only days later, the ship was turned away from the Vancouver docks by a similar protest. As the ship headed for Yokohama, Zenkoku Kowan (National Council of Dockworkers' Unions of Japan) met and reached a decision "to refuse, for the time being, the work of any cargoes in Japan handled by Mersey Dock and Harbour Company, i.e. any cargoes from and to the ports of Liverpool, Thamesport and Sheerness." Neptune Orient Line has now reportedly sold the *Neptune Jade* in Taiwan—with the scab cargo still aboard.

Two days after the Oakland protests began, the PMA filed a civil suit and won a court injunction against the dem-

onstrators, singling out in particular members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU), a division of the ILWU. IBU member Robert Irminger, one of the protest leaders, was charged with contempt of court for allegedly violating the injunction and now faces jail time. The Laney College Labor Studies group, the Golden Gate Chapter of the Labor Party, the Peace and Freedom Party—as well as 500 "John Does" and even "Doe" labor organizations and political associations!—are named in the PMA civil suit, which demands huge monetary damages. We demand: Drop all charges against Robert Irminger and all the Liverpool dockers protesters!

In a December 19 letter accompanying a donation to the Liverpool Dockers Victory Defense Committee, the Partisan Defense Committee stated:

"What lies behind this attack is the capitalists' fear that the power of the international working class will be brought to bear on behalf of the fired Liverpool workers. The shipping employers are out

to intimidate all who would stand up for the rights of labor....

"These attacks demand the widespread mobilization of organized union power in concrete solidarity action, which means refusing to bow to the courts and arbitrators of the capitalist state. That is part of preparing the working class to assume its rightful place in history—those who labor must rule!"

### "Are You Now or Have You Ever Been...?"

Taking a page quite literally from 1950s anti-Communist witchhunter Joe McCarthy, lawyers for the PMA demanded that Irminger and the other defendants answer "special interrogatory" questions. Among other things, they were ordered to "identify all persons, associations and organizations known to you who participated in" the demonstrations; to "identify all labor organizations in which you are or have been a member or with which you are or have been in any way affiliated" and to name "all political organizations" with which they have been  
*continued on page 11*